

Learning/dialogue vs Lecturing

Stacey calls the crisis line at the recommendation of a co-worker. She shares with the advocate that her boyfriend has always been a little controlling and jealous, but lately it has gotten worse. Stacey's co-worker was bringing her home from work the other day when her boyfriend came running out of the house drunk and yelling at her.

Advocate: "Have you ever called the police when he becomes violent?"

Stacey: "No, but the police have showed up at my house before when he got really loud. I think our neighbors must have called them."

Advocate: "When you feel afraid for your safety you should call the police. An advocate can help you fill out a restraining order."

Stacey: "I'd prefer to not get the police involved."

Advocate: "I know it's scary, but you can do it. He is already showing signs of escalation, so it is going to get more dangerous. I can go to the police with you now, if you want?"

Stacey: "That's okay, I am on break from work. I'll call back later."

Connection/social networks vs. Isolation

After another fight with her boyfriend, Stacey comes to the Crisis Center after work. Someone answers the door and ask if she has an appointment, then tells her to wait because she does not. She's offered tea or coffee, and a few minutes later Stacey is welcomed into an advocate's office.

Advocate: "What brings you here today?"

Stacey: "I talked to an advocate a couple of weeks ago. Things with my boyfriend are getting worse. I used to be able to manage it, but I don't know what to do anymore. He's been showing up at my work. He broke my phone. I don't see my family or friends anymore. I'm always afraid of what might make him angry, so I just go to work and go home."

The advocate shows compassion and understanding towards Stacey. Together the two of them talk about some safety planning strategies before Stacey heads for home.

Personalized/survivor's needs vs. Generalized/institutions' priorities

An advocate receives a call from the PD. Stacey is there because her boyfriend assaulted her. The police were called to Stacey's house by a neighbor who heard screaming. The officer tells the advocate that they have responded to her apartment multiple times and that the advocate needs to help her get a restraining order. The advocate goes to the PD to be with Stacey.

Advocate: "Hi! I hear you were assaulted and need help with a restraining order. I am here to help you fill out the paperwork so you don't have to do it alone."

Stacey: "I just want to go home. I can't deal with this right now. And the animals need to be fed, he never remembers to feed them or take them out."

Advocate: "I know this feels overwhelming, but he is a textbook abuser. A restraining order is the best way to keep you safe."

The officer explains that they did not arrest her boyfriend, and unless she tells them what he did to her, they can't arrest him. Stacey does not give a statement or fill out the paperwork, instead she heads for home.

Transformational vs. Transactional/dominating

Stacey walks into the crisis center and explains that she has fled her abusive boyfriend. She is scared because she doesn't have much money and is worried about leaving her animals. The advocate kindly responds: "I can book you a room at a hotel for night and give you a \$50 gas card. Unfortunately you can't bring pets to the hotel. But will that help for now?" Stacey says yes and heads to the hotel for the night.

Whole Person/intersectionality vs. Victim/event

About a week later advocacy is called to the hospital to support Stacey. A neighbor had called the police again when Stacey's boyfriend assaults her in their front yard. The police brought Stacey to the hospital because she had visible injuries. Stacey's boyfriend has been arrested for the assault and will be released with bail conditions.

Advocate: "I am sorry that you are here and that this happened to you. You do not deserve to be treated this way."

Stacey: "He's going to be pissed when he is released from jail."

Advocate: "He will have bail conditions with his release, which means that he can't contact you or be near you. If he does, you can call the police and they will arrest him. All that matters right now is that you get your injuries treated."

Stacey: "I'm fine. This has happened before. He always comes back, and he's never arrested for long. I need to figure out how to get out of here. The animals need to be taken care of and we have the kids tonight."

Advocate: "Kids? I didn't know you had kids."

Stacey: "We don't. They're his kids. We have them every other weekend. I need to get home to be there when they get there or else he will lose his shared custody."

Social Context vs. Isolated Event/psychological

Stacey is subpoenaed as a "witness" in criminal court to testify in the assault case. She calls the crisis center to ask for help. She doesn't understand why she has to go if she isn't the one "pressing charges". Stacey's boyfriend also received notification that children's mom is requesting to modify the parenting plan. The children's mom has a restraining order against Stacey's boyfriend.

Stacey: "I feel like I've been dealing with this my whole life. Is this normal? I'm trying so hard to give my step-kids a normal life."

Advocate: "This type of violence is common. But it's not normal. You deserve to be safe."

The advocate schedules a time for Stacey to come to the crisis center to prepare for court.