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The Acquisition and Usage of the SODAS Problem Solving Method Among Adults At-Risk for Homelessness

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The Acquisition and Usage of the SODAS Problem Solving Method
Among Adults At-Risk for Homelessness

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
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Abstract

Individuals experiencing extended homelessness face multifaceted risks in physical health, nutrition, substance use, mental health, continuing unemployment, and incarceration. Some of these adults may benefit from learning a problem-solving decision-making method to assist them in dealing with everyday problems they encounter. This study taught three men with extensive histories of homelessness, but who were currently housed, the SODAS problem-solving decision-making method, and assessed their ability to learn it and guide another adult in the use of the method in simulated role-play problem situations. The acquisition of SODAS from behavioral rehearsal training was evaluated using a multiple-baseline design across participants' role plays during the baseline, and post-training SODAS conditions. After demonstrating their ability to successfully guide another adult through the SODAS process when role-playing problem situations relevant to this population, the participants were instructed and provided SODAS forms for applying this method to their own every day lives' social and non-social problem situations. Social validity follow-up meetings were conducted weekly with each participant, and assessed the extent to which he reported the use and helpfulness of the SODAS method in addressing everyday life issues.

Chapter One: Introduction

Homelessness is a concern locally and nationwide, and with the recent economic issues facing our country, it is only becoming more common. Several issues causing the increase include foreclosure rates, declining public assistance, fewer consistent work opportunities, low-wage salaries, and a general increase in poverty nationwide (“Why Are People Homeless,” 2009). Homelessness, according to the State of Florida’s definition as they modified it in 2009 reads:

“Any person who lacks a regular or fixed nighttime residence, including those who live on the street, in shelters, in other places not meant for human habitation, as well as persons living doubled up with family and friends, in motels or campgrounds due to the loss of housing or economic hardship, and who lack adequate alternative accommodations” (Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County, 2011, p. 1).

The homeless are often an extremely underserved population, and their needs are great, with 35% reporting at least one of the following conditions: a mental disorder, physical disability or ailment, or substance abuse addiction (Homeless Coalition of Hillsborough County, 2011). Other studies also make it clear that there are significant portions of the homeless that have substance abuse issues (Dykeman, 2011; Gelberg, Anderson, & Leake, 2000; Kraybill & Zerger 2003; Vangeest & Johnson, 2002). Individuals with substance abuse issues and poor social problem solving may have difficulty navigating their way through situations that involve a high-risk of drug usage occurring (Platt & Husband, 1993). Thus, a tool or method that could aid their successful navigation of difficult, but foreseeable, social situations could prove to be of great value.

The homeless also reported more unemployment stretches lasting a year or longer, which can significantly decrease the accumulation of skills in the workforce and thus decrease the chances of

upward mobility in his/her field (Vangeest & Johnson, 2002). Such long layoffs from gainful employment serves not only to inhibit the chances of being hired in the future, but also can lead to a lack of health insurance to allow for adequate treatment of health issues, something noted as a possible precursor to homelessness (Dykeman, 2011). Several factors were cited as being problematic for the homeless, including, insufficient work, inconsistent pay, and relationships with employers (Shier, Jones, & Graham, 2012). An intervention that could help the homeless deal with situations that may arise in their relationships with co-workers and supervisors may be beneficial to all parties.

A study was conducted with homeless veterans who suffer from co-occurring disorders that focused on them staying off substances and remaining independent (Smelson et al., 2012). The program was called Maintaining Independence and Sobriety through Systems Integration, Outreach, and Networking (MISSION). It was a multifaceted program that augmented “treatment as usual” (TAU) among those enrolled, and was compared with other veterans who received only the TAU approach. Those receiving the MISSION components showed greater attendance at sessions for their outpatient care, and were less likely to drink to intoxication and suffer severe anxiety (Smelson et al., 2012). The MISSION group included critical time intervention treatments, peer support, vocational support, and mental health and substance abuse treatment. Those receiving the MISSION treatment were also less likely than their TAU counterparts to drink to intoxication or experience severe tension or anxiety at the 12-month follow-up (Smelson et al., 2012). Another multifaceted program, was called the Demonstration Employment Project Training and Housing (DEPTH). The intervention included financial aid, housing support, counseling for substance abuse problems, mental health assessments and treatment, and job training. The intervention also provided support for the immediate tangible needs of the participants. For the study, there were two groups, each consisting of 101 participants. One group received the DEPTH intervention, and the other was a control group that received no additional intervention, although the homeless in the control group was permitted to seek any assistance on their own from the community and community providers. The results showed that the DEPTH participants rated their quality of housing

much more favorably than did their control counterparts, suggesting the intervention was successful in improving the housing quality of those who received DEPTH's services (Toro et al., 1997).

