

Stepping Up: A training video for substance abuse counselors working with clients who are Deaf

Stepping up discusses a variety of issues when working with deaf clients at different stages of treatment. The DVD can be used in conjunction with a variety of strategies and tools. The DVD focuses on approaches to use when working with Deaf individuals who may be seeking treatment for substance use disorders. The DVD includes three scenarios with two counselors who are able to communicate directly using American Sign Language (A.S.L.) and one other counselor who is using an interpreter when working with a client.

Introduction:The introduction of Stepping Up features a narrator who briefly describes: Important information about language and culture to consider. The narrator also describes three treatment approaches that may be useful when working with Deaf people who have substance use disorders i.e. The Minnesota Model, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy and Motivational Interviewing.

Introduction (short summary): Introduction: This segment features a narrator who describes information about language and culture to consider and three treatment approaches.

Scene 1:Scene One shows a Deaf counselor (Jan) meeting a client (Kim) for the first time. This session would typically happen during the Evaluation Phase of treatment. This scenario includes how a counselor may assess client status by gathering information related to their chemical use, social history and other clinical information. The use of a Drug Chart is highlighted which uses a visual approach to gather the client's drug use history. This information is used to help clients evaluate the extent of problems they experience with alcohol and/or other drug use. The Drug Chart goal is to help the client look at various aspects of their life and examine the impact of their chemical use on those areas.

Scene 1(short summary): Scene One: Deaf counselor (Jan) meeting a client (Kim) for the first time. Focus: This session includes how a counselor may assess client status by gathering information related to their chemical use, social history and other clinical information.

Scene 2: Scene Two shows a hearing counselor (Lynn) who is proficient in sign language, working with a client (Jeff) on part of a Step One assignment. Jeff is currently unemployed and has been sent to treatment. Jeff's drugs of choice are alcohol and methamphetamine. Lynn reviews a portion of Jeff's Step One assignment which includes some of his drawings showing how Jeff is powerless over his drug/alcohol use and how his drug/alcohol use has caused problems for himself and others.

Scene 2(short summary): Scene Two : Shows a hearing counselor (Lynn) who is proficient in sign language, working with a client (Jeff) on part of a Step One assignment.

Focus: This session includes a review of a Step One assignment which includes the concept of how the client is powerless over his drug/alcohol use and how his drug/alcohol use has caused problems for himself and others.

Scene 3: Scene Three shows a hearing counselor (Liz) who utilizes an interpreter for her work with a client (Theo) focusing on aftercare issues. In this scenario, Theo has finished treatment and has returned home where he is trying to learn tools to help him stay sober. Liz focuses on strategies related to relapse prevention i.e.; understanding triggers, building resources and learning how to live a sober life.

Scene 3(short summary): Scene Three: Shows a hearing counselor (Liz) who utilizes an interpreter for her work with a client (Theo) focusing on aftercare issues.

Focus: This session focuses on strategies related to relapse prevention i.e.; understanding triggers, building resources and learning how to live a sober life.

Introduction Discussion Questions

1. What are some risk factors that were discussed in the Introduction that should be considered when working with clients who are Deaf and may have substance use disorders.
2. What treatment approaches were discussed as options to use when working with Deaf clients who have substance use disorders?
3. What are aspects of Twelve Step Recovery Programs that may be challenging and/or helpful for a Deaf client.

Scene One Discussion Questions

1. How does Jan respond when Kim asked where she went to school?
2. Kim tells Jan she signs different- how does she respond?
3. Through the review of Kim's drug chart assignment, what were indicators of Kim's desire for positive change.
4. How does Jan address language issues as she deals with words or concepts that Kim may not understand i.e. blackout?
5. Why would her mother smooth out the problem with CVS?
6. How do you think her mom's behavior helps or harms Kim?

7. What were some of the issues that you would have pursued with Kim in this session and in the future?
8. Assignments are useful in helping a client consider their work outside of the session and provide for continuity. What are some guidelines to remember in order to effectively explain an assignment to a client?

Scene Two Discussion Questions

1. What strategies are used by Lynn to help Jeff identify the concept of powerlessness and unmanageability?
2. Do you think Jeff is ready to be sober? Why or Why not? What aspects of Jeff's behavior support or undermine his ability to stay sober?
3. Jeff expresses discomfort with holding candy and signing –how does the counselor deal with that?
4. Jeff mentions drinking as a factor-do you think he is beginning to recognize this as a problem?
5. How could you help a client understand these Twelve Step Recovery concepts? (no crosstalk; no last names; 90 in 90; let go and let God)

Scene Three: Discussion Questions

1. As a counselor you are responsible for setting up the communication environment. Identify key considerations to ensure that communication is accessible?
2. What are indicators that the interpreter may or may not be accurately matching the communication needs of the client?
3. What are potential challenges that may be encountered when working with an interpreter during a counseling session?
4. Identify potential barriers that Deaf clients face when trying to access recovery resources after they leave treatment?
5. Theo is attending interpreted 12 step meetings and his ex-girlfriend is the interpreter. How would you address this issue with Theo in counseling?
6. In the session, Theo indicates a number of potential triggers for relapse. What are they?
7. Liz used an analogy activity that involved toy cars to help Theo understand a variety of recovery related issues. One of the activities uses a car traveling down a road as a metaphor for recovery and distraction. The point of the activity is that when you are driving you need to be focused and that this is similar to the Recovery process. It is easy to become distracted by people, places and things. What are some distractions that a newly recovering person might face?

8. Liz uses an activity that involves red, blue and yellow blocks to represent how People, Places and Things could help or hinder Theo's recovery. What are other ways that you could help a client to understand this concept?

DVD Discussion Rubric

Communication

1. In what ways does the counselor set up and attend to the communication environment?
2. What can a counselor look for that would indicate that the interpreter is meeting the communication needs adequately?

Language:

3. What specific vocabulary or language concepts does the counselor address in the session?
4. How does the counselor address these words or concepts?

Motivational Interviewing

5. Which of the following aspects of OARS do you observe? Please note the examples of each that you see the counselor using:

Open ended questions

Affirmations

Reflective Listening

Summaries

6. Identify comments that the counselor highlights as indicators that the client wants things to be different. How does the counselor highlight this "change language" to the client?
7. When a client identifies things that are important to them, a counselor can consider these as motivators for change. What motivators did you notice? How did the counselor use this information?

Cognitive Behavioral Considerations

8. In what ways does the counselor address the client's negative thoughts?
9. How does the counselor help the client look at their emotional responses to situations?
10. In what ways does the counselor challenge the client to think differently about their emotions and reactions?

Minnesota Model

11. In what ways does the counselor encourage the client to utilize various people and resources to support their sobriety?

12. How does the counselor support the development of coping skills?

13. In what ways does the counselor connect 12 Step Recovery to the client's experience?

Activities

14. What interactive activities are used to illustrate recovery goals or interpersonal relationship dynamics?

15. What objects or analogies could you use to illustrate recovery concepts? Describe: