

# build Rapport



Don't be afraid to build rapport, it doesn't automatically mean you are colluding!

The quality of your working relationship can help when attempting other strategies in this resource.

Manage your frustration and resist the urge to try to corral the adult into change.

Use selective empathy and mid-point skills to minimise collusion.

**REMIND** practice mnemonic for engaging adult users of domestic, family and sexual violence with little or no openness to change

Rodney Vlasis, October 2025

# Explore what's meaningful to the adult



Spend time finding out about the adult's life, what matters to them, what they hope for, the qualities they strive for.

This might identify desired qualities, priority values and strivings incongruent with their denial and minimisation about their behaviour.

This might also identify discrepancies that you can reflect back to them, to lever some cracks towards behaviour openings, and to sow some seeds of doubt in their view that they do not need to engage in change work.

"You haven't shirked away from some big challenges in life, and I imagine looking into how you can improve things at home now and into the future might be one of them."

# hold a **M**irror up to extreme positions



without shaming, in a curious, matter-of-fact and non-judgmental way

“You’re telling me you have no ability to alter your responses in these situations, and you have zero responsibility for your actions...”

“I’m hearing there is nothing you can learn about being the best Dad and co-parent you can be for your children...”

Ensure you do not say this sarcastically or with bite – hold this up dispassionately for the adult to look at → they might back down from the extremity and give you something to work with (“Oh, it’s not quite like that...”). If they double down, at least you have made them own it, and you can document their unwillingness and what this means for risk and unsafe parenting capacity.

# Invite consideration of benefits



"If you were to go through with this program, how do you think you might benefit from it?"

"I know you don't want to take this step but say that you did. What might you like to learn that could end up benefitting your kids?"

"What do you think some men might get out of these conversations about being safe and calm for their families?"

"If you were OK with me supporting you in an honest way, through speaking up when I have ideas about how you can improve things for your family, would this be of use to you?"

# Normalise hesitancy



without solidifying it → offer the possibility of positive movement

“Many men who talk with us for the first time wonder how we are going to treat them. What fears might you have about our conversations?”

“It’s normal at this stage to not want to talk much, as this is a hard conversation to have. But the experience of many men who stick with it is that they end up benefitting. Would you like me to talk, in general terms, about their experiences?”

“You are wondering what you can get out of this, beyond having to come here to fulfill your order. That’s understandable, you’d prefer not to be here. But given that you are here, I want to make sure this isn’t a waste of your and everyone’s time.”



# Highlight Discrepancies



"You don't see yourself as having done anything wrong, yet on the other hand several people have expressed concern about how safe things are at home"

"You see it as a once-off, something that you did a year ago, yet it's always possible there's more to the story."

"You're telling me everything's fine now, but it also sounds as though you are someone who doesn't like to take big risks. What if something's bubbling under the surface you aren't aware of?"

"You're saying that you consider it to be your partner's fault for what you did. It also seems to me that you see yourself as someone who is capable and can make decisions for yourself."