A brief intervention has also been used with homeless youth aged 13-19 years old that involved a feedback component to decrease alcohol consumption and substance use (Baer, Peterson, & Wells, 2004). A brief intervention can be beneficial for homeless individuals because it is less expensive and does not demand as much of a long-term time commitment from individuals who are often hard to reach and engage over extended periods. The intervention, called the Street Teen Alcohol Risk Reduction Study, or STARRS, involved meetings with youth about the risks related to alcohol consumption, symptoms of dependence, and personal goals and motivations for change to meet those goals. Results showed little or no effect for alcohol or marijuana consumption; however, there were significant differences in consumption of other illicit substances such as cocaine or heroin (Baer et al., 2004).

Other interventions that have been conducted with homeless adults were a "housing first" approach to decrease alcohol consumption (Larimer et al., 2009); studies which included behavioral day treatment and abstinence contingent housing approaches (Milby et al., 2000; Milby et al., 2004; Milby et al., 2003); and finally, a Healthy Living Program that focused on decreasing risky sexual behavior and lowering substance abuse levels among marginally housed HIV sufferers (Rotheram-Borus, Desmond, Comulada, Arnold, & Johnson, 2009). These studies all demonstrated that gains could be made with this population as long as those participating in the programs had a roof over their head of some sort.

In interviews with homeless individuals involved in six different treatment programs, many individuals echoed these findings, stating that a "housing first" approach had been a big help to get them on their feet; and it was noted that outcomes were substantially improved when this was the case (Kraybill & Zerger, 2003). This was mirrored in another study that showed how having adequate housing first, led to much better outcomes for many dually-diagnosed chronic homeless people, a population that oftentimes is considered not housing ready (Tsemberiz, Gulcur, & Nakae, 2004). Oftentimes the homeless, and homeless veterans especially, will present with dually diagnosed conditions, suffering from both physical and mental health conditions, including addictions (Drebing et al., 2005; Thompson,

McManus, & Voss, 2006; Tsemberiz et al., 2004). Provision of housing, whether it required abstinence or not, was found to decrease relapse, improve psychiatric outcomes, and improvement of overall health outcomes.

Another study involving housing was conducted to help prevent recurrent homelessness among men who were entering community housing from a shelter (Susser et al., 1997). Participants were 96 men with severe mental illness, which included both a psychotic component and a deficit in mental ability. They had just finished their time at a shelter and were preparing to enter community housing. One group received a critical time intervention as well as services as usual (SAU), and the control group was given only services as usual. The critical time intervention had two main components, first it sought to strengthen the ties of the individuals to family, friends, and services available in their community, and secondly to provide support, both emotional and practical, during their time of transition. Each individual was assigned a Critical Time Intervention (CTI) worker who would help with aspects such as medication management, financial training, making it to appointments on time, and visiting family. The participants were then followed over an 18-month period to assess their ability to maintain their housing. Over this period of time, the average time spent on the street was only 30 days for the CTI condition, and 91 days for the SAU condition. This underscores the fact that with the proper support, many individuals with co-morbid disorders can spend much less time homeless overall (Susser et al., 1997).

Dykeman (2011) described a number of different approaches to interventions tailored to the homeless. These include a person-centered model that involved: a) a psychological focus on individual deficits within a particular community setting; b) a sociological approach that viewed homelessness as a deficit of social resources available to an at-risk population; and c) an ecological approach that encompassed a psychosocial focus on interactions between individual and societal factors, such as having few strategies for coping and high environmental demands.

Problem solving in the homeless population has not been studied extensively, however, one study was designed to examine the relationship between masculinity, help-seeking attitudes, problem-solving appraisal, and psychological distress among homeless men living at a transitional shelter (Nguyen, Ming

Liu, Hernandez, & Stinson, 2012). It was conducted with 126 homeless men, and involved assessment through a problem-solving inventory, among other measures that were not relevant to problem solving. The problem-solving inventory was a 32 question self-report measure that used a 6-point Likert scale. The study noted that homeless men may not seek help due to traits such as being tough, independent, and self-reliant. The concept of using a social problem-solving component to teach homeless to cope with their problems with help from various social services, when appropriate, may increase their likelihood to utilize some of these available services.

Chang, D’Zurilla, and Sanna (2009) studied, using standardized paper and pencil instruments, correlations between a social problem-solving orientation, stress, and psychological well being among 193 parents. They found positive problem orientation and rational problem solving were positively related to psychological well-being, while negative problem orientation, avoidance style, and impulsivity and carelessness style were related negatively correlated with psychological well-being. The authors noted that improving social problem solving and reducing stress should be two specific goals for middle-aged adults struggling with psychological well-being. In a similar study, relationship between social problem-solving ability and its relationship to daily stress and adjustment was examined, and the authors touted the importance of using problem-solving therapy to increase problem-solving ability and to aid in dealing with behavioral disorders (Bell & D’Zurilla, 2009).

