



The subject matter of this webinar was selected by you and your colleagues out of list of possible subjects. We aren't surprised. Challenging clients are those individuals or family units that seem to take up your time, drain your energy and sometimes leave you feeling defeated. These are the clients that you just can't seem engage in a successful way ---- at least sometimes. Anyone working as a case manager in human services has clients that make them feel unsuccessful. So this day is for YOU. We want your energy level to go up, we hope you are going feel better after spending this hour or so with us. We hope you are going to get some good tips on how to work these clients.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This training is based on selected works of:

- David Moxley
- Linda Albert
- Albert Ellis
- Alfred Adler
- Stephen Covey
- The Harvard Negotiation Project

These people are masters at building relationships with clients and students that affirm the worth of the individual while identifying tools and behaviors that help social workers, psychologists and teachers find success in working with people. If you want to do more reading, Google any of these and you'll find a lot of advanced material to keep you busy. We've tried to take the best from these resources to create this webinar but you can learn a lot more about the psychology and educational theories if you want to read more.

WHAT WILL YOU GET IN THIS TRAINING?

- Validation of your strategies and methods
- Techniques to create more “good time” with clients
- New ways to think about case management interactions
- New tools to use with clients



WORKING WITH CHALLENGING CLIENTS

CASE MANAGEMENT PRACTICE

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DEFINITION OF CASE MANAGEMENT

The organization and coordination of a network of formal and informal activities, services, and supports designed to **optimize** the well being of a person.

Source: Moxley, [Practice of Case Management](#) (1989).

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Let's start by looking at the definition of case management. If you participated or watched our case management training webinars in May, this will be a review for you. Optimize means to make as perfect, effective, or functional as possible.

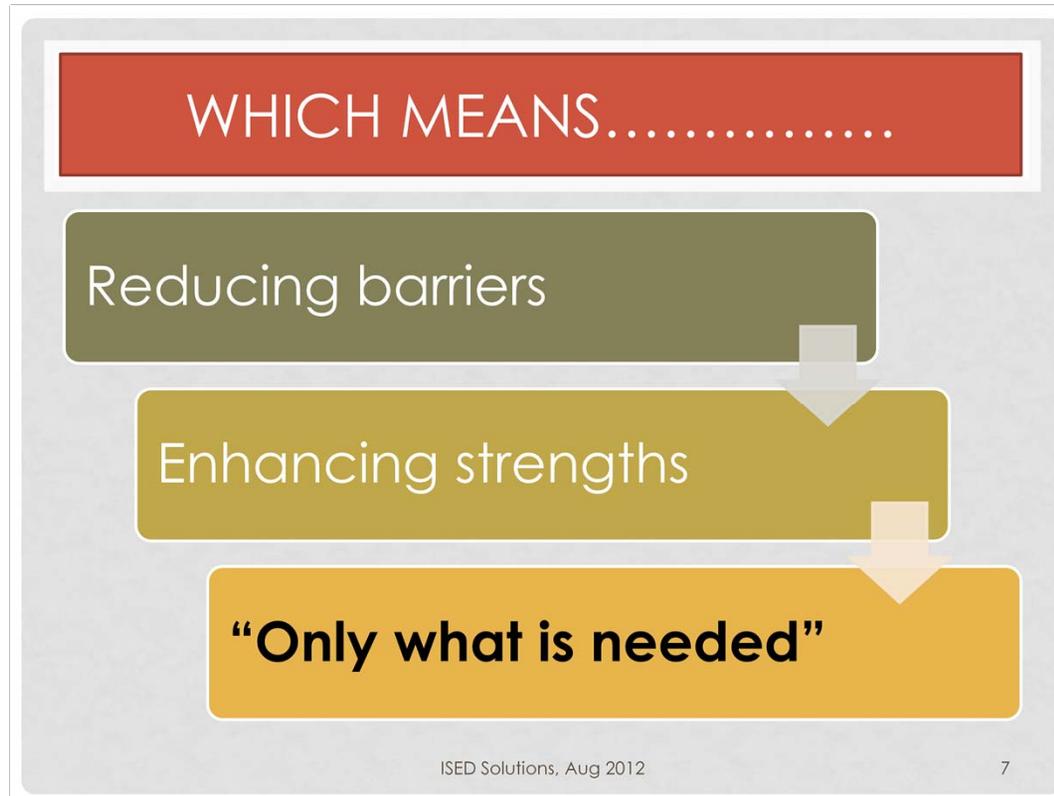
OPTIMIZE.....

to make as **effective** or
functional as possible

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The key word here is OPTIMIZE...case management seeks to help the client become as effective as possible, so they can FUNCTION in their lives, support themselves and their families, and have less need for outside help.



Remember: You cannot solve all of your clients' problems. Your job is to do “only what is needed” to help them be effective and functional.

Your job is NOT to do everything – only what the client needs. You and the client will be partners in the process.

REMEMBER

You are the

Professional

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One of the most important things you can remember about interacting with your clients is that you are the professional. The client needs your skills, your help, your confidence, your energy, your wisdom, your best effort on their behalf.

