HANDBOOK FOR THE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER COUNSELLOR
THIS HANDBOOK IS DEDICATED TO ALL THE COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER COUNSELLORS IN KITGUM DISTRICT FOR ALL THE CARE THEY SO GENEROUSLY GIVE TO THOSE IN THEIR COMMUNITY AND FOR THE MANY LESSONS THEY TAUGHT US AS WE SHARED TOGETHER.
INTRODUCTION TO HANDBOOK FOR CVCs

You are a community volunteer counsellor (CVC) who has completed training to serve others in your community. Your skills are a valuable resource and we hope this handbook serves as a support for you in your work.

As a CVC you are an essential part of the Kitgum District Psycho Social Support Program (PSSP) working with a larger team of people which includes: Community Development Assistants (CDAs), teachers, health workers, supervisors from the district team, Advisory Committee members, Local Councillors (LCs) and parents.

PSSP was initiated by the district in 1997 in response to the needs of people who had fled their homes after brutal attacks by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) rebels. The pilot project in two sub counties was expanded to cover the whole district under a tripartite agreement between Kitgum District, UNICEF, and AVSI. Funding was provided by UNICEF and AVSI which offered technical and logistic support. The district operated the program through the Community Development Office (CDO). Recently, USAID (United States Agency for International Development) provided additional funding for PSSP, implemented by AVSI. Other agencies carrying out similar activities in the district are World Vision, International Rescue Committee (IRC), the Churches, Kitgum Concerned Women’s Association (KICWA), Gulu Support the Children Organisation (GUSCO), Concerned Parents Association, and others.

PSSP is designed to help everyone in Kitgum District benefit from the program. It is aimed at helping people deal with the past traumas so that they can move ahead in a productive and peaceful manner. Training to build capacity for different stakeholders is one of the major components of PSSP’s community-based holistic approach.

The handbook is divided into topics similar to those you covered in training and is designed for you to use in the following ways:

• To review important concepts and materials presented to you in training sessions
• To search for details, ideas or practical suggestions when you are faced with a situation that you are not sure how to handle
• To challenge you to think more deeply about your work – to reflect on it and on yourself
• To remind you of additional resources for your work
• To encourage you to develop new ideas and approaches to fit your situation.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Special thanks to Olaa Ambrose for his invaluable leadership in the development of the PSSP and training. Many thanks for all the contributions to the contents of this handbook that have been made by the AVSI team, district supervisors and other members of the Kitgum District Psycho Social Support Programme, and the CVCs themselves. Thanks to Macmillan Education Ltd. for the use of the family picture on the back cover.

Although the stories, examples and photos in this handbook come directly out of people’s experiences in Northern Uganda, all case studies and names have been altered in order to protect their privacy.
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HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Each topic is presented in a similar way:
1. A story or case study emphasizing the focus of that section.
2. The contents with major points regarding that topic.
3. Practical ideas for you to use in your work.
4. Questions for you to think about in order to personalize the material, to discover how the theory fits with your experience, to apply the theory to your own work, and to gauge your reactions to the material in light of your experience.

Each page is laid out in a similar way so that you can easily follow it or find what you are looking for. Some symbols to look for in this handbook are:

Remember that this handbook with its material, ideas and questions is a starting point for you to expand your knowledge and skills.

Please note any questions or issues that you want to discuss with your supervisor or with other CVCs and give your ideas to supervisors to help expand the scope of this handbook to benefit other CVCs. Together we continue to learn, and to improve our skills and the services we offer to our communities.
The story of the monkey and the fish

Monkey saw Fish swimming. He did not know that Fish liked water. He sympathized with Fish and took it out of water thinking it would drown. In the process Fish died. Monkey cried and said he was only helping.

In order to help others we need to understand the person, family, or group with whom we are working. Part of understanding a person is to know their psycho-social functioning that is common to all people.

PSYCHO refers to the mind and soul of a person. This involves internal aspects such as feelings, thoughts, beliefs, attitudes and values.

SOCIAL refers to a person’s external relationships and environment. This includes interactions with others, social attitudes and values (culture) and social influences of family, peers, school and community.

The internal (psycho) and the external (social) interact and influence each other.

As you go through this handbook you will grow in your understanding of psycho-social needs and how to provide psycho-social support.
NEEDS OF A PERSON

All of us, from the time we are born until the time we die, have needs. What do we need to grow, to develop, and to live a healthy and satisfying life?

We all need:
- Shelter
- Love
- Friends
- Spirituality
- Religion
- Medical Care
- Cleanliness
- Unity / Peace
- Security
- Protection
- Values / Beliefs
- Hope for the future
- Sense of belonging
- Family
- Responsibilities
- Respect
- Clothing
- Food
- Communication
- Activities
- Formal & Informal education
- Traditional Culture

I also need:
- Parental love
- Parental care
- School
- Play
- Guidance

I also need:
- Recognition
- Motivation
- Awareness and appropriate expression of sexuality
- School
- To discover new things
- Adventure
- Counselling
- Freedom
- Independence
- Recreational activities
- Role models

I also need:
- Partner
- Companionship
- Children
- Income
- Leisure activities
- Leadership

Needs are what we must have in order to grow, develop, and live a healthy and satisfying life.
We can think of these needs in three different categories:

**Material Needs**
- Food
- Shelter
- Clothing
- Medical Care
- Security / Protection
- Money / Possessions

**Social Needs**
- Family
- Friends
- School
- Religion
- Culture
- Community
- Activities

**Psychological Needs**
- Parental Love
- Parental Care
- Values / Beliefs
- Spiritual Guidance
- Sense of belonging
- Recognition
- Respect
- Independence
- Love / Companionship from Partner
- Responsibilities
- Peace
- Unity
- Freedom

Often we look at the material needs and forget about social and psychological needs. It is essential that we think about ourselves and others as having all of these needs. Love and care is just as important for a child as proper feeding.

By first understanding our own needs and the needs of others, we become better equipped to meet their psycho-social needs.
A child from 0-4 years has many needs and is unable to meet them alone. As the child communicates her needs and receives an encouraging response from her parents, she begins to develop trust and to feel attached to her mother and father.

When a child communicates her needs and receives a positive response, her needs become her inner resources.

Acan is a one-year-old baby. When she is hungry or tired, she begins to cry and her parents respond by feeding her or putting her to sleep. She watches everyone very closely and moves around, touching everything she can get her hands on and putting objects in her mouth. She also listens carefully to the noises around her and can recognize the voice of her mother and father.