Given that so many homeless men and women face social situations and decisions that could either worsen or improve their lives in regards to housing, employment, drug and alcohol usage, relationships, and community life functioning, it is important that they learn skills and methods that would help them in making decisions across these life domains. One such problem solving and decision-making method is referred to as the SODAS method and has been utilized as a major component of the Transition to Independence Process (TIP) model (Clark & Hart, 2009). The TIP model is an evidence-supported practice that has been shown to improve the progress and outcomes of youth and young adults (14-29 years of age) with mental health and substance abuse challenges as they transition into young adult roles (Clark, Deschênes, Karpur, & Gamache, 2007; Clark, Karpur, Deschênes, Gamache, & Haber, 2008;

Clark, Pschorr, Wells, Curtis, & Tighe, 2004; Karpur, Clark, Caproni, & Sterner, 2008; “Theory and Research Underpinnings Supporting the *Transition to Independence Process (TIP) Model*,” 2009).

It would appear that many individuals struggling with homelessness would also benefit from learning improved problem-solving and decision-making skills using the SODAS method. For example, many of the homeless themselves have complained that one of the top three issues with work is their relations with supervisors and co-workers (Shier et al., 2012). Thus, these individuals may benefit from having a method for making decisions about social situations and other problems to make it more likely that they would experience better outcomes. The purpose of this study was to evaluate the training of the SODAS problem solving and decision-making method to adults who have had extensive and recent histories of homelessness, and to assess their perspective on the social validity of their use and helpfulness of this method in their everyday lives.

Chapter Two: Method

Participants

This study included three adult male participants, Frank, Pen, and Slim. Two were Caucasian and one was African American. Each participant had experienced extensive and recurrent homelessness, but were in housing for the entirety of the study. All three participants signed informed consent to participate and were of typical cognitive functioning. They each were living in apartments that they shared with roommates in a metropolitan area of Florida. Pen was employed about 30 hours a week, Frank worked for a day labor company, and Slim was seeking employment, but living with his wife and their new baby.

All participants were recruited via a flyer placed at a local social worker's office. Each participant received a gift card for 50 dollars once the SODAS condition was finished, then one additional gift card for 5 dollars each week of follow-up, and a bonus card of 30 dollars once the study concluded. All three participants remained in the study for the entire duration and therefore each received a total of \$100.

Setting

The training and role-play sessions, as well as the follow-up weekly meetings, all occurred at the home of each participant.

Procedures

The SODAS Problem-Solving and Decision-Making Method has been typically taught to an individual by their being mentored in its use and then over time learning to apply it themselves to their own problem situations (Clark & Hart, 2009). The steps in the SODAS process include: a) the situation must be defined and understood so that the problem is clear and without ambiguity; b) options are generated through a non-judgmental process where all options are game to be placed on the table; c) advantages and disadvantages are listed for each option based on the individual's perspective; and d) the

individual selects an option as the “solution”. Thus, the SODAS method was designed to be “person-centered”, resulting in the individual being committed to applying the solution (Deschênes, Clark, Herrygers, Blase, & Wagner, 2009)

The participants were required to role-play various scenarios in the baseline and post-training SODAS conditions. During each session, a participant interacted with the lead researcher who assumed the role of an adult with a problem situation that related to circumstances typical of individuals who are homeless or at risk of such. Each scenario was pulled from a pool of 13 that had been developed, some modified from the TIP Model Participant Manual: Part One - SODAS Section (Blase, Wagner, & Clark, 2010) to tailor them more to situations that these participants might be experiencing. Scenarios were drawn randomly for each session without replacement for a given participant, with the exception that at least two of the scenarios used in the baseline condition were included in the post-training SODAS condition, although the number varied for each participant. A separate pool of three scenarios of similar problem situations were used during the behavioral rehearsal training on SODAS when the participant was being taught to apply the process.

For both the baseline and SODAS conditions, participants were asked to guide the adult to solve the problem scenario. A video recording device was utilized during baseline, training, and post-test training conditions to enable scoring, inter-observer agreement (IOA), and fidelity measures.

Baseline

To assess how many steps of the SODAS process participants had in their repertoire, baseline assessments were conducted in which role-play scenarios were presented. The baseline session began with welcoming the participant and giving a brief explanation of the assessment session, without conducting any training of the SODAS method. The participants acted as facilitators of the SODAS process and were scored on the number of SODAS steps used correctly in guiding the role-player to a solution to the problem situation presented. The researcher’s responses were assessed for fidelity using a checklist that was developed specifically for this purpose (Appendix E).

