

## APPENDIX B

# Counseling Session With Kasey: A Practice Exercise

The transcript that follows\* is organized to provide you with an opportunity to practice SFBC interventions. To begin, cover the page with a piece of paper or cardboard and uncover the text as you read. When you get to each *intervention prompt* (printed in bold-italic type within parentheses), keep the text below the prompt covered while you write out the response or intervention you would use with this client at that point in the session. Then compare your response with the one I used in the session. Because there are so many ways to respond to clients using SFBC, my responses are given only as a guide. Before you begin this exercise, you may want to look at the following list of intervention prompts to see if you want to review an earlier section of the book to refresh your memory about any of the SFBC steps or techniques listed.

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## INTERVENTION PROMPTS

***(Identifying the goal)***

***(Detailing the goal)***

***(Reframe negative goal into positive goal)***

***(Detailing)***

***(Cheerleading)***

***(Miracle question)***

***(Reciprocal relationship question)***

***(Reverse reciprocal relationship question)***

***(Summary statement)***

***(What else question)***

***(Instances of success/exceptions to the problem)***

***(Accepting ownership intervention)***

***(Mindmapping)***

***(Scaling)***

***(Moving up the scale intervention)***

***(Flagging the minefield)***

***(Concluding the session statement)***

The case that follows is the transcript of the first session with a 10-year-old African American boy who resides in public housing in a midsized city. The boy, who will be called Kasey, is in a class for students with behavior disorders. Kasey's teacher referred him to me for counseling. The strategies used in the meeting follow the model discussed in this book and are typical of most solution-focused sessions.

## THE FIRST SESSION

The meeting began with some introductory comments to establish rapport and help the client become more comfortable with counseling. This was followed by a description of the procedures

to be used. The session began with determining the client's goal for counseling (C = Counselor; K = Kasey):

***(Identifying the goal)***

C: What's the reason that you are here?

K: I have problems.

C: What do you mean, you have problems?

K: I like messing with people and I like fighting.

C: Is that something that you want to stop doing?

K: Sometimes I want to stop. Sometimes I get messed with and I start to get mean.

***(Reframe negative goal into positive goal)***

C: So if you were to stop messing sometimes, what would you be doing instead?

K: I'd watch TV, play Nintendo, and do my homework.

C: So those are the things you would do instead of messing and fighting and stuff like that?

K: Or if I were in school, I'd do my work and play.

***(Summary statement)***

C: I think I have a picture of what you want to do. You're saying that there are times when you don't want to fight, you don't want to mess. And in those times you want to play instead, in a friendly way.

K: Yeah.

***(Miracle question)***

C: Here is the first crazy question: Suppose tonight when you go to sleep, a miracle happens. Because you were sleeping you didn't know this miracle happened, and when you woke up in the morning the problem that brought you here was gone. No longer were you fighting

or messing with people at all. What would be some of the things you would notice the next day that would tell you that there has been a miracle?

K: I won't be doing anything mean to them, to hurt them.

***(Reframe negative goal into positive goal)***

C: So instead of doing mean things, what would you be doing?

K: Going over to my friends' houses to see what they are doing.

***(Detailing)***

C: So you'd go over to your friends' houses to see what they are doing, and not being mean. What would they notice that you were doing that would say to them, "Hey, Kasey . . ."

K: You've changed.

***(Detailing)***

C: What would they say that you've changed to? What would they see you doing?

K: I wouldn't be pushing them around like I used to sometimes.

***(Reframe negative goal into positive goal)***

C: So instead of pushing them around, what would you be doing?

K: I'd just be talking to them nicely.

***(Reciprocal relationship question)***

C: When they saw you talking to them nicely instead of pushing them around, how would they react to you? What would they do? How would they respond to you?

K: Nice.

***(Detailing)***

- C: What would they be doing that would be different that would show they were being nice to you?
- K: Like, when they throw the ball and I miss it, they would give me a look and say, "That's OK, try to catch it next time."

***(Reciprocal relationship question)***

- C: When this happens, how would you be different?
- K: Try to help them get the ball.

***(Summary statement)***

- C: I guess that whole thing would happen different, if you started to make that little change, and that would cause them to change, and then that would cause you to change.
- K: Yeah.

***(What else question)***

- C: Tell me, what else would be different if this miracle happened?
- K: I wouldn't be calling them names. We'd be joking around but we wouldn't be calling names.

***(Reframe negative goal into positive goal)***

- C: Instead of calling names, what would you be doing?
- K: I would call them by their real names instead of saying, "What's up, punk?"