A child from 0-4 years develops and learns through:

- 5 senses
- Curiosity
- Interaction
- Play
- Movement
- Talking/Crying

A Child 0 – 4 years develops and learns through:

Parents / caregivers

⇒ Parental Care

⇒ Crying
⇒ Talking
⇒ Touching

⇒ Physical and emotional Care

⇒ Attachment
⇒ Trust
⇒ Sense of belonging
Okello is 8 years old. He attends school every day and is beginning to learn how to read and write. He often comes home with his schoolwork and proudly shows it to his mother. However small his accomplishments may be, he wants them to be recognised. Okello plays enthusiastically with his friends and cousins, pretending to be a father and mother or a teacher with students. He also enjoys being around his father, asking him endless questions and imitating his actions.

From 5 - 11 years old a child is becoming more aware of himself and those around him.

As he interacts with family, friends, teachers, and others, he develops more inner resources.

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As he interacts with family, friends, teachers, and others, he develops more inner resources.
Adolescence can be characterized by:
- Physical changes
- Rebellious behavior
- Sexual desires
- Insecurity / Confusion
- Anxiety
- Reactive emotions
- Criticism of parents and elders

As the adolescent passes from childhood to adulthood, he/she searches for his/her own identity and place in the community.

An Adolescent learns and develops through:
- Finding sense of self in society
- Criticising / Rebellious
- Risky behaviour
- Questioning life and death
- Finding role models
- New ideas and thoughts
- Developing own sense of morality / belief / values
- Separation from family

DEVELOPMENT OF A PERSON

Lamara is 16 years old. She has experienced many changes over the last few years. Her body has developed and she now looks more like a woman than a child. She also wants to be treated like a woman and to make her own decisions. Sometimes, though, she seems embarrassed of her body and acts like a child. When her parents give her certain rules, she purposely disobeys them. Lamara doesn't enjoy being at home; she always wants to be with her friends.

Otim is 19 years old. He spends most of his time with his friends and often comes home late at night. He is very reactive with his parents, occasionally speaking aggressively to his mother and father. He tells them that their ideas are old and criticizes some of their values. When they ask him about his friends or schoolwork, he tells them to leave him alone. "I can manage on my own," he exclaims. There is one teacher at school that Otim respects. He often talks to him during breaks, asking about his thoughts and ideas.
What are the positive ways adults can respond to adolescents to help them grow and develop? How can you encourage other adults in your community to respond in those ways?

DEVELOPMENT OF A PERSON

Komakech and Anek are married with four children. They work hard to provide materially for their family. They spend time encouraging their children in their school work and help them to learn their responsibilities at home. Because they want to share their beliefs, values, and traditions with their children, they take them to church and to many cultural activities.
A child from 0 - 4 has a sense of belonging to his parents. As the child grows, his sense of belonging grows; he belongs to his relatives and school. As an adolescent, he feels an even greater belonging to his extended family, culture, and peer group. Finally as an adult, he has developed a sense of belonging to his family, clan, culture, country, friends, etc. As the person grows, his inner resources grow and strengthen.

List the inner resources you have developed throughout your life.
Opiyo's father was a cattle raiser with many cows. Opiyo spent a lot of time with his father, learning how to take care of the cattle. Opiyo's father was a very patient teacher who carefully explained and showed things to his son. When Opiyo was 15, his father died. Opiyo lost his father, but he was left with many gifts from him. These gifts are his inheritance. His father gave him his strong healthy body and his nice smile. He gave him his cows, the ability to raise cattle, and his kindness and patience with others.

⇒ Through inheritance I receive:  
   - physical characteristics:  
     ⇒ strong healthy body and nice smile  
   - material resources:  
     ⇒ cows and land  
   - internal resources:  
     ⇒ kindness, patience, a sense of humor

Even when my parents die, I am left with part of them. This is my Inheritance.

Through inheritance I build:  
- continuity  
- sense of belonging

What have you inherited from your parents?  
List the physical characteristics, material and internal resources.

The resources I receive from my parents and caregivers are my inheritance.

This child has received some of her mother's physical appearance. What internal inheritance might she receive from her mother?
Another way to look at how we build our inner resources is to look at what makes up our world. Each of us develops resources through our relationships, activities and spirituality.

Through RELATIONSHIPS:
- **I HAVE**
  - parents
  - family
  - friends
  - teachers
  - religious leaders
  - community
- **I BUILD**
  - Trust
  - Love
  - Identity
  - Sense of belonging

Through ACTIVITIES:
- **I CAN**
  - school
  - work
  - everyday activities
- **I BUILD**
  - Competence
  - Confidence
  - Initiative

Through SPIRITUALITY:
- **I AM**
  - values
  - beliefs
  - culture
- **I BUILD**
  - Self esteem
  - Purpose in life
  - Identity
  - Responsibility

A community also builds resources together:
- **WE HAVE**
- **WE CAN**
- **WE ARE**

What have you learned and received from your relationships, activities, and spirituality?
One day there was a great wedding feast in the sky. All the birds were invited and talked excitedly about going. Tortoise heard them and longed to go. He begged his bird friends to take him with them. They agreed and carried Tortoise to the party. At the party, Tortoise ate too much. On the way back he was so heavy that the birds couldn’t carry him and he fell. Tortoise’s shell cracked into many pieces. Tortoise was miserable and very exposed. Tortoise could not move about and stayed away from others.

One day, Tortoise realised he could not stay alone feeling depressed for the rest of his life. He decided to start looking for the pieces of his shell. His friends also began to miss him and came to find him. They helped him to pick up the pieces and put them together.

Tortoise felt better about himself and rejoined the other animals. To this day, Tortoise has scars on his shell but he moves around as he did before the wedding feast.
CHARACTERISTICS OF TRAUMATIC EVENTS

Now that you understand more about the World of a Person, it is helpful to look at the ways in which difficult situations affect people.

Often, in life, we face difficult situations. An extreme type of difficult situation is a traumatic event.

Characteristics of a traumatic event include:

- sudden and unexpected
- abnormal / outside normal and acceptable life experiences
- threatening to a person’s life
- a cause of fear, helplessness or horror in a person
- attack of senses (hearing, sight, smell, touch and taste)

Some examples of traumatic events:

- Shooting
- Fire, Bombing, Killing
- Abduction
- Ambush
- Looting, Raping

It is important to think about your own experience in order to understand and recognise the experience of others. Write down a description of a traumatic event that you experienced.
EFFECTS ON INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITY

After a traumatic event, a person can experience many different effects:

- Shock
- Numbness
- Sadness
- Crying
- Fear
- Anxiety
- Nightmares
- Hopelessness
- Guilt
- Anger
- Isolation
- Hatred
- Confusion
- Shaking
- Sleep problems
- Lack of interest
- Excessive tension
- Loss of appetite
- Physical pains
- Flashbacks
- Mistrust
- Avoidance
- Reminders
- Withdrawal
- Always alert

A person's thoughts, feelings, physical sensations and behaviour can all be affected by the experience of a traumatic event.