Training

Once baseline had been completed, the participants were trained on the use of the SODAS process, starting with a thorough explanation by the researcher using a PowerPoint presentation on a laptop (Deschênes, Clark, & Huntsman, 2005; Appendix B) and answering questions from the participant. The participant was given a SODAS Worksheet (Appendix G) to follow along with during the didactic PowerPoint training and the associated behavioral rehearsal training, adapted from the SODAS section of the TIP Model Workshop Participant Manual: Part One (Blase et al., 2010; Appendix C). Appendix C was read aloud to the participants to give them an idea of what the SODAS process sounds like when done correctly. During the PowerPoint, the researcher read aloud the words written on each slide to make each training session similar to the others. Participants were encouraged before the training began to ask questions, and were periodically asked if they had any questions. An integral part of the training that was not included in the PowerPoint was the specific training of the participant on the SODAS Worksheet. Each training session included an in-depth explanation of the SODAS Worksheet, which outlined the steps of the SODAS process. The worksheet provided space under each step for the participants to list relevant information, both in preparation for playing out a scenario and during a scenario. Thus, the SODAS Worksheet was used as a tool for the participants in facilitating each role-play scenario, and, to assist them, later in applying the process in their own lives.

A checklist of the SODAS process created using a task analysis of the SODAS process (Adapted from Skelton, 2013; Appendix D), was used by the participants during training to help in acquisition of the steps and to help them understand what was being assessed. Also, it was used by the researchers to score the participants in the baseline, training, and post-training SODAS condition. During the behavioral rehearsal training the participants were asked to play the role of the facilitator in guiding the researcher, acting as a role-player, through the SODAS method. Additionally, they were to assist the researcher (role-player) in developing a “solution” to the problem situation, drawn from three scenarios developed for training (Appendix A).. The behavioral rehearsal training continued across three training scenarios, each with different problem situations covering both social situations (e.g., learning to accept a

supervisor's instruction without arguing in the work place), and non-social situations (e.g., deciding on whether to buy a new or used motor scooter based on one's cash flow). These scenarios were similar to those used during the baseline and SODAS assessment role-play sessions, but were from a separate pool of three. The behavioral rehearsal training continued, rotating across the three scenarios until the participant used 90% of the SODAS steps correctly with no prompts on two consecutive scenarios, without the researcher stopping to coach the participant. All three participants attained this level within two training sessions, with Frank and Pen scoring at 100% on both scenarios, and Slim scoring at 100% and 90% respectively. The steps included for scoring purposes are listed on the scoring sheet (Skelton, 2013; Appendix D). The criterion for completing the SODAS training was based on demonstration of the SODAS steps, not on any aspect of the qualitative features. Booster training would have occurred if the participant dropped below 80% in two consecutive trials during the SODAS condition, and would have consisted of a brief review of the SODAS process, and behavior rehearsal training focused on the steps that the participant is missing or using incorrectly, again using the same pool of three scenarios for training. However, this was not necessary. In all, the trainings lasted anywhere from one hour and thirty minutes, up to two hours, depending on the number of questions asked by each participant.

SODAS Condition

The SODAS condition mirrored the procedures from the baseline condition. Following training, each participant was evaluated on their ability to lead the researcher (role-player) through the application of the SODAS components on scenarios drawn from the pool of 13 (Appendix F). A participant was evaluated on a given scenario during each session, with a maximum of two sessions occurring during each meeting. The role-play performances were assessed in the same manner as they were in baseline and training.

SODAS Social Validity Follow-up

At the end of each meeting with the participant during the SODAS Condition, the participant was encouraged to watch for opportunities to apply the SODAS method to social and non-social problem situations in their own lives using the SODAS Worksheet. Once the participants demonstrated that they

could attain 90% correct usage of the SODAS process in the SODAS condition across at least two consecutive scenarios, the researcher began interviewing participants once each week for four weeks. The researcher asked the participant to go through the SODAS process using the SODAS Worksheet for one problem the participant dealt with that week. At the end of each meeting, the participant was given a Social Validity Form to complete (Appendix H). The questions were on a Likert-scale of 0-4, and the questions rated how helpful the SODAS process was to them in addressing problems they encountered that week or were dealing with.

Data Collection

Data collection was done by observers viewing an assessment session on video recording, and scoring each step completed by the participant on the SODAS Checklist (Appendix D). Completed steps were scored with a “Y”, and each incomplete step (performed incorrectly, skipped altogether, or offered a specific solution) was scored with a “N”. If a step was merely skipped over or performed incorrectly, then that particular session continued and was scored. However, if the participant provided a “solution”, then the researcher agreed with the suggestion and terminated the session, and all remaining steps were scored as “N”. A percentage of the steps completed correctly was calculated by dividing the number of “Y’s” by the number of steps, and multiplying by 100. There were additional items that were not calculated in the scored SODAS steps results, but were considered “Qualitative Interactional Features”, and were comprised of the “Y” or “N” questions below the Qualitative Interactional Features heading on the scoring sheet. These items were scored and graphed separately.

