

Washington WIC Connects – ENERGIZER: Engagement: It has a Ring to It



- Consider this Energizer as a Nutrition Education In-service.
- Monthly nutrition in-services for para-professional CPAs require face-to-face contact. Please see the Policy and Procedure manual Volume 2, Chapter 14: Staffing for more information.
- Count time spent on this as Nutrition Education in the time study.
- If you are an individual or you have a small group: read this Energizer and view videos on engagement.

Time: 20 - 30 minutes

⇒ **Prior to starting this Energizer: Please check internet access and assure the sound works for the video link.** <http://weinfluencechange.com/videos/greeting-examples/>

Objective: Build skills and awareness about the Motivational Interviewing process of Engagement. By building awareness staff can influence behavior change and create environments supporting clients to become their best selves.

Instructions:

Begin by **sharing** the following:

- A. Introduce the topic – Engaging our clients
- B. Warm Up – a “popcorn” style discussion
- C. Content – **Hear and participate** in:
 - Watching 2 videos
 - Learning about engagement as a basis for client centered services
 - A Food Favorites activity
 - A self-evaluation
- D. At the end, we will **debrief** and **close** our time together.

A. Introduction:

Today we are exploring the first step in motivational interviewing called Engagement. Engagement is the process of creating a helpful connection and a working relationship.

B. Warm Up: – What Does it Mean to You? (Time: approx. 2 minutes)

Let's start with a sharing activity. We'll do this “popcorn” style so just pop-up with your answers... what does engagement mean to you? What words come to mind?

(optional: write responses on a flip chart or white board)

Reflect back.

Leader information:

You might hear responses similar to:

- Listening
- Respect
- Trust
- Curiosity

Thanks for sharing! There are a variety of words that can describe engagement. Now we will look at the importance of engagement in our connections with clients.

C. Content (Time: approx. 20 minutes)

VIDEO

*Let's watch these 2 short video clips and experience how engagement might look in the clinic setting. As you watch these two scenarios, **write down** what you see or hear as signs of engagement and I'll ask you to share your thoughts.*

The first scenario is a Desk Greeting (59 seconds) and the second is a Lobby Greeting (31 seconds).

→ Show the videos: <http://weinfluencechange.com/videos/greeting-examples/>

What were the signs of engagement you saw/heard?

Leader information:

You might hear responses similar to:

- Truth about running late
- Greeted in a friendly manner
- Smile
- Gave water
- Ensured information she filled out would get to educators in back
- Sitting by client in waiting area
- Peeking at the baby and making nice comments
- Picked up her bag

You made some great observations. Some of the things you saw and heard we would consider "good customer service." How do you think engagement is different than "good" customer service?

Leader information:

You might hear responses similar to:

- They go above and beyond
- They are meeting the clients need

So, to summarize, there are many things we do each day that are considered good customer service and there are also ways we can really engage. This Energizer is about how we can actively engage our clients and why it is so important.

Let's start with why it is important to engage with our clients...

STUDIES

Please **read** on page 2, what studies have shown happens when we actively engage with clients.

- Client engagement directly predicts an increased likelihood of them staying in the program and sticking to their goals.
- Clients are more likely to collaborate with staff when there is a solid foundation of engagement. When you have a good relationship with the client, the guidance you share can also convey compassion, respect and hope.

What are your thoughts about these outcomes?

What happens when you really engage with a client?

These studies and your comments really show how much of a difference we can make – in order to see behaviors change we need our clients to want to stay in the program and stick to their goals.

We want to be client centered, engaged, and focused on what our clients are saying to us... and then... the phone rings, the baby cries, we inadvertently think about our long list of to-dos waiting for us at home.... Does all of this sound familiar? Let's talk about barriers....

BARRIERS

Engagement means being comfortable and active in the appointment for both you and the client. Sometimes, however, we encounter barriers which make it more challenging to have a meaningful connection. A couple of the top barriers to engagement are distractions and misinterpretation.

Distractions

Hear from the group: *What distractions do you experience during your work day? What thoughts cross your mind?*

In order to engage with the client and establish trust and respect, we need to put our distractions aside and be in the present, to be in the "here and now."