Which of these reactions have you experienced following a traumatic event?

All of these effects are normal reactions to an abnormal situation. Traumatic events can affect all people - from the strongest to the weakest.
Because each individual is unique, each person has a different reaction to a traumatic event.

**CASE STUDY:** One day there was an ambush by rebels along the road to the market. In the attack some children were abducted, a few people were killed, and some people were injured.

Each of the following people were present at the ambush, and each tells a different experience of that same traumatic event. In addition, each of these people show different effects of trauma.

These are their stories:

| People may experience the same traumatic event, but the effects or reactions are unique for each person. |
|---|---|---|
| I was not expecting the attack so I was not prepared to defend myself. The rebels cut my leg with a panga. Now I don't want to see or go near a panga. Whenever I see one, I remember clearly the ambush as if it was happening all over again. At night I have trouble sleeping, and I do not like eating very much. I will never forget that day of the ambush. | I was always worried about rebel ambushes and whether I would be able to protect my children. Then one day we were ambushed on the road. There was screaming and confusion and we all ran. I lost sight of my young son and did not know what had happened to him for many hours. Some children were abducted but my son hid and returned home later. Now I cannot walk along that road without constantly watching the bushes. I fear another attack and jump whenever I see quick movement, even if it is just leaves moving in the wind. I do not want my children to go anywhere without me. | My older brother was taken by the rebels when they ambushed us. I was scared when the rebels chased us, so I ran. Afterwards, I could not stop shaking and crying for a few hours. Now I cannot sleep because of nightmares about the attack and about what the rebels are doing to my brother. I do not want to leave home to go to school. I just want to stay inside. |
EFFECTS ON INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITY

Intensity

When a person’s reaction to the traumatic event disrupts his or her ability to perform daily life tasks for a significant period of time, then the response may be unusual.

All of the people in this picture experienced a traumatic event. All of them experienced some of the normal reactions to trauma.

This person is the only one of them who, after a few months, continued to have reactions that kept her from cooking, caring for her family or talking with friends. A CVC visited her in her home and offered psycho-social support. She is now doing better and is caring for her family. Some of her friends keep visiting her and encouraging her to talk about her experience when she needs to. The community is working together to help her live her life in a positive way again.

All people experience normal reactions to trauma, but a few people – about 1 out of 10 – experience more extreme reactions that continue for a long time. All can benefit from psycho-social support.
When there is a traumatic event the world of the person is disrupted.

Relationships are affected

= Mistrust and Loss

Activities are affected

= Insecurity and Fear

Spirituality is affected

= Hopelessness and Confusion

When the world of a person is disrupted it can be overwhelming, and at first the person may feel they cannot go on with their activities, their relationships or their spirituality.

A man has trouble in trusting people and has become very aggressive with his wife.

A woman stopped digging in the field because she is afraid of going out of her hut.

A child feels hopeless and confused and has problems concentrating at school.

The result will also be a disruption of the community.

This community stopped digging together and are sleeping in a displacement camp.
Even though trauma disrupts the world of the person for a time, we know from experience that it is possible to move through difficult times. COPING SKILLS are specific ways in which individuals and communities can rebuild their world.

Examples of coping skills

- Talk about the problem with someone you trust.
- Receive advice.
- Do something that helps you feel useful.
- Accept the problem and start a new life.
- Stay with a friend to feel safe.
- Change your environment to help protect yourself and your family.
- Seek spiritual help.
- Attend cultural events.
- Participate in communal work.
- Join in recreational activities.
- Participate in rituals and ceremonies.

Each individual has his/her own ways of coping with problems. What is useful for you may or may not work for someone else.

Part of coping skills is to EXPRESS one’s feelings, thoughts, and beliefs. After a traumatic event, painful feelings and thoughts remain inside like a thorn in a foot. The person will continue to feel pain unless the thorn is removed. If the thorn stays in too long, the person may become disabled. But if the painful feelings are expressed (much as one removes the thorn and the infection caused by it) then the person can recover and heal, even though the scar will still be there.
Positive coping skills are ways to:

Rebuild relationships

I need to re-establish trust and a sense of belonging.

Resume activities

I need to identify safe places to rebuild confidence and competence in my activities.

Strengthen spirituality

I need to
• rediscover hope in the future
• make sense or find meaning of what happened
• find spiritual support

A person can also use negative coping mechanisms that do not help to rebuild his/her world. An example is drinking to forget one’s problems. Drinking does not fulfill the person’s deep need for trust, security, and meaning and, therefore, does not help him/her to rebuild his/her person.

List the coping skills that you used to recover from a traumatic event.

What activities do you promote in your community? Write down the values and messages that these activities communicate which help people to cope.
A way to describe the whole process of healing, or rebuilding the world of the person, is called the Life Wheel. The Life Wheel shows stages of behaviour and feelings that are normal reactions to difficult events in life. Each stage involves some particular feelings and reactions.
Life goes along a certain path with a regular routine and direction until…

There is a difficult event or trauma that disrupts this routine.

When a difficult event occurs in our lives at first we go through a state of **shock**. During this initial reaction to the event there may be shaking, rapid heartbeat, or even paralysis. This leads to **denial**: “I cannot believe this is happening. Everything seems unreal.”

The next stage is **protest**. The affected person may put blame for what has happened on somebody. A person may also start to bargain: “God, I will do anything if only you will stop this.”

The third stage is either **anger** or depression or both of them at different times. During anger the person may seek revenge: “Because they did this to me, I want to do something bad to them.”

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**CASE STUDY**

Aciro is a teacher who had 3 children: 5 year old Okello, 8-year-old Bosco, and 14-year-old Aloyo.

One day Aciro and her 3 children took the bus from Gulu to Kitgum. There was an ambush by rebels and Okello was killed. Aciro was wounded and lost her arm. Bosco and Aloyo were shocked but unhurt.

Bosco and Aloyo felt as if they were paralyzed by this event. Aciro could not believe what happened or that Okello was dead.

Even after some weeks the family was having a hard time, experiencing the typical effects of a traumatic event. Bosco had nightmares about people wanting to kill him. He was very frightened and wanted to stay near his mother for protection. Aloyo blamed herself, feeling that she should have been able to protect her little brother Okello. She promised God that she would always be kind to Bosco if only God would not kill him like Okello.