Inter-Observer Agreement (IOA)

Of all sessions that were scored, 44% were examined for IOA during the baseline and SODAS conditions. An agreement was if both observers scored the same step a “Y” or “N” on the checklist. A disagreement was if one observer scored a step as “Y” and the other observer scored that step as a “N”. The number of disagreements between the two observers was subtracted from the total number of steps,

then divided by the total number of steps, multiplying that by 100. IOA for “Percentage of SODAS Steps Applied” was at 100%. IOA for “Percentage of SODAS Qualitative Features Used” was at 100% for all sessions scored, except for two, which were both at 86% IOA.

Experimental Design

This study utilized a multiple baseline across participants design. There were also weekly meetings following the post-training SODAS condition in which the researcher met with the participant to assess their use of the SODAS method in addressing his/her own problem situation(s) over the prior 7 days.

Chapter Three: Results

During baseline it was demonstrated that 9% or less of the SODAS steps were applied by any of the participants in any of their baseline sessions. Following, role-play training with the lead researcher, each of the participants reached, during the SODAS condition, 100% of the steps (See Figure 1). The qualitative interactional features of the SODAS process are shown for each participant in Figure 2, and illustrates some increase between baseline and the SODAS Post-Training condition, but performance is relatively low and variable. Pen was the only participant to reach above 80% of the qualitative features while Slim's highest percentage was 40% in session 11. Frank improved through the course of the SODAS condition where he was scoring over 50% of the qualitative features in the last two sessions.

SODAS Social Validity Follow-Up

The average of the social validity ratings across the four weeks of the follow-up period are provided in Table 1 for both of the social validity items for each of the three participants. There were two questions asked on each weekly survey, and the ratings for both are displayed for each week as well as the averages across each participant's ratings. Pen rated the helpfulness of the SODAS process for decision making in his life at a 2.5 on a 4-point scale, with 4 being the most helpful. He rated the helpfulness of the SODAS process in improving the outcomes of his decisions for himself as a 2.5. In contrast, Frank rated both of these features at a 4 related to the helpfulness of the SODAS Process as applied to his life. Slim rated these features of helpfulness at a 3 and a 3.75.

During the follow-up period, Frank actually completed multiple worksheets on two occasions during the prior 7 days, and commented on one occasion that he would have completed more had more blank sheets been available to him. When a participant had not completed at least one SODAS Worksheet for the week prior to the meeting with the researcher, the researcher would request that the participant

complete the form on one of the most pressing issues that had come up during the previous week. Neither Slim nor Pen completed any of the worksheets before the researcher arrived, however, when requested, they both would complete the form.

One of the items on the Social Validity questionnaire was about the average number of decisions or problems to which the participant had used the SODAS process during the previous 7 days. These findings are shown in Table 1 and range from 1 to 1.5. Based on the SODAS forms that were completed, the problems and decisions related to topics such as: employment, financial, transportation, health, safety, legal, and relational issues.

Fidelity

During the baseline, training, and SODAS condition, data to assess the researcher's role-play responses was collected to ensure that the researcher followed the procedural guidelines for his role, which included responding with the situation, options, and advantages and disadvantages when prompted by the participant, as well ending the session at the appropriate time. The scores of the fidelity data were 100% for each session, which indicated that the researcher responded as was required during each scenario. IOA data on this measure was 100%.

