

Helpful Conversations

(Part 7 of 7)

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CONTENTS

Chapter:

Welcome

1. Let's Meet Tom and Sally - [[November 2014](#)] - Chapter 1, Appendix Glossary]
2. Social & Helping Conversations - [[December 2014](#)] - Chapters 2, 3, 4, 5]
3. Directive and Non-Directive Helping Conversations
4. Counseling Conversations
5. Choosing the Kind of Conversation
6. Psychological Approaches to Helping Conversations [[January 2015](#)] Chapters 6, 7]
7. Your Communication Skills Toolkit
8. The Wider Frame [[February 2015](#)] Chapters 8, 9, 10, 11]
9. Structuring a Conversation or a Series of Conversations
10. Safe Practice
11. Systems Issues in Managing the Work
12. Putting it All Together [[March 2015](#)] - chapter 12]
13. Professional Competences [[April 2015](#)] - Chapters 13, 14, 15, Appendix]
14. The Core Competence - Reflective Practice
15. Developing Reflective Practice - The Professional Log

Appendix: Explanations to Professional Log

- | |
|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none">16. Professional Log for Sally & Tom [May 2015] - Chapters 16, 17]17. And Finally... |
|---|

Glossary



CHAPTER 16: *Professional Log for Sally & Tom*

Now, if you would like, try your hand at this.

Imagine you had been 'Sally.' How might you have completed the three forms of the professional log subsequently to your conversation with Tom?

I'm aware this requires a leap of faith. Why not try it to see how it works? A set of blank forms follows for you to complete.

I'm not 'Sally' either. As part of writing this course, I completed the forms, trying to put myself in 'Sally's' place. My completed forms follow the blank ones.

We are fortunate and indebted to 'Sally' because she kindly reviewed and amended my entries. So what follows is pretty accurate.

For now - do try to complete the blank forms. You have nothing to lose!

[See Part 6 for the full "Explanations for the Professional Log" section of the Appendix]

PROFESSIONAL LOG
(1) Competences Identification Form

Name: _____ Date: _____

Client ID: _____

	COMPETENCE AREAS	RATING 1 to 5 - to +	COMMENTS
0.0	Social Worker Context		
	Legal		
	Policy		
	Procedures		
	Systems Feedback		
1.0	The Frame		
	Type of Conversation		
	Modality (face-to-face, telephone, etc)		
	Setting		
	Contract (explicit / implicit)		
	Time		
	Timing		
	Ethical issues		
	System Interface		
	Boundaries		
	Reports to 3 rd party		
	Consultative Support		
	Referral Agencies		
2.0	The Helping Relationship		
	Role: Practitioner		
	Role: Client		
	Role-conflict issues		
	Multi-cornered Contract issues		
	Power Dynamics		
	Core Conditions		
	Restrictions		
	Underpinning Values		
	Psychodynamic aspects		

	COMPETENCE AREAS	RATING 1 to 5 - to +	COMMENTS
3.0	Session Content		
	Remit		
	Agenda setting		
	Overlaps (Role, Relationship, Reality)		
	Focus (Task, Client, Organization)		
	Procedural Model		
4.0	Skills Usage		
	Following Skills		
	Leading Skills		
	Other?		
5.0	Practitioner Competence		
	Issues Arising		
6.0	Practitioner Self-Monitoring		
	Practitioner psychic state		
	Client psychic state		
	Rapport		
	Transference =Issues		
	Practitioner Emotional hooks		
	Practitioner Experiential hooks		
	Issues Arising		
7.0	Summary Comments		



**PROFESSIONAL LOG
(2) Skills Usage Form**

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Client ID: _____

Client		Reason for Contact:
Code ID		
Occupation		
Gender		Brief Description of Interaction:
Age		
Interaction		
Date		
Time		
Duration		
No		
Referral		Quotes and Skills Identification
Self		
Managerial		(1)
Personnel		
Medical		(2)
Other		
		(3)
1 st Contact		
Date		(4)
Time		
Duration		(5)
Telephone		
Letter		(6)
In Person		