Sometimes Aciro felt a lot of anger against this life and against God. She would say, “God, why have you given me this experience? I thought you loved me. My husband died three years ago and now you have taken my youngest child! Where is he? Why did you take him?”
A person who is in depression lacks an interest in life: “It feels like nothing is worth doing anymore.” One has no purpose and mistrusts others, often withdrawing and becoming lonely. The person no longer has hope that the future will be better.

Finally one reaches reorganisation and develops acceptance of the situation. Accepting does not mean one agrees with what has happened, but rather it is the capacity to live positively with what has happened. A person finds a new understanding and new meaning for life: “This is a terrible thing that I have been through, but I need to make the best of it and go on.”

The friends and relatives of Aciro abandoned her because she was disabled. Aciro felt very helpless and hopeless about her situation. She lost her smile and felt sad, sometimes thinking about suicide. She could not stop thinking of Okello who died, and this made it very difficult for her to show interest in her two remaining children. She stopped teaching school.

As time passed some good things happened and the situation of the family began to improve. Bosco, who had been very worried about his mother, one day said to her, “Mommy you cannot leave me; I need you.” Suddenly Aciro realized that she was still important to her remaining children and that they were vulnerable. After a CVC suggested that Aciro share her experience with other disabled people, she began to realize that she was not alone. When she saw others coping with more serious wounds, she began to recover hope. The CVC also made the link with the district and the hospital in order to help Aciro get an artificial arm. After some months friends commented that she didn't seem disabled anymore and this helped her to regain confidence. Aciro and Aloyo joined a prayer group and began searching for meaning - they felt consoled and gained some understanding that life and death are not in their power. One night Aciro had a dream of a smiling woman carrying Okello and saying “Do not worry or be sad; your child is in a good place.” This helped Aciro get relief from her grief about Okello. Aloyo gained hope from the Word of God (“God takes special care of widows and orphans”), and from the example of an orphan at school who was always smiling and happy. All these things plus support of friends allowed the family to accept what had happened, regain hope and a purpose in life, and have the energy to start on a new path.
A person’s life is different than it was before the difficult event – the life path is changed. The new life path chosen helps one to make sense out of the changes and find a new way to go on. There may be other difficult events, but the person is stronger and can get through them.

Aciro eventually realized that even though she had lost all of her friends of the past (before the traumatic event) now she had more friends. Her old friends had loved her for what she could give them, but her new friends loved her for who she was as a person. This new quality of friendship was better than before. Aciro returned to teaching school and was able to provide for the education of her children. Aloyo renewed her interest in spending time with friends and Bosco was no longer afraid to go to school.

The steps of the Life Wheel are not clearly separated in life, and a person can move back and forth between stages. Moreover, not all steps are experienced by every person. Each individual takes different amounts of time for the different steps.

Think about your personal story. Which stage was most difficult for you? Which needs were most difficult to meet? (Trust in people? Confidence in your work? Interest in life? Meaning of the event or purpose in life?)

How did you reorganize, and regain acceptance and hope for a new life path?
EXERCISES TO COPE AND REORGANIZE

Exercise A

The Life Wheel represents a part of one’s life following a difficult event. However, our life is made of a past, a present, and a future full of both good and difficult events. (Remember Development of a Person and Inheritance pages 4 - 9.) Often after a difficult event, we become focused only on that event. By thinking about the good things of the past and the difficult times we overcame, the good things that remain in the present, and our desires for the future, we are able to open our eyes to more than just our current situation. It is a way to help us cope, to get unstuck, and to reorganize our lives.

Exercise B

Another exercise to help us look at more than our difficult event:

1. Draw a diagram like the one below.
2. Put your name in the centre like Aciro did.
3. In the space around the centre, write all of your qualities, abilities, and roles. Also include your painful situations.

Do this exercise with some friends and those who you know well. They can help you think of your qualities and abilities. As this exercise helps you, you can also use it with others in your community.
In order to provide effective psycho-social support as CVCs, it is important to develop some basic helping skills, attitudes and approaches. These can be thought of as building blocks that equip you to become a better helper. These blocks are a combination of attitudes, approaches and specific skills useful in helping others.

**Building Blocks of Helping**

Provide follow-up support
- Be trustworthy
- Offer alternatives
- Refer to network if needed
- Know your limits
- Be Patient
- Be flexible in your approach
- Enable person to solve their own problem
- Respect the person
- Listen to the person
- Try to understand the person’s views
- Help the person to express feelings

Building Blocks are the skills, attitudes and approaches necessary to be an effective CVC.
Respect is the basis of people choosing to work together.

- I believe there are positive qualities in every person.
- I can learn something from any person.

As I respect my elders, I will respect each person I go to visit.
- I accept people who are different from me.
- I am comfortable with listening more than talking.
- I frequently check with the person to find out if I have understood their words and feelings correctly.

I focus on the other person in order to understand a person’s experience and point of view. I know that this is the first step to helping.

Listening encourages sharing and expression.

- I understand the person’s perspective and what it is like to be in their situation.
- I do not assume that others think the same way I do.

I understand that the person’s view is more important than mine.

People are motivated to work on problems that are important to them, not what others think are their problems.

- I build trust in the relationship by accepting someone’s feelings.

I accept a person’s feelings, whatever they are and however strong they are.
- I know I should not stop someone from crying because it is their way to express their feelings.

Expression helps the person to feel relief, think more clearly and manage their emotions.
Be patient
• I understand that people need time to change their attitudes and habits.
• I am patient for each person to take his/her own time to change.

Be flexible in your approach
• I am able to change and respond to the needs of the person.
• I need to follow what the person shares with me (like the mirror exercise).

Offer alternatives
• I can be creative in proposing new resources.
• I can involve the person with others to share ideas.

Enable the person to solve their own problem
• I believe that each person is able to find his/her own solution.
• I believe that people should be self reliant and not dependent on me.
• I help the person to identify his/her solutions instead of giving my own advice.

Change is a gradual process that is complex and on-going.

Each person has a unique way to move through a change process.

When a person has more alternatives, he/she is able to choose the best possibility for him/herself.

People are capable and responsible for solving their own problems.
• I know who to refer someone to if he/she has a special need.

There are others in the community with different skills to help.

• I use supervisors to get support, new perspectives and to share ideas.

It is impossible for one person to have all the answers.

• I do not make promises I cannot keep.

Confidentiality builds trust over time.

• I believe that it is always important to visit a person more than once.

Follow-up support helps people to continue their process of change.

• I cannot help everyone in every way.

• I consult regularly with other CVCs and my supervisors.

• I do not repeat people’s stories to anyone.

• I understand that people need reinforcement over a period of time to help them stick with their plans.
LISTENING SKILLS

Listening is one of the most important skills in this group of basic building blocks that can help you to become an effective CVC. The skill of listening is important because it is one of the best ways to encourage people to tell their stories and share their problems.

