

## BASIC HELPING SKILLS: RESEARCH AND PRACTICE

### HELPING SESSIONS PACKET

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#### Instructions for Helping Sessions

##### **You need to bring to each of the sessions:**

1. a digital recorder, or cellphone/laptop with recording capability
2. Informed Consent Form
3. 3 copies of the Session Review Form
4. Client Session Process and Outcome Measure (Client SPOM)
5. Helper Session Process and Outcome Measure (Helper SPOM)
6. Helper Intentions list
7. Client Reactions System

**Test the recorder ahead of time**, to make sure it works and that you can hear it well enough to transcribe a session from it.

ARRIVE 10 MINUTES EARLY IF POSSIBLE.

Students will be gathered in groups of three. Each student will conduct a 20 min. helping session (i.e., will be the helper) with one of the two classmates she/he was grouped with (i.e., the client). The third member of the group will serve as an observer. Each student in the triad will take turns in all 3 roles (helper, client, observer); therefore, each group will conduct a total of THREE 20 min. helping sessions. At the beginning, students in the triads should quickly decide who will serve in which role first. Each group will have to conduct three 20-min. sessions and review each of the sessions, so is central for students to be very efficient with their time. Once the roles have been determined, each participant will sign the consent form.

##### **HELPER Instructions:**

1. Give to the observer the observer version of the session review form for him/her to complete during the helping session.
2. Turn on the tape
3. Say to the client, "Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm an undergraduate student learning helping skills. We have 20 minutes to talk today. After our session we will complete some measures and review the tape. Everything we talk about here today will be kept confidential. The only exceptions to this are if you express thoughts about hurting yourself or someone else or if you mention any childhood physical or sexual abuse. Do you have any questions? What would you like to talk about?"
4. Conduct a 20-minute session. Be sure to go through at least 20 speaking turns. Try to be as helpful as possible.
5. Give the client a warning when you have about 5 minutes left saying something like, "We have about 5 minutes left to talk."
6. Stop the tape at the end of the 20 minutes.
7. Give a copy of the client version of the **Session Process and Outcome Measure (SPOM-C)** to the student who was your client, for him/her to fill out.
8. Fill out the **helper version of the Session Process and Outcome Measure (SPOM-H)**.
9. Conduct the Session Review:
  - a. As the observer reads what you said in each speaking turn, you should:
    - i. Record your intentions for the speaking turn; you can code up to 3 intentions (using the Helper Intentions list) per speaking turn.
    - ii. Then rate the helpfulness of the speaking turn on a scale of 1 to 9. Repeat for each speaking turn.
10. Collect the Session Review Forms that were completed by the helper and the observer. Collect the Session Process and Outcome Measure completed by the client.
  - a. When you leave the helping session, you should have **FIVE** forms:
    - i. the **SPOM-H** (which has your own ratings of your interventions when you were a helper),
    - ii. the **Session Review Form – Helper Version**,
    - iii. the **SPOM-C** (which reflects how the client rated you),
    - iv. the **Session Review Form-Client Version**, and
    - v. the **Session Review Form-Observer Version**.

**CLIENT Instructions:**

1. Talk about something safe for 20 min.
2. Complete the **client** version of the **Session Process and Outcome Measure** (SPOM-C) that the helper will give you.
3. As the observer reads what the helper said in each speaking turn during the session review, complete your portion of the **Session Review Form**. You can give up to 3 reactions (using the Reactions System, p. 14 in this packet) per speaking turn. Then rate the helpfulness of the speaking turn on a scale of 1 to 9. Repeat for each speaking turn.
4. Give to the helper your completed SPOM-C and the completed Session Review form.

**OBSERVER Instructions:**

1. Sit in an unobtrusive place as possible to watch the session.
2. Using the Session Review Form, write down as much as possible about what the helper (& only the helper) says during each speaking turn.
3. During the review after the session, clearly state the turn number to make sure that both the client and helper are on the same turn, and then read out loud what the helper said during that turn. Pause to give the client and helper time to do what they need to do.

# SESSION REVIEW FORM – **HELPER** VERSION

**Instructions:** At the end of the 20-minute session, use the observer form to fill in the key words for each of your speaking turns. Helpers should indicate up to three intentions for each of their speaking turns. Helpers should then rate the helpfulness of their interventions using the Helpfulness Scale shown below (use the whole range of the scale). **Respond according to how you felt at the time in the session.** Do not collaborate.