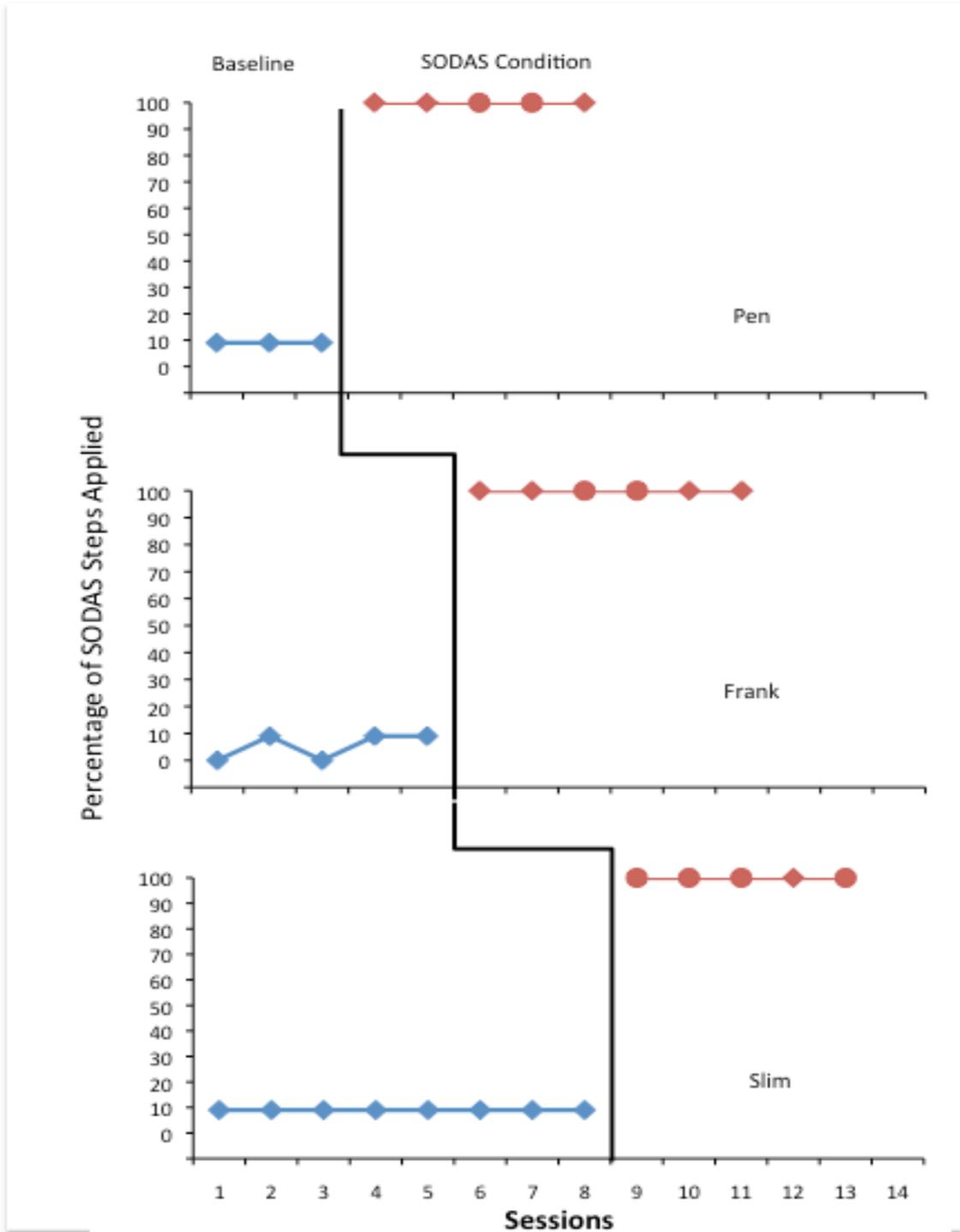


Figure 1. Percentage of the SODAS steps that were completed by each participant during the baseline and SODAS condition. The intervention line represents the training and the circles in the SODAS condition represent scenarios repeated from baseline.

