

# Session 8

mentoring skills and processes 2 - motivation and  
dealing with challenging mentoring situations

the fostering network  
helping children to thrive



## Session 8: mentoring skills and processes 2 - motivation and dealing with challenging mentoring situations

### Introduction

Motivation in the mentoring context is about increasing mentees readiness for change. Although motivating is a key mentoring skill, nobody can control the motivation of another person. An effective mentor therefore does not seek to control or persuade their mentee but allows the mentee the freedom to explore choice in a climate of acceptance, where he/she can move forward at their own pace.

This session looks at the goals and rewards that motivate people. Motivation leads to a sense of inner satisfaction. While most people will have achieved something in life and will have enjoyed the sense of satisfaction experienced when a goal is achieved, it is important to remember that not everyone will have had this experience.

It is possible that mentees will find it hard to remember a time when they achieved a goal: mentors should be aware of this when dealing with challenging situations.

### Purpose

To explain factors of motivation and emphasise how these affect mentees.

### Application

Mentors to motivate mentees to take an active role in their own ongoing development.

### Overview

#### time

Total session running time:

3 hrs

#### objectives

By the end of this session you will:

- Have identified and listed what motivates you
- Have listed some of the things that affect the motivation of young people engaging with mentoring
- Have discussed a case study and identified successful motivation strategies
- Have taken part in a role play of a challenging mentoring meeting

#### key issues

Motivation is determined by basic needs. Mentees will often want things instantly. Mentors need to be able to deal realistically and sensitively with the demands of their mentee.

**materials**

Flipchart stand, pad and marker pens, Blu-Tack

Paper and pens for note taking

6-8ft long bamboo cane

**OHP slides**

1. Session objectives
2. Maslow's hierarchy of needs
3. Values and Mentoring

**handouts:**

1. Session objectives
2. Maslow's hierarchy of needs
3. Motivation
4. Self efficacy
5. Resilience
6. Case study
7. How you can make a difference as a mentor
8. Role play scripts
9. Hometask
10. Evaluation sheet

## Training session

### 1. Session objectives

5 minutes

This exercise is designed to let everyone know what is going to be covered in this session.

#### What to do

- Show slide ①. Reveal and talk about each objective, one at a time.
- Ask if anyone has any questions or is unclear about anything.
- Explain that the experience of being in care and of having very little control over so many aspects of their lives often leaves young people with reduced motivation. In order to assist young care leavers to make progress in their lives, it is important to address motivation. Mentors can play a crucial role in encouraging their mentees and helping to maintain their motivation.

### 2. Ice breaker: lowering cane exercise

10 minutes

This exercise is designed to highlight the importance of working together effectively as a team to achieve a desired outcome.

#### What to do :

- Ask participants to stand side by side in a line with their arms outstretched at chest height and index finger of each hand extended.
- The trainer places a 6-8ft cane so that it rests on the outstretched index fingers of everyone in the group.
- The trainer instructs the group that the task is to lower the cane to the floor.
- Emphasise that at all times everyone's index fingers must be in contact with the cane. Fingers should not be curled round the cane!
- While the group are carrying out the task the trainer should not intervene other than to remind participants of the rules.

#### Trainers' notes :

Although this task sounds easy, in fact, it is deceptively difficult and often results in the cane actually rising higher instead of being lowered, as people try to overcompensate. Frustration levels increase and blame can be apportioned in order to make sense of why such a simple sounding task is not being achieved.

After a time if the group is still struggling, the trainer can step in as leader or coach until the task is successfully completed.

The teaching points here are the importance of teamwork and the ability of people to go the extra mile with support and encouragement.

This exercise also highlights the importance of positive self-talk : you have to tell yourself that you CAN do the task despite frustrations. It also highlights the fact that we may assume, on the face of it, that tasks are simple and may not be able to find a simple, obvious explanation as to why they are proving difficult.

### 3. What motivates you?

30 minutes

This exercise aims to make everyone aware of how they motivate themselves by asking them to consider their motivation for becoming a mentor. Sometimes participants discover that their motivation has changed.