Helper name: \_\_\_\_\_ Client name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Hindering				Neutral				Helpful
Helpfulness Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

Turn	Keywords	Intentions	Helpfulness rating
1	_____	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	_____
4	_____	_____	_____
5	_____	_____	_____
6	_____	_____	_____
7	_____	_____	_____
8	_____	_____	_____
9	_____	_____	_____
10	_____	_____	_____
11	_____	_____	_____
12	_____	_____	_____
13	_____	_____	_____
14	_____	_____	_____
15	_____	_____	_____
16	_____	_____	_____
17	_____	_____	_____
18	_____	_____	_____
19	_____	_____	_____
20	_____	_____	_____

What was the most helpful event that occurred during this session? Why was it helpful? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

What was the least helpful event in the session? Why was it unhelpful? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

# **SESSION REVIEW FORM – CLIENT VERSION**

**Instructions:** At the end of the 20-minute session, use the observer form to fill in the key words for each of your speaking turns. Clients should indicate up to three reactions to each of the helper's speaking turns and should circle any reactions that were hidden. Clients should rate the helpfulness of the intervention using the Helpfulness Scale shown below (use the whole range of the scale). **Respond according to how you felt at the time in the session.** Do not collaborate.

Helper name: \_\_\_\_\_ Client name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

	Hindering				Neutral				Helpful	
Helpfulness Scale	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	

Turn	Keywords	Reactions	Helpfulness rating
1	_____	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____
3	_____	_____	_____
4	_____	_____	_____
5	_____	_____	_____
6	_____	_____	_____
7	_____	_____	_____
8	_____	_____	_____
9	_____	_____	_____
10	_____	_____	_____
11	_____	_____	_____
12	_____	_____	_____
13	_____	_____	_____
14	_____	_____	_____
15	_____	_____	_____
16	_____	_____	_____
17	_____	_____	_____
18	_____	_____	_____
19	_____	_____	_____
20	_____	_____	_____

What was the most helpful event that occurred during this session? Why was it helpful? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

What was the least helpful event in the session? Why was it unhelpful? \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

### SESSION REVIEW FORM – OBSERVER VERSION

**Instructions:** During the session, write down the key words for each HELPER speaking turn. You do not need to write down the key words for the client's speaking turns. At the end of the 20-minute session, allow the helper and client to copy the key words you wrote down.

Helper name: \_\_\_\_\_ Client name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Turn	Keywords
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	
9	
10	
11	
12	
13	
14	
15	
16	
17	
18	
18	
20	

## Session Process and Outcome Measure – Client (SPOM-C)

*Instructions:* Indicate how much each statement reflects your experiences in this session. Please note that all of these things do not occur in every session because helpers do many different things to be helpful. The term helper can refer to a therapist, counselor, or any other person in the helping role. *Circle one number for each item using the following scale:*

**Instructions:** Indicate how much each statement reflects your experiences in your most recent helping session. Please note that all of these things do not occur in every session because helpers do many different things to be helpful. The term helper can refer to a therapist, counselor, or any other person in the helping role. Circle one number for each item using the following scale.

### The Helping Skills Measure

In this session, my helper...	Strongly Disagree			Strongly Agree		
1. asked questions to help me explore what I was thinking or feeling.	1	2	3	4	5	
2. encouraged me to challenge my beliefs.	1	2	3	4	5	
3. did <u>not</u> help me think about changes I could make in my life.	1	2	3	4	5	
4. did <u>not</u> teach me specific skills to deal with my problems.	1	2	3	4	5	
5. did <u>not</u> encourage me to express what I was thinking or feeling.	1	2	3	4	5	
6. helped me become aware of contradictions in my thoughts, feelings, and/or behaviors.	1	2	3	4	5	
7. helped me think about my concerns.	1	2	3	4	5	
8. did <u>not</u> help me identify useful resources (e.g., friends, parents, advisors, schools, clergy).	1	2	3	4	5	
9. helped me figure out how to solve a specific problem.	1	2	3	4	5	
10. helped me understand the reasons behind my thoughts, feelings, and/or behaviors.	1	2	3	4	5	
11. did <u>not</u> encourage me to experience my feelings.	1	2	3	4	5	
12. did <u>not</u> discuss with me specific things I could do to make change happen.	1	2	3	4	5	
13. helped me gain a new perspective on my problems.	1	2	3	4	5	

### The Relationship Scale

In this session, I...						
14. did <u>not</u> feel a bond with my helper.	1	2	3	4	5	
15. liked my helper.	1	2	3	4	5	
16. trusted my helper.	1	2	3	4	5	
17. worked collaboratively with my helper.	1	2	3	4	5	

### The Session Evaluation Scale

I...						
18. am glad I attended this session.	1	2	3	4	5	
19. did <u>not</u> feel satisfied with what I got out of this session.	1	2	3	4	5	
20. thought that this session was helpful.	1	2	3	4	5	
21. did <u>not</u> think that this session was valuable.	1	2	3	4	5	

## Session Process and Outcome Measure – Helper (SPOM-H)

*Instructions:* Indicate how much each statement reflects your experiences in this session. Please note that all of these things do not occur in every session because helpers do many different things to be helpful. The term helper can refer to a therapist, counselor, or any other person in the helping role. *Circle one number for each item using the following scale:*