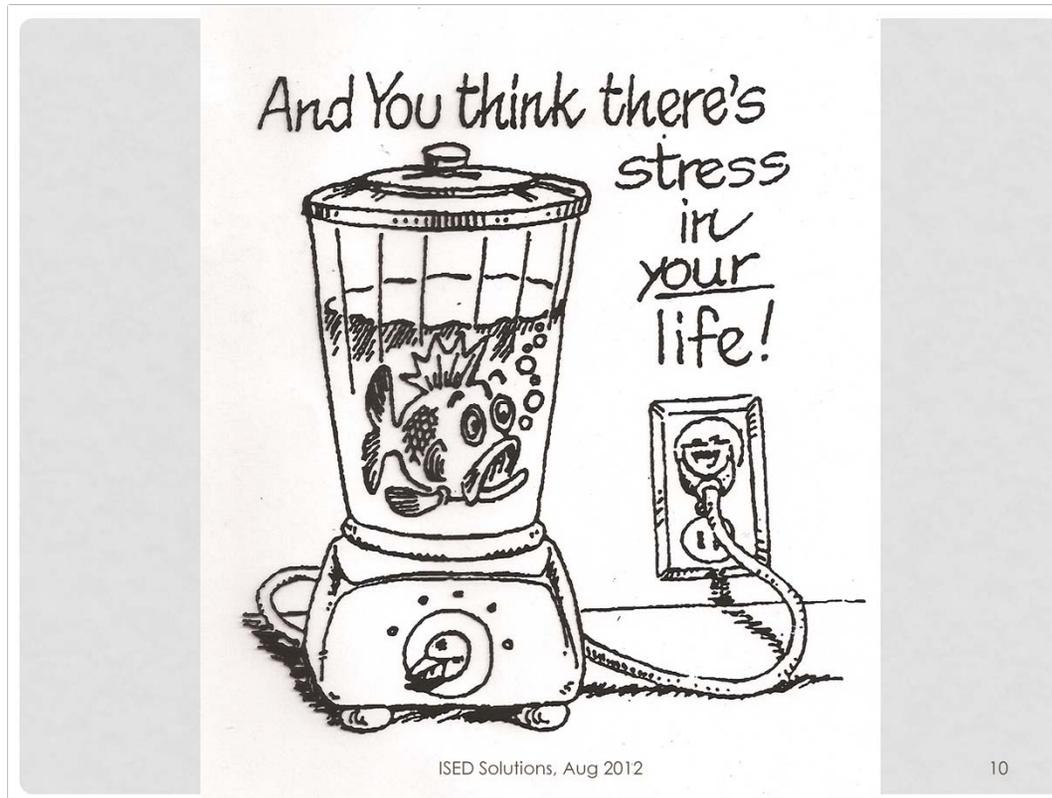
THE PROFESSIONAL “YOU”

You ARE:

- Case manager
- Teacher
- Coach
- Cheerleader
- Guide

You are NOT:

- Parent
- Sister or Brother
- Psychologist
- Priest/Cleric
- Friend



Yes indeed, your job has a high level of stress. Just like teachers, case managers are constantly working with a broad range of personalities and in your case newcomers, many of whom have arrived with a significant number of fears, anxieties and high expectations. This is why we are here today: to share some tips on dealing with those clients that are most challenging.