#### What to do

- Ask people to get into pairs.
- Ask one person to discuss with their partner their motivation for joining the mentoring project and training to be a mentor.
- Has their motivation changed since getting actively involved in the training? What has helped maintain their motivation?
- The role of the partner is to actively listen, and assist the person to identify factors which affected their motivation, either positively or negatively.
- After 7 minutes swap roles and repeat the exercise.
- After 15 or 20 minutes, ask everyone to return to the large group.
- Ask people for feedback on their discussion. Write points on a flipsheet.
- Point out the value of examining factors that inhibit motivation so that people can gain a fuller understanding of the whole issue of motivation.
- Review everything that has been said and add any other motivation factors you know of.
- Talk through extrinsic/intrinsic factors. Give out handout 3. The motivation of participants will initially have been 'extrinsic', but through engaging with the learning process may have become, at least in part, 'intrinsic'.

### 4. Factors of motivation for young people

10 minutes

The purpose of this input is to make everyone aware that a variety of factors can influence the motivation of young people engaging with mentoring.

#### What to do

- Show slide ② and talk through Maslow's hierarchy of needs.
- Explain that young people in crisis or who are going through periods of uncertainty/change will prioritise meeting lower level/basic needs over self-actualisation, (including engaging with mentoring).

Some young people who have been in care may have a sense of goals and rewards based on immediate gratification, e.g. food and money. Their experience of being in care may have led them automatically to expect things : cupboards full of food at all times, clothing grants, money for outings, a leaving care grant. However lack of continuity in their lives often results in these young people having no awareness of or experience of long term planning.

- Young people with considerable experience of the care system can become institutionalised with possible feelings of powerlessness/low self-efficacy and dependency
- Draw on real-life examples of the needs of young people who have been in care, which are likely to directly affect their motivation.
- Show slide ③ "Values and Mentoring" which highlights the importance of bearing in mind the context of the young person's life and the opportunities available to them. We need to deal with the "reality" of young people's lives.

## 5. Strategies for motivating

40 minutes

This case study is designed to let everyone identify the motivational skills they'll need as a mentor.

### What to do

- Explain to everyone that they will now look at a case study, handout 6, which focuses on developing motivational skills.
- Ask people to get into small groups and spread themselves around the room so they can't hear what other people are saying.
- Ask each group to use a flip sheet to make notes.
- After 15 minutes, bring the whole group back together.
- Ask someone from each group to say how their group would deal with the situation presented. Discuss and clarify the issues that are raised with the whole group. There is an opportunity here for the concepts of Resilience and Self-Efficacy to be introduced. More information is contained in Handouts 4 and 5.
- Give out handout 7 entitled 'How you can make a difference as a mentor' Go through the points on the handout and link them to material covered in Sessions 7 and 8.

Coffee break

15 minutes

## 6. Role plays dealing with challenging situations

50 minutes

These role-plays give people an opportunity to practise skills in dealing with more challenging mentoring situations. Remind people that the most challenging behaviour they are likely to encounter is a young person not turning up for meetings.

### What to do

- Ask people to split into groups of three. Explain that people are now going to get the opportunity to practise their skills through taking part in role plays
- Ask each trio to decide which of them will play the mentee, who will play the mentor and who will take the role of observer in this first role play (explaining that they will switch roles so that each person will take a turn in each role).
- Brief all the mentees and the mentors on their roles by handing each of them a typed brief.
- Tell the observers that their role is to observe and take notes of their observations
- Tell everyone that they have 5 minutes for each role-play and a further 5 minutes for sharing feedback in the small group.
- Keep the group to time
- After 10 minutes ask the group to switch roles and role play new situation.
- After 30 minutes, bring everyone back to the large group.
- Ask the mentors how they approached their mentoring role in the light of their brief.
- Ask the mentees how they experienced what their mentor did.
- Ask the observers to give feedback on what they observed.

