



Gettin' By Nine F's

Factors That Hinder Help

Focus – does the person have to shut out distractions or read printed materials? Does it assume the person can look ahead to the future? Is this problem/ situation a new thing to take up space in the mental “tunnel” or is it already there?

Fabric – does the person have to have appropriate clothes and shoes? Do children have clothes and diapers that they need? Can the person get laundry soap and access to machines to wash their clothes?

Family & Friends – does a solution require the person to have childcare or to have time away from family? Does the function work if a person has a child with him/her? Does the program involve or affect the client’s family? Does the person have regular social contact with friends? Is the person lonely?

Fear (of stigma or of exposure) – does the solution expose the person to others who may judge them? Is the help perceived as threatening to the person’s dignity? Does the help involve giving info to a government agency?

Fetch – is the person expected to be able to travel to other locations, such as a drug store, a clothes giveaway, or food pantry?

Flexibility/ Schedule – does the person have to miss work or other commitments? Will the person have to wait for hours to be served?

Food – does the function assume that a person has food regularly available? Is the problem made worse by unstable food access or poor diet? Is the person distracted by hunger?

Fund – does the function assume the person has money, such as for a drug co-pay or to purchase an item? Do you know the cost of the item you are expecting them to buy?

Roof – does the function rely upon the person having stable housing, working kitchen appliances or uninterrupted electricity or Internet service? Does the problem have to do with something in the home— which the person cannot control?

Three Major Themes of Poverty and the Brain

Bandwidth

- Bandwidth is our ability to retain information and think logically.
- People living in poverty are used to receiving information orally, not by print means.
 - Takeaways: Start your relationship with the person with storytelling; avoid printed materials until you have helped them gain print culture skills.

Oral Culture	Print Culture
Relationships are central	Time is central
Jump from one topic to another	Linear – first this, then that
Storytelling	Analytical/ abstract
Present-oriented	Strategic / future oriented

Source: Poverty Institute Guide/ Donna Beegle PhD

Power

- People in poverty do not have an experience of mastery or influence that is common for higher-income people.
- Powerlessness may heighten stress and amplify the body's response to it.
 - Takeaways: Find ways to give people an experience of mastery. For example, have one student teach using her own experience or work.

Generational Poverty	Working Class Poverty
"Life happens to me and I don't have any control over it."	"I have some control over my life but not very much"
Situational Poverty	Immigrant Poverty
"I pulled myself out of poverty. If I did it, anyone can -- you just have to make better choices, work harder, and make sacrifices."	"I have the power to make a better life for me and my family."

Source: Poverty Institute Guide/ Donna Beegle PhD

Hope

- Hope is a positive orientation to the future.
- Hope is frequently missing for low-income people since the brain is overwhelmed with the present.
- Encouraging people to think in a positive way about the future is a start. Helping them to choose and then pursue goals is a valuable foundation.
- Motivators are likely to differ for a low-income person compared to a high-income person.
- Example: A pregnant teen is unlikely to be motivated to stay in high school in order to get a better job but may be interested in staying in order to be a better mother.
 - Takeaways: Make sure the goals and motivators are set by the person and not imposed or assumed by others.

INTERVIEWER

Background:

Your task is to interview the client and uncover what hinders help. You can use the “F”s as a guide.

The Client	Your client, a single mother of three children, is enthusiastic about starting her own dog grooming business. She enrolled in a CEI cohort group, but she has missed a few sessions and she has not met with the consultant you helped her select. Your goal is to uncover the barriers she is facing and find ways to get past them.
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<i>Fabric</i>	Does the person have to have appropriate clothes and shoes? Do children have clothes and diapers that they need? Can the person get laundry soap and access to machines to wash their clothes?
<i>Family & Friends</i>	Does a solution require the person to have childcare or to have time away from family? Does the function work if a person has a child with him/her? Does the program involve or affect the client’s family? Does the person have regular social contact with friends? Is the person lonely?
<i>Fear (of stigma or of exposure</i>	Does the solution expose the person to others who may judge them? Is the help perceived as threatening to the person’s dignity? Does the help involve giving info to a government agency?
<i>Fetch</i>	Is the person expected to be able to travel to other locations, such as a drug store, a clothes giveaway, or food pantry?
<i>Flexibility/Schedule</i>	Does the person have to miss work or other commitments? Will the person have to wait for hours to be served?
<i>Food</i>	Does the function assume that a person has food regularly available? Is the problem made worse by unstable food access or poor diet? Is the person distracted by hunger?
<i>Fund</i>	Does the function assume the person has money, such as for a drug co-pay or to purchase an item? Do you know the cost of the item you are expecting them to buy?
<i>Roof</i>	Does the function rely upon the person having stable housing, working kitchen appliances or uninterrupted electricity or Internet service? Does the problem have to do with something in the home—which the person cannot control?

Background:

<i>The Client:</i>	You are a single parent with three children ages 4, 7, and 12. You want to start your own business grooming dogs. You have reached out to CEI to learn more about small business loans. They want you to take a six-week class that meets on Thursday mornings. They have also invited you to in person networking events, and lined you up with a consultant.
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Factors that hinder help:

Allow the interviewers to ask questions and discover details about your family, work, and home situation. Do not proactively volunteer the information.

<i>Focus</i>	Having time and energy to do classwork is a challenge. Your time aside from working is taken up with your family's health and the children's activities. You have an hour here and there.
<i>Fabric</i>	You worry that your clothes will make a bad impression on people at a bank or the consultant the CEI has lined up for you. You have also avoided in-person networking events because of your clothes.
<i>Family & Friends</i>	You live with your mother who has a lot of doctor's appointments that you have to attend. Also, two of your children have asthma and one has ADHD. These conditions demand regular doctor's appointments and trips to the drug store. One child is struggling in school. You are just starting the complex, multi-step months long process to get your preschooler into Head Start.
<i>Fear (of stigma or of exposure)</i>	You are afraid to ask questions in class, for fear they are stupid questions. You have postponed having the appointment with the consultant.
<i>Fetch</i>	You have your mother's car and the registration is overdue. You try to limit trips in the car to going to work and the drug or grocery store.
<i>Flexibility/Schedule</i>	You have a part-time job at the hospital, and a side job with unpredictable hours. Whenever your mother is well and none of the kids has a doctor's appointment or an emergency, you want to work. The side job pays well.
<i>Food</i>	Your SNAP benefit just got cut. You are looking for local food pantries to fill in the gap. You get some food at the hospital at a discount, but you are nearly always hungry. Your kids' school will send home food and hygiene supplies, but you have to pick the kids up from school to get this, which does not happen very often, given your work schedule.
<i>Fund</i>	You do not have any money, but you do have dog grooming tools that a friend gave you. This friend also taught you how to groom dogs. Someday, you would like to get certified, but you cannot afford the tuition or the time right now.
<i>Roof</i>	You live with your mother at her house. It needs a lot of repairs. The heating system is old and probably makes your child's asthma worse. Your mother gets subsidized rent; you and your kids are not technically allowed to live with her. You missed one of the CEI sessions because you had to remove all signs that you lived there, in preparation for her apartment to be inspected.