

Varying Styles of Reflection ~ Some Examples:

Simple Reflection (usually a repeat or a rephrase)

Client: The judge didn't order that!

PRACTITIONER: That's not what you remember the judge saying *[rephrase; rolling with resistance]*

Client: It's not like I can just go out and get new friends!

PRACTITIONER: Making friends is not easy. *[rephrase – expressing empathy; rolling with resistance]*

Client: I don't know why this is such a big deal for everyone else. All my friends drink like I do.

PRACTITIONER: It doesn't seem like that big a deal, when what you see is people basically drinking like you do. *[repeat – allows the offender to hear what he has said; rolling with resistance]*

OR

PRACTITIONER: You're feeling like people's concern about your drinking is blown out of proportion. *[rephrase – allows the offender to hear what he has said; rolling with resistance]*

Complex Reflection (adding something to it—usually a paraphrase or a reflection of feeling)

Client: There's no way I can get to treatment every week.

PRACTITIONER: Right now it seems like getting there is a pretty huge barrier. *[paraphrase; rolling with resistance; expressing empathy]*

Client: I'm trying! If you guys would just get off my back, I could focus on getting my life in order.

PRACTITIONER: It's frustrating to have someone watching what you do. *[paraphrase; rolling with resistance; expressing empathy]*

OR

PRACTITIONER: You're working hard on the changes you need to make. *[paraphrase; rolling with resistance; affirmation]*

Complex Reflections (cont.)

Client: It's not fair that I have to do this program and everyone else in court didn't!

PRACTITIONER: And you're wondering what it is about your particular situation that made the judge want to order it for you. *[paraphrase; agree with a twist – getting client to think about the judge's perspective]*

Client: Everyone should just relax. I'm doing the best I can with trying to find a job.

PRACTITIONER: You're pretty angry that others aren't recognizing all the efforts you've made. *[Reflection of feeling; expressing empathy; rolling with resistance]*

Client: You don't know my family. It's basically impossible not to drink when we get together.

PRACTITIONER: It's really difficult to be around your family and not drink, and definitely would have to involve some pretty careful planning ahead to manage it. *[Paraphrase; Agreeing with a twist]*

Amplified Reflection (exaggerated form)

NOTE: This must be done empathetically and in a supportive tone. Any vocal hint of sarcasm, irony, or impatience can quickly recast the response as hostile and elicit client resistance.

Client: I couldn't just give up drinking. What would my friends think?

PRACTITIONER: There's just no way that you could get through that.

Client: I can take care of myself. I don't need my parents always checking up on me.

PRACTITIONER: There's really not any reason at all to have your parents in your life.

Client: My wife is always exaggerating. I haven't ever been that bad.

PRACTITIONER: It feels like this is coming out of thin air and none of her concerns are even close to the truth.

Client: It's nothing about you or anything. You've been pretty cool, but as soon as I'm done with this, I'm going back to using anyway.

PRACTITIONER: No matter how much you accomplish now, there's just no way you're going to stick with the plan you've got going when no-one's watching over you.

Double-sided reflection (capturing both sides of the client's perspective or ambivalence)

Client: Okay, maybe I've got some problems from my using, but it's not like I'm addicted.

PRACTITIONER: So while you see that using is causing problems for you, it's important that people not think of you as some kind of addict. [Double-sided reflection]

Client: I don't smoke any more than most of my friends. What's wrong with having a joint now and then?

PRACTITIONER: I can see how this is confusing for you. Earlier on, you told me some ways that you're concerned about your use, and at the same time it seems like you're not using any more than your friends do. Hard to sort it out! [*Double-sided; rolling with resistance*]

Client: I guess the workforce center could help me get a job, but I don't know...

PRACTITIONER: Part of you knows finding a job is really possible for you, and at the same time, it's hard to know the best way to go about it. [*Double-sided reflection; expressing empathy*]