

The 5-Column Approach

The following table, known as the 'column approach', illustrates the use of questions based on the first five steps of this framework. The column approach is a paperwork tool that is used to record, in summary point form, conversations and reflections between workers and those accessing services. (Using the column approach as a paperwork tool for practice is discussed further in Chapter Five)

The Column Approach

<i>Stories and Issues</i>	<i>The Picture of the Future</i>	<i>Strengths and Exceptions</i>	<i>Other Resources</i>	<i>Plans and Steps</i>
Ask questions that invite people to share their stories and enable them to clarify the issues.	Ask questions that help people explore their aspirations, dreams, interests and goals.	Ask questions that help people explore their strengths and the exceptions to the issues.	Ask questions that help people identify resources that might help them reach their goals.	Ask questions that enable people to specify concrete steps towards their goals.
What's happening? How do you feel about this? How long has this been a problem? How is it affecting you and others?	What do you want to be happening instead? What will be different when the issues are addressed?	What strengths do you have that might be helpful? What do you do well? What's happening when the issues aren't around?	Who else might be able to help? What other skills or resources might be useful?	What steps can be taken, given your picture of the future, strengths and resources? Who will do what? When? How? By when?

McCashen, W. (2005). 'The strengths approach'.
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