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Fall 2025 Week 02 SOWK 530



HOW WE HELP

Silhouette from OpenAI 2025

Getting Started with Direct Practice

PLAN FOR WEEK 02

AGENDA

- How have we been helped
- Social work's orienting perspectives and phases of the helping process
- Getting started with the helping process, motivation, and rapport
- Values and ethical dilemmas

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Reflect on one's own experiences of receiving support to deepen empathy and recognize key helping behaviors.
- Describe the five orienting perspectives of social work practice and the phases of the helping process, and explain how each shapes engagement with clients.
- Compare the experiences and needs of voluntary, non-voluntary, and involuntary clients, and discuss strategies to promote motivation and trust.
- Analyze value conflicts in ethical case scenarios and evaluate potential responses in accordance with professional standards and cardinal social work values.



QUESTIONS YOU
MIGHT HAVE ABOUT
THE COURSE?



DEVELOPING A POSTER SHOWCASING HOW YOU HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED

You don't need to
share what it is, or
provide overly
personal details



Recall a time that you were
experiencing an intense emotional
difficulty and were comforted and
supported

- How did you "know" that person was supportive?
- What behaviors and words did that person use that were helpful to you?



ORIENTING PERSPECTIVES FOR SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE

Ecosystem Perspective

Strengths
Perspective

Cultural
Humility

Antioppressive
Practice

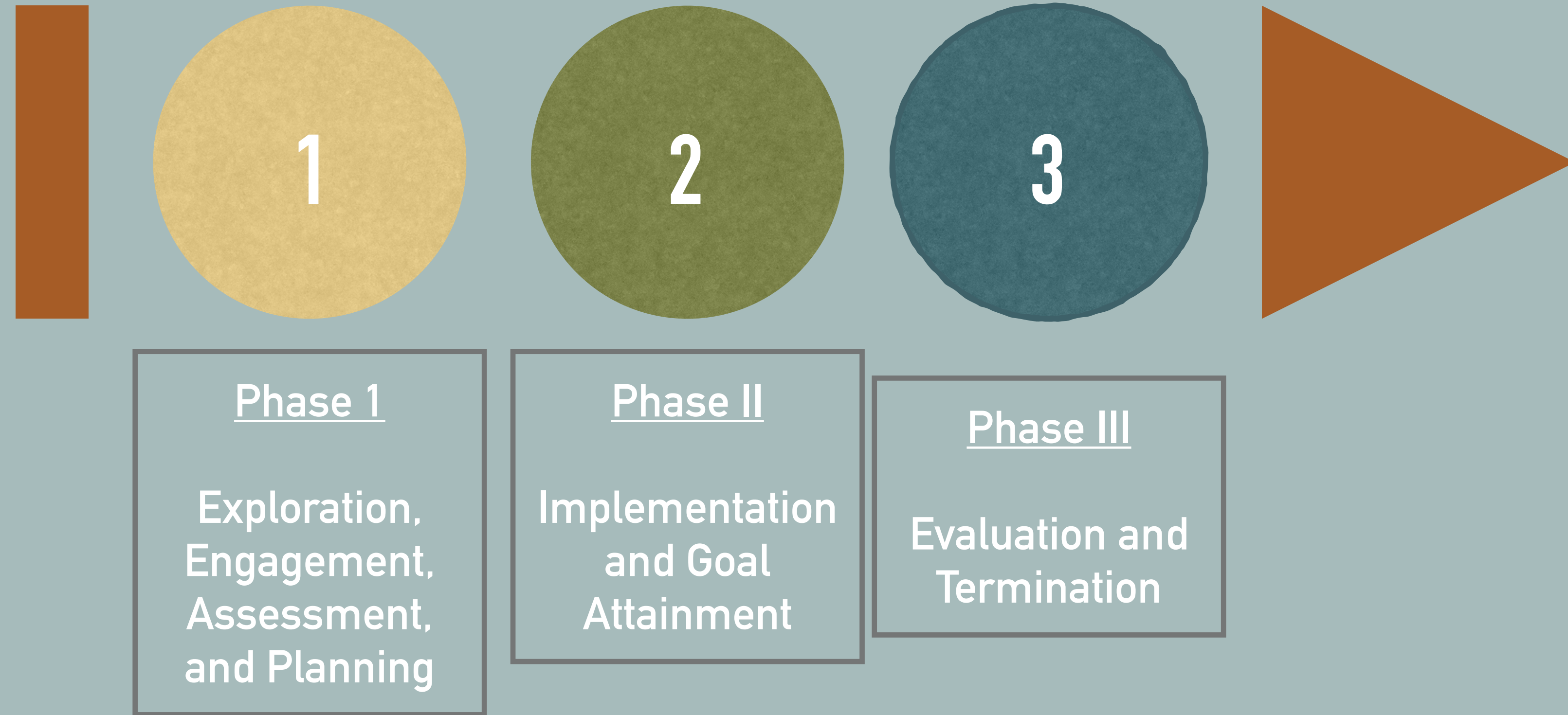
Trauma-Informed
Practice

Evidence-Informed
Practice

Direct Practice



PHASES OF THE HELPING PROCESS



*Small
Group
Discussion*

Does helping need to be structured in a systemic process like this systemic? What are some of the potential benefits or challenges to having it structured like this?