How can you be in the "here and now"? What can you do?

Leader information:

You might hear responses similar to:

- Focus

- Use your OARS skills
- Review charts to learn more about the clients you are seeing before the day begins
- Jot down information on your client throughout the appointment
- Know purpose of your work

Thanks for sharing. Make a note of the strategies for staying in the “here and now” that will work for you.

Another barrier to engagement is misinterpretations.

Misinterpretations happen when we add our own interpretation to what someone says or does. This brings in possible errors in communication or misunderstandings.

What are some examples of how we misinterpret our clients?

Leader information:

You might hear responses similar to:

- Having a preconceived idea about the client
- Hearing something different than what was said
- Assuming what the client means

One of the tools we have to engage with our clients is OARS. By using these skills, we can ask for clarification from the client which helps to steer us clear of misinterpretations. We can ask open-ended statements, like “Tell me more...” or a reflection, such as “Let me see if I understand ...”

In order to use your OARS skills well, it requires you to be in the “here and now.” This WIC Connects mindset allows you to really hear the client’s need, and this in turn, is what keeps the client engaged.

When barriers to engagement occur, whether it’s because of a backlog of clients needing to be seen, or misinterpreting your client’s response, pay attention to your emotional reactions. Your feelings are closely connected to engagement. Triggered feelings may make you less available to be fully engaged in your work and with clients. If you’re not engaged, then you’re just going through the motions.

To keep conversations open and clients engaged:

- *Be in the “here and now”*
- *Be curious*
- *Be inquisitive*
- *Search to know and to discover*

Find out what is really going on and how things work for the client. Admit to not knowing and be open to learning.

The activity on the top of page 3 illustrates that sometimes our own perceptions and judgments are also barriers to engaging with our clients.

Activity: Food Favorites

Optional for this activity: Ask people to get up and find a partner before beginning. Encourage people to move around while thinking and talking in their pairs.

In this next activity, please hold off on sharing your response until directed.

Now:

- 1) Answer this question- but keep the answer to yourself for now: *“What is my favorite food?” Remember “don’t share yet!”*
- 2) Turn to your neighbor and think to yourself: *“What is my neighbor’s favorite food?”*
- 3) Once you have **thought** of your answer, **share** with your neighbor what you believe their favorite food is. Your neighbor will share with you what they think your favorite food is.
- 4) Now, **share with each other** what your favorite foods are.
- 5) *How many of you guessed right?* (ask for a show of hands)

How is it that we often think we have the right answers for our clients and, in actuality, it is the client who has the answers; you need to hear their knowledge and their expertise about their life. Engagement happens when you are interested in understanding the client’s perspective and open to their answers without judgment.

Now that we have heard about some of the possible barriers to engagement, let’s consider how we personally do in our own experiences.

SELF-EVALUATION

Whether you are front-line staff, a certifier or breastfeeding peer counselor; whatever your role is with the client, there are some questions you can ask yourself to see how engaged you are with your client.

Who would like to read on page 3 these questions?

- *How well did I understand how this person saw their issue/situation?*
- *Could I accurately explain what this person was going through and feeling?*
- *How many of my responses were reflective listening statements?*
- *How engaged was the client in our conversation?*

Thanks for reading these. Today we have discussed the importance of engagement and I hope you’ll find these questions helpful to periodically check:

Are you engaging with your clients?

For a moment, think about this question: *How engaged were you with your last client?*

Now, take a moment to think about:

- *how your clinic's environment and*
- *how you interact with the client,*

impacts the next person's connection or engagement with the client; the impact can be negative or positive,

and just like with dominoes, what you do impacts how willing the client is to engage positively with the next person in their WIC appointment or their next appointment.

When you connect with the clients, what kind of momentum will your engagement produce, negative or positive? You can decide.

ACTIVITY:

Now that you have explored some about engagement, share with your neighbor (or optional to do this in a circle with everyone sharing)

- *What do we do well in our clinic?*
- *What can we do better?*

Debrief and Close (Time: approx. 2 minutes)

Engaging clients is at the heart of all WIC services. Clients, who receive compassion, respect and hope from staff, who feel supported to find solutions together with staff, are likely to make behavior changes and want to continue receiving the support WIC has to offer their family.

