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*by* Hjyu Uytr

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Reflective <sup>2</sup>Interaction between Client and Social Worker

Student's Name

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<sup>2</sup>Reflective Interaction between Client and Social Worker**Question 1**

Jane <sup>is</sup> a 16-year-old high school-going girl who has autism. She is an African American of Hispanic descent, and she speaks English and Spanish. We have been meeting with Jane for the past six months. She is living in Brooklyn, New York, currently in an apartment with her mother, brother, and sister. In school, she is enrolled in a special program now for two years, and she is a brilliant young girl. The school-based program Jane is enrolled in focuses on addressing the challenges of autism, communication, self-awareness, cognitive development, and experience sharing. Jane enjoys playing with her tablet, watching television, walking, and sometimes reading books. Jane is currently diagnosed with absence seizures, pervasive development disorder, and enuresis.

According to her mother, Jane becomes agitated whenever there is a change in her routine or when someone invades her space, especially her siblings. She struggles with focusing while at school, and expressing herself is a problem. During her assessments, she would respond to questions with minimal words, had poor eye contact, and she was difficult when it came to following instructions; this can damage her cognitive skills. She experienced difficulty when it came to transitions, and she experienced a hard time when it came to completing her tasks and school assignments. Her comprehension is good when she is working on something that interests her, and when she does something that does not interest her, she experiences a low understanding. When it comes to personal boundaries, she has no sense, and she is poor when it comes to hygiene.

**Question 2**

Jane and I have agreed that we will work on her ability to focus on things such as working on her school assignments and projects to improve her cognitive skills. We also decided to focus on her behavior when engaging with other people, such as improving her eye contact when speaking to people, embracing change instead of pushing it away, self-expression, and to work on her hygiene. I informed her mother that whenever they need my assistance, they could reach me via email or phone call depending on the urgency and that they should give Jane space and time and to help integrate into a new system.

The degree of mutuality was regarding the focus of the tasks that were ahead of us. While forming a relationship with Jane's family, my main focus was solely on Jane and her behavior towards working on the traits mentioned above. I strived to encourage her more on doing activities that are out of her comfort zone but without being pushy and demanding.

### **Question 3**

The interpersonal obstacle I experienced in this session was the issue of change. As I was interacting with Jane, I realized she does not do well with change, and she takes some time before adjusting to a new routine. Adapting to change for Jane would make her act in a not so friendly manner because she was uncomfortable, and she would leave the room we were in and go to her room to control her emotions. According to Gitterman & Germain (2008), the source that might have contributed to the obstacle was the pressure from the agency to control my sessions with Jane with rigid procedures and policies.

### **Question 4**

Having worked with Jane for three months now, and by the look of things, she was going through a lot of emotional changes at this particular time due to the changes she had to go through. She does not prosper when associated with change, and it was taking a toll on her. As

an autistic child, it was not easy for her to adapt to change because sometimes she would misinterpret our conversations or lose focus while we were in session, and this was causing a strain in our interactions. I, on the other hand, was not patient with her because I expected her by now to have fully grasped the routine I had created for her, and because of this, I felt a bit disappointed by her.

#### **Question 5**

The session that follows took place at Jane's house in one of our scheduled meetings that took place in April.

**Jane:** I was not able to complete the task you assigned to me last week. (**Speaking meekly while and avoiding eye contact**).

**Worker:** Why? Was it hard? Tell me what happened on the day you were to begin the task.

**Jane:** I was about to begin the task, but then I got distracted, and I started drawing (**showing me the sketch pad**), and I lost track of time.

**Worker:** The drawing is pretty. So did you try cleaning your room afterward?

#### **Question 6**

##### **Transaction 1a**

**Jane:** I was not able to complete the task you assigned to me last week. (**Speaking meekly and avoiding eye contact**).

**Worker:** Why? Was it hard? Tell me what happened on the day you were to begin the task.

I am sure she is disappointed with me because I did not complete the task she gave me. I feel bad for not following her routine, which is very simple. How will she react when I tell her I got distracted?

She took it well, although I still feel like she is disappointed in me.

From Jane's perspective, my interventions, in this case, show that I might be disappointed that she did not finish her task as instructed.

That must have been hard for you, would you mind telling me the reason why you did not complete the task?

The new skill is more thoughtful, and it shows that I am understanding.

Transaction 1 b

**Worker:** The drawing is pretty. Did you try cleaning your room afterward?

**Jane:** No, I did not clean it afterward; I started doing other things.

**Worker:** That is okay. Did you also try interacting with your siblings after our last session? How was it?

I hope she understands that I was not able to clean my room.

At least she did not ask more questions about tidying up my room, does she know that socializing is hard for me even with my siblings?

In this intervention, it shows that I was connected to Jane on a personal level because I understood her reasons for not cleaning her room or wanting to socialize.

Because of your situation, it must have been hard for you to try socializing and interacting with your siblings, how was it?

I am hoping to get to know Jane more by knowing what she likes, and she dislikes with this new skill.

