DIAGNOSTIC INTERVIEWING FOR POLICE OFFICERS

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet has been prepared as a general guide for the Police Officer who is engaged in Community Social Action Programs. Some of the suggestions contained in the writing are useful to officers involved in other areas but due to the lack of available time, much of the material cannot be used by the uniformed patrolman.

The term "Diagnostic Interviewing" was selected to distinguish this form of interviewing from the general methods of interrogation employed in police work. This does not imply that there are not many similarities, but simply that diagnostic interviewing demands a different approach in some instances.

Every effort has been made to eliminate technical language and theory so that the material will have the widest possible application.

This booklet is not intended to give 'questions and answers' but to offer suggestions in the understanding of diagnostic interviewing which will be helpful in the development of a personal technique for the individual officer.

THE INTERVIEWER

INTERVIEWER'S IMAGE

There is no way to dispute the existence of mistrust, fear and resentment for the police officer by a large segment of American society, especially among the lower socio-economic groups. While strides have been made during the last decade to improve the image of the police officer, it would be foolish to assume that a "new day" has come. The concept of the "beat cop" who knew the people in his area and in many cases served as their friend, big brother and even fulfilled the traditional "father image," has passed with the coming of the complexities of large urban development.

In the concept of the social action policeman we find him reaching out and touching the lives of people, not as suspects of a crime, but as clients whose names frequently appear on police reports. It is not a new concept, but it is one that is not easily accepted by the public.

Regardless, the policeman working in this area must in some manner, convince his clients that his intention is to be of service. Uniquely, he is not a social worker, he is a policeman who devotes a portion of his time in assisting clients in seeking solutions to their problems. The image of a strong policeman, if used properly, offers a stability to the client that cannot be given by any other agency.

INTERVIEWER'S PERSONALITY

Personal Problems and Pressures

The officer, as with all people, is limited in his personal interest and in his responses to situations which are governed by his own background. He too reacts to friction in his personal life, the strain of financial problems, difficulties involved in raising his own children, and a job that places excessive demands upon him emotionally as well as physically. To be effective in interviewing, the officer must eliminate his personal problems and pressures in his relationship with his client. Though he can call upon his personal experiences to establish a rapport with the client, he cannot allow these same experiences to influence his evaluation.

Aggression Against Client

The interview can be one of the most frustrating encounters that a police officer can experience. He is in a position of not being in control of all of the elements involved and he is called upon to gather information from clients who may not be interested in assisting him or themselves. One of the most common results of frustration is aggression. In childhood we often reacted to frustration in a violent manner. If something stood in our way we pushed it aside; if it were large we would pick up the nearest tool and start hammering at it. The act of hammering relieved our frustration even if it did not remove the obstacle. This type of aggression will seldom be effective in interviewing. If we hammer away at the client we will arouse even more resistance in him. The interviewer has essentially lost control if he allows his own frustration to dictate his action. He must recognize his potential for aggression toward the client and make every effort to control it.

Criticism and Sarcasm

Americans have developed a strange attitude in speech. A great deal of our exchange with others involves criticism and sarcasm. It may be for us a way of holding attention or of bringing others to our level. These "cuts" are often humorous and the criticisms are many times misplaced compliments. We do not offend our associates with these words because we have a continuing rapport with them. As an interviewer we do not enjoy the same relationship with our client and such remarks may completely undermine the interview. No matter how much these expression patterns may have become a part of the interviewer's personality they must be eliminated in the interview at least until a solid relationship has been established.

Role Playing

The skilled interviewer is an accomplished actor. This statement would seem to imply a deception in dealing with a client but that is not the case. This "role playing" is best described as a flexibility in the approach which allows the officer to adjust his personality to meet the needs of the client. As with the actor, he must put aside his personal problems and become involved in the problem of the client. If the interviewer is unwilling or unable to make the adjustment his chances of success are small.

THE CLIENT

UNDERSTANDING THE CLIENT

The definition of the word client is: dependent; one who is under the protection of another. It is within this meaning that we approach the entire concept of police social action. The client is entirely different from the suspect, subject, witness or the accused. He is one who needs the services of a professional in the solution of a particular problem. With this in mind we must consider him in the framework of law enforcement and social service. You have become involved in his life as the result of a problem, and you are to deal with him in a manner that will prevent him from further problems which could lead to infractions of the law. You are looking for the reason *behind* his problem and possible solutions. Again, you must remember that the stability of your position as a police officer affords the client an opportunity that he might otherwise be denied. To derive the most from your position you must understand the factors that may interfere with establishing a satisfactory rapport with the client.