***(Reciprocal relationship question)***

- C: When they heard that, what would they do?
- K: *(Motions jaw dropping.)*
- C: *(Laughing.)* Their jaw would drop. They would say, this is a new Kasey. They would be amazed.

K: They would.

C: You'd just blow their socks off if you did something like that! And after you did that, what would they say to you? How would they act when you talk to them that way?

K: You've changed! Sometimes they'd say, "You've changed a lot!"

***(Reciprocal relationship question)***

C: They'd say that. How would they behave toward you?

K: They'd be nice to me.

***(Detailing)***

C: How would they act nice to you? What would tell you they were being nice to you?

K: Like I said, if I miss a ball or something, they would pat me on my back and say, "Try harder next time." Like when we play kickball and I roll it wrong, and somebody still kicks it far and straight up to me so I can catch it and I miss it, they just pat me on my back.

C: Instead of using different kinds of language and stuff, you'd call them by their names. Who would you be calling by their names?

K: Dominique, Darrell.

C: So you'd be saying, "What's up, Darrell?"

K: Yeah. That's one thing I won't change . . . saying, "What's up."

***(Reverse reciprocal relationship question)***

C: So if all of a sudden you started calling them by their names, saying, "What's up, Dominique?" and they are patting you on your back, what would you be doing in return?

K: Patting them back on their back, or hitting them on their shoulder.

***(Summary statement and what else question)***

- C: In other words, you would have a different kind of relationship with them? What else would happen with this miracle?
- K: I'd be different; everything would be different.

***(Detailing)***

- C: What would you notice that would be different?
- K: I'd get up and say, "Hello, Mom!" or "Hey y'all, wake up, everybody!"
- C: So in other words, the way that you know this miracle happened is that you'd be saying, "Hello, Mom! Hello, everybody!" and you'd be up. Who would notice that this change was happening to you?
- K: My whole family.

***(Reciprocal relationship question)***

- C: They would all notice? What would they say?
- K: "Dang, you've changed!"
- C: How would they know that Kasey had changed?
- K: I'd be helping my mom cook. I'd start cooking before she gets home. Sometimes I would take care of everything. Or I do half of it and when she gets home she takes a little break and then she does the other half. Like, tacos—I do the hamburger and the lettuce, and heat up the taco shells.
- C: Before she gets home? Boy, I bet she would appreciate that, wouldn't she? Helping out like that.
- K: Yeah. She appreciates that. I did that yesterday. We had tacos. I heated up the taco shells and cut up some lettuce and tomatoes. She made the hamburger and everything else.
- C: Wow, you've already done some of this stuff.
- K: Yeah.

- C: So your mom would notice that you are helping out. Who else in your family would notice this miracle?
- K: My brother and sisters would see that I would be playing with them more often sometimes. And I would treat them nice, just like my friends.

***(Detailing)***

- C: What would they see you doing that would tell them, "Hey, he's treating me different, like he treats his friends?"
- K: Helping them with their homework. Usually when they ask me, I say no. Sometimes I help them, sometimes I don't. That's when I feel like being nice and I be nice.

***(Reciprocal relationship question)***

- C: So you'd help them with their homework. That would sure tell them. When they see you doing that, how would they be with you?
- K: They stop treating me mean 'cause they know I'm being nice. I'm usually mean to them first.
- C: So instead of being mean, they are nice to you.
- K: Yeah, 'cause if I'm mean to them, they are mean to me.
- C: So whatever you do to them, you get that back?
- K: Yeah. Like sometimes I need help with my homework. They'd be helping me do my homework.

***(Instances of success/exceptions to the problem)***

- C: Let me ask you another question. Tell me about some times when some of this miracle is already happening.
- K: Miracle hasn't really happened.
- C: Let me run some of this down for you to help remind you.
- K: Okay.



**(Summary statement)**

C: You talked about talking instead of pushing your friends around. You talked about calling them by their name instead of putting them down, and calling them by their real names. And you told me about helping your mom with the cooking yesterday. That's already happened—when you helped with the tacos.

K: Yeah.

C: How did you decide to do that?

K: I just tried to be nice for a change. I just did it.

**(Mindmapping)**

C: Yeah, but I think there are times when you decide not to do that, but yesterday you decided to do it. How did you decide that? How did that happen for you?

K: Most of the times when I do it, I'm bored. There's nothing good on TV or I want to eat 'cause I'm hungry. Or I just want to be nice.