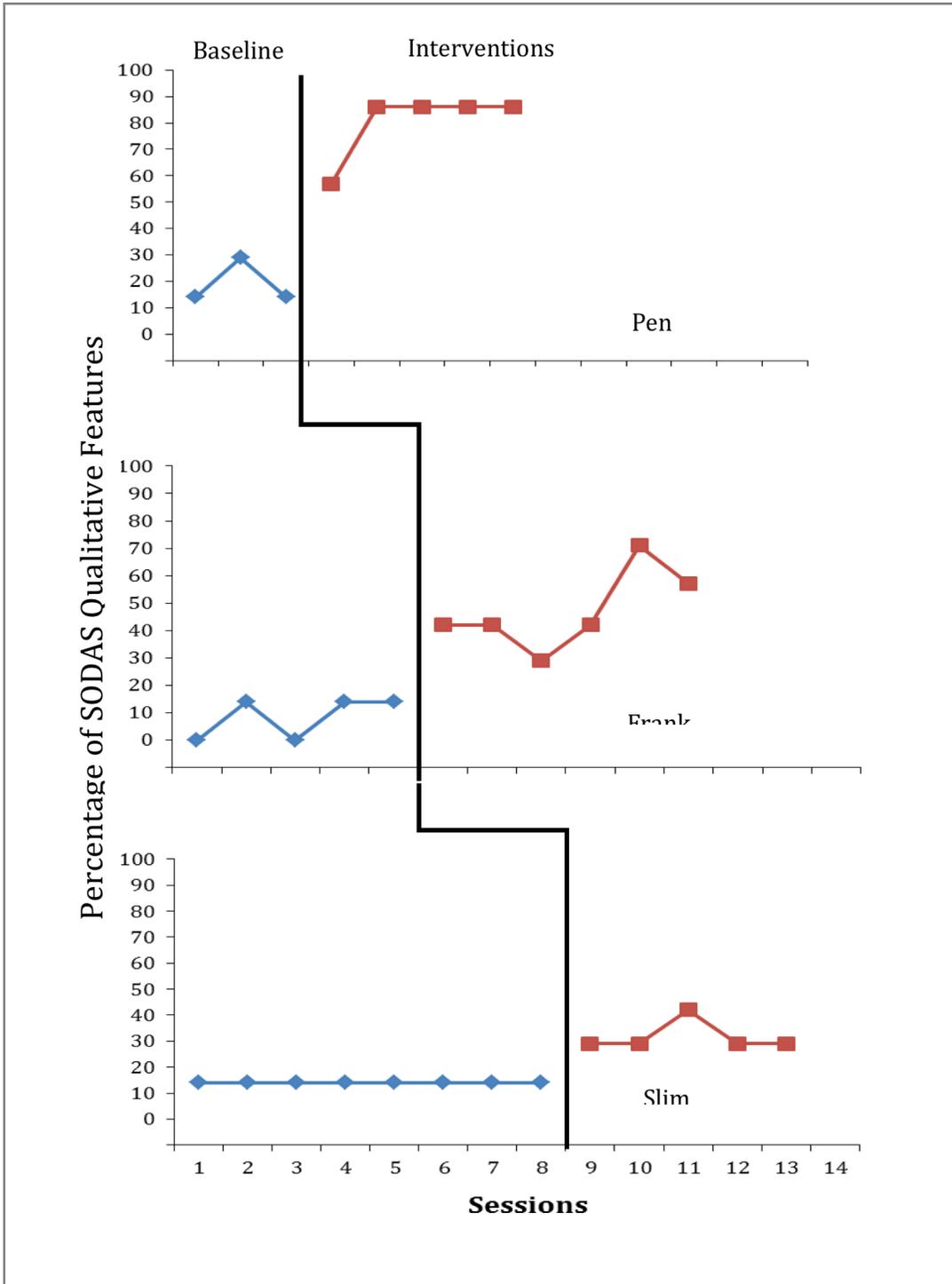


Figure 2: Percentage of the interactional qualitative features that were used by each of the participants during the baseline and SODAS conditions.

Chapter Four: Discussion

This study sought to demonstrate that the SODAS Problem Solving Method is an effective and teachable process for adults who have a history of homelessness. The findings of this study suggest that the training process was effective in establishing the participants as facilitators in the application of the SODAS process as they guided another person through the steps of the problem solving method. The training on the SODAS process with its emphasis on completion of the steps of the process yielded improvements in performance from about 10% of the steps during the Baseline condition to typically 100% of the steps being completed during the SODAS condition. It appears that participants found the training on the SODAS Worksheet and the use of the form during the role-play sessions to be extremely helpful in their application of all of the steps of the process while they facilitated another person in using the process to solve a problem.

Although all three of the participants acquired the SODAS steps, they varied substantially in the use of the qualitative interactional features (e.g., summarized options, did not react negatively to options, summarized advantages and disadvantages). Pen, Frank, and Slim averaged 80%, 57%, and 32%, respectively, on the use of the qualitative interactional features during the SODAS condition.

Of the qualitative interactional features that participants were coached to implement, they often stayed natural or non-judgmental (i.e., “did not react negatively”) when presented with options that generally would not be considered the best solution to the situation, and/or might even be harmful. One of the qualitative features that was never used was “Summarized advantages and disadvantages”.

In planning this study, the authors decided to train the participants to act as facilitators in guiding others in solving their problems. The concept was that if the participants became skilled in facilitating

another person through the process, they would then be more likely to be able to apply SODAS to problem situations in their own lives. That is, if a participant is able to “teach” a skill to another person, it is likely that the participant knows the dimensions of the skill fully and may be better positioned to apply it to one’s own life.

The findings from the 4-week Social Validity Follow-up period suggest that the training and use of the SODAS process also enabled each of the participants to apply the process to situations they were facing in their own everyday life. During this period, Frank seemed to value having access to the SODAS Worksheet for use in applying the process to his own problem situations. On the second Follow-up week, he indicated to the researcher that he needed more worksheets, and said the worksheets were of “great help”.

Table 1. Participant average rating on social validity questionnaire over four weeks of follow-up, as well as average number of problems SODAS method used with.

Question:	Pen	Frank	Slim
Helpfulness of SODAS – Average	2.5	4	3
Achieve Better Outcomes – Average	2.5	4	3.75
Average # of Problems SODAS Used	1	1.5	1

Another interesting comment was made by Pen who described the SODAS process as “common sense” during one of the Follow-up meetings. Although Pen had used very few of the SODAS steps during baseline, he mastered the use of the steps during training and the SODAS conditions, and seemed to really get into his role as facilitator, scoring the highest of all three participants on the qualitative interactional features. During the Follow-up period, the participants received minimal coaching and guidance on the qualitative features, as they were applying SODAS to their own lives now, and not interacting with others. The participants did receive help on the necessary steps of the SODAS process during each weekly meeting to ensure that they still had a strong grasp of the SODAS procedures.

Limitations

This study has a few limitations. First the participants were not assessed experimentally on how well they actually used the process on their own problems, but were instead trained on how to guide another person in solving a problem situation. Thus, the follow-up condition provides a “self-report” indication that the participants were applying SODAS to their own situations over during that time. Another limitation relates to the lack of direct observational data on the participants use of the SODAS method in application with their own problem situations in everyday life. The social validity findings are suggestive of their use of the process in their own lives and its helpfulness, but more definitive information on this critical issue would be helpful to the field.

