

WE ALL HAVE DIFFICULT CLIENTS

The following exercise is taken from Building Motivational Interviewing Skills: A Practitioner Workbook (Applications of Motivational Interviewing Series) by David B. Rosengren

We all have difficult clients. These individuals put us through our paces and may leave us feeling uneasy about our work or even dreading our next encounter. Consider your work situation and think about who that person might be.

Now consider three questions about this person.

- Where are you now in your work with him or her?
- Where would you like to be?
- What's getting in the way of that happening?

Now imagine that you are this client. Really put yourself inside this person's skin.

- Where are you now in your work with your practitioner?
- Where would you like to be?
- What's getting in the way of that happening?

Fill out rating handout

Now consider these three questions.

- What, if anything, do these ratings tell you might need to happen for the relationship to change?
- What might you do differently to make that happen?
- If you were to try one new approach with this client, what would it be?

After reviewing both sets of answers, think about the three areas of MI spirit. Then rate where this relationship falls on these three dimensions:

			Collaboration			
We are working against each other (wrestling)			We are working in partnership (Dancing)			We are in the room but not much is happening (Standing)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

			Autonomy			
I struggle with the client's choices and/or press the client to change (Directing)			I recognize and honor client's choices, including no change (Guiding)			I seem indifferent to client's wishes or choices (Observing)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

			Evocation			
I am presenting the reasons for change (Advocating)			I am drawing out the client's views on change (Interviewing)			I just let the session go wherever it will (Following)
1	2	3	4	5	6	7