WORKING WITH CHALLENGING CLIENTS

UNDERSTANDING WHAT MOTIVATES INDIVIDUALS

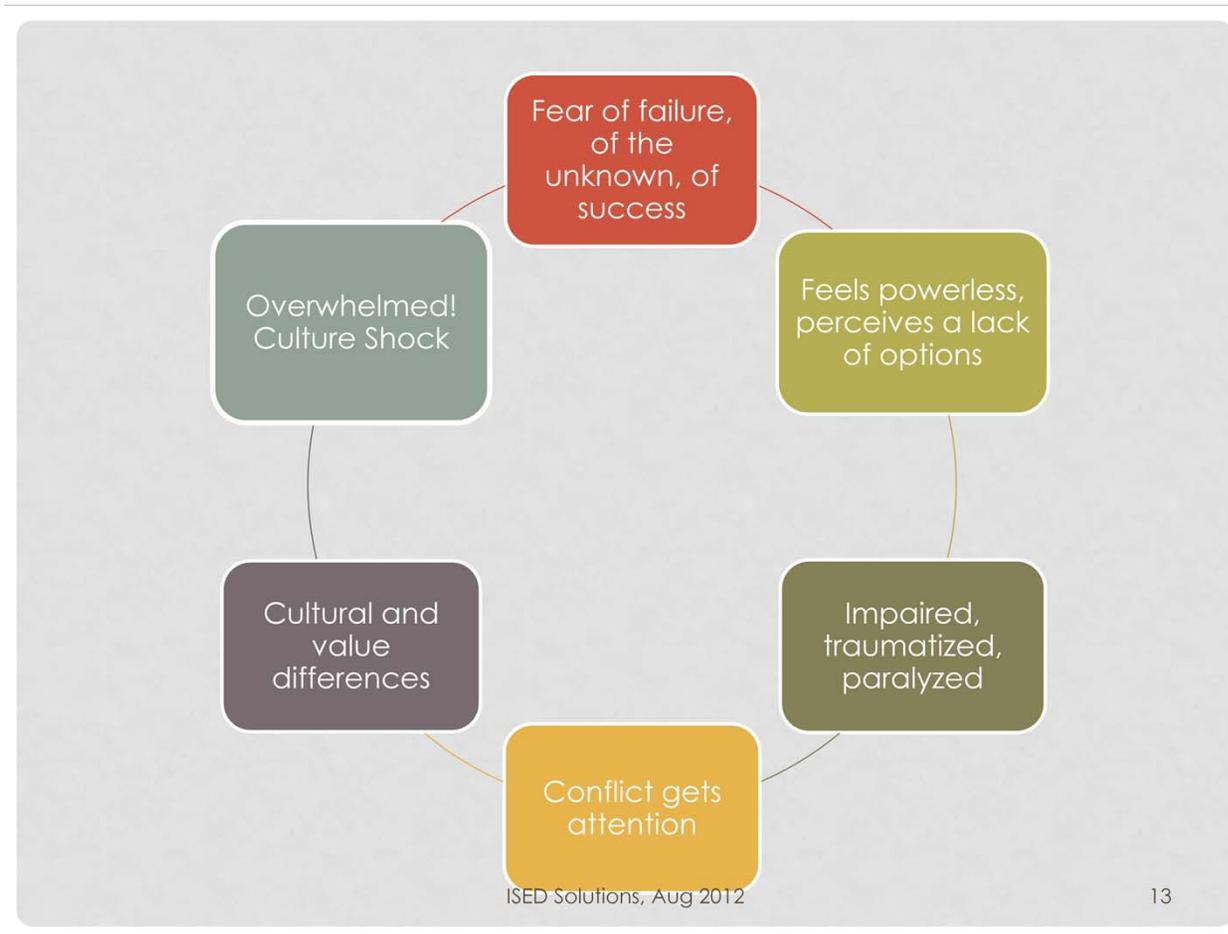


Why are clients difficult?

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So... here is the heart of the question. Not every single client you have is difficult to work with, which leads us to ask – what makes some clients so challenging to work with? Anyone who has a job that involves working with people will encounter challenging clients from time to time. However, in the human services field – and our work in refugee resettlement– it can be really hard to understand WHY clients are challenging us, when all we are trying to do is HELP them. Now, there is a lot of excellent information and wisdom in the fields of personality psychology and behavioral theory that you could study to learn more in-depth about the development issues that lead to people being downright difficult. However, we are going to focus on several of the most common factors behind difficult behavior.



SLIDE 13 Talking Points

FEAR – Fear is the #1 reason for clients being difficult. They may fear that they will fail here and have no idea what will happen to them and their families. The fear of the unknown is huge— for those of you who have been through the refugee experience personally, know what that is like. Any change in life brings some fear of the unknown. They may also fear success—what their lives will be like if they are successful here, how things will change, will they lose their ethnic and cultural identity if they “make it” here in the US.

Also, clients may fear you – or actually, your role. They may see a big gap between where they are and where you are. You have more education, you are in the position of authority. This may cause them to be defensive with you.

POWERLESS – It is difficult for most people to be on the receiving end of assistance. Pride is often at the root of the problem. Many people are ashamed that they need help. They feel powerless. It is also very hard to find that, as a refugee, you have a limited number of choices and none of them may be what you expected or wanted. They may perceive that they have no options, simply because everything is new to them. Think about anytime you started in a new office location, or a new home. If you were unfamiliar with the area, you wouldn’t know all the options, until you had a chance to settle, feel comfortable, and take a look around.

IMPAIRED: emotionally, mentally, physically. In some cases, neither you nor your agency has the skills and resources to help a client with significant impairments. Then you need to consult with your boss and make a plan for referral of the client.

CONFLICT GETS ATTENTION: Acting out works for adults the same as it works for children in a classroom. Many clients act out to get your attention—they need to have that attention to feel secure.

CULTURAL AND VALUES DIFFERENCES: You have no doubt experienced this – it’s cross-cultural experience 101. We might interpret a behavior as unacceptable in our culture, only to learn it the standard in another culture. Refugees are bringing their cultural values and ways of behaviors. We might interpret that as difficult.

OVERWHELMED/CULTURE SHOCK: Culture shock based on expectations can be overwhelming. Remember that very few arrivals receive extensive cultural orientation. Some receive as little as a few hours and all receive the book in their own language, but, really no orientation can truly prepare a person for life in the United States. I’ve heard case managers tell amazing stories about arriving refugees and what they understood or did not understand about the resettlement process. I can recall a number of refugees from a specific country arriving a few years back who were shown the architectural layout of a “sample” apartment so they could become familiar with apartments in America. A big group of these folks thought they were seeing their apartments and began to complain when they didn’t get to live in that specific apartment! Life here is overwhelming for many Americans born here. Not only are refugees arriving to a new place, they are also starting over! Most arrive with the clothes on their backs and really and truly, most are at the mercy of the agency and the case managers. They want to trust and do well, but for many it is simply overwhelming. Some become depressed, some become angry, some give up, most adjust and move on but all of you have encountered people that are really struggling.

SEVEN BASIC ADLERIAN CONCEPTS

1. People are social beings
2. Behavior is goal oriented
3. Our primary goal is to belong
4. A difficult client may be a discouraged client
5. Everyone needs to have social interaction
6. All people have equal claims to dignity and respect
7. Everyone needs to believe others care about them

based on the work of Alfred Adler and Linda Albert

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It will be an enormous help to you as a case manager if you can recognize these concepts as a key to understanding why you do what you do and why clients do what they do. These concepts are based on the work of Alfred Adler— any of you who have studied psychology or social work will recall that he developed theories of human behavior that were known as Individual Psychology. He believed people are largely motivated by social interest...wanting to belong, establish their identity, and be cared for by others.