⇒ Listening breaks the isolation of the person and encourages the person to share their thoughts, feelings and beliefs.

⇒ Expression helps the person:
  • feel relief
  • think more clearly
  • find solutions
  • feel accepted
  • develop confidence
  • build self esteem

⇒ Expression serves as a basis for:
  • understanding
  • building relationships
  • personal change
  • development
  • community action

Perhaps listening is the most powerful tool of the CVC because it unlocks the potential or capacity of the person. So what is listening? What are the qualities of a good listener?
LISTENING SKILLS  Qualities of a Good Listener

- Sit face to face.
- Lean toward the person.
- Use facial expressions to encourage the person.
- Use gestures to encourage the person to say more or to let them know you understand.
- Notice the person’s body posture.
- Notice their facial expression.
- Nod, or use hand gestures for encouragement.

- Share eye contact (appropriate amount).
- Listen to the message.
- Ask questions to be sure that you understand the person.
- Focus on what the person is saying and communicating, not on what you want to say.

- Give undivided attention to the person (free of other thoughts or worries).
- Avoid interruptions or distractions.
- Find a quiet place that is safe.
- Show interest in the person.
- Concentrate on the person, not on your problems.

- Be patient. Give time to the speaker.
- Be a trustworthy person who keeps secrets.
- Be empathic and approachable.
- Be tolerant and accept the person without judgement.
- Be open and flexible.
- Have courage to tolerate reactions or behaviour that is off-putting (there’s a reason someone behaves that way).
- Believe there is good in every person.
- Give encouraging responses.

We usually think that we listen only with our ears, but we also listen with our eyes, mind, body and heart. All of the above qualities of a good listener help the speaker to express their true thoughts and feelings, and this builds a good relationship.
CASE OF LISTENING AND HELPING

A woman is having problems with her 14 year old son. Almost a year ago the rebels attacked and the boy’s father was killed in front of the wife and son. The son was abducted and spent nearly 9 months in the bush before escaping and returning home 2 months ago. Here are two different ways (Scenario A and Scenario B) to approach this woman:

**SCENARIO A**

1. **Woman:** I need some help with my son and someone said you might be able to help me.
   
   **CVC:** Yes Yes… but I need to finish this report. So what is the problem?

2. He won’t go to school and won’t listen to me. Sometimes he just sits all day under a tree and won’t help me at all.
   
   **CVC:** Excuse me while I answer his question...

3. So he refuses to go to school or help you. Why don’t you tell him that a son is supposed to obey his mother? Try that and come back if it doesn’t work.

**Comments on CVC Helping Skills**

- CVC stays behind desk, separated from person.
- CVC writes while listening.
- CVC allows interruption.
- CVC does not give full attention to woman.
- CVC sticks to facts and is not empathetic by asking how the mother feels about this.
- CVC does not offer comfort or ask what the mother thinks would work.
- No follow up scheduled.
**SCENARIO B**

1. **CVC: Welcome, how can I help you?**
   - **Woman: I need some help with my son and someone said you might be able to help me.**
   - **CVC moves closer to greet person.**

2. **Sit down and we will try to figure it out together. Tell me about the situation with your son.**
   - **He is 14 years old and returned from the bush a few months ago. Since then, he won’t go to school and he won’t listen to me. Sometimes he just sits all day under a tree and won’t help me at all.**
   - **CVC sits face to face at equal height.**
   - **CVC emphasizes partnership in working on problem.**
   - **CVC asks open-ended question (‘Tell me about …’).**

3. **How has this affected you?**
   - **I can’t sleep and I cry a lot. It is hard for me to work without help but I have to, otherwise we wouldn’t survive. (woman cries).**
   - **CVC asks question to help woman express.**
   - **CVC accepts woman’s emotions.**
   - **CVC is empathetic.**
   - **CVC allows woman to cry and waits in silence.**

4. **It is normal to feel sad in this situation. What do you think has caused his behaviour?**
   - **I am not sure. The last time we were together before he was abducted was during the ambush where my husband, his father, was killed in front of us. I don’t know what happened to him in the bush but when he returned he was uncooperative.**
   - **CVC asks mother what she thinks about the cause of the problem.**
   - **CVC waits patiently and listens.**
CVC empathises with mother and son.
CVC consults with person about next step.
Follow-up meeting scheduled to have more time to listen and better understand the situation.

How does this person feel after talking with this CVC? In what ways have her problems been addressed? Which CVC would you go to with a problem? What about the CVC’s approach did you like?

Who in your family or community would benefit from your good listening skills? Make a plan to visit them.

Are there times when someone listened to you in a way that made significant difference to your situation? Write down the story.

DO’s and DON’Ts of Good Listening

**DO**
Be kind and respectful.
Find a quiet place where the person feels free to talk.
Listen carefully and try to remember what the person says.
Be empathetic.
Be patient.
Offer encouraging responses and be interested.
Maintain appropriate eye contact.
Look for what is not said as well as what is said.
Ask to clarify or to understand the person better.
Allow silence.
Give appropriate feedback – reassurance, suggestions.
Try your best to listen and understand the person.
Try to find the real feelings behind the story.
Re-state what has been said to show you understand.

**DON’T**
Don’t blame.
Don’t undermine or minimize what the person says.
Don’t judge or criticise.
Don’t be rude.
Don’t interrupt.
Don’t give advice or solutions (listen to the solution of the speaker).
Don’t immediately tell your story of a similar experience.
Don’t express your opinions.
Don’t promise things (you’ll lose trust).
Don’t discipline or use an intimidating voice.
Don’t interpret what they say.
A CASE STUDY

When Bosco was ten years old he saw rebels attack his village. He hid but his best friend was taken by the rebels. He felt sad and guilty because he had not tried to prevent the abduction of his friend. He alone survived.

When Bosco was eleven years old he was abducted for one month, but succeeded in escaping before crossing into Sudan. However, he remembered that one day a boy had tried to escape so the rebels had forced all 18 children to beat this boy as a punishment. The boy died. Now Bosco has returned home but he never speaks to his parents about his guilt, his sadness or the questions inside him. He fears his father who beats him when he does something wrong. He fears to speak with his mother who cries and gets angry when the neighbours talk about the rebel activities. Bosco fears to tell her what he has done because he worries about losing her love. Bosco felt like a part of the rebels for a period of his life, even though he didn’t like it.

Bosco continues to live with the pain inside him, like a big secret that is too heavy for him to carry, but he does not feel he can share it with the people he loves the most, and from whom he would like reassurance and peace. At night he cries alone and has difficulty sleeping.