Feelings of Guilt

Many people have a background of doing things that have never been discovered. Sometimes they are merely acts which are disapproved of by society and other times they are criminal acts. In either case the feeling of guilt may enter into your relationship. Regardless of your reason for the interview, the client may have a feeling of uneasiness. He may be concerned that in the course of the interview you will penetrate the past and discover the wrong doing.

Parental Authority

In childhood we faced our parents with very little power at our command. We developed fear for their strength and were held in awe by the piercing eye that always seemed to observe the things we did wrong. We did not comprehend that it was the parent's knowledge rather than a mystic ability which allowed them to detect a lie. For many of your clients you represent that pattern of authority that dictated what a child can or cannot do. It is the fear of this authority which is an important source of the unwillingness on the part of the client to cooperate with you.

Outside Forces

Clients may frequently be subjected to reprisals from their friends and neighbors because of their association with the police. Many of us occasionally pick up information which would be useful to the police. The person who has committed a crime will be quite concerned if he thinks he is threatened by possible disclosure of that information. Any contact with the police may trigger a reaction against your client by this person.

There is a tendency in lower income groups to be hostile toward the police even though there is no criminal act. This element of society considers cooperation with the police on any level disloyal to the group.

Your client may feel this fear of reprisal in a very real way and it may be a powerful motive governing his relationship with you.

Protection of Another

There are no extremes to which a mother will not go to protect her child. This is true of each of us when our loved ones are threatened by an outside force. You are a stranger entering their lives who, as a policeman, has the authority to dictate punishment. No matter how violent the argument with a spouse, or how severe the reaction against the child's act, your client will often color the picture to protect her children or family from possible harm.

It may be difficult to understand why a woman who has been physically abused by her husband will go to great lengths to point out his good qualities and minimize his abuse. Simply, it is a conditioning which allows us to accept or overlook the shortcomings of those persons intricately involved in our lives. It may prove most frustrating unless you recognize it and learn to deal with it.

THE CLIENT AS A PERSON

There are many other factors involved in the relationship that you have with a client; some are easy to identify, others lie hidden deep beneath the surface. Perhaps the key to understanding the client is never lose sight of the fact that he is a real person. He is subject to all of the fears and worries that you experience and because of his societal position, the worries and fears may be exaggerated to him. He will cooperate only if you can communicate your sincere desire to assist him.

THE INTERVIEW

The goal in interrogation is to obtain direct information or a confession of a crime. Success for the interrogator is achieved when the officer can convince the subject that further resistance is useless.

The officer-interviewer in a social action situation is also seeking information but of a different nature. His objective is to obtain enough information about an existing situation to make a proper evaluation. Based on this information he must make a referral of the client to someone capable of effectively dealing with the problem.

In interrogation the officer is confronted with a subject who is withholding information that could lead to his or an associate's punishment. The barriers that exist between the subject and the officer are on a conscious level, the subject is fully aware of his part in crime and will make every effort to protect himself.

The officer-interviewer in a social action situation deals with underlying forces that are substantially different from that of the interrogator. Often the client is being interviewed as a follow-up on a domestic or juvenile problem. In this situation the officer is faced with a client who may be withholding information without being aware of it. Resentment toward a spouse, or the problem of a predelinquent can be altered, adjusted or explained away by the client over a long period of time with the result that he may not be conscious of the motivation involved in the specific act.

This lack of conscious recognition by the client demands a great deal of insight and understanding from the officer if he is to accurately evaluate the existing problem.

INTERVIEW SCENE

An automobile pulls up and two men approach the house. The scene takes on an air of tension for the client.

"It must be the police."

"What has Billy done?"

"What will the neighbors think?"

"Am I in trouble?"

These are only a few of the questions in the mind of the client waiting for the knock on the door. Before the interview can be successful the tension created by these fears must be replaced with an understanding of why you are there. Your opening remarks to the client may be the most significant of the entire session that will follow. For your client you are extablishing the level of response which you will expect.