C: You know, my guess is that you wanted to be nice. So you have that in you.

K: Yeah.

**(Cheerleading)**

C: Being nice is inside your soul. And you just decide sometimes that you want to be that way.

K: Yeah. It's where I live at, it gets me all confused and I just want to be mean.

C: My guess is that you can be nice if you want to even during those times when you're confused.

K: Yeah.

**(Mindmapping)**

C: You have that kind of control. How do you do that? How do you make yourself be nice?

- K: I just say in my head about 50 times, “Be nice, be nice, be nice.”
- C: Oh, so you tell yourself, “Be nice.” Just like that? That works for you?
- K: Yeah. 50 times. Say it 50 times and I’m nice. Sometimes it takes me only 25 times to be nice.
- C: How did you figure that out?
- K: I don’t know. I just started saying it one day and it helped me.

***(Cheerleading)***

- C: Yeah, that’s pretty miraculous. Think about that. You were able to figure that out.
- K: I figured that out myself.
- C: Just by yourself! You weren’t watching Oprah on TV?
- K: No. Just myself.
- C: You figured that out on your own. You must be really smart.
- K: I remember when I started saying it. It was, I think, last year and it just happened. I was bored and didn’t have nothing to do. No cartoons or nothing on and I just started saying, “Be nice, be nice. Don’t go in the kitchen and burn up something. Just be nice.”
- C: Fantastic! So you have a tool. You can make yourself be nice by just saying that. By reminding yourself, “Be nice, be nice.”
- K: Yeah, 25 or 50 times.

***(Instances of success/exceptions to the problem)***

- C: That’s amazing! Tell me about some other times when you have been able to have this miracle happen for yourself.
- K: I’ve said, “Don’t do nothing wrong ‘cause you know you might get a treat.” And I like treats. I like going out to eat. I just say that so many times, too.

C: So you say, “Don’t be mean, be nice.”

K: Yeah, don’t be mean, be nice.

C: And that works, too, ’cause then you get treats.

K: Yeah. Most of the time I just say, “Be nice, don’t hurt nobody.”

***(Cheerleading)***

C: Be nice, don’t hurt nobody. Wow, I’m impressed. So that works for you when you are able to do that. Does that help you to say hello, to call your friends by their names, and stop yourself pushing them? Does that work there, too?

K: Yeah, sometimes I get nice to this one guy in my class who gets real mean.

***(Reciprocal relationship question)***

C: So if you are nice to him, what happens?

K: He’s nice to me.

C: So you can start it off?

K: Yeah.

***(Scaling)***

C: Another question for you: If we had a scale from 0 to 10, with 0 being that this miracle never happens. You are fighting and messing with people all the time, all the time. You have no control over it, is a 0. With 10, you are able to be nice all the time. Where do you think you are?

K: I think I’m a 5.

***(Cheerleading and detailing)***

C: That’s impressive. How have you gotten yourself to 5?

K: I used to be mean all the time until just this last year I started saying those words in my head.

C: So you say, “Be nice, don’t hurt anybody.”

K: Yeah. And sometimes I lose control. Sometimes I don’t.

***(Mindmapping)***

C: Sometimes you lose control. Tell me about some times when you were going to lose control and you didn’t.

K: One time I wanted to do something and my mom said no and I was about to sneak, but I didn’t.

C: Wait a minute—you didn’t sneak!

K: Yeah. I went outside and I was about to go through the alley and through the back door and I just turned around and took off my jacket and went back in the house.

C: You didn’t sneak?

K: Yeah, I was ready to but I didn’t.

C: So normally, you would have sneaked out of the house?

K: Yeah. ’Cause when she has to go to the store and she says she’ll be gone 2 hours, I will sneak. It takes me like 5 minutes to get up to the pay phone and I make calls. Then it takes me about 30 minutes to get back home and I’ve wasted my time.

***(Mindmapping)***

C: How did you do it that time? How did you decide not to sneak?

K: Just turned around, took off my jacket, went back in the house and calmed down.

C: I know that’s what you did, but you had to make a decision about that to be able to do that, didn’t you?

K: Oh, yeah. I just thought I’d get in trouble ’cause sometimes she says she’ll be back in 2 hours but that’s when she wants me to sneak. She’ll tell me a story ’cause she doesn’t want me to go anywhere. She gets back home early and she says, “Where’s Kasey? He’s not supposed to go outside when I’m gone!”

