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Fall 2026 Week 04 SOWK 486w



HOW WE HELP

Silhouette from OpenAI 2025

Getting Started with Direct Practice

PLAN FOR WEEK 04

AGENDA

- Phases of the helping process
- Getting started with the helping process, motivation, and rapport
- Interviewing clients
- Values and ethical dilemmas

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Describe the three phases of the helping process and identify key tasks associated with each phase.
- Practice and evaluate techniques for starting the interview, engaging clients, and initiating assessment.
- Identify behaviors and communication styles that enhance or inhibit client trust and motivation.
- Analyze ethical dilemmas using professional values and guidelines to inform decision-making in complex situations.

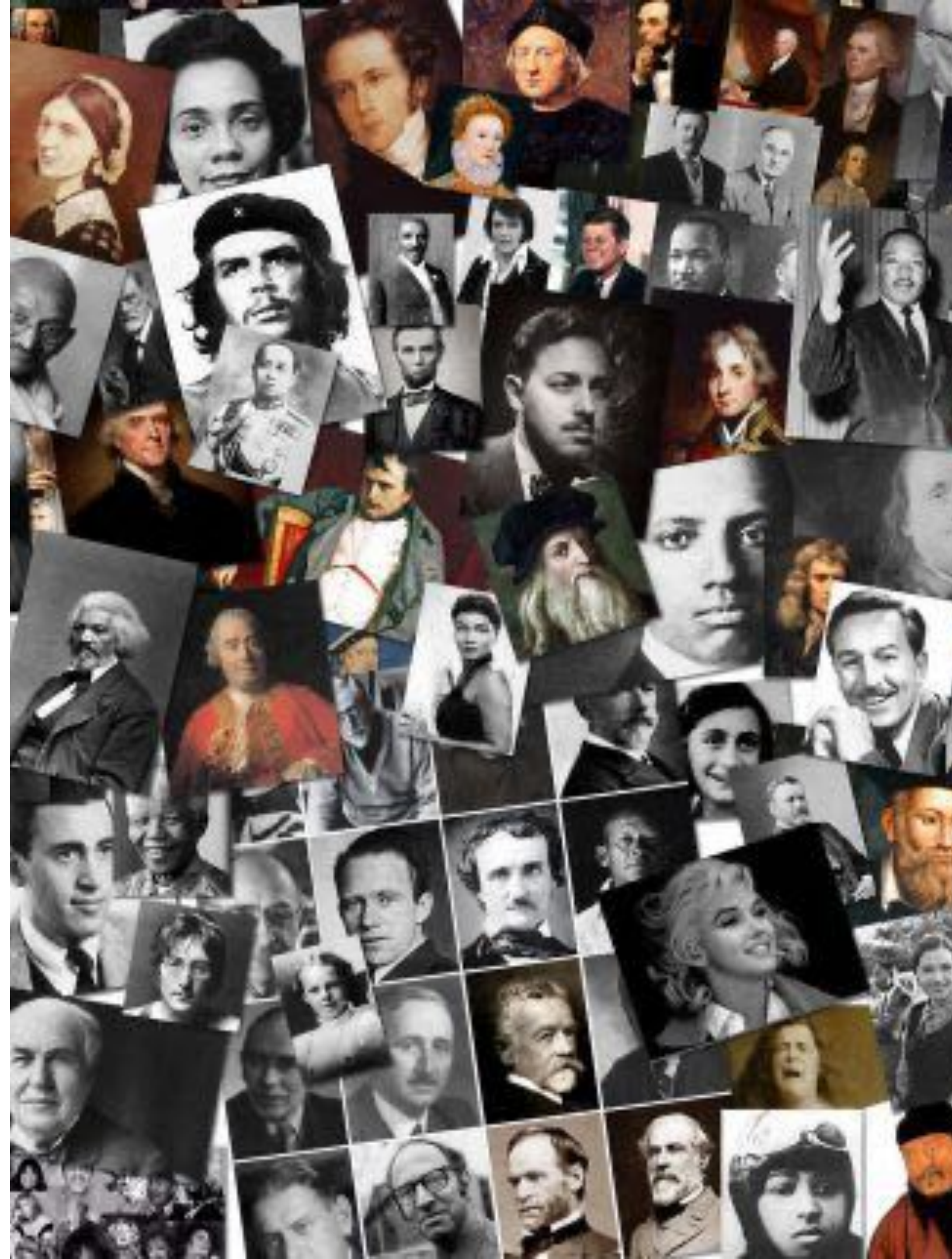


What would you do?
What would you wear?
How would you feel?