1. People are social beings. Our lives depend on other people – infants would not survive without help from other people.
2. We behave in ways that help us reach our goal. For instance: I don't like to live in a messy, dirty space. So I clean my house to meet that goal. Or, I want to be able to run a 10K race next month, so I go running and train my body to do that.
3. Why do you go to church, temple, synagogue, or a social or athletic club? It may be to practice our faith or learn something, but there is also the sense of belonging that occurs when we interact with others?
4. This is a very important concept. Many of the most difficult people we meet in life - -and our work– are very discouraged. They feel trapped, unable to change anything in their lives.
5. Again, social interaction is vital to have a fulfilling life. “No man is an island.”
6. Do you want and need respect? Yes!! You do. I do, your client does, your co-workers do.
7. Knowing others care about us makes life worth living. Everyone needs to know that someone cares about them.

THE THREE C'S:

Every person needs to be
.....

- **Capable**
- **Connected**
- **Contributing**

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Linda Albert, an educator hypothesizes (and we agree) that every person needs to be validated in these ways. The 3C's.

-- Every person needs to feel capable of taking care of himself or herself

-- Every person needs to feel connected to other human beings (this is especially true for refugees arriving to no family or friends or community (ethnicity is something, but it isn't enough)

-- Every person needs to feel as if he or she is contributing, helping their families, friends, community. They want to have a purpose.

A client who is challenging to work with may not feel as though they can achieve this in their lives. It might be that they felt very capable, connected and contributing in the homeland, or even in refugee camp setting, but not here.

This is a key point we want to focus on. Many of the challenging clients you are dealing with are struggling in ways that they cannot properly articulate or describe. They may not even be able to understand why they are behaving as they are.

Case management, as we discussed earlier, is about optimizing – helping clients become effective and functioning by removing barriers and enhancing strengths. A challenging client is challenging because he or she is throwing more barriers in their way, by the manner in which they are behaving. We'll look now at strategies and techniques for getting more good time with these clients.



WORKING WITH CHALLENGING CLIENTS

THE COOPERATIVE CASE MANAGEMENT APPROACH

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Let's unpack the basic concepts of what we call Cooperative Case Management. Clients have choices....the concept here– Empowerment. Clients are empowered to make choices.

Good choices– the cooperative case management approach is set up to give them the opportunity to make GOOD choices. They can make good choices because you are sharing information, options, guidance during the planning process.

Case managers make choices about how to work with clients: hands off, hands on, hands-joined. If your overall approach is hands off, the client won't have enough information and support to make good choices. If you are too hands on– they may feel like you are trying to control them and become more difficult. The hands-joined approach is most effective. You are working together.

What does hands-on look like? Having clients participate in the design of their experience. Treating them with respect as decision makers. Remember, many of their decisions are made for them- where they are living, going to ELT or job training. The more they can make decisions, the more empowered they will feel.

COOPERATIVE CASE MANAGEMENT:



Encourages “hands – joined” approach

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Keep in your mind, a picture of your hands joined to those of your client. You are, in so many ways, the lifeline that new arrivals – even the challenging ones need to progress through a traumatic time in their lives.

THE THREE C'S:

The goal of every client is to be:

- **Capable**
- **Connected**
- **Contributing**

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ONCE MORE FOR EMPHASIS!!! The cooperative case management approach will assist in moving clients towards this goal.

Linda Albert, an educator hypothesizes (and we agree) that every person needs to be validated. Every person needs
to feel capable of taking care of himself or herself
to feel connected to other human beings (this is especially true for refugees arriving to no family or friends or community
(ethnicity is something, but it isn't enough)
To feel as if he or she can contribute

If a client resists becoming capable, connected, contributing there may be other issues that will require referrals outside your agency. They may be survivors of torture or have severe mental or physical health issues that require other types of services

TWO OF YOUR BEST TOOLS

Rights & Responsibilities

- Explain every item in detail
- It gives the client an active role in the resettlement process

Family Self-Sufficiency Plan

- Remind the client this is **their plan**—you are guiding them based on your experience and knowledge

In your case file materials you have two of your best tools to establish the foundation for cooperative case management. The R&R and FSSP. Do not rush through either of these agreements.

The Client Rights and Responsibilities agreement essentially establishes the “ground rules” for your relationship. When/if you have conflict with the client, you can go back to this document – which they signed– to remind them of their rights and responsibilities.

The FSSP should be presented as a goal setting tool for the refugee. The agency and you as the case manager will work to help them in the following areas...health care, housing, school, ELT, employment services– but the plan is a tool to help them move from “new arrival” to being capable, connected, and contributing.