### Trainers' notes:

At this point it may be useful for you to remind the trainee mentors of the support which the project provides to assist them in their mentoring.

Make the point that mentors can always refer to project staff for advice and assistance with mentoring issues. They would not be expected to handle difficult situations on their own.

This exercise works best if a facilitator/trainer is able to provide feedback to each group along with the observer.

## 7. Recap of session

5 minutes

This will help people reflect on what they have learned and recaps on the session objectives.

### **What to do**

- Show slide ① again.
- Ask everyone if they are happy that each objective has been met.

## **8. Home task** **5 minutes**

Explain to people that today's home task is to carry out a "Force Field Analysis" in relation to a sticking point/problem in achieving a goal in their lives. A worksheet and instructions are provided.

## **9. looking ahead**

Link forward to next session.

### **What to do**

- Tell everyone what the next training session will be about.

## **10. Evaluation of Session** **10 minutes**

### **What to do**

- Give out evaluation sheets and allow 10 minutes for everyone to fill them in. Make sure you get them all back before everyone leaves!

## **11. Handouts**

Give out session handouts.



## Objectives

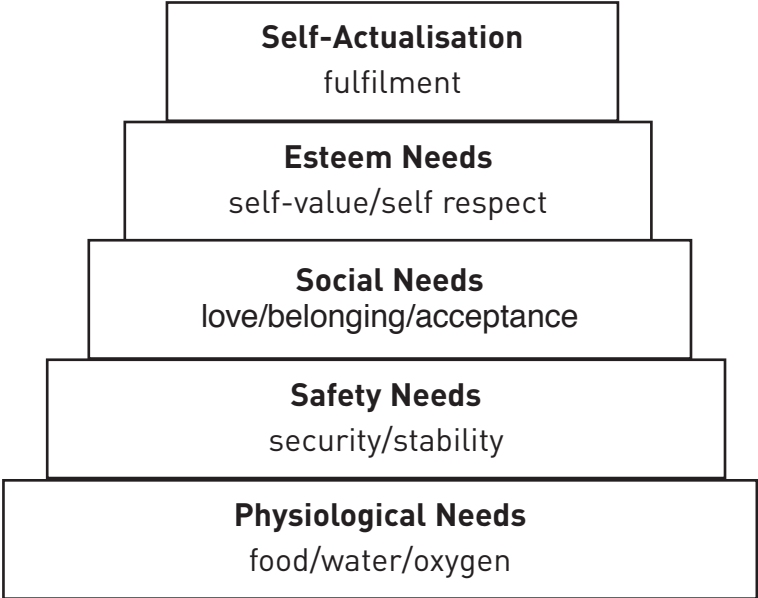
Slide 1

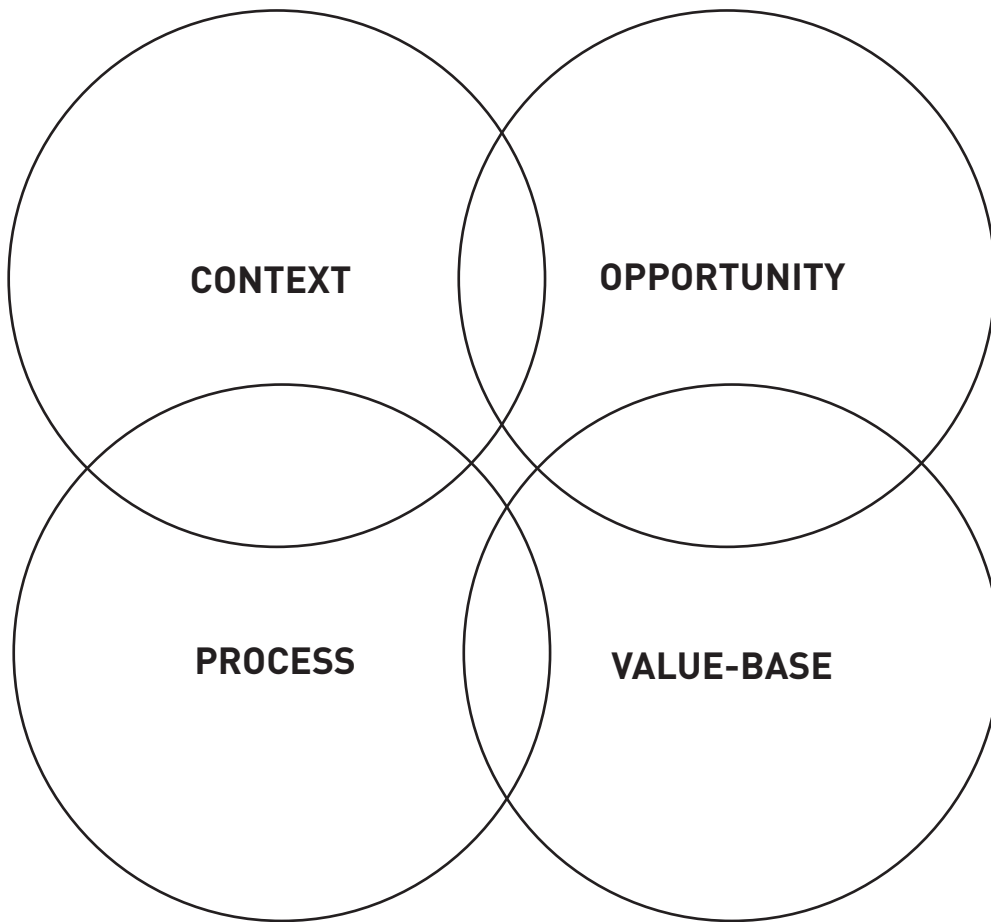
By the end of this session you will:

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# MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Slide 2





**The mentoring value-base needs to connect with :**

- The context of the mentee's life
- The mentee's opportunities for learning and development
- A process that will enable the mentee to achieve his or her goals

*Adapted from: Depaul Trust "Working Out!"*

## Motivation

**Motive** = That which makes a person act in a particular way

Ambition, desire, drive, hunger, inspiration, interest, wish (Thesaurus)

"What makes life dreary is want of motive"