Transaction 2a

**Jane: (Hesitating)** I tried, but it did not work out well because I cannot connect with them since they do not understand me and I do not understand them

**Worker:** Well, that is an improvement on your part for socializing. Do not worry, keep on trying okay.

I hate socializing, people do not get or understand me, and I end up misinterpreting things and creating an uncomfortable environment for those around me.

That went well; at least she encouraged me to keep trying.

There was a connection between Jane and me, according to her perspective, because instead of being pushy, I encouraged her to keep on trying.

I know it must have been hard for you to get out of your comfort zone, but for a first-timer, you have tried good job.

The new skill, in this case, is I have learned to encourage instead of discouraging the client when they try something out of their comfort zone.

Transaction 2 b

**Worker:** How was your experience while interacting with your siblings? Which particular issue did you experience during the interaction?

**Jane: (Getting distracted and I try to bring her back)** the experience was challenging for me since I could not focus on their discussion, and the issue was because I could get distracted easily and steer away from the conversation altogether.

I wish it were easy for me to interact and socialize with other people.

She understands that I need to interact with other people socially so that I can improve how I interact with people on a personal level.

Even though it is not easy for Jane to socialize, from her point of view, she understands that it is essential for her well-being in general.

I understand that interacting with other people has not been easy, but could you state the issues that are causing this phenomenon?

I have learned the art of listening because I was able to gather the information that she is not good at socializing.

Transaction 3 a

**Worker:** Did any of your siblings try to help you in any way while you were interacting.

**Jane:** Yes, my sister did try to help me focus, but I kept pushing her away because I felt like she was in my space.

**Worker:** Why did you feel like she was invading your space?

These questions are too much, I feel like drawing something, wish I could draw now.

But she is interested in knowing my progress so far despite the many questions.

The connection between Jane and me in regards to her perspective is that I am inquisitive because of the number of questions I ask.

Getting assistance from other people is not wrong; in fact, it helps an individual to complete a task faster, was it easy for you to get help from your siblings?

The skill I have learned for this is the art of assertiveness. Based on the questions I asked Jane, it proves to show that she and I will hit our target once our sessions are over.

Transaction 3 b

**Jane:** She kept on turning my head towards them while they were conversing and switching off the television while watching one of my favorite shows, and I did not like that at all.

**Worker:** Okay, I get it now, I can say you have tried when it comes to socializing, keep interacting with your siblings, I will talk them as well to help you get through this. But well done, although we will have to work on tidying your room.

**Jane:** Okay. (**Standing up ready to leave**).

Now I have to excuse myself from this session and take a break for a few minutes.

She is determined to help me get through this step by step, plus she is not pushy.

In regards to Jane's perspective, she knows when to take a break, and she fully understands my intentions towards her.

Based on our sessions, you have greatly improved since we met, keep up the excellent work.

In this scenario, the skill I have gained is the problem-solving skill, in that from Jane has improved when it comes to social interaction, and by the time we end the session, she will be out of her shell.

### Question 7

At the moment, the obstacle issue is still ongoing, but I have managed to speak with the agency to go easy on the policies because the case I am handling is a different one that needs more time and attention to get a breakthrough.

### Question 8

My next helping step would be to encourage Jane to keep trying to socialize with people even though it is hard for her. Based on the discussion in question 4, 5, and 6, it is clear that Jane likes being in her comfort zone. Getting Jane out of her comfort zone will boost her self-esteem and increase her self-awareness in society. I would do this by making her understand who a friend is and the importance of having one. Because she loves drawing, I would encourage her mother to enroll her in art clubs near their home as this place will create an exciting setting for socialization.

### Question 9

<sup>4</sup> A Virtual Joy-Stick Study of Emotional Responses and Social Motivation in Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder by Kwanguk Kim et al.

In this article, it has made me understand what autism is and how children and teenagers alike behave when they have this disease. The journal has helped me through this session to know how to interact with autistic individuals. Being an autistic child is hard because one's social skills are nonexistent and secondly because they get distracted easily. The article has

made me learn that treating autistic children like Jane with motivation instead of being tough will make them feel appreciated and understood.

<sup>3</sup> Greeno, E. J., Ting, L., Pecukonis, E., Hodorowicz, M., & Wade, K. (2017). The role of empathy in training social work students in motivational interviewing. *Social Work Education*, 36(7), 794-808.

The above article has taught me that empathy is a critical component when associating and interacting with clients. In the case of Jane, since she is autistic, she is in touch with her emotions, and the worst thing to do in such a situation is not to feel what she is feeling; this will, in turn, make an individual lose that special connection with the client. During my sessions with Jane, I learned to understand and respect her perspective, especially when it came to social interaction. Since I knew it was hard for her to interact with people socially, I decided to go with her pace while encouraging her at the same time to keep trying.

#### Question 10

From doing this assignment, I have learned that the best thing to do while handling meetings with individuals who are autistic is to be understanding and not pushy. Being pushy will create a wedge between myself and the client, and this will not have a pleasant outcome. Secondly, I have learned to be patient while handling autistic children and teenagers as well, because they tend to get distracted easily. Being patient with them goes a long way because, at the same time, I get to learn more about them, creating a friendship in the long run.

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