

# CONVEYING EMPATHY & AUTHENTICITY VERBAL FOLLOWING, EXPLORING, & FOCUSING SKILLS COMMUNICATION SKILLS

LAB DAY



# AGENDA

## OUR TENTATIVE PLAN FOR WEEK FIVE

- What's you've learned so far
- Teaching empathy to clients
- Following skills
- Sharing following skills
- Practice with labeling empathetic levels
- Practice implementing following skills

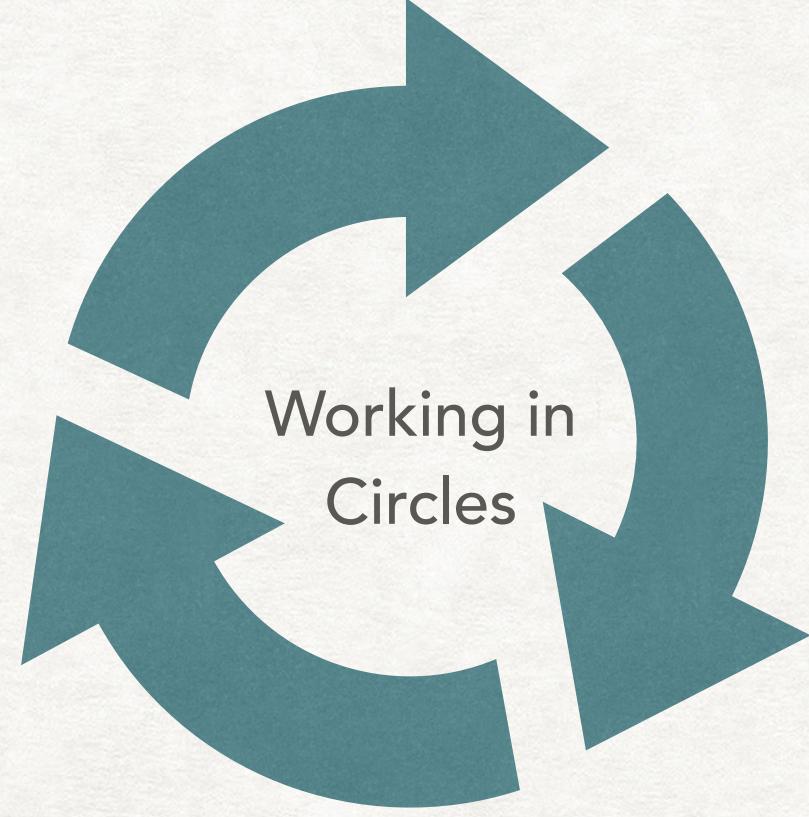
# OBSERVATION YOUR CONVERSATIONS THIS WEEK



- A. As you interact with others and observe others' interactions during the week, notice how frequently infrequently people send empathic messages. Also, observe the types of messages that are sent and how these messages influence the course of conversations.
- B. As you interact with your spouse, parents, children, friends, and fellow students, practice listening carefully and responding with empathic messages when appropriate. Be alert to how empathic messages influence interactions and to the feeling tones that these responses create.

# WHAT WE HAVE BEEN LEARNING

## CHECKING IN



Respect the talking piece

Speak from the heart

Listen from the heart

Trust that you know what to say

Say just enough

(Clifford, n.d.)

- What are some things that you feel like you can take away from this class so far?
- What are ways that you are implementing or incorporating things you have been learning in any of your classes into your life?
- What do you need to be a better social worker as you progress through your education?

# TEACHING EMPATHY

## HOW TO SHARE WITH CLIENTS

- Teach clients the paradigm for empathic responding.
- Introduce clients to the list of affective words and phrases and to the Leads for Empathic Responses list.
- Intervene in sessions when clients ignore or fail to validate messages.
- Give positive feedback when clients listen to each other.



Work in teams of three or four to design a planned intervention for teaching empathy. What population would you work with, how would you teach them empathy, what would some of the sessions look like?

You will have about 15 minutes to come up with ideas, and then you will share back with the group.



# FOLLOWING SKILLS

FURTHERING RESPONSES

REFLECTION RESPONSES

CLOSED-ENDED RESPONSES

OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES

PROVIDING & MAINTAINING FOCUS

SUMMARIZING

SEEKING CONCRETENESS



# FOLLOWING SKILLS FURTHERING RESPONSES



- Nonverbal minimal prompts
- Verbal minimal prompts
- Accent responses

# FOLLOWING SKILLS

## REFLECTION RESPONSES



### REFLECTION OF CONTENT

emphasize the cognitive aspects of client messages, such as situations, ideas, objects, or persons

- Simple reflections
- Complex reflections
- Reframing

### REFLECTION OF AFFECT

In reflections of affect, social workers relate with responses that accurately capture clients' affect and help them reflect on and sort through their feelings

# FOLLOWING SKILLS

## CLOSED-ENDED RESPONSES



Define a topic and restrict the client's response to a few words or a simple yes or no answer.