PROFESSIONAL LOG
(3) Procedural Elements Grid

Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Client ID: _____

	Work Pressures Difficulties	Personal Issues	Partner/ Marital Issues	Family Issues	Emotional Issues	Health and Medical	Financial, Debt, Legal	Other
Managing the Setting								
Pre-appointment contracting								
Contracting								
Mini-Contracting								
Working with the Reluctant Client								
Issue Acknowledgment/ Support								
Issue Identification								
Issue Clarification								
Risk Assessment								
Deferral								
Exploration of Implications								
Prioritization								
In-depth Exploration								
Exploration of Personal Meaning								
Responding								
Identification of Strengths/ Opportunities/ Solutions								
Identifying Patterns								
Identification of Blind Spots / Resistant Client								
Identification of Short Term Coping Strategies								



	Work Pressures Difficulties	Personal Issues	Partner/ Marital Issues	Family Issues	Emotional Issues	Health and Medical	Financial, Debt, Legal	Other
Identification of Skills Deficit								
Goal Setting								
Action Plan: Client								
Action Plan: Practitioner / Call-back								
Life- and/or Executive Coaching								
Internal-Frame-of-Reference Reporting								
External-Frame-of-Reference Reporting								
Advocacy/ Representation								
Making Recommendations								
Practitioner Initiated Action								
3(+)-way Meetings								
Referral								
Client Monitoring and Support								
Umbrella Monitoring/ Supervision								
Client Follow up								
System Feedback								
Other								

PROFESSIONAL LOG
(1) Competences Identification Form

Name: 'Sally' Date: May 3, 2015
Client ID: TT

	COMPETENCE AREAS	RATING 1 to 5 - to +	COMMENTS
0.0	Social Worker Context		
	Legal	4	Pretty sure of this, although I expect there would be a legal 'cut-off' point somewhere. I'm aware of consultations within my Department of what does/does not constitute a suitable environment for counseling interventions, privacy, confidentiality etc.
	Policy	4	Probably not a policy issue as yet - need to think about whether it should be in the future.
	Procedures	4	Not a problem - would all follow on from above.
	Systems Feedback	2	Depending on above, may need feedback to my Department and Organization as a whole that this is a problem. The thought makes me anxious. Will I be perceived as a troublemaker?
1.0	The Frame		
	Type of Conversation		
	Modality (Face-to-face, telephone, etc)	3	Face-to-face was best. Of course, we had this additional weird situation of it being a video-taped practice for the course!
	Setting	3	Again, a case of 'grin and bear it.' Had to. We were on the course and had to do it.
	Contract (explicit / implicit)	3	Mixed, confused, not sure. Tom was a fellow student, in the same line of work as me. Not sure where that left me and what my contract with him was supported to be.
	Time	3	Not so good because pressure of timing. We were being video-taped in skills practice, so it all had to be wrapped up in 15 minutes. Felt under tremendous pressure to 'perform.'

	COMPETENCE AREAS	RATING 1 to 5 - to +	COMMENTS
	Timing	3	Again, not so good because neither client nor I had any control over this. If anything, timing was imposed and at a point, late afternoon where I might not have chosen to see client. However, have to accept that's what happens...
	Ethical issues	4	The good news is: no ethical conflicts! My only slight reservation is about my not quite being aware of any Ethical Framework issues.
	System Interface Boundaries	5	Not an issue - we were talking quite anonymously as fellow students and fellow Social Workers.
	Reports to 3 rd party	5	Again - not relevant. If anything, food for thought for me personally,
	Consultative Support	5	Yes, in place. As above, not something that requires consultative support.
	Referral Agencies	5	Again, not relevant
2.0	The Helping Relationship		
	Role: Practitioner	4	I suppose I was slightly uncertain because of the dual-role implications as set out above.
	Role: Client	4	Think he was fine. We did not make the dual-role implications explicit.
	Role-conflict issues	4	Yes, maybe. Maybe that's what held me back from responding how I otherwise might have.
	Multi-cornered Contract issues	4	Not as such. Client/my fellow student was in a different department and our conversation was outside out of work relationships, really on the basis of us being fellow students.
	Power Dynamics	5	Not a problem at all. We were peers, mutually trying to explore the issue. The fact that I was being video-taped about my professional practice was largely incidental.
	Core Conditions Restrictions	5	All in place
	Underpinning Values	5	Entirely supportive and with client.
	Psychodynamic aspects	5	No 'hooks.'
3.0	Session Content		
	Remit	3	Have to say I was a little muddled about this because of dual role relationship. Not sure at which level I should be working.