You can empower your client by taking their thoughts and concerns very seriously. Explain the program and the limited options BUT give them as many choices as possible

MANAGING CLIENT EXPECTATIONS

Listen to their stories

Explain the resettlement process and their options

Engage them in creating the plan

Create clear, specific, attainable and beneficial goals

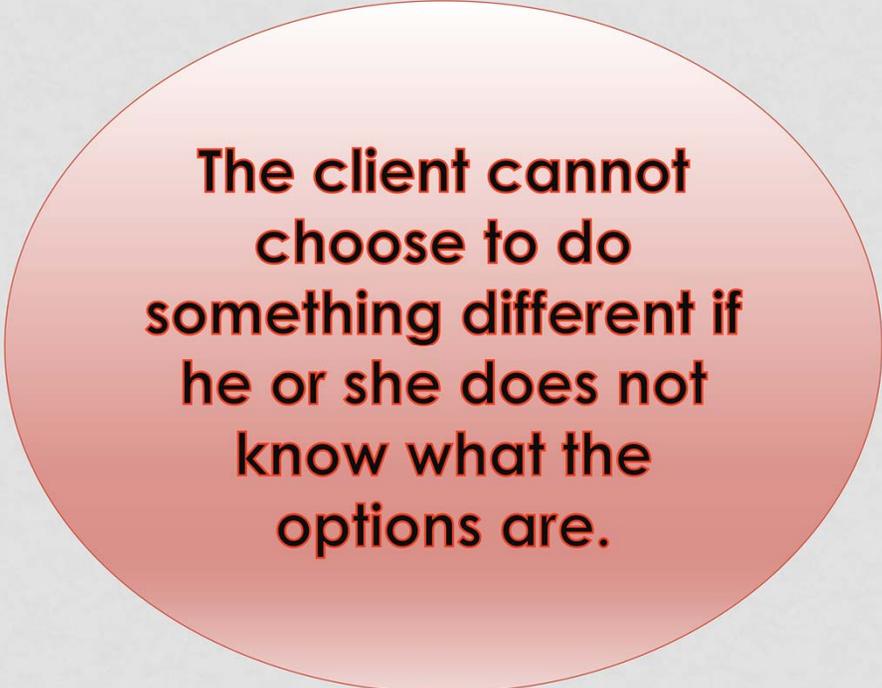
SLIDE 21 Talking Points

Client R&R and FSSP give you opportunity to explain the program; what their options are; and how they can achieve short-term and long term goals.

Anyone who has been in refugee resettlement work knows that dealing with client expectations is a real challenge. As we said before, many refugees received very limited cultural orientation. For some refugees, their expectation of the US is based on TV or internet or rumors they hear.

Understanding expectations— their “story”— is a key to establishing a cooperative relationship. We need to understand the other person’s story well enough to see how their conclusions make sense within it.

Another concept to keep in mind as you develop FSSPs: Human behavior research has shown that people are motivated by two factors: the pursuit of pleasure or avoidance of pain. Psychological studies have shown repeatedly that people’s actions are motivated far more by the avoidance of pain than trying to gain pleasure. Similarly, most people fear losing something more than they value the possibility of gaining something. So when working with a challenging client, keep in mind that they may feel they are losing something by moving ahead with the process. Even though our knowledge and experience is that they will gain something better. For example, a refugee reluctant to take a job may be acting out of fear of losing their current routine. Perhaps they walk their child to school, or meet friends for lunch. The thought of losing that tangible experience is more painful than the “gain” they will get (more money, safer housing) by taking a job. As a case manager, you need to carefully and calmly build the case that by moving ahead with getting a job, the client will be avoiding far more pain in the future— such as losing their apartment, their children having to go to another school, having a less desirable job or longer commute...etc. In the US, we tend to focus on what we will gain, but sometimes that language doesn’t connect to a refugee struggling to get settled in a new environment. They may just starting to feel safe when they are told they need to change their routine again. We understand this does not describe all your clients, but it is a way to look at some of your more challenging clients.



**The client cannot
choose to do
something different if
he or she does not
know what the
options are.**

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Explain all possible options from which a client can choose. Let the client ask questions. Explain the result of every choice they consider. Having some ability to choose really empowers people.

WINNING COOPERATION

“People whose lives are affected by a decision need to be a part of the decision-making process...”

John Naisbitt
Megatrends

“...if you want them to cooperate.”

Linda Albert
Cooperative Discipline



A good idea to keep in mind with all clients, but again, especially for those who are challenging you in some way.

SUCCESS FACTORS FOR CASE MANAGER & CLIENT RELATIONSHIP

Create a positive atmosphere in your space

Commit to a high-quality relationship

Build client self-esteem

Encourage decision-making skills

Allow for clients to take responsibility and make choices

A few suggestions to keep in mind.

We know you sometimes have cramped space...maybe a desk and two chairs. Sometimes not even hard walls. Try to keep things tidy. It gives people confidence. If you have space, display the gifts refugees have given you. Make it a welcoming space. Be prepared for your clients when they arrive. Try not to keep them waiting too long if they have an appointment. Try to think how you would feel if you were the new arrival. Or the way you felt when you first arrived. Maintain your standards of a high quality relationship, even if you feel it is not reciprocated.

Build self esteem– in part 2 of our case management training webinar, we talked about the importance of the strength-based perspective. Talk about your clients strengths, compliment them on what they do well. Even if it's something they do that annoys you! Say you are filling out a form and you miss a line or a box, and the client says "you missed that!" Our natural reaction is to be defensive or annoyed, but say something like "you really have a good eye for detail."



WORKING WITH CHALLENGING CLIENTS

UNDERSTANDING CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

WHEN CLIENTS “ACT OUT”



They are typically seeking...

- Attention
- Power
- Revenge
- Avoidance of failure

COMMON BELIEF SYSTEMS

- Attention: I only count when I'm the center of attention.

Look at me!

- Power: I only count when I'm in charge and doing things my way. I win.

Let's fight!

- Revenge: When people hurt me, I have to hurt them back.

I'll get even!