C: Oh, I see. So in other words, you decided you didn't want to get in trouble? That's different for you, isn't it?

K: Yeah. I only did it five times.

C: Oh. That's a lot! A lot. 'Cause you didn't want to get in trouble.

K: Right.

***(Cheerleading)***

C: You know, Kasey, that says something to me about you. That says that you respect your mom and yourself.

K: Yeah. Sometimes I have sneaked out when she told me not to.

C: But those five times were different, for you were able to decide that you were going to listen, and going to show respect, that you were going to show that you care enough about yourself to not get yourself in trouble. That says you can do it when you want to. How did you do that, make it happen this time?

K: I don't know. For some reason, I just did. Like a miracle. Usually when I sneak out when she tells me not to and then comes back early because she forgot her card or something. When I get back home and she's home . . . yipes! I'm in trouble.

***(Accepting ownership intervention)***

C: Yeah, but you've thought that before, haven't you? And you still went out, didn't you?

K: Yeah.

C: So it had to be different.

K: I just got tired of getting in trouble.

C: So when you think it through . . .

K: Yeah, when I think it long enough before she leaves. I'll be sitting on the front porch thinking before she goes, "Do I want to get in trouble or do I not want trouble?"

And I decide I don't want to get in trouble, take off my stuff, stand up, go back in and hang my jacket up.

C: You were thinking about the consequences. Thinking about, "If I do this, I know what the consequences are—I'll get myself in trouble and it's not worth it."

K: Yeah.

***(Mindmapping)***

C: How do you make yourself think about the consequences?

K: I just do it.

***(Detailing)***

C: Yeah, but you know something tells me that there are some times that you don't do it and some times that you do it. So there's a difference. And what's real important is that if you know what that difference is, you can do it again.

K: And again, and again, and again!

C: See how important that would be? So how do you do it? How do you make yourself think about it before you do it?

K: I just start thinking about it, about when I get in trouble. And if I do it I'll get a punishment. Sometimes when I'm bored I don't want to get myself in trouble. Then the next day things get messed up, my friends come back early. Oh no, and I'm stuck in the house!

C: So you don't want to disappoint your friends, either?

K: Yeah.

C: And yourself?

K: Yeah, and my mom.

C: So you don't want to disappoint yourself, your friends, or your mom.

K: Yeah. I don't want to disappoint my father either. I feel great when I do those things.

***(Moving up the scale intervention)***

C: Excellent. When you are at a 6 what will you be doing then? You're at a 5 right now.

K: Work hard. Work hard at being nice.

***(Mindmapping)***

C: So how would you make yourself be nicer? What are you going to have to do?

K: Keep saying, "Don't do it, you'll get in trouble if you do it."

C: Think of the consequences?

K: Yeah.

***(Flagging the minefield)***

C: What would happen if you were thinking those thoughts and being nice, and one of your buddies, one of your friends, starts being mean. How are you going to keep yourself nice?

K: Don't hang around them.

C: Don't hang around them?

K: Just don't hang around them until they change.

C: That would work?

K: Yeah.

***(Concluding the session statement)***

C: You know, Kasey, I'm real impressed with all that you have been telling me here. You really know what works for you. You have some really good control when you want to be in charge of yourself. You are really good at that. Is there anything else that I need to ask you before I take a couple of minutes to put my thoughts together so I can write you a note?

K: Not that I know of.

As part of this practice exercise, now write Kasey a message and compare it to the one I wrote to Kasey that follows.

## MESSAGE FOR KASEY

### *Compliments*

I am amazed with your understanding of what you have to do to avoid messing around and fighting. Calling your buddies by their names, talking to them instead of pushing them around, and playing with them work to keep things peaceful.

You also realize that you would be happier if you were to get up on your own in the morning, say hello to everyone in your family after waking up, help your mom cook dinner, and treat the members of your family like you treat your friends. If you were to do these things you think they would be nicer to you in return.

I am really impressed with your ability to tell yourself to “Be nice and don’t hurt anybody” 25 to 50 times in your mind to avoid trouble. Your ability to think about the consequences of doing things that will get you in trouble, like sneaking out of the house, shows that you respect yourself, your mother, your father, and your friends and also says you don’t want to disappoint them.

### *Bridging Statement*

Because of your desire to improve your relationships with your friends and your family, I would like you to

### *Task*

notice when you are doing the things to be nice to your family and friends that move you to a 6.

Note: The words *compliments*, *bridging statement*, and *task* are included above for instructional purposes. They were not part of the message Kasey received.