### Motivation depends on :

- The level of expectation .....aspiration - self/others
- The need to achieve
- The need for social approval
- The level of anxiety
- The need to avoid failure or the limelight of success
- The individual goals of the person
- The degree to which you feel that you are in control

### Extrinsic/Intrinsic sources

- Intrinsic - Motivated to do something for the sake of the activity itself ..... you get something out of it.
- Extrinsic - Motivated for the material gain to be received from it.
- Level of arousal - tasks that are either too easy or too difficult are not motivational
- Past experience - If you are used to success then you are motivated to perform well. If you are used to failure you expect to fail.

### Your level of motivation influences :

- Your selection of and preference for an activity.
- Your persistence at the activity
- How much effort you put in
- How well you perform relative to your ability

### What motivates you ?

- Praise
- Comparison
- Competition
- Reward
- Goals
- Enjoyment
- Challenge
- Team success

- Responsibility
- Love
- To make a difference
- Good leadership

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## Self-Efficacy

**Self-Efficacy** = the belief in your ability to act in/manage a situation in a way that exercises an influence over its effect on your life.

### **Strong self-efficacy =**

- Your assurance in your own capabilities means that you approach difficult tasks as challenges to be mastered rather than as threats to be avoided.
- You are likely to get engrossed in things you are doing.
- You set yourself challenging goals and maintain a strong commitment to them.
- You try harder and hang in there in the face of failure.
- You quickly recover your belief in your own abilities after failures or setbacks.
- You attribute failure to a lack of effort or insufficient knowledge or skills on your part. You believe that this can be remedied.
- You approach threatening situations with an assurance that you can exercise control over them.
- Your positive outlook promotes successful outcomes, reduces stress and makes depression less likely.