Opening Remarks

Introduce yourself and state clearly why you have come. Without hesitation indicate that you wish to enter and talk with him. Once you have entered proceed immediately with general conversation. A long silence while entering and being seated increases the client's tension. The conversation during this period should be directed toward projecting your friendliness. Some possible actions are: playing with the cat or dog, commenting on the children and engaging a child in conversation, complimenting the client on a particular household furnishing, or asking about trophies or awards that are displayed. If nothing else is available, you may have to resort to the weather; or in a humorous way describe your difficulty in locating the address. If you can relate your personal life with statements such as, "I have a son his age, or I have three children also," it will be most effective in relieving the tension of the client.

It is important that when you are ready to begin your interview there be no noticeable change in your basically friendly attitude toward the client. The transition can be so smooth that the client is almost unaware that you are now down to business.

Presence of Others

The officer is usually present as the result of a domestic or juvenile complaint and in either circumstance the emotional response of the client will be influenced by the presence of another person, either adult or older child. There is no way to conduct a satisfactory interview if both parties involved in a domestic crisis are present. The same is true with a juvenile and his parent. The situation with a friend, relative or older child is somewhat better, but it is far from ideal and should be avoided if at all possible. If it is not possible to isolate the parties so that individual interviews can be conducted, then a time should be set when you can return under more favorable conditions.

Distractions

The officer may be interrupted many times in the progress of the interview while the client responds to the needs of young children. Other sources of interruption or distraction may include a radio or television, children running in or out, the telephone, or even a curious neighbor coming to the door under some pretext.

These distractions must be accepted good naturedly by the interviewer. If he shows annoyance it will be reflected in the attitude of the client.

It is possible to eliminate some of these distractions with a suggestion by the officer that something be done. An example is, "I see that your children are like mine, they turn the radio up lous enough for the entire neighborhood. I wonder if they would mind if we turn it down a bit." This type of wording avoids embarrassing the client and still makes it possible to decrease the distractions and comment only on those that can be easily altered without embarrassment.

INTERVIEW TECHNIQUE

An interrogation and general police interviewing the basic questions who, what, when, where, why, and how will supply the necessary information. This is not the case in the police-client interview. These questions, of course, must still be answered but the primary emphasis of the interviewer is on the "why." In the answer to this question you must uncover all of the ramification that affect the client and the other members of the household.

WHO: *the father*

WHAT: *beat the son*

WHERE: *in the home*

WHEN: *Sunday*

WHY:*the son took money belonging to the father*

HOW: *heavy leather belt.*

From the social action standpoint we know almost nothing that will be of benefit to us in the solution of this domestic problem.

It does not tell us if this type of confrontation has occurred frequently, or if the degree of violence has increased. We do not know whether the severity of the father's action was prompted by the specific act or if it was compounded by the father's drinking problem. We cannot determine the involvement of the other members of the household. Nor do we have any indication of the motivation of the son. Did he take the money to supply his need for drugs, or was it the simple act of a deprived child? From the questions above it is obvious that the interrogative questions will not meet the social action situation.

To obtain the desired information there must be a general outline of questioning. Because of the individuality of each client and the variable responses possible due to the inter-personal relationship of the client and the interviewer, it must be understood that the outline of questions below is merely offered as a guideline and will require much adaptation in any particular interview.

The Interview Outline

1. If you are answering a call and are without any information it will be necessary for you to get answers to all of the basic questions.

2. If your visit is a follow-up on a previous report it will be necessary for you to verify all information.

   The information that you receive at the time of your interview may be substantially different than that given at the time of the complaint. The elapsed time will effect the intensity of emotion felt by the client. Also, if the scene has been properly set you will have established yourself as a sincere advisor and the client's response to you will be entirely different from that of the officer who answered the call. A comparison of the verification and the initial report will often give you a valuable point for evaluation of the client's motivation.