- Avoidance of failure: I will never belong here or have value. I'm not good enough. Nothing I do is ever right.

Leave me alone!

Those behaviors stem from their beliefs about themselves, or the current situation they are in. When under stress – and the refugee resettlement process is very stressful– these beliefs can become their primary coping mechanisms. It gives the client a way to control their environment.

Think about how and when you have seen these behaviors in some of your clients.

ATTITUDE IS A JOURNEY

“Our attitude towards what has happened to us in life is the important thing to recognize.

Once hopeless, my life is now hope-full, **but it did not happen overnight.** The last of human freedoms--to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances-- is to choose one's own way.”

Viktor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*

“It did not happen overnight.” It’s important to remember that in refugee resettlement, we are working with people who are typically at the beginning of a long journey towards a “new normal.” Your interest and your skills and your compassion can help them in that transition to a hope filled life.



HOW DO WE HAVE FEWER DAYS LIKE THIS?

TECHNIQUES TO DEAL WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

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The bottom line: difficult people bring us down! They make our jobs so much harder. They create a huge amount of stress in our lives. We might be tempted to get out of this line of work so we don't have to deal with unreasonable clients. But the reality is we cannot avoid difficult people—they are all around us. But we can learn some techniques to help us deal with their behaviors in a satisfying ways.

A LITTLE ENCOURAGEMENT GOES A LONG WAY...

Remember: A difficult client may be a discouraged client

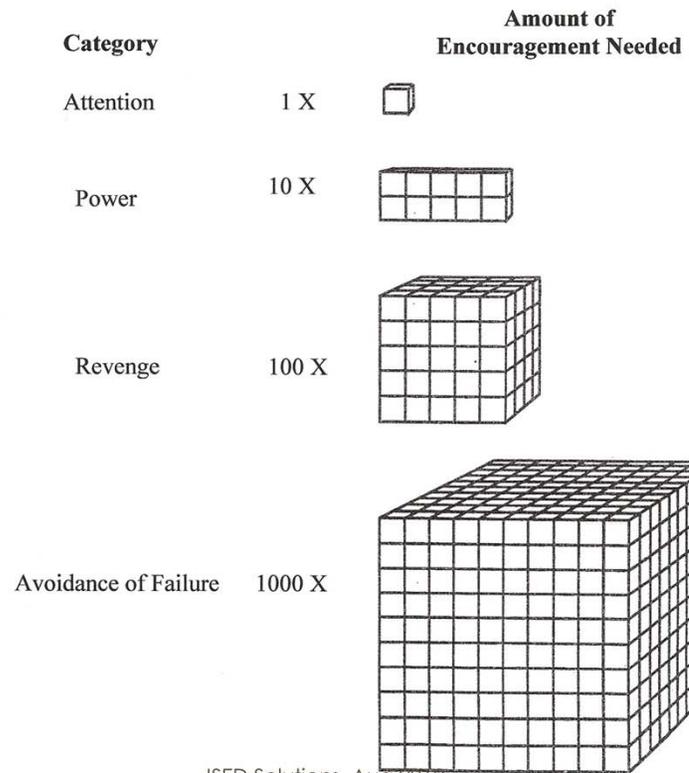
“I can go for two months on a good compliment.”

Mark Twain

- When defined using the root meaning of **courage**, encouragement is, “the process of facilitating the development of a person's inner resources and courage toward positive movement”

Remember, the most difficult clients you have may be the most discouraged. They may cover it up with anger, selfishness, resistance, but at the heart they are discouraged. They lack courage to move on to the next step. As a case manager, you have the ability to encourage at each step of the way.

How Much Encouragement?



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SLIDE 31 Talking Points

We found this graphic very interesting. We spoke earlier about some of the ways clients will act out, based on their beliefs about themselves and their situations. This graphic shows how encouragement can be used with those behaviors.

1. If you have a client that is constantly craving attention– that person doesn't need that much more encouragement! You might say– I'm proud of the way you handled going to that appointment/store/school on your own today!
2. Someone who is determined to show their power gets a little more encouragement– but directed in a way that reinforces the balance of power between you. Tell them how you notice their some of their excellent abilities or how they have exceeded expectations.
3. A revenge seeker, as we discussed, is typically a person who has been hurt by others. Keep encouraging their abilities that are gentler, more positively focused. You can encourage her dedication to her children, or elderly parents, some vulnerable person that she would not be likely to seek revenge upon.
4. Those who are resisting because they are trying to avoid failure need the most encouragement. They need encouragement to take small steps. Break down their larger goals for them. They need to see that failing is not that terrible...they need to know you will continue to help them if, for example, the first job they take isn't a good fit. Say they get let go. Let them know they have a "safety net" of services to help them. They benefit a lot from personal stories, so might want to tell them about a time when you failed or struggled with some situation. For example: "I know you are afraid if you take a job, you might get let go. That happened to me. I lost my job X years ago – it was scary, but I developed a plan, just like what you are doing, and I took it one step at a time, and my situation changed for the better. We are here to help you if that happens."

