
Making Safeguarding Personal Toolkit

Case Example 12:

Supporting Michael to change
attachment behaviour





Case Example

Michael was referred to the community team when he was in his early seventies. The Community Psychiatric Nurse made the referral because Michael was isolated and not managing his personal care or his personal admin. Michael had never had a mental health diagnosis. However, the way he acted had been described as 'odd'. Rachel, the social worker, initially visited with the nurse and found that Michael didn't want to talk to her. She decided to visit alone, despite some reservations because Michael was quite loud and seemed intimidating. Over time, on a one-to-one basis, Rachel got to know Michael. She found that he had no family or friends and that people tended to be wary of him because he spoke loudly. Rachel got to know that Michael became frustrated and pushed people away when he felt they were making decisions for him. She built a relationship that allowed Michael to tell her what was worrying him when his speech became louder and he gestured more. Rachel was able to support Michael to identify how he could make his flat and his affairs more manageable, and ultimately to agree to some support so that he was less isolated.

Case Example taken from Jones and Watson, 2014



Reflective questions

How do I make sense of people's behaviour towards me and others?

How do I build relationships with people I work with?

Social care practitioners may be in a position where their work sheds light on someone's experience. They need to be sensitive to this and know when to seek additional support.