	COMPETENCE AREAS	RATING 1 to 5 - to +	COMMENTS
	Agenda setting	5	Not an issue. Completely open. Client set, and I was happy to follow.
	Overlaps (Role, Relationship, Reality)	4	Yes - a slight muddle. Wasn't quite sure who I was in this conversation - fellow student, Social Worker playing the role of Social Worker in skills practice or what.
	Focus (Task, Client, Organization)	3	Yes - this was a key issue. I'm aware I focused on the Task and in retrospect, I would have liked to have focused more on the Client and the Client's process.
	Procedural Model	4	Think I did well with this. The time frame was very limited.
4.0	Skills Usage		
	Following Skills	3	Generally happy
	Leading Skills	3	Generally happy
	Other?	N/A	Not an issue
5.0	Practitioner Competence		
	Issues Arising	4	Mostly did a good job.
6.0	Practitioner Self-Monitoring		
	Practitioner psychic state	2	Aware of being assessed, which caused me anxieties, creating lack of confidence in skill usage. I could sense that Tom was trying to make things easier for me; this probably heightened my anxieties even more.
	Client psychic state	3	Likewise, under pressure
	Rapport	4/5	Excellent in 'real life'!
	Transference Issues	5	There was no way I was responding to Tom as though he were a person from my past.
	Practitioner Emotional hooks	5	Not a problem for me.
	Practitioner Experiential hooks	5	Again, not a problem
	Issues Arising	4	About 'problem solving' versus 'hearing the client.'

7.0 Summary Comments

This was a skills practice on my training course rather than work with a client. Even so, it highlighted some professional issues.

(Some verbatim comments from 'Sally':)

"I think that it's a good exercise to get people thinking about what they would say and do. However, I felt that in this video-taped practice, it was probably a mixture of nerves and that I was very unsure of asking questions. I remember hearing what was being said, and thinking I'm not sure if I can ask this question or how to phrase it so that it wouldn't sound direct.

Both 'Tom' and 'I' had no previous experience in Welfare work and dreaded the video work. On reflection, I feel it was used as a valid and useful tool and it assisted me to practice in a safe environment even though my stomach always ended up in knots."

(2) Skills Usage Form

The second form is a more in-depth look at the skills and interventions you used. Again, explanations are in the Appendix and a worked example follows:

**PROFESSIONAL LOG
(2) Skills Usage Form**

Name: 'Sally' **Date:** May 3, 2015
Client ID: TT

Client	TT	Reason for Contact: Skills Practice at Training Residential	
Code ID	TT		
Occupation	WO		
Gender	M	Brief Description of Interaction: 'Tom' talked about a work-related issue that was 'real' but also chosen with a view to the needs of skills practice & the video. The issue concerned his dissatisfaction with the furnishing of a new room he used for client work that he felt was unsuitable. Underlying that, however, and identified in retrospect, was a reluctance to ask outright for changes in case he was perceived as 'pushy.'	
Age	50		
Interaction	F2f		
Date	5/3 /15		
Time	10:0 0		
Duration	15m		
No	1st		
Referral			Quotes and Skills Identification
Self	ō		As quoted and identified in Chapter (12). See this for further explanations.
Managerial Personnel			(1) So you say it makes you feel silly? Reflect Meaning (RM)
Medical Other		(2) The set-up makes you feel silly? (Focusing or Deepening) NB Please refer to original context: Sally (8) for explanation.	
1st Contact		(3) So, you feel that it is too formal? Reflect Point of View (RPV)	
Date	5/3	(4) It sounds as though this is a very important issue to you. Advanced Reflection of Meaning (ARM) NB Please refer to original context: Sally (20) for explanation why this is 'advanced'	
Time	9:45		
Duration	15m	(5) How important is it for you get something done? (Deepening)	
Telephone			
Letter		(6) How important is it for us to make the client feel safe and secure, ummh? (Challenging / Deepening)	
In Person	ō		