3. Have the client define the problem.

   If this visit is a follow-up it is not necessary for you to explain in detail the report. Frequently you will find that the client has never identified the problem in a manner that will allow him to explain it. If you are successful in getting him to clearly define the problem you may be a longway toward a solution. Getting the subject to verbalize his thoughts may require suggestion from you but the more self-expression you encourage from the client the better your opportunity to properly evaluate the problem. Do not allow the client to involve you by making you answer such questions as, "Do you think that

was right?" Avoid making a value judgement of the problem at this time. Be a good listener. If the client has something to say, let *him* say it

4. Establish the frequency of occurrence and identify a possible pattern.
   Seldom will the police be called for a first-time domestic problem unless it involves unusual physical abuse. You are generally dealing with a recurring situation that previously involved the police. The importance of establishing the frequency or a pattern with this type of problem is critical in evaluating the severity of the problem. In many cases the client will withhold this information to protect the spouse or child and it will require prodding by the interviewer to reach the truth. The interviewer should be aware of the pain that is sometimes involved in relating the frequency of unpleasantness in their lives. Some people have a way of minimizing emotional pain by refusing to connect painful events. It is this mechanism that must be overcome if an accurate appraisal is to be made.

5. Seek out other situations which may not appear to be related to this occurrence but may result from the same motivation.
   There is a tendency to disassociate related circumstances to preserve hope for a better tomorrow. The individual who feels trapped in an unpleasant situation is so deeply involved that he does not associate yesterday's events with something that may occur today unless it is the same in every respect. This allows him to deal with each day's problems individually and by elimination of the cumulative weight of problems, he makes his existence bearable. Obviously, this may not be a wholly conscious action by the client and therefore the burden is greater for the interviewer. He may find it necessary to search his experiences to make suggestions as to events that could be related. Unless a clear picture of the overall problem can be drawn, no valid conclusions will be reached by the interviewer.

6. Discuss the involvement of other people in the problem.
   A domestic or juvenile problem cannot be understood unless the involvement of others is properly evaluated. There are two areas of consideration. How do others influence or contribute to the situation, and how are others affected by the alternate solutions to the problem. Relatives living in the household, male or female friends of the spouse, the interference of in-laws, companions of the children, older children taking sides in an argument of the parents, a stepfather or mother, are only a few of the areas of conflict and that may

   have a direct bearing upon the problem. The interviewer must become aware of these potential contributors and determine their degree of influence upon any solution.

7. Determine the effect of the economic standing of the client.
   One of the major contributors to domestic crises are financial pressures. In our society, especially among the lower-income groups, we find a remarkable tolerance to hardship; there may be many complaints, but on a day-to-day basis people manage to survive without a high degree of hostile reaction to society. In the family group this seems to be true so long as the parties involved are mutually contributing to the family's survival. It breaks down, however, when this feeling of mutuality is destroyed and one member of the family feels that he is shouldering an undue portion of the burden. The interviewer must be careful in phrasing questions in this area that he not open a "can of worms." Select questions which will not bring about a strong emotional reaction. What we are really after in this area are basic facts on the financial structure of the family and how they relate to the specific problem.

8. Establish the client's desire to take steps to alter the situation or eliminate the problem.
   The social worker's approach to a problem may be to assist a client in improving his relative position in society. In police social action you are primarily concerned with the solution to an existing problem. In order for you to be of assistance to the client he must have the desire to correct the problem. Most people with a problem want help and will accept it if they can overcome their fear and resentment. You should make every effort to bring the clients needs to the surface and overcome his fear, but failing to do so you can be of no real assistance to him. In the end the client, not you, will determine the degree of assistance you may give.

9. Have the client suggest possible solutions to the problem.
   A point often missed is that the client may have already decided upon what he thinks is the best course of action. An illustration of this is an interviewer who devoted an hour to discussing with a client methods that might correct her husband's drinking problem. It was by an innocent question that the interviewer discovered that this time had been wasted. The client's real desire was a divorce and the assistance she needed and wanted was to that end.

10. If necessary, suggest alternative solutions.

You will find that many clients, even after the problem has been clearly defined, cannot or will not offter any solutions. This for most clients is reasonable. If the alternatives were apparent to them, your presence would probably not be required. While this may be obvious to you, it is not to many interviewers. We have all found ourselves offering to friends and families simple solutions to problems and wondering why they could not find the answer themselves. The interviewer must be aware that when people are deeply involved in a situation it may be impossible for them to see even the most obvious solutions. It is at this point in the interview, when the interviewer realizes that his client is not seeing the possible solutions, that he must exert particular care not to lead the client to a course of action that he has chosen for him. Always suggest as many alternatives as possible and involve the client in a discussion of the value and consequences of each.

