# Sample Process Recording

**Agency**: Department of Social Services **Client System:** Claudia Jones, age 22, unemployed single mother **Date**: February 22, 20xx **Presenting Issues:** Client was referred to DSS for neglecting her 3-year-old daughter, Mia. Mother has custody of child but has been mandated to receive services.

**Purpose of Interview**: Fourth interview; follow up interview for mandated client

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| **Content** | **Skills Used** | **Gut Reaction** | **Analysis** | **Field Instructor’s Comments** |
| **Student (S):** How have things been going this week? |  | I’m happy to see Claudia again. |  |  |
| **Client (C):** OK, I guess. Not much different than last week. |  |  |  |  |
| **S:** Did you get a chance to check into parenting classes like we discussed last week? |  |  | I’m following up on what we talked about last week. I want Claudia to know that what she does is important. |  |
| **C:** No. This wasn’t a good week. I know I promised that I’d make phone calls but Mia got sick and I got so tired being up all night with her.  Then I guess I forgot. |  | She’s making excuses. |  | The “Gut Reaction” column is to record your own feelings, rather than your thoughts about the client’s motivations. How did you feel when Claudia said that she didn’t make the phone call because her daughter was ill? |
| **S:** Well, it does sound like this was a hard week for you. Do you think you can make the calls this week? | Empathizing |  | I’m showing empathy for the client’s situation, but I’m also asking her commitment to follow through this week. | Good idea that empathizing with the client would be helpful here. Based on Claudia’s response (verbal and non-verbal), how do you think she heard what you |

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|  |  |  |  | said? Are there other things you might say to convey your empathic concern about Claudia’s difficult week taking care of her sick daughter? |
| **C:** I’ll try. Could you give me the phone numbers again? I think I lost them. |  |  | No wonder she didn’t call! |  |
| **S:** Sure. [I write down the phone numbers and give them to Claudia.] Be sure and put them in a safe place. | Providing resource information |  |  |  |
| **C:** OK. I’ll really try to call this week. [She started looking around the office.] What else do we have to talk about today? |  | I’m getting the idea she doesn’t want to be here. Maybe there’s something else I should be doing but I don’t know what it is. |  | Good observations about yourself and Claudia. You’re picking up cues from Claudia’s words and behaviors and you’re aware of your own feelings of uncertainty. |
| **S:** This is your time, Claudia. What would you like to talk about? | Open-ended question |  | I am trying to be collaborative and get Claudia engaged in the session. | Your goal of trying to get Claudia engaged is excellent. How do you think your open- ended question worked here? If it didn’t move you towards your goal, think about what else you might try to get Claudia engaged. We can discuss your ideas in supervision. |
| **C:** Like I said – not much has changed since last week. |  | I feel stuck. |  |  |
| **S:** Well, Claudia, what do you think you learned from the |  |  | Since she doesn’t have anything to say, I’ll try | This does come across as trying to teach Claudia a lesson. |

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| problems you had last week making the phone calls? Is there anything you could do differently this week?  Remember we talked a couple weeks ago about changes that you could make that would make your life easier, like going to the parenting class.  You might learn new ways to discipline Mia and help her play better with other kids. |  |  | to use the fact that she didn’t follow through as a learning experience. | Perhaps as her social worker, you feel responsible for her following through? Working with mandated clients can be complicated. Let’s talk about some ways you can distinguish between the client’s responsibilities and yours. |
| **C:** Last week was just hard for me because Mia was sick. I’ll really try to call this week. |  | She has to learn to be responsible. |  | This is the second time that Claudia has mentioned that Mia was ill. Because Claudia has been referred for neglect, it’s important to explore what Claudia did when her daughter was sick and to support efforts she made to care for Mia. Let’s talk about how you might do this. |
| **S:** Remember – you have to take a parenting class before the next hearing on your case. | Providing information |  | The court has mandated parenting classes for Claudia so I need to really get her to comply. |  |
| **C:** I know. |  |  |  |  |
| **S:** I’m a parent myself and I know how hard it can be to find time to do everything. But when your kids are | Self disclosure (I think) |  | I am using myself as an example to show that I can connect with Claudia as another | Although self disclosure, used judiciously, can be a useful intervention, there are some helpful guidelines for when and |

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| involved, you have to make the time. Right? |  |  | parent. | how to self disclose. One guideline is that the purpose of the disclosure should always be to address the client’s needs.  Another guideline is to observe how the client reacts to your self disclosure. Based on what Claudia says next, how do you think she might have experienced the way you told her you are also a parent? |
| **C:** I don’t know if I’m going to be able to come next week. My sister won’t be able to watch Mia for me and I don’t have any other babysitter. |  | This is an excuse. |  | What were your feelings here? |
| **S:** Let’s talk about why you are here. Why do you think you are here? | Sharing responsibility Open-ended question |  | I’m re-focusing on the purpose of the interview. |  |
| **C:** [Silence] Why don’t you tell me. You seem to have all the answers. |  | Uh-oh. I’m afraid she’s angry with me. |  |  |
| **S:** Maybe there is something else you want to talk about today. |  | I hope so. I don’t want her to leave feeling angry. |  |  |
| **C:** Not really. |  |  |  |  |
| **S:** If you can’t come next Wednesday, we can reschedule for another day next week. |  | I think she’s angry and it makes me very uncomfortable. | I’m trying to be flexible, but I’m not sure what else to do. | Good self awareness. How do you think your feelings about Claudia here, and at other points during the interview, might be |

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|  |  |  |  | affecting how you’re interacting with her? |
| **C:** You tell me what day and I’ll be here. |  |  | I’m not sure if she means this. Maybe she’s trying to cooperate. |  |
| **S:** OK. Then let’s keep our next meeting on Wednesday since that’s our usual day.  Remember your goals. Don’t forget to call about the parenting class. |  |  | This will give me time to talk to my field instructor about what to do next. | This is a great case for us to discuss. Before our next supervision session, think about your own feelings during the interview (remember – you might feel all kinds of ways).  Assess the helpfulness and effectiveness of your interventions. Which ones seemed to work well? Why? |

**Student’s Assessment**: I think I started out OK by following up on what Claudia was supposed to do before our meeting. I had a hard time with this interview because Claudia doesn’t seem to understand the importance of following through on the court’s recommendations and I want her to attend parenting classes so she can get learn to stop neglecting Mia. At the end of the interview, I didn’t want Claudia to leave feeling angry with me so I tried to change the subject. I don’t think this worked very well. I’d like to learn other things I could have said.

**Plan for Next Interview**: Talk with my field instructor about what to do when a client doesn’t follow through and when she gets angry with me.