### **Weak self-efficacy =**

- You doubt your capabilities and shy away from difficult tasks that you view as personal threats.
- You have low aspirations for yourself and a weak commitment to any goals you set.
- When faced with difficult tasks you dwell on personal deficiencies, obstacles you will encounter and all kind of adverse outcomes.
- You put out less effort and give up quickly in the face of difficulties.
- Your belief in yourself takes a real knock following failure or setbacks.
- You are more likely to feel stressed and depressed.

### **Our level of self-efficacy affects:**

- The choices we make
- The effort we put into things
- How long we keep going/persist in the face of failure
- How we feel

## How do we develop our feelings of self-efficacy?

- **Mastery Experience**

This is the most effective way of building self-efficacy.

Successes build your belief in yourself; failures undermine it (particularly if you have a low belief in your abilities to start with).

Easy successes though can lead to discouragement when obstacles appear. The best kinds of successes are ones that have required perseverance to overcome obstacles, setbacks and difficulties. By sticking it out through tough times we learn that we can emerge stronger from adverse situations.

- **Vicarious Experience**

Seeing people similar to you succeed by sustained effort increases your belief that you could succeed in similar things to them. The opposite is also true if people similar to you fail despite putting in a lot of effort. How much other people's successes and failures impact on your self-belief depends on how much you identify with them i.e. how similar you perceive them to be to you. We also choose "role-models" against whom we judge our own capabilities. Often we look to them for answers (through their knowledge, skills, strategies etc) as to how to manage situations.

- **Social Persuasion**

People who are persuaded verbally that they possess the capabilities to master particular activities are likely to put in more effort and sustain it longer than if they have doubts and dwell on their own shortcomings when problems arise. Boosting people's perception of their self-efficacy often leads to them developing new skills, trying new things and achieving unexpected results and, through this, viewing their capabilities differently.

Unrealistic boosts are quickly wiped out by disappointing results. It is important to structure situations in ways that are likely to lead to success rather than set someone up to fail. It is also more difficult to instil high efficacy in someone by persuasion alone than it is to undermine their sense of efficacy by talking him or her down.

- **Physiological States**

People also rely on how they feel emotionally and bodily to gauge their capabilities. Stress reactions, fatigue, tension, mood etc. can all impact on perceived levels of efficacy.

It is not the sheer intensity of emotional and physical reactions that is important but rather how they are perceived and interpreted. People with high efficacy levels are likely to view stress as an energiser, whereas people beset by self-doubt will view it as debilitating.

Positive mood enhances efficacy while despondency reduces it.

## **Cognitive Processes and Self-Efficacy:**

Personal goal setting is influenced by self-appraisal of capabilities. The stronger the perceived self-efficacy, the higher the goal challenges people set for themselves and the firmer is their commitment to them.

Most courses of action are thought about in advance. People with a high sense of efficacy visualise success scenarios and get guidance from them about how to succeed, as well as increased motivation. Those with low efficacy visualise failure scenarios and dwell on the many things that can go wrong. They find it difficult to succeed while fighting self-doubt.

Drawing in information from various sources, using it to generate options, predicting their outcomes and revising judgements in the light of new evidence are essential skills if people are to predict events and to develop effective ways to control those that affect their lives. When faced with the need to stay task focused in the face of lots of demands or difficult circumstances, people with self-doubt become more and more erratic in their thinking, lower their goals and the quality of their performance drops.

*Adapted from work of Albert Bandura, Contained on the website [www.emory.edu](http://www.emory.edu)  
"Information on Self Efficacy: A Community of Scholars"*



## Resilience

Resilience in individuals is a combination of "internal factors" (skills, behaviours and/or competencies) and "external factors" (caring relationships, high expectations, opportunities).

Resilience develops through the interaction between these. For example, caring relationships can trigger a positive cycle in which a person gains a sense of connection and confidence, which increases their motivation to try, which attracts more positive attention.

The most important part of a strength-based approach is believing that every one of us has strengths and can act on them. Sometimes holding on to this belief is difficult.

Resilience should not be equated with the end points of success. It is a process of struggling with hardship. That process progresses by accumulating small successes that occur side by side with failures, setbacks and disappointments.