11. Have the client set a time when you should return to finalize what you have discussed and to determine the positive steps which will be taken.

If the scheduling of your case load permits it is best to avoid having the client make a decision on major changes in their lives or one which will require action that will have long range effects on another individual. If these are the circumstances then you should attempt to return within the next few days, preferably the following day. This will give the client time to prepare for the decision on his own and will lessen the possibility of your making the decision for him.

Of course, if the matter can be handled or a referral made to an appropriate agency, then further delay is unnecessary.

12. If necessary, establish a basis for further interviews.

The interview that has followed the general lines above will likely be successful to the extent that you have a rapport with the client and the case can be closed or a solution is at hand. Should the interview have gone poorly, but you feel that there is need for further work which could be productive, then you must try to leave in a way which will permit upon your return an opportunity to resume discussion. A statement similar to this may achieve the desired result: "We haven't accomplished a great deal today but at least, I feel, that we have gotten to know each other. I'll come back in a few days and we will talk again. I think that you know that my only purpose is to help you and I am not going to force anything on you. If I can help, I want to and that is why I am coming back."

INTERVIEW PROBLEMS

The Obvious Lie

In the interview the "hit and run" technique is usually very productive in dealing with the lie. The client gives you information that is obviously not the exact truth or is distorted to preserve his own self-image. With this technique you merely accept the client's statement after making him aware you do not believe him. "I can't buy that, but we will move on," is usually adequate. This is disarming for the client who has brought into play his defense mechanisms. Your attitude of confidence in your knowledge of the situation will bring about an insecurity in the client and may give you a lever to probe deeper into the problem. You may later return to the question (several times) and find that you now receive a different answer.

The Hostile Client

The uncooperative client is frequently encountered but it is not unusual to find a client who is actually hostile. Before any ground may be covered with this client, the interviewer must find a way to overcome this hostility. If this cannot be accomplished in a short span of time, further efforts will be wasted.

This type of client will not respond to the suggested "friendly approach" and appeals to logic will also prove inadequate. You may have a degree of success by returning the hostility of the client with your own attitude. "I have a job to do. With your attitude I really don't care about you or your problem. So why don't you make it easy on both of us by just answering the questions - then I'll be on my way." Each of us enjoy a feeling of self-importance and this type of "put down" may trigger the need of the client to increase his importance to you.

The client may also favorably react to an implied threat of a stronger action or unpleasant alternatives. Tremendous discretion must be used in both methods or any chance of establishing a rapport with the client will be lost.

There is another technique which involves less risk in the event of failure and have proven valuable with adults and juveniles. Many clients who are hostile toward police and other authority pride themselves on their ability to analyze the alternatives and to select the one that requires the least effort or has the lesser consequence. You will hear them discuss it with regard to their associates, employers, teachers and parents. This personality construction may be effectively utilized in the interview situation. As in the traditional "good guy - bad guy" technique, working with a partner, it is easy to create a situation where one will advocate strong action and the other will offer some degree of understanding. One partner leaves and allows the other to

build a relationship with the client by appealing to his pride in the selecting the most practical alternative. The danger in this technique lies with the perceptive client who is capable of out-performing you.

Keeping Control

The officer involved in social action carries a case-load that limits his time to a critical point. The expeditious use of the interview must be a prime consideration but it must not hinder his efforts to reach a satisfactory evaluation.

There are two types of clients that will work directly against your efforts to get the most work done in the available time.

The client who needs someone to share his problem, and a way to vent suppressed emotions, will resort to any method to detain you. Since this type of action by the client is often compulsive, therefore, uncontrollable by the client, you must frequently interrupt and restate the question. If done politely, there is almost no danger of offending this client. However, it may become necessary to be more forceful. Explain that your time is limited at present but that you will return to discuss the matter in greater length. With this as a preface you can be more forceful in making the client stay on the track. Another type of client that presents a similar problem to the interviewer is the one with a strong personality who skillfully answers your question with a question. From experience he will have learned that each of us enjoy talking about ourselves. To avoid your questions he may appeal to you on this personal level and he may in fact become the interviewer.

