OARS Skit IDEAS IPE Oct 17th, 2023

*Ice breaker – This is just an idea: review of What OARS are- Canoe analogy- trying to paddle to the client and get them in the boat. If they do not want to- might need to include the coast guard (public curator, hospital, etc.). Can make this into a short/ funny skit between us- 5 min.*

TO BE READ OUT LOUD BY A TEACHER - Remember that the purpose of using the OARS Skills in MI Is to help us move vulnerable clients who are ambivalent to change to recognize and accept the need for change. We can use the metaphor of a getting the client into the same boat with us, so we can collaboratively create and execute a plan for change.

As a social service worker, physiotherapy technologist, nurse, or other allied health care worker, we must work together to encourage vulnerable clients who are resistant to change to address their biopsychosocial issues in a wholistic way. This is especially important for mandated clients or those who must receive services or change lifestyle but may not want to.

We can tend to see ourselves as “the rescue squad”, or coast guard, looking for problems and providing solutions to clients. However, these clients are more likely to agree to change, if solutions come from them. The purpose of MI is to help clients reflect on and come up with those solutions, if they are able to. MI also helps us assess the client’s abilities, goals and needs.

*The stage is set with a canoe, symbolizing the client's life. The client, struggling with various health problems, is inside the canoe, frantically bailing water out of a hole. The* *health professional is in a different canoe, Worker is Paddling towards the client, coast guard uniform trying to engage the client.*

