



StreetWorks Toolkit

Resources: *Stages of Change*

In Classroom 101, we introduced the idea of using stages of change as a framework for doing harm reduction. Use this activity to identify strategies that are client-centered, non-judgmental, and reflect what the client wants and needs.

How to use this activity:

The activities in the StreetWorks Toolkit are meant to support you to apply what you have learned in the Classroom 101 in context at your agency. There are many ways that this activity may be helpful. Choose the option that makes the most sense for you in your context.

The following scenarios are common situations that match a specific stage of change. Describe in writing or prepare to discuss a strategy that you could use with Jo that reflects the stage of change that Jo is in.

Option 1 Individual Reflection:

How many of these scenarios can you respond to on your own?

Option 2 Paired Reflection:

Bring these scenarios to a peer or your supervisor. Reflect together and see how many you can respond to.

Option 3 Team Discussion:

Use these scenarios as a part of a team or community meeting to discuss as a group.

To the extent you feel comfortable, we invite you to share feedback or questions on these activities so that we can better fit these tools to your role and your community.

Feel free to reach out to streetworkstraining@lssmn.org or james.scott@lssmn.org for questions or to reflect on this activity, and we encourage you to share any or all of your results with StreetWorks.

Pre-Contemplation

Jo is living a transitional living program run by your agency. The rules of the program state that residents can not have overnight guests in the first three months of a resident's stay. Jo has been caught with their partner staying over twice, and the manager of the program has warned Jo that they will be kicked out on their third strike. When you and the manager have attempted to talk to Jo about the consequences, Jo states, "It doesn't matter. It's a f-ed up rule. You can't tell me who I can have in my own place."

Contemplation

Jo has been talking about getting a job for six months. They talk about wanting to start making money in a "real job," and they also say they are bored and want something constructive to do with their time. However, every time you have talked to them about filling out applications or talking to an employment case manager, Jo appears to get uncomfortable and changes the subject. They even walked out on a meeting with you last month when you attempted to talk about it.

Preparation

Jo was diagnosed with depression while they were in foster care. They described the mental health counseling they received as "bulls**t." "The therapist didn't really listen to me. They just wanted to put me on meds." Jo is willing to talk about options, but when you have set up appointments for Jo to see a mental health professional, something always comes up, and they miss the appointments.

Now what?

- The information you gather in this activity will form the basis of your discussion in Classroom 201, so be prepared to have your notes available during that phase of the training.
- Reflect on a past situation with a client where you can now identify the stage of change the client may have been in. In hindsight, would you use a different strategy in that particular situation?

Action

Jo has a tooth ache. They tell you that they have been in pain for a month, but it is getting worse. You have gotten Jo signed up for medical assistance, and have even found a dentist in the community willing to see Jo for a discounted rate, and your agency has funds to cover any medical expenses not covered by assistance. Jo has been scared of going to the dentist, but they say they are in so much pain, they are willing to go.

Maintenance

You have been working with Jo for a year. They have spent most of that time couch hopping with friends and with people they have met through their friends. They have had several jobs during that time, but have maintained their current employment for nearly six months. They applied for housing through coordinated entry, and two weeks ago, they moved into an apartment subsidized by a rapid rehousing program. Jo was excited to move in, got along really well with their new housing case manager, and appeared to be happy about their new situation. Yesterday they called you up saying, "I don't think this is going to work out. I'm lonely. My case manager is an ass. I thought I was ready, I really want my own place, but I just don't know if I can do this."

Relapse/Learning

You met Jo as they were exiting a correctional facility, and you had strategized couch hopping options with them as they waited for housing options from coordinated entry. Jo has a lengthy record of thefts, but the local DA connected Jo with a program that will remove all their previous charges from their record if they maintain a clean record for six months and get a job. Jo calls you to tell you that they have been fired from their job for stealing, and their employer plans to press charges against them.