Although we imagine that children do not know what is happening around them, they understand more than we think they do. For example Bosco understood that his mother wanted him to be a good boy, and he could not risk losing her love by telling her something bad about himself.

Especially in painful situations, children often fear that they will wound their parents, so they do not speak.

If children cannot talk openly about their pain, they hold painful feelings inside them. In the long run these feelings can come out as loneliness, strange behaviour, aggression, or withdrawal.

Remember that children want to make adults happy by saying what they think adults want to hear. This is because children cannot live independently and need parents to survive and thrive. Because they are young, they need the love and acceptance of adults. Remember the stages of development on pages 4-8.
COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN

I would like to explain my thoughts and point of view to my father, but he does not listen to me. He immediately starts giving me advice. So I remain quiet.

It is difficult to speak with adults! Most of the time they laugh at me or humiliate me in front of others. They are critical of what I express and I feel judged. It seems that they do not trust or believe in me and what I explain to them.

Even though I’m seven years old, I notice what is going on around me. I pick up on feelings and emotions of all the big people around me. But please, help me! Sometimes I need your explanation about what I see because I can often feel confused, worried or scared.

If you want to talk to me, do not expect that I will instantly talk to you. I need time to feel safe, to be sure that you are a friend that I can trust. Maybe we can start by doing something together - some games or playing in order for me to feel relaxed so that it is easier to talk. I need time to observe you!

Usually I avoid speaking with adults about painful situations. You never know which way they will react. It is better to lie and please them by saying something they want to hear. That way they will continue to love and care about me, and I feel safe.
I never imagined that children were more difficult to listen to and help than adults! They need all of my helping skills!

If a child is aggressive or rude with me, I must remember that it may not be directed only at me. That child may be feeling angry with adults for treating him badly or letting him down. I must be patient and not take it personally.

I need to positively reinforce the effort of a child to express. I cannot force her to share.

I cannot hurry the child. I must allow plenty of time and be patient.

I need to make an effort to explain things in simple terms to a young child. Just because that child is not asking questions does not mean that he or she is not thinking about things.

It is important for me to remember that there are many reasons that a child may not tell the truth - fear of punishment, desire to please adults, difficulty expressing how she really feels, or inability to accept what has happened.

I must remember that younger children in particular may need physical contact to comfort and reassure them.

I should not stop the child from crying but offer him freedom and comfort him. Although it is painful for the child, and sometimes for me, it is like removing the thorn so that the wound can heal.
Children have many ways of communicating:

- Through play
- The way they get along with other children during activities
- Through music, dance and singing
- Through writing, drawing and drama
- Through story telling and prayers
- Through physical contact

For children in difficult situations, these ways of expression can be very useful, especially when it is difficult for them to express in words. These ways of expression can all be opportunities for you to ask the children about their drawings, writings, play or drama, in order to allow them to verbally express their thoughts and feelings. Meeting with children in groups to discuss allows them to get support from each other and they begin to realize that they are not alone.

Some questions you may ask:

- “Tell me about your drawing.”
- “What is this person in your drawing thinking?”
- “What did these people say to you?”
- “Why did you end the drama in this way? Is this the way it happened to you?”

A helpful activity for children is to talk, draw, write, sing, or act the good things of the past, present, and future. Refer to page 23.
Acholi cultural values help to build inner resources of a person and of a community. They can also help to rebuild broken relationships, activities, and spirituality. These roles and values play an important part in the lives of the Acholi people.

Examples of meanings behind traditional dances:

1. BWOLA - Royal Dance  
   = source of identity  
   = allegiance

2. LARAKARAKA - Courtship Dance  
   = builds friendship / relationships  
   = encourages confidence  
   = promotes morality  
   = encourages community responsibility in building families

3. MYEL LYEL - Funeral Dance  
   = inspiration  
   = recognition  
   = role model

People can also create new dances, drama and songs to express grief, desire for the future, and messages of peace, unity, and forgiveness in the community.

- Cultural games - develop skills
- Working together - build relationships
- Cooking together - emphasize responsibility of a whole community to take care of orphans
- Speaking - give consolation and comfort
- Singing - allow expression
- Drama - pass messages

Acholi cultural values have always given people inner resources and a sense of belonging and identity in the community. However, all cultures change and progress so it is important to promote the positive values and meanings in traditional ways while remaining open to necessary changes and creativity.

All of these promote acceptance, welcoming, respect, sense of belonging, values, beliefs, forgiveness and reconciliation.

- Respect for leadership and clan support system
- Funeral ceremony - to console the family in grief
- Teaching the children at the fire camp - not just teaching but allowing them to express their opinions, ideas, painful situations, and difficulties.
- Marriage - acceptance into a clan, introduce children to the relatives. Educate children to avoid pre-marital sex. Sensitise parents to avoid early marriage. It is respecting the rights of the child and Acholi values to not allow children to be married before 18 years old.
SCENARIOS

SCENARIO 1  HELPING PEOPLE WHO HAVE LOST INTEREST IN LIFE

This scenario was drawn from various role plays developed by CVCs in response to the following situation that was presented: “You find in your community some people who have completely lost interest and purpose in life (numbness). What is your intervention?”

= thoughts of the person (not said out loud) = what is actually said = CVC

Some of the building blocks of helping are noted under the dialogue when they are used by the CVC.

1. Good afternoon. How is the day going? How is home? Can I join you?
   - CVC creates good atmosphere by showing interest in their lives.

2. You have started relaxing very early in the day!
   - TRY TO UNDERSTAND THE PERSON'S POINT OF VIEW

3. That is how it is with us. It helps us forget our problems.
   - LISTEN TO THE PERSON

4. I lost all my property and now I have nothing more to do than to drink.
   - CVC asks open questions to try to understand.

5. I am left with only this boy who says he wants to join the army and die like his father.

6. I remember ... I cannot make it better for them, but I can listen. There are too many with problems but maybe I can start with one of them. Perhaps the man ...
   - BE FLEXIBLE IN YOUR APPROACH

7. I had better do something to help them.
   - KNOW MY LIMITS

8. Take heart. These things happen. There are still a lot of things to do in life. Whatever you are going through will pass. Tomorrow will be better.
   - RESPECT THE PERSON

9. He doesn't know anything about my life or he wouldn't say that.
   - He doesn't know what it is like to lose a spouse and not be able to protect your son.

10. That is easy for him to say. He hasn't lost all his property.
    - CVC realises that advice is not working so he tries something else.
What do you like about what this CVC did? How would you do it differently? Think of some follow-up visits and how you might approach this person. Write them down. Write down some ways that you might approach some of the other people in the scenario.
SCENARIO 2  HELPING COMMUNICATION BETWEEN ADULTS AND ADOLESCENTS

This scenario was drawn from various role plays developed by CVCs in response to the following situation that was presented: “Some adolescents in the village have problems with adults and parents. The parents came to you to complain. What will be your intervention?”