The well deserved feeling of accomplishment that results from persisting in the face of hardship or adversity = "survivor's pride".

By identifying and acknowledging this, we can connect more effectively and constructively with people than by focusing on their pathology and attempting to "fix" their problems.

We can motivate positive change most effectively by:

- Conveying respect and honouring people's struggle i.e. seeing their behaviour and the choices they make in the context of the difficulties, challenges and past experiences in their lives.
- Shifting an individual's self-image from "damaged goods" to "one who prevails...a survivor".
- Providing evidence that a person has been capable of meeting challenges in the past and can do so again.
- Uncovering a person's methods for succeeding in the past that they can use again in the present/future.

Resilience is the process of persisting in the face of adversity. Evidence of resilience can be found in the small details of people's lives as they try to deal constructively with the daily challenges/hardships that life brings.

Resilience encompasses both the psychological damage and the enduring strength that can result from struggling with hardship.

Troubles present a danger to people but also an opportunity. We are vulnerable to the damaging influence of hardship, but we are also challenged to rebound from

harm by experimenting, branching out and developing our own resources. Over time, these self-protective behaviours develop into lasting clusters of strength called "resiliences".

"Resiliences" describes 7 clusters of strength that are mobilised in the struggle with hardship:

- Insight – an understanding of yourself and others, empathy for others, an ability to tolerate ambiguity and complexity in things.
- Independence – being able to create emotional and physical distance from the sources of pain and distress in life.
- Relationships – developing mutually gratifying connections with others (with a balance of give and take).
- Initiative – taking charge of problems, setting goals and tackling challenging situations.
- Creativity – using imagination to express feelings and thoughts and to create a vision of the world as you see it/would like to see it.
- Humour – the capacity to laugh at yourself and situations you find yourself in.
- Morality – acting on the basis of values and principles that include a sense of obligation to contribute to the well-being of others.

### **Re-framing**

The technique of re-framing capitalises on the subjective nature of personal stories to emphasise potentially helpful learning/themes rather than disabling themes.

This opens up the opportunity for people to shift from seeing themselves as damaged goods, to telling a re-framed story that is more constructive. A story with pride as a theme, revolving around the bravery, resourcefulness and determination shown by them as well as all they had done to help themselves.

The result is that people who consider themselves bad, helpless or damaged can change by becoming aware of their own strengths and resources to help themselves. In doing so, they will begin to act accordingly.

### **Talking about strengths**

This applies not only to people who have mastered their troubles. It applies equally to people who are faltering in their struggle and/or who are in crisis.

Remember that:

- All people have a right to dignity and the potential for resilience.
- It is important to be respectful.
- Do not dwell on problems, symptoms and deficiencies.
- Do not establish a power imbalanced relationship ie one where you are "healthy" and the other person is somehow "sick".

- Do your best to meet others who are asking for your help on their own terms by finding and talking about the positives, no matter how small.

Talking to people about their strengths can foster a powerful bond.

To understand why, think about the difference in your own reaction when someone tells you about your deficiencies in contrast to your accomplishments.

In the safety of a relationship where they know they are respected for their achievements, people can come around to recognising the areas of their lives that need work and find the motivation to do that work. They can change a victim image of themselves to a picture of someone who is resilient, who can and will prevail.

While we can usually do little to change the overwhelming circumstances that burden so many people, talking about strengths is something we can do that matters.

**Mind-set = your habitual way of seeing and thinking about things.**

An "at-risk/deficient" mind-set can easily shape work with young people into a search for problems. Its hallmarks are diagnoses, labels and fix-it interventions. Dwelling on the negative it induces despair and burnout in workers/helpers, biases their understanding of the young people they serve, and promotes low expectations. For young people this mind-set also has negative consequences. Regarded as clients or victims rather than as resources in their own lives, young people can experience services as uncaring, disrespectful and even threatening.