It is *you* that must direct the interview. If you lose control of the interview and after several attempts to regain your dominance, you have not been successful, it may be best to discontinue your efforts and schedule another interview at a later date.

It is important to note that control of the interview does not preclude deviation from your directed questions. Many times it is in leaving the subject that will uncover the information you are seeking. You must guard against pushing the client in the interest of time, because it will lead to invalid conclusions.

The Easily Influenced

There is a tendency among people to agree with any person of authority. This is especially true with older adults. To get a reading on how easily you may lead the client by your questions and statements, simply restate what

you have been told about the problem and alter one of the main facts. If the client accepts your alteration without objection, then it will be necessary for you to exert extreme caution to avoid leading the client. With this type of client it is best *not* to offer summations or conclusions. On important questions rephrase them several times so that you will have a comparison for evaluation.

The Reluctant Client

The psychological therapist usually deals with a client who is seeking assistance. The officer-interviewer does not always enjoy this same relationship with his client. The officer, in many instances, deals with a client that seemingly does not want assistance, but upon more careful examination what would appear to be resistance is only on the surface. The client faced with a domestic crisis or a juvenile who finds himself in trouble, deeply wants help and would transfer the problem in its entirety to the officer if his self-image and resentment could be dealt with without emotional pain. In this situation the ultimate task of the officer is to bring to the surface the desire for assistance.

When the officer finds that there is resistance, but suspects that there is also a real desire for help, his approach must involve several techniques.

He may find it necessary to divert his questions from the particular situation and concentrate on questions that will bring about a higher level of emotional response. A direct question such as, "You resent my talking to you about this, don't you?" will give the interviewer an opening to restate the purpose of his visit and perhaps quiet some fears of the client. The question, "Do you feel that you can solve this problem without any assistance?" will give the interviewer an insight into how he must direct further questioning.

"DO'S" OF DIAGNOSTIC INTERVIEWS

1. Do remember that you are not a social worker and that the strength of the police image can be valuable to your client.
2. Do control your aggression toward the client.
3. Do be flexible in your approach to the client.
4. Do be aware that the client may *not* be aware that he is withholding information.
5. Do project your friendliness toward the client in every way.
6. Do place the emphasis of the interview on the "WHY" of the client's problem.
7. Do let the client define his problem.
8. Do determine the involvement of others in the problem.
9. Do establish the client's desire to be helped.
10. Do let the client suggest solutions to his problem.
11. Do try to change the attitude of a hostile client.
12. Do recognize that most clients want help if you can overcome their fear.
13. Do seek a level with a juvenile that is comfortable to each of you.
14. Do answer the juvenile's questions which will contribute to his understanding of your purpose.
15. Do relate personal experiences to the juvenile which will sell you as a real person.
16. Do let the juvenile have a choice of alternatives

"DON'TS" OF DIAGNOSTIC INTERVIEWS

1. Don't let your personal problems effect your attitude toward the client.
2. Don't use criticism and sarcasm in the interview.
3. Don't lose sight of the client as a *real* person.
4. Don't let silence at the beginning of an interview create additional tension.
5. Don't hold an interview with other persons present.
6. Don't show annoyance at distraction during the interview.
7. Don't let the client disassociate related events in establishing the frequency of the problem.
8. Don't go deep into financial problems unless they relate directly to the existing problem.
9. Don't force the client to make a snap decision.
10. Don't persue the obvious lie.
11. Don't lose control of the interview.
12. Don't use language with the juvenile unless it is natural to you.
13. Don't come down to the juvenile's level nor expect him to come up to yours.
14. Don't let the juvenile test you without his understanding that you are aware of his efforts.
15. Don't be afraid of juvenile tears; they can help establish a real rapport.

THE JUVENILE INTERVIEW

The youth of this generation is so unlike many of the generations of the past, that the average adult, regardless of his interest, finds it difficult to relate to them on any level. If you combine this with the lack of respect and trust for the police officer that has shown itself in this generation, you will understand why special skills and insights are necessary if the interviewer is to be successful with the juvenile.

If you are not sincerely interested in youth you are not going to establish the rapport that is essential in an interview. You may be able to mask your personal feelings with adult clients, but with a juvenile it will be considerably more difficult, if not impossible.