APPROACHES FOR DEALING WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

1. Challenge the behavior, not the person: **Avoid labeling the person**
2. Take charge of your emotions: **Stop...look....listen...**
3. Avoid escalating the situation: **Don't pick up the rope!**
4. Allow the client to save face



**“You can't shake hands with a clenched fist.”
-Ghandi**

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1. Focus on the behavior: Remember your job is to create an environment where clients feel safe, respected and valued. Your response should be clear that the behavior is not acceptable, without making them feel unaccepted as a person.
2. Take charge of your own negative emotions: As a helping professional, you have taken on a job where you are willing to work with all types of people, some of those who do not appear to appreciate what is being done on their behalf.
3. Avoid escalating the situation – back away from any situation that might turn into a fight.
4. Allow face saving. Find ways for the client to keep their dignity even when they are behaving inappropriately.

SEPARATE BEHAVIOR FROM IDENTITY: AVOID LABELING

It's important to separate the client's challenging behavior from his or her identity as a person.

Subconsciously, you may label your clients and expect them to behave the same way every time.

For example, your inner-talk about your client, Ahmed, may go something like this, "Oh, he is such a pain; he's going to complain about anything I suggest. I can't stand dealing with him."

This mindset negatively impacts the nature and outcome of the conversation. Resist the temptation to label or judge, even if the behavior is really irritating.

Adapted from D. Berenbaum, Communico LTD.
http://www.communicolt.com/pages/465_six_strategies_for_dealing_with_difficult_people.cfm

Try to keep your mind open for each encounter with a client. Trust that the other person does not mean to be difficult, but they are acting out of some of the beliefs we discussed earlier: fear, powerlessness, cultural differences, etc. The more you can separate the behavior from the person, the less likely you'll be to interpret their behavior as a personal attack. Take notes— make sure you document any consistently challenging behaviors, so you can address them specifically. This avoids "overgeneralization" saying things like: "you never come to appointments on time" or "you always attack everything I say." So for difficult clients like "Ahmed", you might highlight in your case notes with a specific color (green or hot pink) specific instances when he challenged you, or resisted your suggestions. (We realize you have to follow a specific process if he is downright noncompliant.) If he just being difficult, you can be prepared to approach him calmly, with specific instances. Or it might be a combination of incidences that you discuss in your weekly staff meetings. The point is, keep it specific and focused on the outcome. If it's angry outbursts, resistance to participation, complaining— you can discuss it as unacceptable behavior that is keeping him and you from moving ahead.

I SEE YOU...

Seeing vs. Stereotyping (from Stephen Covey, "The 3rd Alternative")

	I See You	I Stereotype You
SEE	I see a human being with worth, talent, passions, and strengths. You deserve dignity and respect.	I see a difficult client...from a difficult "group." You are a symbol of conflict for me.
DO	I demonstrate authentic respect for you. I listen to you views.	I try to control you, ignore you, or deal with you quickly to get you out of my way.
GET	An atmosphere of cooperation where we are stronger working together.	An atmosphere of hostility where we are weakened and neither of us is successful.

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We found this research in the latest book by Stephen R. Covey, well known for his work on leadership and personal growth and author of the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. Sadly he passed away earlier this year. The book is called "The 3rd Alternative", and offers a vision of conflict resolution that encourages people to move beyond fighting for your side (2 alternatives) and working together with the other side to find a "3rd alternative." It has some excellent tools and approaches to resolving conflict, in personal relationships, work and on global level. This chart is helpful to keep in mind when you are dealing with a difficult person.

MANAGE YOUR EMOTIONS

Stop...

Take a break from the conversation

Look....

What's behind the behavior?

Listen....

Move from certainty to curiosity

You haven't "heard it all"

Before you respond!

SLIDE 35 Talking Points

Part of being a professional is keeping your cool under pressure. A difficult client may push all your buttons! But try to resist a quick, critical or angry comeback.

1. Stop: Pause the conversation. If a client is challenging you verbally, it's OK to physically step away. Explain that you can't continue the conversation right now because his or her behavior is making it too difficult. Bring your supervisor into the mix. It's usually harder for someone to direct their anger at multiple people, so keep including higher-ups if needed.
2. Look: Try to look past the challenging behaviors to see what beliefs may be behind them. Fear, anxiety, stress, etc. "I see YOU " that we just talked about.
3. Listen: Approach each interaction with an open mind. The Harvard Negotiation Project was a group of scholars who studied effective communication and wrote a best selling book called "Getting to Yes". A few of those scholars collaborated on another book called "Difficult Conversations". One of the key points they made was "Move from certainty to curiosity." When you encounter a person who is bringing a conflicting view, instead of thinking, "how can they think that?" as yourself, "I wonder what information/cultural value/emotions/ experiences that has brought them to that understanding? What do they know, believe, feel that you don't? Certainty locks you out of their story, curiosity lets you in. Stephen Covey says it like this: When I hear some who disagrees with me, I walk up to him and say "You see things differently than I do. I need to listen to you." If you think you've heard it all before, you're mistaken. Each client you encounter has the potential to help you see the world, your job, your approach to case management, in a whole new light.

Of course, this doesn't mean every viewpoint is correct, or will be workable, but just allowing yourself to listen will take a lot of the tension out of a difficult conversation. When you listen and seek to understand the other person's point of view, it's more likely he or she will be willing to listen to your ideas. That might be a great way to bring the conversation back to the FSSP or Client R&R. "I hear your frustrations about (whatever the topic), and I understand you would like something different. Here's where we are on the FSSP – you're going to need to be employed by such date, because your RCA will end a month later, etc....