	Strongly Disagree				Strongly Agree
<b>In this session, I...</b>					
1. asked questions to help the client explore what s/he was thinking or feeling.....	1	2	3	4	5
2. encouraged the client to challenge his/her beliefs.....	1	2	3	4	5
3. did <b>NOT</b> help the client think about changes s/he could make in her/his life.....	1	2	3	4	5
4. did <b>NOT</b> teach the client specific skills to deal with his/her problems.....	1	2	3	4	5
5. did <b>NOT</b> encourage the client to express what s/he was thinking or feeling.....	1	2	3	4	5
6. helped the client become aware of contradictions in his/her thoughts, feelings, and/or behaviors.....	1	2	3	4	5
7. helped the client think about her/his concerns.....	1	2	3	4	5
8. did <b>NOT</b> help the client identify useful resources (e.g., friends, parents, advisors, schools, clergy).....	1	2	3	4	5
9. helped the client figure out how to solve a specific problem.....	1	2	3	4	5
10. helped the client understand the reasons behind her/his thoughts, feelings, and/or behaviors.....	1	2	3	4	5
11. did <b>NOT</b> encourage the client to experience his/her feelings.....	1	2	3	4	5
12. did <b>NOT</b> discuss with the client specific things s/he could do to make change happen.....	1	2	3	4	5
13. helped the client gain a new perspective on his/her problems.....	1	2	3	4	5
<b>In this session, my client...</b>					
14. did <b>NOT</b> feel a bond with me .....	1	2	3	4	5
15. liked me .....	1	2	3	4	5
16. trusted me .....	1	2	3	4	5
17. worked collaboratively with me .....	1	2	3	4	5
<b>My client...</b>					
18. is glad that s/he attended this session .....	1	2	3	4	5
19. did <b>NOT</b> feel satisfied with what s/he got out of this session .....	1	2	3	4	5
20. thought that this session was helpful.....	1	2	3	4	5
21. did <b>NOT</b> think that this session was valuable.....	1	2	3	4	5

## HELPER INTENTIONS LIST

<b>Intention</b>	<b>Definition</b>
1. Set limits	To structure, make arrangements, establish goals and objectives of helping, outline methods to attain goals, correct expectations about helping, establish rules or parameters of relationship (e.g., time, fees, cancellation policies, homework)
2. Get information	To find out specific facts about history, client functioning, future plans, and so on
3. Give information	To educate, give facts, correct misperceptions or misinformation, give reasons for helper's behavior or procedures
4. Support	To provide a warm, supportive, empathic environment; increase trust and rapport and build relationship; help client feel accepted, understood, comfortable, reassured, and less anxious; help establish a person-to-person relationship
5. Focus	To help client get back on track, change subject, channel or structure the discussion if she or he is unable to begin or has been diffuse or rambling
6. Clarify	To provide or solicit more elaboration, emphasis, or specification when client or helper has been vague, incomplete, confusing, contradictory, or inaudible
7. Instill hope	To convey the expectation that change is possible and likely to occur, convey that the helper can help the client, restore morale, build up the client's confidence to make changes
8. Encourage catharsis	To promote relief from tension or unhappy feelings, allow the client a chance to let go of or talk through feelings and problems
9. Identify maladaptive cognitions	To identify maladaptive or irrational thoughts or attitudes (e.g., I must be perfect.)
10. Identify maladaptive behaviors	To identify and give feedback about the client's inappropriate behaviors and their consequences, do a behavioral analysis, point out games
11. Encourage self-control	To encourage client to gain a sense of mastery or control over her or his thoughts, feelings, behaviors, or impulses; help client become more appropriately internal rather than inappropriately external in assigning responsibility for her or his role
12. Identify and intensify feelings	To identify, intensify, and enable acceptance of feelings; encourage or provoke the client to become aware of or deepen underlying or hidden feelings or affect or experience feelings at a deeper level
13. Promote insight	To encourage understanding of the underlying reasons, dynamics, assumptions, or unconscious motivations for cognitions, behaviors, attitudes, or feelings (may include an understanding of the client's reactions to others' behaviors)
14. Promote change	To build and develop new and more adaptive skills, behaviors, or cognitions in dealing with self and others; to instill new, more adaptive assumptive models, frameworks, explanations, or conceptualizations; to give an assessment or opinion about client functioning that helps client see self in new way
15. Reinforce change	To give positive reinforcement or feedback about behavioral, cognitive, or affective attempts at change to enhance the probability that the change is continued or maintained; encourage risk taking and new ways of behaving
16. Deal with resistance	To overcome obstacles to change or progress (may discuss failure to adhere to procedures in helping, either in past or to prevent possibility of future failure)
17. Challenge	To jolt the client out of a present state; shake up current beliefs or feelings; test validity, adequacy, reality, or appropriateness of beliefs, thoughts, feelings, or behaviors; help client question the necessity of maintaining old patterns
18. Deal with the therapeutic relationship	To resolve problems as they arise in the relationship in order to build or maintain relationship or a smooth working alliance; heal ruptures in the alliance; deal with dependency issues appropriate to stage in helping; uncover and resolve distortions in client's thinking about the relationship that are based on past experiences rather than current reality
19. Relieve helper's needs	To protect, relieve, or defend the helper; alleviate anxiety (may try unduly to persuade, argue, or feel good or superior at the expense of the client)



