

Appendix I: Practical 3A

Role-play 2: Part A: Second Session with Simon Leung

Participant's Briefing Instructions

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Instructions for Role-play Volunteer (Simon Leung)

These are the instructions for the person helping the student with Role-play 2 by acting in the role of the client, Simon Leung. You must use the following information to assist you in your interactions with the student during the role-play.

The role-play will consist of the student conducting the beginnings of a second counselling session with you. While you are encouraged to use your creativity and judgement during the role-play, follow the instructions below.

Please note that the gender of the volunteer doesn't need to match the gender of the character they will be playing as long as the volunteer can accurately portray the character as described in the following instructions.

Background Information

You are Simon Leung, a 19-year-old man who saw a counsellor for the first time last week. You were referred to counselling by your GP to assist you with issues related to social anxiety. You have always thought of yourself as an anxious person, but you have found this to be more and more problematic since you started university last year. Starting university meant that you had to move to Sydney and away from your parent's home (your parents live in Wagga Wagga). You moved into university accommodation, sharing an apartment with three other first-year male students. Even though you were sharing with other first-year students, you felt a bit anxious around them and were concerned that you would say something stupid and that they would judge you.

This meant that, initially, you were timid around them. This created a lot of awkwardness in the house. While you eventually became more comfortable with them and are now all friends, you are unhappy that it takes so long to come out of your shell and feel comfortable around new people. You have noticed that this pattern re-occurs in your social interactions. You see how easy social interactions seem for others, and you want to be just like them. You want to learn to interact more confidently with people, especially girls. In your previous session, you focused on your most pressing concern: whether or not to ask out a girl from your chemistry lab, Nina.

During the counselling session, you decided to ask her out and did ask her out during the week. She said yes, and you have arranged to take her to dinner and a movie this coming Saturday night. While you are happy, she said yes. You are concerned that you will be awkward on the date and want to learn to relax and communicate more effectively.

You have always felt very nervous around new people. You think you will say or do something 'stupid', and people will judge you. Your heart starts beating fast, and you are convinced everyone in the room can hear it. You feel as though your brain stops working correctly, and you can't think of clever or appropriate things to say, and when you do talk, your tongue tends to get tied, and you stumble over your words.

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This feeling is particularly strong around girls. You tend to get 'stuck' and don't know what to say and do, so don't say anything. You tend to let other people talk, which can get awkward during one-on-one conversations. This problem improves once you get to know and are comfortable around people. Your friends tell you that you are clever and witty during conversations and that they like talking to you.

You know you can be a good conversationalist when comfortable with people. Still, you want to learn how to manage your anxiety and be a good conversationalist with everyone. While you know Nina and are comfortable around her during your chemistry labs, you fear your date will be a disaster because you will be nervous – your dating experiences so far have been minimal. You are scared that you will not know what to do or what to say and that you will either say too much and turn into a 'gibbering idiot' or you will just freeze up and be a 'silent idiot' on your date.

You have not been on a 'proper' date before. When you were in early high school (around years 8 and 9), you had 'crushes' on the 'popular' girls, and, at various times, you tried asking a few of them out, but all rejected you. One even started a nasty rumour that you wouldn't take no for an answer and followed her home after school, begging for a date.

This didn't happen at all, but you were so upset and embarrassed by the experience that you stopped talking to girls until early in year 11 when one of your cousin's friends took an interest in you. Her name was Mikaela, and she asked you 'out'. You were thrilled and readily said yes. While you never actually went out on a 'date' together, you often hung out with her, and your cousin walked Mikaela home from school, bought her many gifts, and spoke to her on the phone almost every night.

After two months, she broke up, telling you you were too clingy. You felt devastated by being rejected, and you haven't asked out another girl since, until Nina. You are concerned that Nina will think you are 'clingy' or 'stalkerish' if you don't act the 'right' way on the date but aren't sure what the 'right' way to act is. You are sure that your lack of dating experience will make your date awkward.

During the Role-play:

Below are some specific instructions about things you must say/do during the role-play.

- At the beginning of the role-play, the student will greet and welcome you – you should respond naturally to any small talk they make.
- If the student asks any questions about steps you have taken since your last session together, you should say that you asked Nina out, and she said yes. You should say that you are pleased she said yes, but you should ensure you appear unhappy/uncomfortable. For example, you might say you are happy while crossing your arms closely over your chest, look at the floor, shake your head, and say you are pleased with a worried inflection.
- Suppose the student asks you what you want to focus on in this session. In that case, you should reply that you are particularly interested in managing your anxiety and acting appropriately during your date.
- You should use the information provided in the "background character information" to help flesh out the conversation. Respond in a way that comes to you naturally based on the student's questions/probes while using the background information. Note: don't simply read this information out – instead, respond in a manner that makes sense to the conversation you are having with the student.
- At some point during the role-play, you should express that you know that Nina will reject you during the date because she will discover that you are too awkward and not cool enough for her.

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- At some point during the role-play, you should say that you are too awkward and that no one likes you. Explain that no one ever asks you out, which means you have nothing to offer girls.
- Towards the end of the role-play, the student should summarise the key aspects you discussed during the session. Suppose you believe that the student's summary is accurate. In that case, you should respond by saying something like "Yes, that's right"; however, if you don't think the student's summary is accurate, you should clarify any aspects you believe have been misunderstood.
- The role-play will conclude once you are happy with the student's summary.