1. A group of adults approach the CVC. Greetings are shared, then the adults begin to speak.

We have come to seek your help. We are having big problems with our youth. They will not listen to us, they are staying out late drinking, and they are causing problems in the village. Can you get them to behave in a good way?

RESPECT THE PERSON

TRY TO UNDERSTAND THE PERSON’S VIEW

CVC shows an interest in trying to understand both points of view - the parents and the children.

My son stays out very late most nights at the disco, then he comes home and expects his mother to feed him, even though the rest of the family has finished supper. Sometimes he is drunk and injured from fighting.

My son does some of the same, then comes home drunk and disrespectful. He yells at us (his parents), and refuses to go to school. He acts like he does not care about us and ignores my guidance.

When my daughter comes home late, she acts like it doesn’t matter what I think. Then she refuses to help around the house, even when I threaten her. I always see lots of boys around her.

I think I understand why you want to work on these problems. Tell me more about how this has affected each of you.

2. 

I will be glad to work with you and with the young people to try to find a solution. What specific problems are you having with the youth?

LISTEN TO THE PERSON

HELP THE PERSON TO EXPRESS FEELINGS

My friend operates a shop near the disco and has had some disturbances outside. He has come to me about it, accusing my son. It is embarrassing in front of my friends to feel like I cannot control my son.

My friend operates a shop near the disco and has had some disturbances outside. He has come to me about it, accusing my son. It is embarrassing in front of my friends to feel like I cannot control my son.

I get very frustrated when every night my son comes home drunk and uncooperative. He disturbs the whole household, then in the morning he refuses to get up to go to school. It puts me in a bad mood for the day.

Good luck trying to talk some sense into them. I can’t!

I feel like I cannot control my daughter. No matter what I try she won’t listen. I fear she may play sex.

Okay you can try!

It certainly sounds like your families are being disrupted. It is normal to feel embarrassed, frustrated or angry in these situations. I think it would be important for me to meet with the youth and listen to them. How does that sound?

I guess I’ll just be trying to listen so that I can get a clearer picture of what they see as problems and solutions. Then we can all meet together to plan the next step.

BE FLEXIBLE IN YOUR APPROACH

CVC realises the need to meet with the youth and listen to them.

We agree.
The next evening the CVC approaches a group of youth who are drinking.

How is it? May I join you?

Sure if you can buy us drinks.

That is not the best because I’d rather talk to you another time. How about tomorrow afternoon?

CVC decides that it would not be useful to talk with the youth while they are drinking.

BE PATIENT

Yes, if you can find us. We don’t always hang out in the same place.

I will look for you after school hours.

Whatever you like.

The following afternoon the CVC joins the youth under a tree. The CVC sits with them while they talk about life at home and at school.

Your parents are concerned about what is happening between you at home. How do you see it?

It makes me frustrated. I am grown and should be able to make my own decisions about what I do.

My parents disapprove of everything I do, so I stopped trying to please them. I do what I want.

My family doesn’t care what I think, so I don’t care what they think.

CVC arranges to meet at another time.

TRY TO UNDERSTAND THE PERSON’S VIEW

My parents drink too much and need all their money for that. I need new shoes for school but they won’t get them for me. They don’t care about me.

My parents want me to do all the work at home. They do not understand that I want to spend some time with my friends. To go to discos relieves my frustrations.

My parents are always busy. I wish they would listen to what I have to say.

HELP THE PERSON TO EXPRESS FEELINGS AND POINT OF VIEW

You all have some good points. Everyone deserves to be listened to. I’ll talk with your parents and see what we can work out.

ENABLE THE PERSON TO SOLVE THEIR OWN PROBLEM

RESPECT THE PERSON
Another day the CVC meets with the parents again.

I am glad we can meet again. I have some thoughts about what might help. Would you like to discuss some possible solutions to the problems between you and your young people?

Yes of course.

In talking with your youth it reminded me of what it was like for me when I was that age. Do you remember yourselves as adolescents? Do you remember your anxiety about all the changes in your body? And the need to be smart and to be recognised by others? I also remember the need for some freedom to spend time with friends my own age. I had many questions about life, the meaning of life and death, and the uncertain future. Do you remember that yourselves?

What do you like about what this CVC did? How would you do it differently? Think of how you would approach the follow-up visits. Write down your ideas.

Adolescents have many needs. Their lives are changing and their parents cannot impose discipline as before. Your youth need your explanations and meanings about the values that you want to give them, more than being forced to follow rules. Most of all they need you as role models. I’m interested in your reactions to all of this. What do you think about it?

CVC waits until both groups are ready to meet.
ROLE OF A COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER COUNSELLOR

A CVC is someone who:
- Is a volunteer
- Can respond to psycho-social needs in the community
- Is selected by the community
- Can promote the psycho-social well being of the community
- Has received training
- Is part of a network

PSYCHO-SOCIAL NETWORK IN KITGUM DISTRICT

**CDO** • Coordination of all people involved in psycho-social support program.

**Trained Counsellors** • Taking care of referred difficult cases
- Counselling services

**Supervisors** • Sensitisation sessions
- Regular follow-up and support
- Facilitation of training sessions
- Coordination with other stakeholders

**CDA** • Delivering goods and social services to the community
- Identifying psycho-social problems and handling them
- Registration and documentation for the district
- Supervision and follow-up at sub-county level

**Teachers** • Identifying children with difficulties, supporting them to cope positively
- Sensitising children and parents to promote unity and to understand psycho-social needs
- Promoting recreational activities to relieve stress
- Requesting a home visit with the CVC

**Community** • Offering material and emotional resources to help others
- Promoting solidarity and unity in the community

**CVC** • Sensitising the community about the need to participate in PSSP
- Identifying and supporting people in difficulties through frequent visits
- Reintegrating returned abducted children into the community
- Referring people to the appropriate services (CDA, counselor, etc)
- Promoting cultural activities and values in the community to help people cope

**Health Workers** • Identifying whether a person has a mental illness or trauma
- Handling simple cases and referring difficult ones to psychiatric nurses and trained counsellors
- Supporting the work of teachers and CVCs

**Non-Government Organisation** • Providing technical support to PSSP (logistics, capacity building)

**Advisory Leaders** • Advising about and promoting positive aspects of Acholi cultural values to help people cope
- Performing ritual and traditional practices
- Linking PSSP with traditional framework of society

The CVC is not alone in promoting the well being of the people.
The CVC is part of a network.
PLANNING AND RECORDING

Use the following questions to guide you in your visits, in reporting, and in planning for future visits.