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| **ACT 1 - Open ended** |
| Narrator | Open ended questions are initially intended to create a relationship with the client who may not fully see the need for change, and to get the client into the same boat as you. |
| Health Professional | **[lacking empathy- interrogating- worker could try to circle the client]** Hello!! Hello!! Can you hear me? Wow how long have you been out here? Aren’t you cold? It looks like the boat is damaged and starting to take on a lot of water. What made you come here? Where are you going? What kind of a boat is that? Where is your life jacket? You should have a life jacket ya know. Do you have water? OH YEAH- Sorry, I forgot to ask what’s your name? “What’s your name? How did you get here? How long have you been out here? Aren’t you cold? Do you have water?  |
| Client | **[suspicious, overwhelmed with questions].** Ummm, I don't know who you are or why you are here, but I’m not interested, go bug someone else, can’t you see I am busy! I don’t need a stupid life jacket either. *The client starts paddling away from the worker, frustrated, still trying to empty out water from the boat* |
| Health Professional | I see you are working very hard, but you are not getting anywhere. Do you think this is a good idea? You can’t keep doing this forever. |
| Client |  |
| Health Professional | Listen, if you do not agree to come with me, I will have to call the Coast Guard for back up. |
| Narrator | Too many assessment / closed ended questions, or warn clients, it can scare a client off. We need to be careful with open ended questions. If we use too many of them, clients can feel overwhelmed or interrogated. So, let’s do a retake of the O part of OARS- using open ended questions to ask clients **what they think their main concerns are** and to give them space to vent about their resistance to change. |
| Health Professional | **[Approaching the client with empathy]** Hello there! My name is... I am just wondering are you having trouble with your canoe? Do you need some help?  |
| Client | **[Exhausted and frustrated]** It’s fine, the boat is cheap and it’s old, there’s a small leak, one of my OARS broke, no biggie. I got this, thanks anyway. |
| Health Professional | **[approaching the client with empathy]:** Oh no, I am really sorry to hear that the boat is not in great shape., that must be frustrating (Reflection of feelings). Is it okay for me to ask how you think this started? |
| **ACT 2 – AFFIRMATIONS** |
| **Narrator** | **Affirmations** can help us acknowledge the client’s strengths, efforts and autonomy to make decisions and find solutions, as well as reduce defensiveness, if used effectively.  |
| **Health Professional** | Uh the water is really cold, you’re going to get hypothermia. I see you are trying to get the water out of the boat, just leave the boat and get into mine, I will take you to the shore. |
| **Client** | Duh- of course the water is cold- it's a lake. I am not stupid. Please leave me alone, I am fine, some water just came into the boat. I am perfectly capable of getting to shore on my own. |
| **Worker tosses a life jacket towards them. Client tosses it back.** |
| **Client** | I know how to swim! I don’t need one of these stupid things, seriously I am not a child! |
| **Health Professional**  | Why on earth do you not want to go to shore with me? It’s not like I am going to sail away with you. Why don’t you believe in life jackets?  |
| **Narrator** | **This last piece was an ineffective use of affirmations.** If we are too direct and use one of Gordon’s roadblocks, like arguing, warning or ordering, the client will often pull away.Let’s do a retake and look at the A – Affirmations done well. Affirmations help clients vent and recognize client’s efforts; this builds empathy and helps the client know you respect and care about them. If done well, they can also help us roll with a client’s resistance to accepting change. |
| **Health Professional**  | *Worker canoes very slowly a little closer and stops. Shouts over to the client.* Okay I get it, you are an adult you do not need other people telling you what to do. I am just really concerned. I admire your efforts! Listen I am sorry for so many questions. |
| **Client** | *Client pauses…* I got it, just a little tired, that’s all. |
| **Health Professional** | You have put a lot of effort into staying afloat. Extends the oars to the client- almost falls into the water. “If you want to come into this boat, I would be happy to let you steer. |
| **Client** | *Client, getting wet at this point.* Nope I am fine, plus I don’t even know you. |
| **Health Professional**  | **Rolling with resistance:** “I noticed that you're working so hard to bail out water. You have so much stamina to be out here for so long in this cold. I am very impressed. I am just wondering if you would be willing to consider this life jacket, just in case you need it? “ |
| **Client** | **[Refusing]** No, I can swim super well, so I don’t need a life jacket. Thanks though. I can take care of this myself. I can't rely on anyone or anything. |
| **Health Professional**  | “I am really glad to hear that you are a good swimmer. I am not sure I could manage to get very far in this deep cold water. You are very brave. I think I would get pretty tired, pretty quick if something were to happen, especially after bailing all of that water out. If you had a life jacket at your disposal, when might you decide to use it? “ ( Affirmation and reflection with a twist) |
| **ACT 3 - Reflections** |
| **Narrator** | Reflections help a resistant client to dig deeper into what prevents them from making change. They need to be relevant, to the point, descriptive and structured.  |
| **Health Professional**  | So, what do you think motivates folks to take outdoor adventures alone? When you think about this fishing trip- do you think it is a metaphor for your life? How much water do you think that boat can hold before it sinks? How would you navigate a whirlpool? |
| **Client** | *rolls their eyes at the Health professional* Ahhh listen buddy- I am busy, I think it is time for you to go. |
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| **Narrator** | Reflections need to be concrete to prevent the defensiveness that just happened in this last scene. Reflections can be simple or complex and they help the worker listen for the client's DARN CATS (desires, abilities, reasons, needs, commitment, activation, taking steps) and explore the need to change. **Lets’ Try R again** |
| **Health Professional** | So, I hear you are really good at canoeing and very capable, however your boat itself is not in good shape. There is a hole, and you are exhausted from bailing the water out for so long. How are you managing trying to paddle and bail at the same time? (Pointing out contradictions) |
| **Client** | yeah well, it’s just old but it will hold up. I will get some wood and duct tape to patch my canoe. (Abilities) |
| **Health Professional** | I hope so, what would be your plan if it the hole gets bigger. (Reflection- future oriented) |
| **Client** | I’ll swim and drag it behind me (abilities) |
| **Health Professional** | You must be a really strong swimmer (affirmation- extend the oar, gets closer). What might be an easier way to move your canoe to shore? (Simple reflection) |
| **Client** | With a different boat obviously, but I don’t want someone taking me and my boat off course, where I don’t want to go. I don’t want anyone to take my boat. (Reasons)  |
| **Health Professional** | So, I hear you are concerned about someone potentially steering you in the wrong direction or taking charge, or even stealing your boat. Is that correct? |
| **Client** | (sarcastically) Yep, I am busy here bailing…. |
| **Health Professional** | What would be your plan If your canoe fills up with water and sinks? |
| **Client** | I have no idea what I would do. |
| **Health Professional** | If you like I could call the coast guard to help us? |
| **Client** | Client: “NOOOOO! I do not need the boat police! What were you thinking? I don’t have my fishing licence. I don’t want to get a fine!  |
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| **ACT 4 – SUMMARIES** |
| **Narrator** | Summaries: these can and should be done throughout the intervention, and especially at the end. These help you and the client check in and make sure you are still on the same page, capturing their needs, feelings and goals , as much as possible. |
| **Health Professional** | I hear what you are saying. The coast guard can rescue you, but you would be in their big boat and are concerned you might get into trouble. You would also like to drag your boat with us and go to the opposite shore, is that correct? Would you consider getting in my small boat and we can paddle to shore together? |
| **Client** | Fine I will get into your boat but stop asking me questions. (activation). |