

THE SKILLED HELPER MODEL (based on Egan*)

This model is a framework for mentors that you can use to assist your mentee in:

- analysing and solving problems
- reframing situations towards a new understanding
- developing opportunities resulting from the situation or problem
- choosing and defining goals and actions, and
- achieving outcomes they value.

The model addresses four main questions:

- 1) What is going on (exploration)
- 2) How else could the situation be seen (reframing)
- 3) What do I really want (goal setting)
- 4) How can I get to what I really want (action planning)

When using this model, the following active listening strategies can be effective:

- asking Open-ended questions
- paraphrasing
- structuring the discussion
- summarizing key point
- silence
- recognising patterns or themes
- challenging
- focusing
- Showing empathy

STAGE 1: EXPLORATION	STAGE 2: REFRAMING	STAGE 3: GOAL SETTING	STAGE 4: ACTION PLANNING
Description			
<p>In this stage you encourage the mentee to describe the situation or problem from his/her point of view.</p>	<p>Now you should show your understanding of their point of view, but then offer challenges to explore new perspectives that lead to new understanding. This will help to reframe the current thinking and is a first step from problem definition to a positive outlook.</p>	<p>In the next stage, you invite your mentee to reflect and articulate what he/she really wants to happen. Based on that, he/she can then determine concrete goals to get there. Encourage your mentee to explore different options and to define realistic goals that are aligned with his/her values.</p>	<p>Now that your mentee has set his/her goals, they should be prioritized and now you can discuss specific strategies and actions to achieve the goals set in stage 3.</p>
Possible Questions			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would you like to talk about? Let's explore this issue some more. Tell me about your experience of... • What I understand you are saying is ... is that right? • You have said very little about but that seems to be central to the issue we are discussing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are your options here? • What is there to learn here? • If you a magic wand, what would you change? • What might this look like from another person's point of view? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the most important thing here to work on now that you are seeing things differently? • What goals would you like to set now that you have analysed the situation? Why? • What will you achieve if you do this? What would the consequences be? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you need to do to achieve your goals? • What might be possible obstacles? • What will you do first and by when? • What are your key milestones?

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you feel about that? What were you thinking? What was that like? • What else is there about that? • What upsets you most about it, and why? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What in particular about this is a problem for you? • If you were describing someone else in this situation, how would you describe them? What does she/he think/feel? • What might be the consequences of doing... • What is positive about the situation you describe? • Why aspects of this situation are a problem? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the most important aspects you would like to change (name 3)? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do you need (resources, help, etc.) to get there? How will you access these? • What will success look like when you have reached your goals? • What will you do if it does not work?
Things to consider			
<p>This phase requires a certain level of trust. Make sure you and your mentee are comfortable in your relationship before you use this model.</p>	<p>This requires some degree of restraint from your side – your role is not to impose your own perspective on things and not to downplay the seriousness of the problem, but to enable the mentee to develop new perspectives and to assist him to gain a positive attitude.</p>	<p>Here you will need to help the mentee develop realistic goals. In this situation, less is often more. Count on some quick wins for motivation and help your mentee prioritise if necessary.</p>	<p>This is all about good self-management, and about eliciting help where needed. Make sure you continually ask about your mentee’s progress and motivate them to keep to his/her plans.</p>

*Egan, G. (1990). *The skilled helper: A systematic approach to effective helping* (4th ed.). Thomson Brooks/Cole Publishing Co.