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

Who would you want to meet?

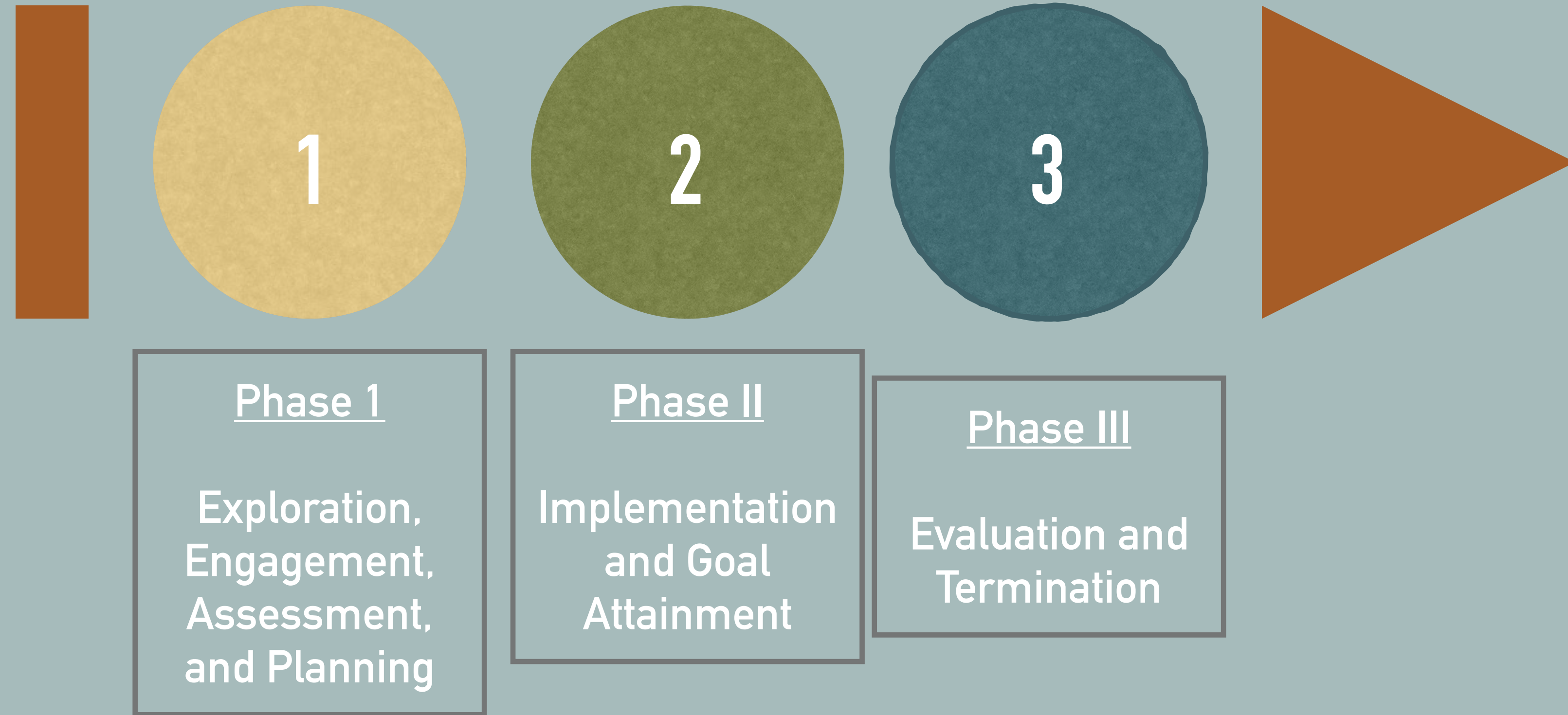
Activity taken from Customer Service Training Helper (n.d.)



PHASES OF THE HELPING PROCESS AND CONSTITUENT ACTIVITIES AND PROCESSES

Phase I: Exploration, Engagement, Assessment, and Planning	Phase II: Implementation and Goal Attainment	Phase III: Evaluation and Termination
1. Exploring clients' problems by eliciting comprehensive data about the person(s), the problem, and environmental factors, including forces influencing the referral for contact. 2. Establishing rapport and enhancing motivation. 3. Formulating a multidimensional assessment of the problem, identifying systems that play a significant role in the difficulties, and identifying relevant resources that can be tapped or must be developed as strengths. This review should also include screens for trauma, cultural humility. 4. Mutually negotiating goals to be accomplished in remedying or alleviating problems and formulating a contract. 5. Making referrals.	1. Prioritize goals into general and specific tasks. 2. Select and implement interventions influenced by best available evidence. 3. Plan task implementation, enhancing self-efficacy. 4. Maintain focus within sessions. 5. Maintain continuity between sessions. 6. Monitor progress. 7. Identify and address barriers to change. 8. Employ appropriate self-disclosure and assertiveness to facilitate change.	1. Assessing when client goals have been satisfactorily attained. 2. Helping the client develop strategies that maintain change and continue growth following the termination. 3. Successfully terminating the helping relationship.

