

Tuning in to Others

Tuning in to Others:

The worker's efforts to get in touch with actual and potential feelings/concerns/beliefs/values that the client/family member brings to the helping encounter.

This skill can be used *in preparation* of an encounter with a client (e.g., with a supervisor), and used "live" while interacting with the client during any phase of the relationship.

Steps:

- 1) Use "focused listening" to answer these questions:
 - ✓ *"What are this person's possible emotional, physical and cognitive reactions to this situation?"*
 - ✓ *"What are the non-verbal behaviors I see that help me to know this?"*
 - ✓ *"What is the person saying that helps me to know this?"*
- 2) Ask yourself, *"How can I let him/her know that I understand these feelings?"*
- 3) Ask yourself, *"How can I check to make sure that I understand correctly?"*
- 4) Implement your answers to questions 2 and 3 and observe/analyze the other person's responses.

Tuning in to Others (continued)

Script # 1a (Good Example)

Scene: Parent's living room.

Worker: "Thanks for seeing me today Ms. James. I wanted to talk to you about a call we received about the safety and supervision of your children ..."

Parent: (interrupting; hostile) "You people always assume the worst about us single parents, don't you?"

Worker: (concerned) "I'm not sure I understand Ms. James, would you say more?"

Parent: (bitterly) "Anytime somebody decides they don't like how I raise my kids, you people show up ready to take 'em away from me."

Worker: "So, you feel that you are being falsely accused of being a bad parent?"

Parent: (resentfully) "Yes I do, and it's not fair! I work really hard to be a good mother and father to my kids."

Worker: "And you're feeling resentful because I'm here to talk to you about your kids?"

Parent: (sadly) "Well yeah, wouldn't you?"

Worker: "I can understand feeling that way. Please tell me about your past experiences with other workers."

Parent: (sitting down) "Well you better buckle your seat belt because its going to be a long story."

Fade out

Tuning in to Others (continued)

Video Review # 1a:

Answer the following questions to indicate specific aspects of observing the skill **Tuning in to Others**.

1. Did the Child Welfare Professional use “focused listening” to answer these questions:

“What are this person’s possible emotional, physical and cognitive reactions to this situation?”

a. *“What are the non-verbal behaviors I see that help me to know this?”*

b. *“What is the person saying that helps me to know this?”*

2. Did the Child Welfare Professional demonstrate, *“How can I let the client know that I understand her feelings?”*
3. Did the Child Welfare Professional demonstrate, *“How can I check to make sure that I understand her feelings correctly?”*
4. *Did the Child Welfare Professional implement steps 2 and 3 and observe/analyze the other person’s response?*
5. How did using the skill *Tuning in to Others* begin the processes of engagement and building a positive relationship?
6. How might case work intervention be affected if the worker didn’t use the *Tuning in to Others* skill?

Tuning In to Others (continued)

Script # 1b (Bad Example)

Scene: Parent's living room.

Worker: "Thanks for seeing me today Ms. James. I want to talk to you about a call we received about the safety and supervision of your..."

Parent: (interrupting; hostile) "You people always assume the worst about us single parents, don't you?"

Worker: "I don't know who you're referring to, but I haven't assumed anything. As I said, I wanted to talk to you about a call that we received about the safety ..."

Parent: (interrupting; bitterly) "Anytime somebody decides they don't like how I raise my kids, you show up at my door ready to take 'em away from me."

Worker: "Look I always complete a thorough investigation before making any recommendation on children's safety."

Parent: (angrily) "I doubt that very much. You know I work really hard to be a good mother and father to my kids, and I don't have to justify myself to you!"

Worker: "I'm not asking you to justify anything but there are some questions that I need answers to before leaving here today! So let's get started."

Fade out

Tuning in to Others (continued)

Video Review # 1b:

Answer the following questions to indicate specific aspects of observing the skill **Tuning in to Others**:

1. Did the Child Welfare Professional use “focused listening” to answer these questions:
“What are this person’s possible emotional, physical and cognitive reactions to this situation?”
 - a. *“What are the non-verbal behaviors I see that help me to know this?”*
 - b. *“What is the person saying that helps me to know this?”*
2. Did the Child Welfare Professional demonstrate, *“How can I let the client know that I understand her feelings?”*
3. Did the Child Welfare Professional demonstrate, *“How can I check to make sure that I understand her feelings correctly?”*
4. *Did the Child Welfare Professional implement steps 2 and 3 and observe/analyze the other persons response?*
5. How did **not** using the skill *Tuning in to Others* impede the processes of engagement and building a positive relationship?
6. How was the casework intervention effected by the worker **not** using the Tuning in to Others skills?