Teater (2014) groupings of phases of the helping process

Preparatory

Initial: Getting Started

Ongoing: Working Toward Goals

Ending: Bringing the Shared Work and the Relationship to a Close

CASE STUDY 2-1

SOCIAL WORK PRACTICE FROM AN ECOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Review the
Case Study
starting on
page 39.

- What was the social worker's focus at the beginning of the work together?
- Identify any themes from Hepworth et al. (2023) and the phases of the helping process that you see implemented by Teater's (2014) case study.



Phase I
Exploration,
Engagement,
Assessment, &
Planning

Establishing
rapport and
enhancing
motivation

RAPPORT

- Relationship description with strong rapport
- Look and feel of a strong rapport
- Developing strong rapport



STRATEGIES AND BEHAVIORS THAT IMPROVE CLIENT TRUST

MAINTAIN:

- Client comfort
- Confidentiality & trust
- Enthusiasm
- A collaborative relationship
- Interest in client concerns
- Objectivity
- Attentiveness
- Eye contact
- An open posture

AVOID:

- Passing judgement
- Jargon and technical language
- An authoritarian demeanor
- Interruptions



STRATEGIES AND BEHAVIORS THAT IMPROVE CLIENT TRUST

BE:

- Dependable
- Open minded
- Flexible
- Reassuring & supportive
- Confident
- Friendly
- Genuine
- Warm
- Sincere
- Honest
- Empowering
- Engaging and interactive
- Respectful of client wishes and needs
- Sensitive
- Empathetic
- Altruistic

USE:

Open-ended questions

Rationales for procedures, treatments and decisions



TYPES OF CLIENTS

*legally
mandated*

voluntary

*non
voluntary*



INVOLUNTARY CLIENTS

1. Acknowledge to yourself that the client is indeed voluntary.
2. Try to put yourself in the clients shoes.
3. Label and help the clients express their negative feelings.
4. Clarify your role for the client.
5. Know the limits of your authority, and in effect power over the client.

10 Tips for
Working with
Mandated Clients



INVOLUNTARY CLIENTS

6. Give them as many choices as possible including minor options.
7. Figure out what you can do for the client that he or she wants.
8. Use pro-social modeling and reinforcement in order to encourage and promote client pro-social values and behaviors.
9. Allow the client to gain trust in you and in the intervention process.
10. Accept the fact that, ultimately the client has the right to choose whether or not to cooperate with you.

10 Tips for
Working with
Mandated Clients



Questions can be categorized by answering essential questions, such as who the person is, their situation (including strengths, resources, networks, and needs), and the concern or presenting problem.