By contrast, a "Resilience/challenge" mind-set credits young people with the power to help themselves. It also casts adults not as directors or authorities in the lives of young people but as partners in their struggle to prevail. A Resilience/ challenge mind-set also encourages helping professionals to be hopeful and to hold high expectations for the young people in their care.

*Adapted from : "Project Resilience" website [www.projectresilience.com](http://www.projectresilience.com)*

### **case study: mentee**

You are a young person aged 17 who has recently left care and is living in shared supported accommodation. You are attending college doing a course in social care as you want to work with children. Although your attendance at first was good you have recently had a few days off sick and tend to arrive late for class as the other people in your flat are often up late playing their music loud. Your class tutor is ticking you off for your attendance and your attitude and doesn't seem to have any time for you.

When you were off sick people were allocated placements for the following term and you discover that you have been allocated a 4-week placement in a nursing home for the elderly in your absence. You have no interest at all in this kind of work and are really fed up with both the course and the tutor and decide you might as well give up the course.

You tell your mentor that you are thinking of leaving the course.

## How you can make a difference as a mentor

**Self Esteem** = Your sense of your own worth

**Self Efficacy** = Your sense of control/influence over events in your life

**Resilience** = Your ability to bounce back from adversity

### What can you do to build these?

- Focus on successes, no matter how small.  
Remember that nothing worth achieving is handed to you on a plate.
- Respect people's struggle. Don't minimize it.
- Re-frame discussions. Talk about strengths. Self talk.
- Has anyone else succeeded in what you are attempting?  
Their example might act as a spur or they may be seen as a role model.
- I believe you can achieve this. Here's why...
- Stress and self-doubt are normal when you step out of your comfort zone. The greater the challenge you take on the stronger the feelings might be. It means you are trying to grow and develop towards your potential.
- "Just do it" Nike slogan. "Impossible is nothing" Adidas slogan. Your mind set can give or drain energy/motivation from you.
- Visualise what success will feel/look like. Remember the power of this as it imprints on your memory.

## Role Play Case Studies

### Information for mentee

1. You have been meeting with your mentor for around 2 months. For the first few meetings you have turned up on time and been keen to participate in the discussion, often talking animatedly about your future plans.

You have arrived very late for this meeting. Your Throughcare worker, who you felt very close to, has just left for a new job and you are now questioning in your head whether it's worth getting close to your mentor when they could leave you at any time. You don't feel much like talking.

### Information for mentor

1. Your mentee has been meeting with you for around 2 months. For the first few meetings they turned up on time and were keen to participate in the discussion, often talking animatedly about their future plans. However, they have turned up very late for this meeting. They are unkempt and appear "vacant". How do you respond ?

## **Role Play Case Studies**

### **Information for mentee**

2. You have been getting on extremely well with your mentor. You seem to have lots in common and lots to talk about. You have never got on so well with anyone in your life. You know that you have fallen head over heels in love with your mentor and have decided to tell them how you feel.

### **Information for mentor**

2. You have been getting on extremely well with your mentee. You seem to have lots in common and lots to talk about. There has also been a lot of positive feedback between the two of you. You are really looking forward to this session.

## **Role Play Case Studies**

### **Information for mentee**

3. You have been receiving sexual come-on's from a residential worker in your children's unit. It frightens you but also makes you very angry. You want it to stop but don't know what to do about it. You decide to tell your mentor.