## CLIENT REACTIONS SYSTEM

### POSITIVE

Reaction	Definition
1. Understood	I felt that my helper really understood me and knew what I was saying or what was going on with me.
2. Supported	I felt accepted, reassured, liked, cared for, or safe. I felt like my helper was on my side or I came to trust, like, respect, or admire my helper more. This may have involved a change in my relationship with my helper, such that we resolved a problem between us.
3. Hopeful	I felt confident, encouraged, optimistic, strong, or happy and felt that I could change.
4. Relieved	I felt less depressed, anxious, guilty, or angry or had fewer uncomfortable or painful feelings.
5. Negative thoughts	I became aware of specific negative thoughts or behaviors that cause problems for me or others.
6. Better self-understanding	I gained new insight about myself, saw new connections, or began to understand why I behaved or felt a certain new way. This new understanding helped me accept and like myself.
7. Clear	I got more focused about what I was really trying to say, what areas I need to change, what my goals are, or what I want to work on in helping.
8. Feelings	I felt a greater awareness or deepening of feelings or could express my emotions better.
9. Responsibility	I accepted my role in events and blamed others less.
10. Unstuck	I overcame a block and felt freed up and more involved in what I have to do in helping.
11. New perspective	I gained a new understanding of another person, situation, or the world. I understand why people or things are as they are.
12. Educated	I gained greater knowledge or information. I learned something I had not known.
13. New ways to behave	I learned specific ideas about what I can do differently to cope with particular situations or problems. I solved a problem, made a choice or decision, or decided to take a risk.
14. Challenged	I felt shook up or forced to question myself or to look at issues I had been avoiding.

### NEGATIVE

Reaction	Definition
15. Scared	I felt overwhelmed or afraid and wanted to avoid admitting having some feeling or problem. I may have felt that my helper was too pushy or would disapprove of me or would not like me.
16. Worse	I felt less hopeful, out of control, dumb, incompetent, ashamed, or ready to give up. Perhaps my helper ignored me, criticized me, hurt me, pitied me, or treated me as weak and helpless. I may have felt jealous of or competitive with my helper.
17. Stuck	I felt blocked, impatient, or bored. I did not know what to do next or how to get out of the situation. I felt dissatisfied with the progress of helping or having to go over the same things again.
18. Lacking direction	I felt angry or upset that my helper did not give me enough guidance or direction.
19. Confused	I didn't know how I was feeling or felt distracted from what I wanted to say. I was puzzled or couldn't understand what my helper was saying. I wasn't sure I agreed with my helper.
20. Misunderstood	I felt that my helper did not really hear what I was trying to say, misjudged me, or made assumptions about me that were incorrect.
21. No reaction	I had no particular reaction. My helper may have been making social conversation, gathering information, or was unclear.

**Client Session Informed Consent (Instructor Copy)**

I understand that my helper is a student-in-training.

I understand that my helping session(s) will be audiotaped for training and supervisory purposes; that only my helper and those involved in the course will review my tapes; and that confidentiality will be strictly maintained in accordance with the law. Recordings will be destroyed in a timely manner.

I understand that all information shared in this session will be kept confidential, with a few key exceptions:

- a) Supervisors, instructors, and/or teaching assistants may listen to the session or read transcripts of session (transcripts will have no identifying information)
- b) Intention to harm self or others, as required by law
- c) Reasonable suspicion of current or previous child abuse or neglect, as required by law
- d) Court orders

With the understanding that I may withdraw my consent to the above conditions at any time, I grant my permission to participate in the session(s) and to be audiotaped by the helper whose signature appears below.

Signature of client: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of helper: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name of Client

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name of Helper

**Client Session Informed Consent (Your Copy)**

I understand that my helper is a student-in-training.

I understand that my helping session(s) will be audiotaped for training and supervisory purposes; that only my helper and those involved in the course will review my tapes; and that confidentiality will be strictly maintained in accordance with the law. Recordings will be destroyed in a timely manner.

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- d) Court orders

With the understanding that I may withdraw my consent to the above conditions at any time, I grant my permission to participate in the session(s) and to be audiotaped by the helper whose signature appears below.

Signature of client: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of helper: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name of Client

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name of Helper