**WHAT QUESTIONS
WOULD YOU USE
TO INTERVIEW
DURING PHASE I**





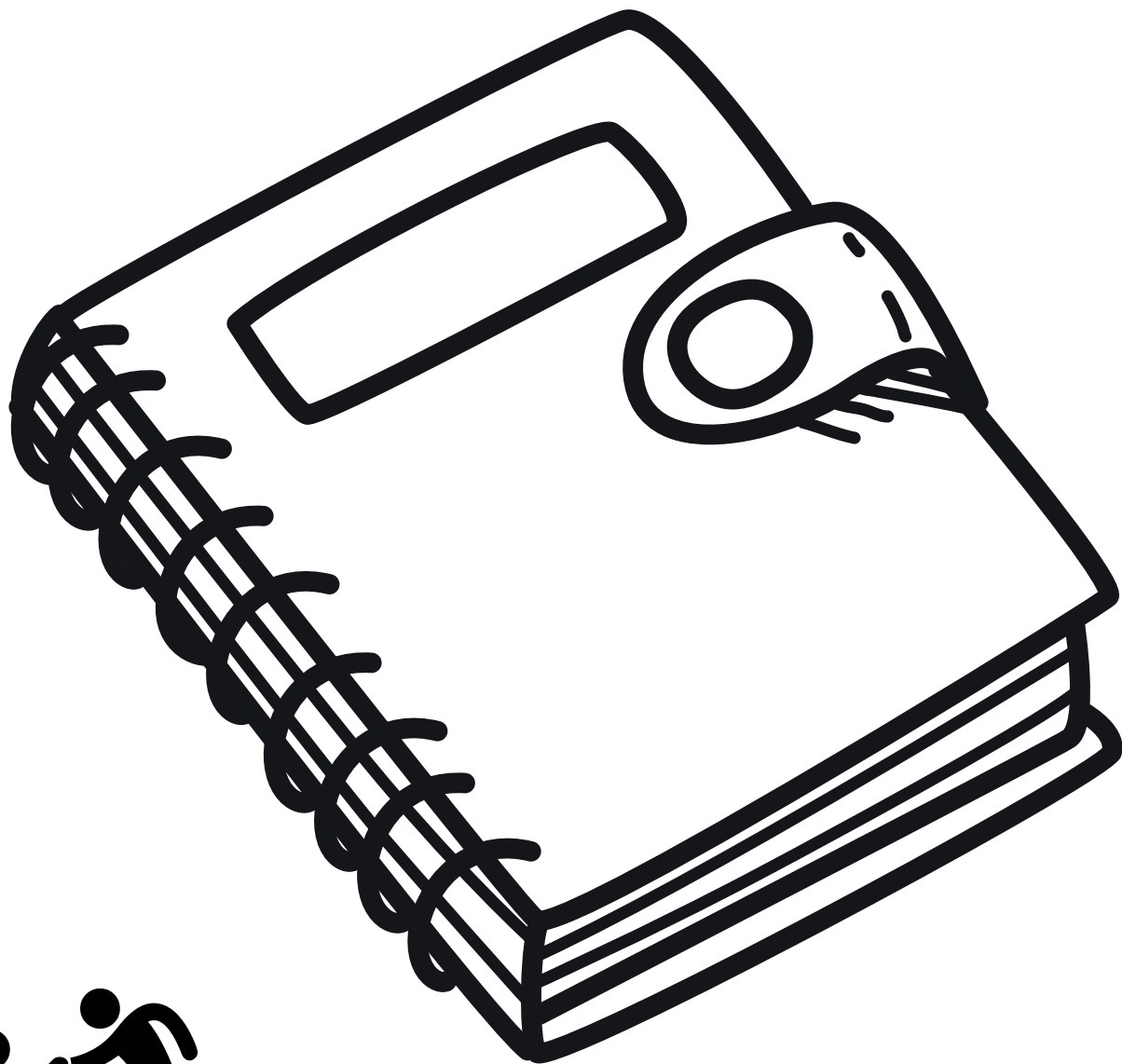
CARDINAL VALUES

The scenario exercises in operationalizing cardinal values in Chapter 4 encourage discussion and exploration of personal–professional value conflicts.

What are the implications of not upholding the profession's values?



Write about and reflect on **value dilemmas** in your practicum journals to identify and reflect on value dilemmas as they arise in the field or in other class work.



A classmate has told you that they are Googling clients from their field agency as well as looking them up on Facebook. They state that the information is public, so there is no confidentiality involved, and the more they learn about them the better they can help them. In your own placement, workers send Snapchat messages to each other of the wacky ways clients dress and behave. They say it builds camaraderie in the team and is harmless since the photos and comments go away after only a few seconds.

- What conflicting principles and values are in play in the case?
- What are the pros and cons of the various courses of action?
- What guidelines are applicable in resolving this dilemma?
- What resources could you consult to help you decide on an ethical course of action?

ETHICS CASE 1



You are forming a youth group in a state correctional facility. From past experience, you know that members sometimes make references in the group to previous offenses that they have committed without being apprehended. You also know that they may talk about indiscretions or misdemeanors they (or others) may have committed or plan to commit within the institution, such as smoking marijuana, engaging in sexual encounters, receiving contraband from visitors, or stealing supplies or property from peers or staff. Are you required to share all the information you learn in the group? How can you encourage trust and sharing if there are limits to confidentiality?

- What conflicting principles and values are in play in the case?
- What are the pros and cons of the various courses of action?
- What guidelines are applicable in resolving this dilemma?
- What resources could you consult to help you decide on an ethical course of action?

ETHICS CASE 2



In conducting an intake interview with a young woman in a family agency, you observe that both of her young children are withdrawn and listless. Throughout the interview, the client seems defensive, suspicious, and appears ambivalent about having come for the interview. At one point, she states that she feels overwhelmed with her parenting responsibilities and is having difficulty in coping with her children. She also alludes to her fear that she may hurt them but then abruptly changes the subject. As you encourage her to return to the discussion of her problems with the children, your client says that she has changed her mind about wanting help, takes her children in hand, and hastily leaves the office.

- What conflicting principles and values are in play in the case?
- What are the pros and cons of the various courses of action?
- What guidelines are applicable in resolving this dilemma?
- What resources could you consult to help you decide on an ethical course of action?

ETHICS CASE 3



You have been working in a mental health agency with a middle-aged male who has a history, when angered, of becoming violent and physically abusive. He has been under extreme psychological pressure lately because of increased expectations at work. In an interview today, he is extremely angry, clenching his fists as he tells you that his boss is giving him a hard time, singling him out for criticism, and threatening that he will lose his job. “If that happens,” he says, “they’ll be sorry.”

- What conflicting principles and values are in play in the case?
- What are the pros and cons of the various courses of action?
- What guidelines are applicable in resolving this dilemma?
- What resources could you consult to help you decide on an ethical course of action?

ETHICS CASE 4