# FOLLOWING SKILLS OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES



# FOLLOWING SKILLS PROVIDING & MAINTAINING FOCUS



1. Selecting topics for exploration
2. Exploring topics in depth
3. Managing obstacles to focusing



# FOLLOWING SKILLS SEEKING CONCRETENESS

- Checking out Perceptions
  - Clarifying the Meaning of Vague or Unfamiliar Terms
  - Exploring the Basis of Conclusions Drawn by Clients
  - Assisting Clients in Personalizing Their Statements

(Hepworth et al. 2022)

Jacob Campbell, LICSW at Heritage University

# FOLLOWING SKILLS SEEKING CONCRETENESS



- Eliciting Specific Feelings
- Focusing on the Here and Now
- Eliciting Details Related to Clients' Experiences
- Eliciting Details Related to Interactional Behavior

# FOLLOWING SKILLS

## SUMMARIZING



1. Highlighting key aspects
2. Making connections
3. Reviewing major focal points
4. Recapitulating highlights and progress

# FOLLOWING SKILLS

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# PRACTICE WITH EMPATHIC COMMUNICATION

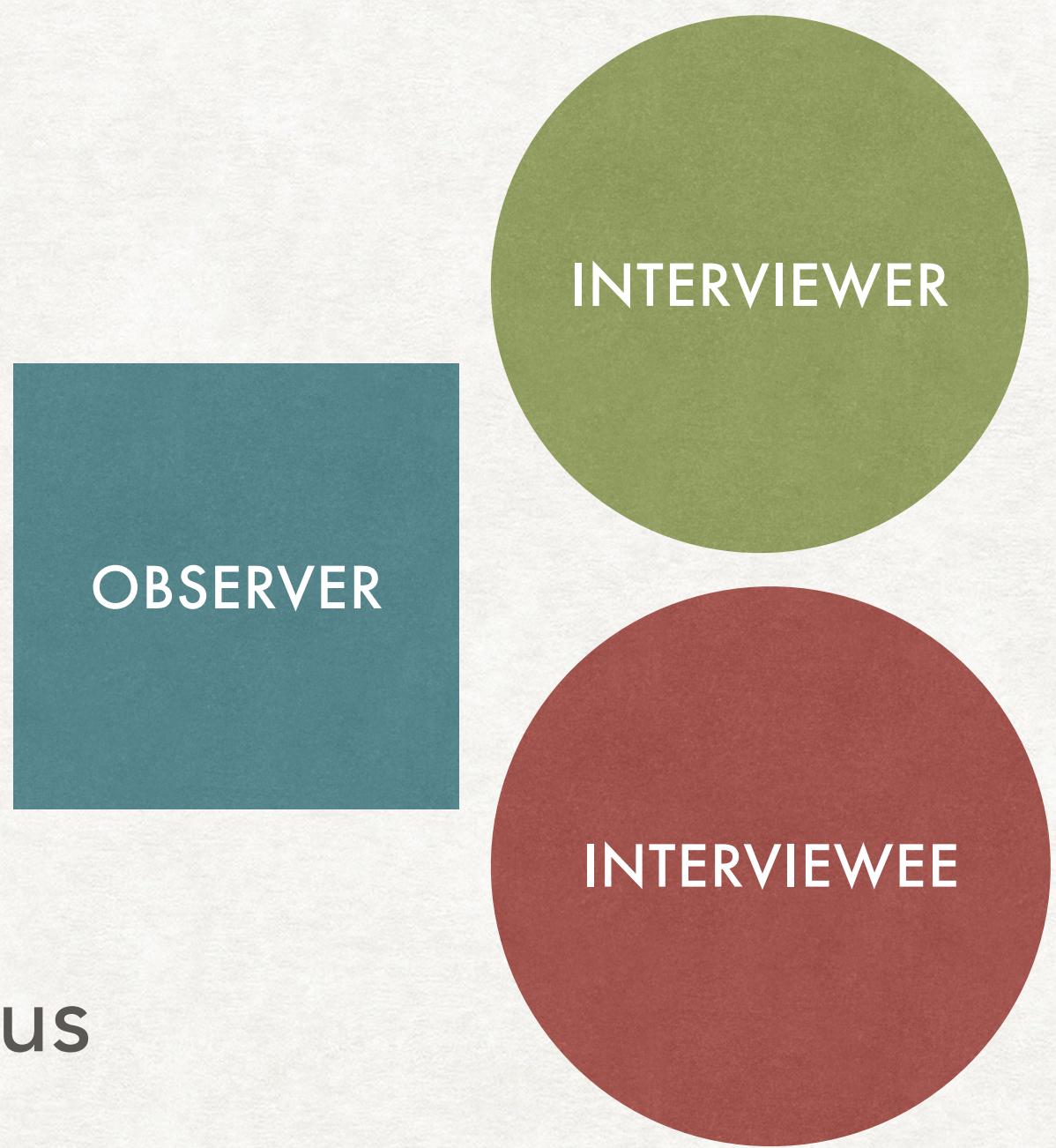
- Single woman, age 80 [to social worker concerning her request to move to an independent living complex provided for ambulatory older persons]:
- Goodness, the more I think of moving, the more scared I get. I have neighbors here who look after me, and I won't know a soul there. I'm afraid I'll be all alone.

# PRACTICE WITH EMPATHIC COMMUNICATION

- Male, age 16 [in weekly visit to social work probation officer]:
- I don't see the sense in having to come here every (expletive) week. I haven't been in any trouble now since I went to court a month ago. You should know by now you can trust me."

# FOLLOWING SKILLS

- Reflection responses
- Furthering responses
- Closed-ended responses
- Open-ended responses
- Seeking concreteness
- Providing & maintaining focus
- Summarizing



DEBRIEF AFTER

- How did it feel as the interviewer to use the techniques
- How did it feel as the interviewee
- What did the observer notice

# TEACHING THESE SKILLS



## FOLLOWING SKILLS

FURTHERING RESPONSES  
REFLECTION RESPONSES  
CLOSED-ENDED RESPONSES  
OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES  
PROVIDING & MAINTAINING FOCUS  
SUMMARIZING  
SEEKING CONCRETENESS