

Worksheet 9.4: Core values and boundaries – adult sufferers

Adult sufferers may be living at home with their parents, living alone or living with siblings, friends or partners, and in these circumstances the challenges are slightly different for anyone who has a caring role.

SBC, Chapter 10 looks at the particular challenges for partners, siblings and friends.

Use the scenario below or think up a scenario in which an adult sufferer is pushing the boundaries of the relationship.

Scenario

Ashley, an adult male, age 35, has been suffering from anorexia for several years and has recently lost weight. He has also taken to waking up in the night and going running for an hour or so. He claims he can then get back to sleep better. His partner Sophie and his Mum Jenny are really worried that he might collapse while out running. They have tried to reason with him but he gets very angry and tells them not to treat him like a child.

a) Use OARS to open a conversation with Edi

Open Question

Affirmation

Reflection

Summary

- b) Come up with a menu of options to seek to move away from the carer-patient relationship and to rebalance elements of the adult to adult relationship.

In this scenario while Ashley might still feel the urge to go running in the night sometimes, it is likely that he will feel better understood having had this conversation with his Mum and/or Sophie. Ashley can still maintain his independence and is likely to be in a better place to consider some of the less risky options. Sophie can then focus more on being a good partner to Ashley rather than his carer.

Adult sufferers often feel more comfortable keeping in touch via email, Skype, facetime, phone, rather than having confrontational face-to-face meetings in which they might feel they are being treated like a naughty child. One reason why charity helplines and other modes of online support have become so popular is because there is the opportunity to talk and seek support without the emotional intensity, it is confidential and may be available 24/7.