INITIAL STAGE

How was this person referred to you?

INFORMATION ABOUT HIM/HER:

Name ________________________________
Place ________________________________
Age ________________________________
Marital status ________________________________
Number of children ________________________________

Economic situation ________________________________
Condition of home ________________________________
Relationship with family and relatives ________________________________
Relationship with neighbours and others ________________________________
External help ________________________________

What are the signs this person shows that makes you think he/she needs help? (Refer to list of effects on p 13)

How did he/she express his/her situation?

What are some of his/her ways of coping?

What observations do you have about this person and his/her circumstances?

What possible solutions did you discuss with him/her?

Which alternatives does he/she think is best (after considering advantages and disadvantages of different solutions)?

Which steps has he/she taken towards reorganisation or solutions to the problem?

MIDDLE STAGE

Describe the person’s current state. Is he/she showing further signs of coping and recovery?

Talks more freely about the problem
Able to talk about other things
Sleeps well
Stays together with family members
Takes care of him/herself
Takes care of loved ones

Carries out daily activities
Socialises with friends
Eats well
Expresses hope for the future
Drinks more moderately

WAY FORWARD (if needed) or FINAL STAGE

What are the next steps?

What kind of assistance is needed? Who should provide this assistance? Be specific.

This person needs to be referred to______________________________ because ________________________________. (This is only necessary for certain cases).
SELF EVALUATION

The same qualities that you use in listening to others are important for listening to your inner self – openness, non judging, alertness and curiosity. As a CVC it is important to listen to yourself and your experiences because the more aware you are of your own abilities, limits, strengths and problems, the better you are able to understand and help others.

Following are some tools or exercises and guides for encouraging you to think about your inner self and your experiences.

A. ABOUT MY LIFE

One thing I like about myself is ________________________________________________________________

Something I’m not good at doing, but wish I were good at is ________________________________________________________________

The thing I like most about my home is ________________________________________________________________

If I could change one thing about my life it would be ________________________________________________________________

A person who has been a role model in my life is ________________________________________________________________

What I appreciate about this role model is ________________________________________________________________

One new thing I would like to learn is ________________________________________________________________

One skill I could improve is ________________________________________________________________

The thing I most like about my family is ________________________________________________________________

One thing in my daily life that I enjoy is ________________________________________________________________

My favorite day of the week is __________________ because ________________________________________________________________

My favorite time of the day is __________________ because ________________________________________________________________

What I like most about my friends is ________________________________________________________________

My favorite activity is ________________________________________________________________

Something I believe strongly is ________________________________________________________________

You can also use these tools to help you get to know people you meet.

B. SOME QUESTIONS TO THINK ABOUT AND DISCUSS WITH OTHER CVCS OR IN SUPERVISION

In my role as CVC:

How do I work best?
What is easy for me?
What is difficult for me?
What would I like to share with others about a difficult case?
What is the reason the case was difficult for me?
What do I want from my peers?
What do I not want from my peers?
What can I contribute to this group of peers?
C. BUILDING BLOCKS OF HELPING

Rate your level of skill / ability / attitude for each of the following building blocks.

This information is for you to assess your areas of strength as a CVC, as well as areas where you want to grow and develop. It is important to be honest with yourself and open to learning new things about yourself. This information is for yourself alone; no one will check on it. Doing these ratings over time can also help you to track your progress.

To rate yourself, think of yourself as a water jar: By shading in the amount of water it contains you indicate how well you think you are doing.

- currently do not have - need to learn this skill/attitude
- have a little of this skill/attitude but need to grow and develop it
- have an average amount of this skill/attitude
- have reached the best in this skill/attitude

Complete one rating for each:
1. Before you took the CVC training (before)
2. How you see yourself right now (today)
3. Leave blank now for you to complete in the future, maybe a year from now (future)

Refer back to pages 24-27 for the full explanation of each block.

Before | Today | Future
--- | --- | ---

☐ Respect the person

☐ Listen to the person

☐ Try to understand the person’s view

☐ Help the person express feelings

One way I could grow/develop in this area is:

________________________

________________________

________________________
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Before</th>
<th>Today</th>
<th>Future</th>
<th>One way I could grow/develop in this area is:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be patient</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Be flexible in your approach</td>
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<tr>
<td>Enable the person to solve their own problem</td>
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<tr>
<td>Offer alternatives</td>
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<tr>
<td>Refer to network if needed</td>
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<tr>
<td>Know your limits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Be trustworthy</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provide follow up support</td>
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Other thoughts about how I want to improve:
Rights of a Child

All these rights come from the needs of a child. A child needs:

- to grow in a peaceful and caring environment
- to talk and be listened to
- to be protected from abuse and violence.

My needs become my rights. However, my rights cannot be separated from my responsibilities. Responsibilities increase as the child grows and develops. (Refer to Development of a Person.) What we need from others should also be what we give to others (love, care, security).

Promoting Human Rights - including children’s and women’s rights - is a challenge for us in our work. It will take time and patience. Let’s work together to change our own attitudes and promote positive attitudes in the community.

Children’s Rights

A child has the right to:

- Life.
- A name and nationality.
- Rest and leisure.
- To know his/her parents.
- Be cared for by his/her parents.
- Freedom of expression.
- Freedom of thought, conscience, religion and association.
- Participation in cultural and artistic life.
- Education on the basis of equal opportunity.
- The highest standard of health facilities and rehabilitation of health.
- Not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment.
- A child has a right to protection against all forms of discrimination or punishment.

In all actions concerning children, the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration.

Article 2 UN Convention on the rights of the child

Access information and material aimed at the promotion of his/her social, spiritual and moral well being.

A physically and mentally disabled child has a right to enjoy a full and decent life and active participation in the community.

Protection against interference with his/her privacy, honour and reputation.

Protection from illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances.

Protection from sexual exploitation and abuse.

Protection against abduction of, the sale or traffic in children for any purpose.

Protection against all forms of physical and mental violence, abuse, neglect, exploitation or hazardous work.

A child has a right to:

- Be cared for by his/her parents.
- Freedom of expression.
- Freedom of thought, conscience, religion and association.
- Participation in cultural and artistic life.
- Education on the basis of equal opportunity.
- The highest standard of health facilities and rehabilitation of health.
- Not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman, degrading treatment or punishment.
- A child has a right to protection against all forms of discrimination or punishment.

Article 3 UN Convention on the rights of the child.

All these rights come from the needs of a child. A child needs:

- to grow in a peaceful and caring environment
- to talk and be listened to
- to be protected from abuse and violence.