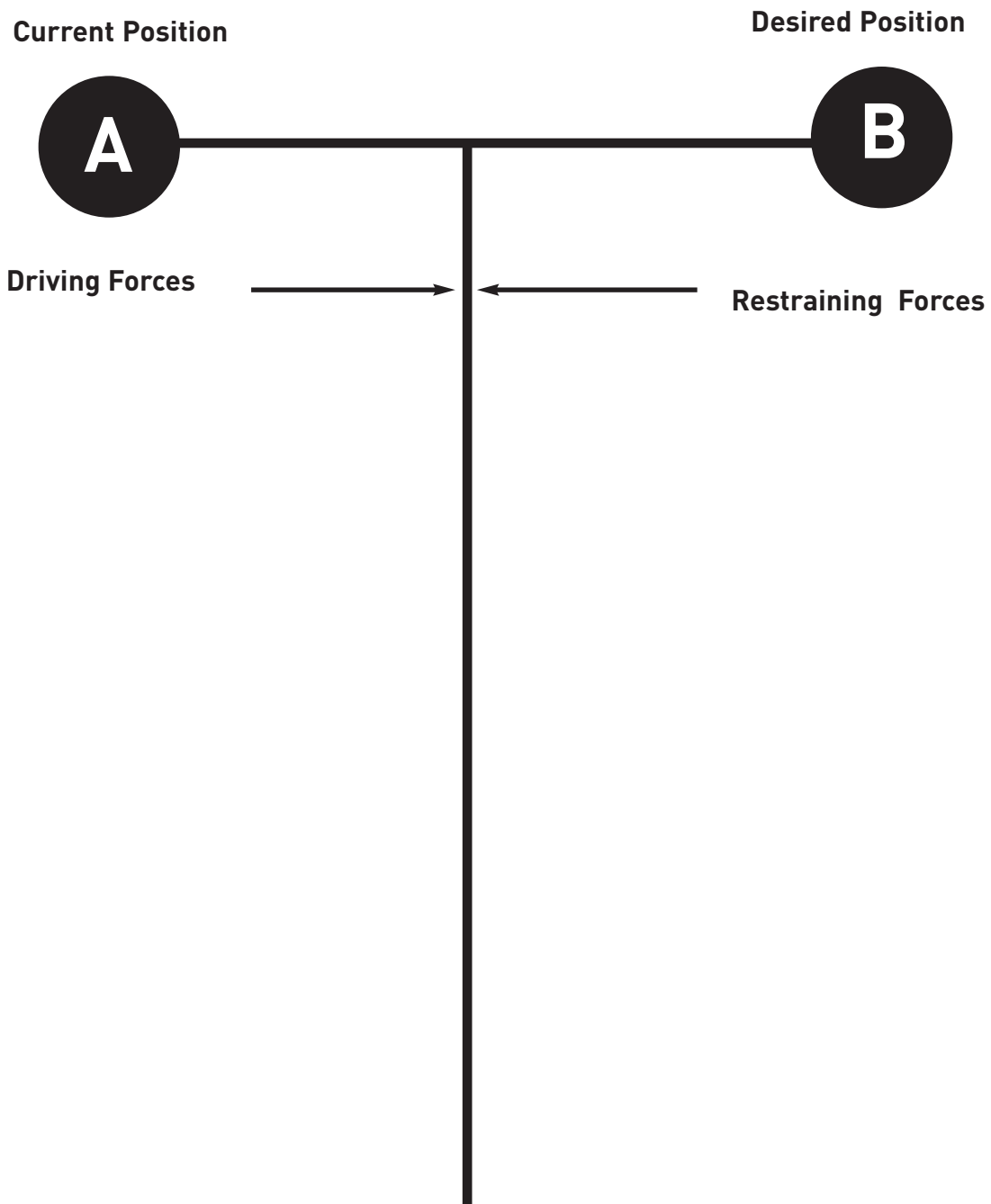
### **Information for mentor**

3. You have been having an issue with your mentee invading your personal space and making comments that could be interpreted as flirting with you. You have not been sure whether to say anything about this or how to raise it.



## Hometask for Session 8

Thinking about the course work we have done in this session so far and the problem you have identified for this exercise, list below the driving and restraining forces for change in the appropriate columns below :



*Adapted from : Depaul Trust "Working Out!"*

## EVALUATION SHEET

1. Rate today's training session by circling one number

Not interesting

Very interesting

1

2

3

4

5

2. How will today's training session help you carry out your role as a mentor?

3. What did you enjoy most about today's training session?

4. Anything you didn't enjoy or didn't feel was useful?

5. Any suggestions to improve this training session when it is next run?

6. Any other comments?

Thank you for completing this form

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