PHASES OF THE HELPING PROCESS



*Small
Group
Discussion*

Does helping need to be structured in a systemic process like this? 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 38.

-
- 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





OFFICE SETUP



WHO'S GUIDING THE INTERVIEW

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**



THE INITIAL INTERVIEW



Photo by Nik Shuliahin 🧡💙 on Unsplash

INTERVIEW STRUCTURE

- Rapport
- Starting with client motivation
- Use of an interpreter



DISCUSSING PROBLEMATIC SITUATIONS

- Determine clients' expectations
- Cultural differences
- Assesses the significance of information



FOCUSING IN DEPTH

- Clients' emotional reactions
- Clients' opinions and interpretations
- Substance abuse, violence, and sexual abuse



PROCESS OF GOAL NEGOTIATION

- Mutually negotiating goals and formulating a contract
- Continued use of interviewing skills





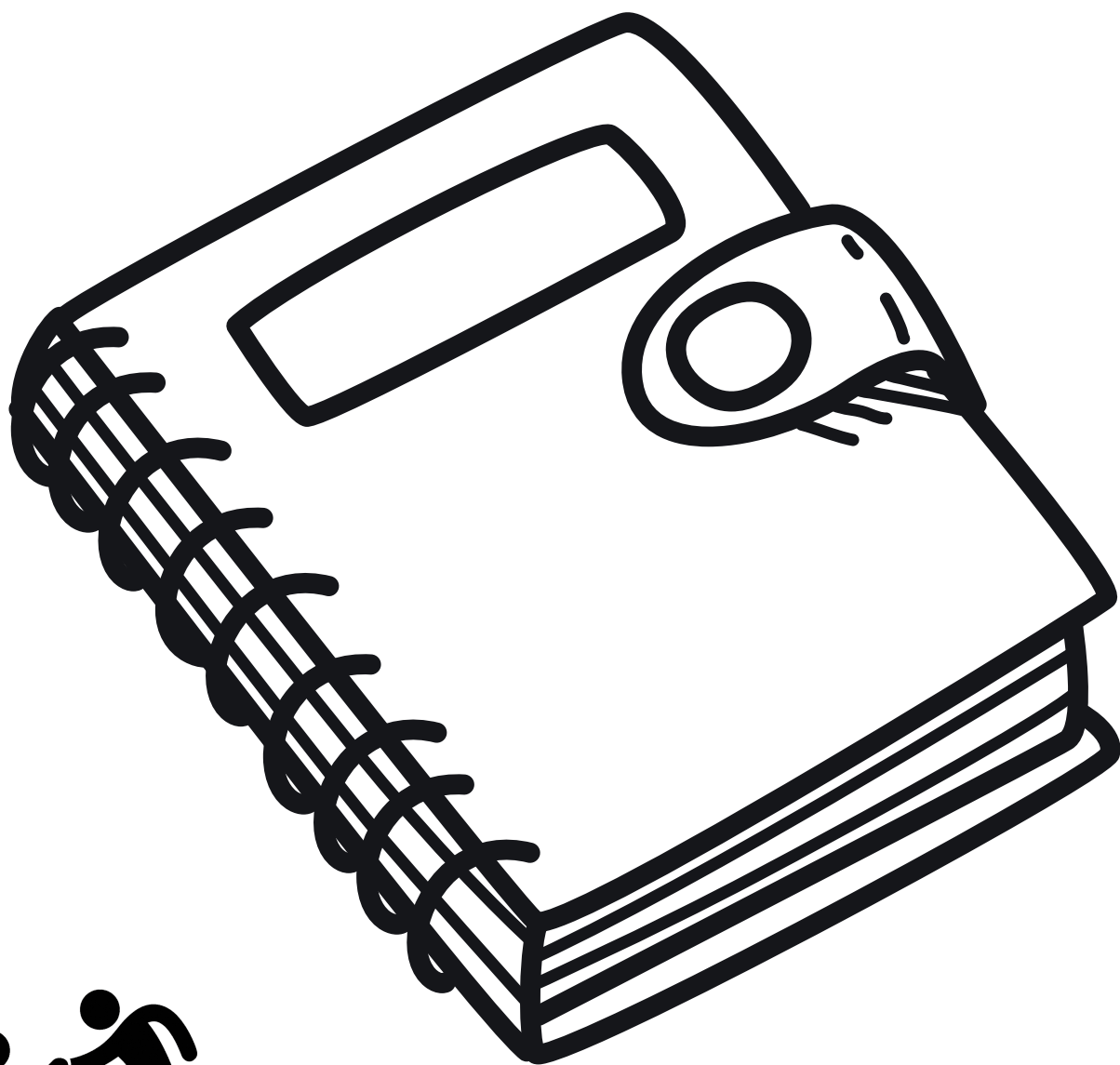
CARDINAL VALUES

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

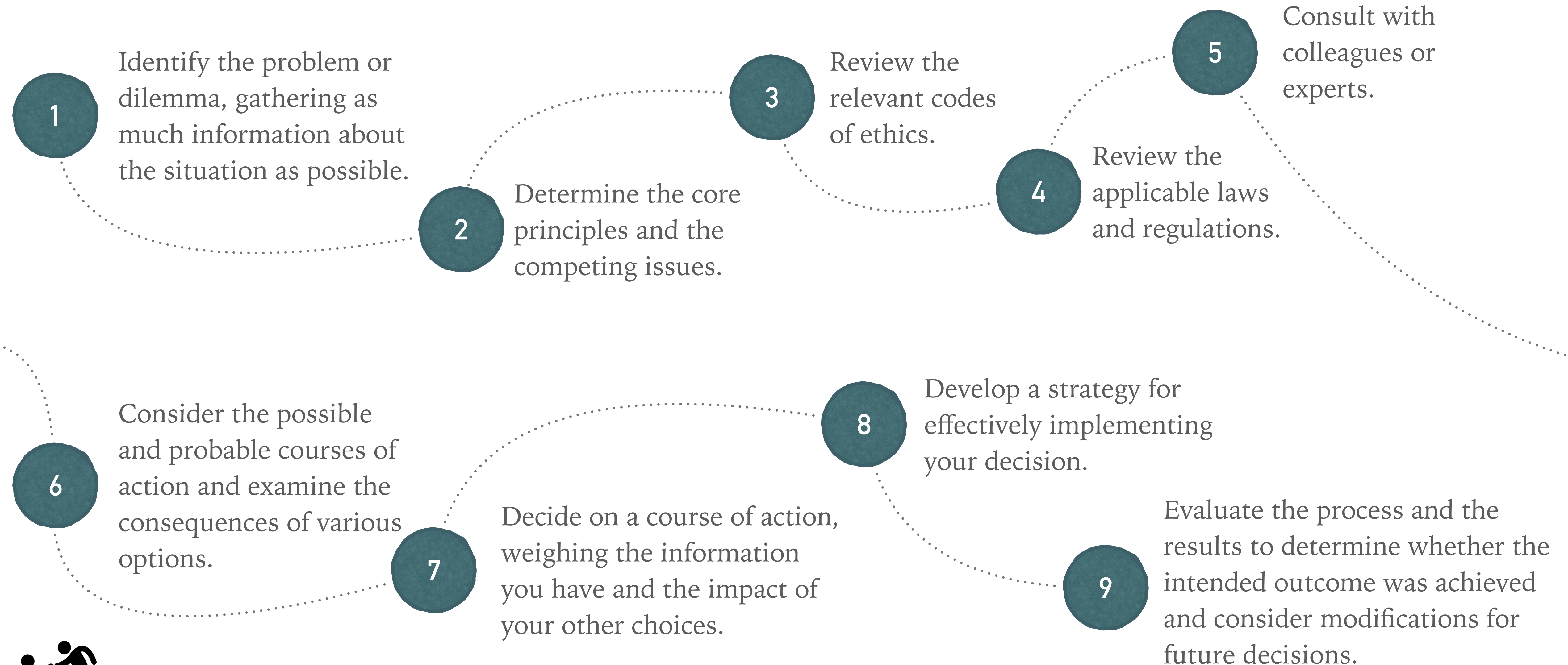
What are the implications of not upholding the profession's values?



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.



STEPS IN ETHICAL DECISION-MAKING



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 5