From the very first WIC experience, whether it is:

- by phone or walking into the clinic,
- the clinic environment,
- to the staff person's "here and now",

these are all opportunities to engage the client and move them in the direction of behavior change.

Engagement is the fuel that drives any good service and is the foundation for participant-centered services.

Thank you for participating in this Energizer today. I hope you have some new ideas for connecting with your clients and overcoming barriers to really engage for change.

References

Motivational Interviewing, Helping People Change by William R Miller and Stephen Rollnick, Gilford Press, 2013

Psychology Today, The Ostrich Effect

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-ostrich-effect/201210/the-right-conversations>

The Heart of Engagement

Published on February 6, 2013 by Bill Kahn, Ph.D. in The Ostrich Effect

<http://www.psychologytoday.com/blog/the-ostrich-effect/201302/the-heart-engagement>

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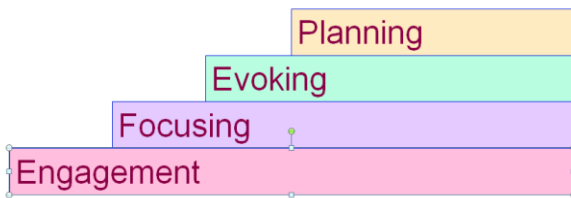


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Staff Handout

Introduction:

We will be exploring **engagement**, the first step towards supporting behavior change.



Warm Up:

What does **engagement** mean to you? What **words** come to mind?



Content



Let's **watch** a video and **experience** how it might look in the clinic setting. As you watch these two videos, **write** down what you see or hear as signs of engagement. We will **hear** your thoughts after viewing the videos.

How do you think engagement is different than "good" customer service?

Why it is important to engage with our clients?

Studies show when clients are engaged they:

- Are more likely to stay in WIC
- Stick to their goals
- Collaborate with staff

What are your thoughts about these outcomes?

What have you noticed when you really feel like you have engaged with a client?

Barriers to Engagement

A couple of the top barriers to engagement are distractions and misinterpretation.

Distractions



What distractions do you experience during your work day? What thoughts cross your mind?

How can you be in the “here and now”? What can you do?

Misinterpretations

Misinterpretations happen when we add our own interpretation to what someone says or does. This brings in possible errors in communication or misunderstandings.

What are some **examples** of how we misinterpret our clients?

One of the tools we have to engage with our clients is OARS.



“Tell me more...” or “Let me see if I understand ...”

In order to use your OARS skills well, it requires you to be in the “here and now.”

This is what keeps conversations open and the clients engaged.

Activity: Food Favorites



In this next activity, please hold off on sharing your response until directed. Please **think** to yourself and answer, “What is my favorite food?” Remember “don’t share yet!”

Now:

1. Turn to your neighbor and **think to yourself**: “*What is my neighbor’s favorite food?*”
2. Once you have **thought** of your answer, **share** with your neighbor what you believe their favorite food is. Your neighbor will share with you what they think your favorite food is.
3. Now, **share with each other** what your favorite foods are.

Self-evaluation

Ask yourself the following questions to see how well you did engaging your client.

- How well did I understand how this person saw their issue/situation?
- Could I accurately explain what this person was going through and feeling?
- How many of my responses were reflective listening statements?
- How engaged was the client in our conversation?

How engaged were you with your last client?

Now, take a moment to think about:

- how your clinic’s environment and
- how you interact with the client,

When you connect with the clients, what kind of momentum will your engagement produce, negative or positive? You can decide.

Activity:

Share with your neighbor:

- What do we do well in our clinic?

- What can we do better?

Debrief and Close

Engaging clients is at the heart of all WIC services. Clients who receive compassion, respect and hope from staff, who feel supported to find solutions together with staff, are likely to make behavior changes and want to continue receiving the support WIC has to offer their family.

From the very first WIC experience, whether it is:

- by phone or walking into the clinic,
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