

Worksheet 4.4.5

Role play is one of the best ways to practice OARS as it is like learning a new language.

Carer task

As a group or in pairs think up a difficult scenario in which you might have used OARS to open up a conversation with Edi. Take it in turns to be the carer and respond to Edi using OARS, remembering that pauses are powerful and plenty of reflections and affirmations. Alternatively use this scenario:

James and Lisa are both solicitors in their early thirties, with demanding jobs schedules. Lisa has been suffering from anorexia and bulimia for 2 years. In the past, she has been good at hiding her illness, but recently her boss has expressed concerns over her health and work output. Since then, while Lisa has stuck to her meal plan, she has significantly increased her exercise regime and her outpatient care team have flagged this up with James. James arrives home to find Lisa putting on her trainers.

James asks an open question: 'Hi Lisa, looks like you are getting ready for a long hard run. Tell me about your day before you go?'

Lisa might respond in a defensive or negative way, particularly after a hard week at work: 'Yes James I need to go for a run and I don't need you nagging me. Sometimes I feel you just don't get it. I have had a really hard week and I am really stressed out and going for a run helps me to relax. You should know that by now.'

While this might seem like a rebuttal, imagine you are James and use reflections and affirmations to convey that you really do care and you are trying to help in any way you can.

MI techniques might not always yield an immediate or obvious response. As a carer you are sowing the seed that you are prepared to try different things and you are really trying to understand Edi's perspective. Patience and persistence is required.