The more youthful juvenile may resent your physical size and interpret it as a threat to his well being. This is the result of conditioning to adult authority based on superior physical strength.

To the pre-delinquent, you are the formalization of the adult authority which has dominated his life. His association with this authority has made him believe that you are not capable of understanding his reaction to a particular problem.

Your Approach

Be honest in your approach to him. Make no effort to conceal your personal feelings with regard to his situation. If you think that he is hostile toward you, tell him so. Give him every opportunity to tell you how he feels about you and your authority. If you have hostile feelings toward him, let him know it. These things must be brought out into the open before any mutual respect can be established. Time spent in this area will not be wasted.

Do not come down to his level nor expect him to reach your level; look for a level at which you will both feel comfortable. Only in this way will you be able to effectively communicate with the juvenile.

Your Language

Use language that is natural to you. If it allows the use of slang or other forms of contemporary language do not hesitate to use them to be understood. The important thing is - don't be a phony, if you are not one of the boys" then don't try to talk like one of them. Assumed street language is one of the most easily detected forms of deception.

Answer Questions

Answer his questions as long as they are not an attempt to divert the course

of the interview. At the beginning of the interview make it clear that you will answer all questions if they contribute to your mutual understanding.

Relate Personal Experiences

If possible, use personal experiences that will convince him that you can understand his situation. This will assist you in presenting an image of an "individual" as well as a police officer. This does not mean that you should relinquish your position of authority in your relationship but that you should give the juvenile the benefit of your entire personality.

Keep Control

Do not allow the juvenile to test you without making him aware of your understanding of his efforts. The juvenile will often test the sincerity of the motives of an adult. You, because of your position, will be subjected to even more testing. He may really want you to care even when he cannot accept consciously that you do. He, perhaps not on a conscious level, is asking for proof. He may well be saying, "If you are sincere then you will take a little of my abuse." You must help him identify his motivation in testing you if he is to accept your purpose.

Don't Push

Do not push the juvenile into a situation where he must drop all self-respect in order to cooperate with you. Even if he is trying to cooperate he, like an adult, must maintain an image which will permit him to regain his defenses after the interview. Many times the juvenile will feel that his parents are worthless, but for him to verbalize this would strip him of the defense that makes his life bearable.

Let Him Choose

Make the juvenile aware of the alternatives, but, as with an adult, do not make the selection for him. To have a choice is of particular importance to this age group. It represents to them a recognition of their individuality. This alone could be the key that will put your relationship on a sound footing.

Emotional Outburst

With the juvenile more so than with the adult, the physical symptoms of nervousness, broken speech patterns, closed eyes, or a dropped head, may indicate that you are hitting at the root of a problem. Don't be afraid of tears. The juvenile who begins to cry is primed for the establishment of a good relationship. If you can, at this point, demonstrate your willingness to be his friend and help him overcome the embarrassment of his emotion, you will have gone a long way toward building a successful rapport.

CONCLUSION

The interview presents a challenge which is found in only a few of life's situations. The dynamics of the interview strike deep at mans' ability to communicate with his fellowmen. The relationship that evolves between the interviewer and his client is contingent upon the interviewer's understanding of human behavior.

What has been presented here is not a comprehensive study of the social action interview, for such would take volumes. Experience in interviewing is the chief factor that will determine the success that can be expected by the interviewer. To most clients, the police officer represents a strong image of authority which can greatly assist the officer in the interview, if he is able to convey his willingness to assist the client. The officer-interviewer can learn from observation of a more experienced officer and the case-study method can also be useful in exposing the inexperienced interviewer to the various techniques which have proven successful, but there is no way to artificially duplicate the pressures of an interview. Until the officer has faced the man-to-man confrontation of real interview, he will not begin to develop his own "interview personality." No two interviewers will approach the problem in exactly the same manner. This does not preclude an equal effectiveness of different approaches to the same client.

The interaction between interviewer and client is a matter of individual personalities.

The uniformed patrolman and the psychological therapist may both object to some of the material presented in this booklet. For the patrolman there is seldom time to employ many of the described techniques. In a few areas there is a departure from some theory for the therapist. The validity of such objections cannot be denied.

What is written here serves only as a guide to the officer who seeks to develop his own techniques of interviewing. Each officer must evaluate his method in relationship to the available time and the techniques which may be used.

END