THE DESTRUCTIVE DON'TS



- Getting angry
- Nagging
- Yelling
- Lecturing
- Threatening
- Being sarcastic
- Humiliating
- Ignoring (giving up)

We understand as professionals you all know these “Don’t”, and avoid them....Sometimes it’s good to have a reminder....

HOW DO YOU WANT TO BE
REMEMBERED?

**Your clients won't always remember
what you said, but they will always
remember how you treated them!**

AVOID ESCALATING THE SITUATION

- When clients are being difficult, our first reaction might be to defend ourselves or to argue with them. It's almost as if they can set you up to make you lose your cool!

Disengage the moment emotions begin to escalate

- A brief look at brain chemistry: once your brain perceives a threat, the survival mechanism kicks in, urging you to "fight" or "flight." It's a downward spiral from there...so...

When the survival part of the brain that activates fight or flight - takes over, it is VERY hard to stop. You both are like runaway trains, trying everything you can to win or not lose. That's when things can get very ugly.

DON'T PICK UP THE ROPE!

Once you pick up the rope, you are in a power struggle and it won't end well.



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Don't pick up the rope: this is true for Power seekers especially! Do not get into a struggle with the client. You will always be the loser if the client can make YOU appear unstable, angry, frustrated. Put all the choice back on the client. For example, you can say: "Remember, I am not in charge of your decision making. You are the one in charge of your own choices. I can only give you my best advice and counsel. You get to decide and you get to live with the consequences/outcomes of your decision."

DON'T PLAY TUG OF WAR!



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This is what happens when YOU pick up the rope!

FACE SAVING OPTIONS

The “And Stance...”

- When we have conflict with someone, we typically assume we must either ACCEPT or REJECT their story, viewpoint, or ideas...and if we ACCEPT theirs, we must ABANDON ours.
- The “And Stance” give you the ability to understand and validate the other person’s viewpoint without giving up your own.
- The client can save face, AND you can continue to explain why things are done a certain way, or why one option is better than another, etc...
- It’s very helpful in situations when you must give bad or unwelcome news, or implement a decision that is unpopular.

In conflict situations, people often fight harder to preserve their image-- “saving face”-- than about the actual issue they were upset about.

When working to resolve issues with challenging clients, try to allow for them to save face.

The And Stance came out of the Harvard Negotiation Project. It allows for each person to be “right” about some things.... It allows you to be firm about the truth, while validating the other person’s feelings, thoughts, viewpoint.

“AND STANCE” EXAMPLES...

- A client is angry because his apartment is several blocks farther from the bus station than his friend who arrived a few months after he did.
 - Typical response: I'm sorry you are angry, but we did the best we could to find you a good apartment. That apartment building was full when you arrived but it had an opening when he arrived...
 - “And Stance” response: I understand this is upsetting AND it happened because that apartment was not available when you arrived AND I know you have a long walk to the bus station AND we can continue to help you look for an apartment closer AND you'll be able to afford it once you've been working a few months....

The And Stance...a good substitute for constantly saying “yes, but...” Now, there is no “magic bullet” for getting rid of conflict. This can help keep difficult people from getting more “hyped up” and angry with you. Try it out... Now, for those of you who studied English grammar, this looks like a huge run-on sentence! That’s just for emphasis...you can take a breath... However, see how it changes from giving someone the opening to challenge your “BUT”

“AND STANCE” EXAMPLES...

A client who wants a lot of attention comes to see you every day, interfering with your ability to serve other clients.

Typical response: “I know you want to see me but I’m busy here. A lot of people need my help– I just don’t have time. You’ll have to come back tomorrow.”

“And Stance” response: “I know you want to see me AND I understand you are frustrated AND I need to serve a lot of people today AND I will try to make some time for you AND if I can’t I will set an appointment for you tomorrow AND we will talk then...”

So you can see, in both those examples, the client is allowed to be “right” about their feelings or viewpoint. You’re not giving up the facts as you know them, or your need to be the authority figure in the discussion. You are simply re-stating their concerns AND emphasizing what you must do as the professional.



We must make sure that the message of caring gets through

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Don't forget: You are a care giver. Compare yourself to a nurse, a teacher, a counselor, a religious leader. You are likely to be one of the most important people in the life of a newly arrived refugee family. You have a major responsibility. You are overworked, underpaid, and you have your own life to live including your own problems, your family worries. And you may be the most important person the life of the newly arrived refugee.

DEVELOP AN HONOR CODE TO SHARE WITH YOUR CLIENTS



- We will treat each other with **Respect**.
- We will take **Responsibility** for our actions.
- We will honor **Reliability**.
- We will act with **Integrity**.

Your honor code might be something like this....post it on your wall, make a creative little card to hand to the client. Use this slide, if you want. Start sharing the honor code from the first time you meet with the family in your office or in their home.



Make this your motto to encourage yourself. Print it out and hang it on your wall. Because you DO make a difference.....one way or the other. You are helping people – some of them VERY difficult people!– during a time they need a caring professional. Your presence in their life really makes a difference.

REFLECTION ACTIVITY

1. One important thing I've learned is . . .
2. One thing I have relearned is . . .
3. One thing I am going to do differently is . . .

Please email your answers to meredith.lee@isedsolutions.org.

We will compile the responses and include them with the PowerPoint of this webinar that will soon be available on line.

Thank you for your time and attention! We would appreciate your feedback. Your feedback will be anonymous.

THANK YOU!
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We will also send an evaluation survey so we can get your feedback on how to improve this and future trainings!