(3) Procedural Elements Grid

The third form considers the procedural elements you adopted.

**PROFESSIONAL LOG
(3) Procedural Elements Grid**

Name: 'Sally'

Date: May 3, 2015

Client ID: TT

	Work Pressures Difficulties	Personal Issues	Partner/ Marital Issues	Family Issues	Emotional Issues	Health and Medical	Financial, Debt, Legal	Other
Managing the Setting								
Pre-appointment contracting								
Contracting								
Mini-Contracting								
Working with the Reluctant Client								
Issue Acknowledgment/ Support	0							
Issue Identification	0							
Issue Clarification								
Risk Assessment								
Deferral								
Exploration of Implications								
Prioritization								
In-depth Exploration								
Exploration of Personal Meaning								
Responding	0							
Identification of Strengths/ Opportunities/ Solutions								
Identifying Patterns	0							
Identification of Blind Spots / Resistant Client								
Identification of Short Term Coping Strategies								



	Work Pressures Difficulties	Personal Issues	Partner/ Marital Issues	Family Issues	Emotional Issues	Health and Medical	Financial, Debt, Legal	Other
Identification of Skills Deficit								
Goal Setting	0							
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Action Plan: Practitioner / Call-back								
Life- and/or Executive Coaching								
Internal-Frame-of-Reference Reporting								
External-Frame-of-Reference Reporting								
Advocacy/ Representation								
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3(+)-way Meetings								
Referral								
Client Monitoring and Support								
Umbrella Monitoring/ Supervision								
Client Follow up								
System Feedback								
Other								

CHAPTER SUMMARY

This chapter allowed us to try completing the three forms of the Professional Log related to 'Sally's' conversation with 'Tom.' In so doing, we reviewed how the conversation went.

Over time, completing professional logs facilitates development as a 'reflective practitioner' who can account for their practice.



CHAPTER 17: *And Finally...*

When you first began reading this, you might have felt a range of different ways. Perhaps you were:

- Hopeful and excited about your work
- Confident that you were a good communicator
- Looking forward to helping clients and making a difference.

Personally, I would hope all of those!

As you've seen, the ability to hold helpful conversations is actually more sophisticated and complex than one might expect. What this means practically is that when you started the job, you probably did so because you were perceived as being 'good with people.' You were possibly already quite experienced in having helpful conversations with people and now working through this course might have left you unsettled.

Learning to drive again

If you drive and have held your license for a while, imagine how it might feel if you were taught all over again. You'd likely become very conscious of each of your feet and what they were supposed to be doing and when.

Thinking about helpful conversations and taking them apart into their components is a little bit like that. It's likely to leave you somewhat self-conscious and all fingers and thumbs to begin with. Rest assured - this is only temporary. Over time, you will first consciously familiarize yourself with your helpful conversations tool-kit and eventually applying it becomes second nature. Trust me and the hundreds of students who have walked this path before!

The benefit is that you will then be able to 'tailor' all sorts of helpful conversations to different clients and situations. You'll be following best practice, keeping the client, yourself and the organization safe. You'll be a competent, confident, and accountable practitioner.

So we've taken Humpty-Dumpty apart, in order to put him together again more consciously. Here's wishing you and your clients all the very best!



[See Part 6 for the full "Explanations for the Professional Log" section]



Task No 17

How did it go with completing a professional log?
Please give a frank account.