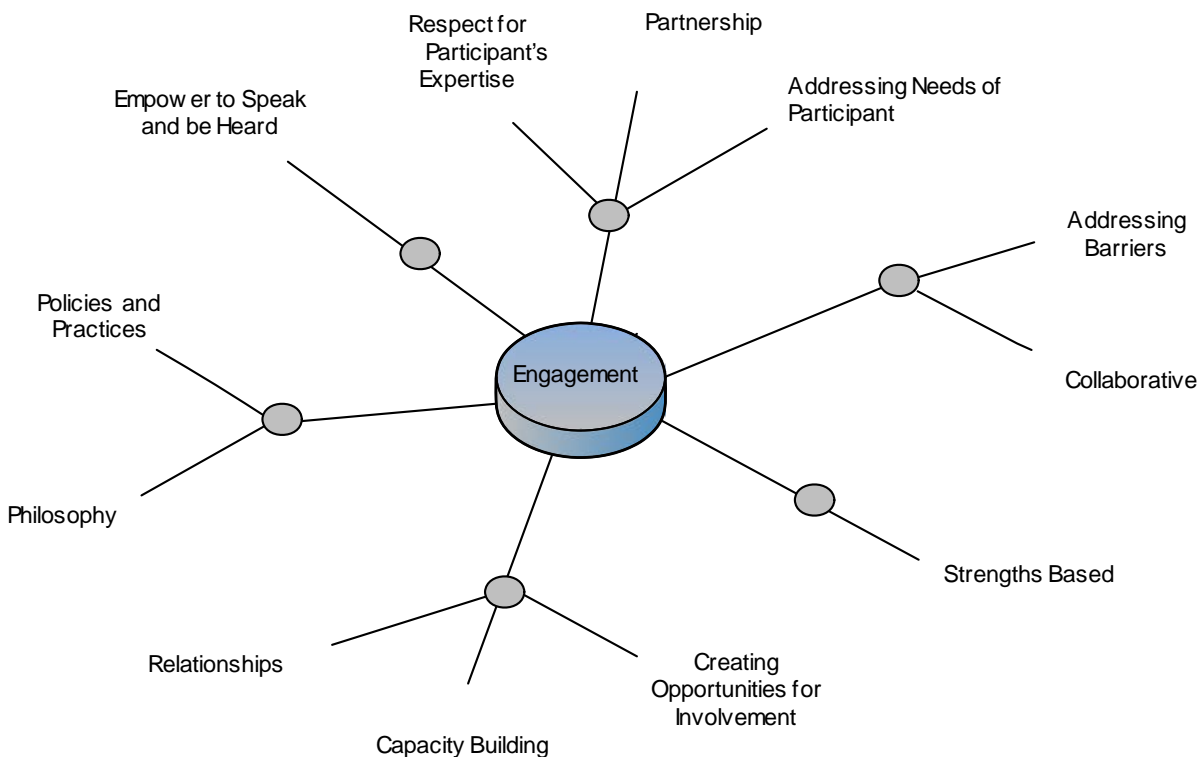


TIPS FOR ENGAGEMENT

ELEMENTS OF ENGAGEMENT



Engagement is about motivating and empowering participants to recognize their own needs, strengths, and resources and to take an active role in changing things for the better.

Engagement is not a simple construct, but rather is made up of key elements that work together to ensure ongoing involvement of participants as partners. Engagement is what keeps individuals/families working in the long and sometimes slow process of positive change.

The importance of a strong therapist-participant relationship has long been recognized as a predictor of positive outcomes. The therapeutic alliance emphasizes the collaboration of the clinician/therapist and individuals to achieve the aims of therapy. Competent clinicians/therapists actively co-create an enduring, collaborative, supportive relationship with individuals by demonstrating empathy, authenticity, and approachability in session. As a clinical supervisor, it is our responsibility to ensure that our clinicians/therapists, employ a set of skills that are person/family centered and strengths based. As supervisors, we need to develop a model of competence among our staff that includes these guiding principles:

Everyone deserves respect; Everyone has strengths; Judgments can wait; Partners share power; and Partnership is a process.

Adapted from Nicole, Chovil, PhD. 2009. The F.O.R.C.E. Society for Kids' Mental Health. "Engaging Families in Child & Youth Mental Health: A Review of Best, Emerging, and Promising Practices."

TIPS FOR ENGAGEMENT

Initial Engagement Strategies:

- Welcomed the individual and provided introductions to the program/service
- Displayed a friendly and respectful attitude toward individuals
- Described the treatment approach(es) that will be used
- Spent time exploring/listening/understanding the issues and concerns that have brought the individual to seek treatment (refrained from making assumptions)
- Clarified understanding of the issues/concerns with the individual
- Relayed to the Individual that they are a critical partner and primary decision maker with respect to their care
- Explored potential barriers that are likely to interfere with treatment and assisted the individual in developing a plan to address the barriers
- Encouraged and supported the individual in making informed choices regarding their treatment needs
- Identified strengths for which services and supports could be built on
- Communicated clearly and honestly with the Individual
- Has a context for understanding racism, oppression, prejudice and stigma and the impact these factors may have on individuals as it relates to treatment
- Focused on developing a positive collaborative working relationship with the individual by eliciting feedback from the individual about their experience at the session

On-going Engagement Strategies:

Adapted from Nicole, Chovil, PhD. 2009. The F.O.R.C.E. Society for Kids' Mental Health. "Engaging Families in Child & Youth Mental Health: A Review of Best, Emerging, and Promising Practices."

TIPS FOR ENGAGEMENT

- Participants given clear, easy to understand information that is necessary for them to be fully and meaningfully involved in their care
- Participant was encouraged to be an active participant in all aspects of care
- Spent time exploring/listening/understanding any presenting issues that are impeding the participants success in meeting goal areas
- Clarified understanding of the issues/concerns with the participant
- Treatment goals were tied to the participant's beliefs, opinions, and preferences
- Educational opportunities were provided that helped participants understand mental health, services available, legal rights and protections
- Strengths were considered and services and supports reflected these strengths
- Explored potential barriers that are likely to interfere with treatment and assisted the participant in developing a plan to address the barriers
- Participants were respected and valued throughout the process