Future Research

One aspect of this study that would deserve additional examination is whether learning the SODAS method through the “facilitation” role is more effective in establishing the application of the process in one’s own life, verses just learning it through the SODAS Worksheet in application to one’s own problem situations. All future research regarding the SODAS process would do well to address the earlier stated limitation of needing to develop a more behaviorally define means of reliably measuring the application of the method to participants’ own life situations.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Training Scenarios for Homeless

Training Scenarios

Situation A

Collin is meeting with Participant for your weekly meeting. Collin is discussing how things in his life are going and shares with you (participant) that two of his friends got arrested last week because they got caught shoplifting. Collin expresses relief that he was not with them. Collin tells you (participant) that he hopes he doesn't get caught in the future when he is with his friends and they are shoplifting.

Option 1 – Stop hanging out with friends who were shoplifting

ADV – Wouldn't have to be around people who were stealing

ADV – Wouldn't get arrested

DIS – Wouldn't get to hang out with friends

DIS – Might get made fun of

Option 2 – Don't go into the store with your friends when they shop

ADV – Would be able to be around your friends

ADV – Wouldn't get in trouble for stealing

DIS – Would have to sit outside the stores when they shopped and couldn't go to malls

DIS – Might get made fun of by friends

Option 3 – Continue hanging out with friends as usual and ask them not to steal when they're around you.

ADV – Would get to hang out with friends

ADV – Hopefully they wouldn't shoplift so wouldn't get in trouble

DIS – Friends might lie and shoplift anyhow

DIS – Might get made fun of for speaking up.

Situation B

Collin and Participant are meeting today. In this meeting, the Participant asks the Collin how things have been going. Collin tells the Participant that things have been very good. He tells the Participant that, in fact, he's planning on going off his psychotropic medication.

Option 1 – Go off meds abruptly and hope you don't have any symptoms flare up

ADV – Would be off of the meds and side effects would eventually stop

ADV – Wouldn't have to find money for medication

DIS – Might have worsened side effects for awhile

DIS – Might have symptoms re-emergence

Option 2 – Stay on medication and deal with the side effects and hassle of taking them

ADV – I would not have any symptoms return

ADV – Wouldn't have to deal with discomfort of getting off of meds

DIS – Would have to worry about finding money for meds

DIS – Would have to continue dealing with side effects

Option 3 – Slowly taper off the meds and begin seeing a therapist

ADV – Would allow for you to get with a professional about setting up a plan to get off of the meds

ADV – Wouldn't have to deal with side effects of abruptly stopping

DIS – Would have to work to find a therapist

DIS – Would cost more money and take longer than stopping cold turkey

Situation C

Collin and Participant are meeting today. In this meeting the Participant asks Collin how things have been going, and he tells the Participant that he thinks he wants to quit his current job. Collin says that he no longer feels like working there.

Option 1 – Quit the job immediately and begin to look for new work

ADV – Wouldn't have to deal with working there any longer

ADV – Would be able to look for other work full time

DIS – Would not have a paying job any longer

DIS – Might not get another job right away

Option 2 – Stay at the job and deal with the crummy hours, co-workers, and supervisors

ADV – Would continue to get paid

ADV – Could see a change in some of the people and policies I don't like

DIS – Would have to stay at the job

DIS – There is a good chance that nothing will change

Option 3 – Continue working while going and looking for another alternate job

ADV – Would be able to continue getting paid while looking for a new job

ADV – Would ensure that I wasn't without work for any period of time

DIS – Would have to deal with current job

DIS – Wouldn't be able to look for work full time

Appendix B – PowerPoint Presentation for Training in Outline Format

•Problem-Solving & Decision-Making

Integral part of daily life

What are some decisions **we** face on a daily basis?

Easy Decisions...

Hard Decisions...

Social and Non-Social decisions

•Teaching Adults to make better decisions & resolve problems helps them to...

Get along with others better.

↑ **Ability to develop and maintain close relationships.**

↑ **Control over outcomes of situations.**

Feel more control over situations.

Improve their quality of life.

•Preparation of Adult for SODAS

Facilitator introduces the person to the SODAS process.

Explain benefits of problem-solving.

Uses *clear, specific, relevant* Rationales.

•O = Options

Help person generate possible options

Accept all options – evaluate later

Reinforce person for options – even if you don't like them

Rules of Brainstorming

•O = Options

Types of Questions that can assist in generating options:

- What might be done to solve the problem?
- How might you achieve your goal?
- What do you want to do?
- What else might you do? What about...?
- We have _____ on the list, might you want to considering putting _____ on the list?

•A = Advantages

D = Disadvantages

Help the adult explore the realistic A & D of each option

May involve revising or combining aspects of options

How does exploring

the A & D of each

Option assist the person?

•S = Solution

Guide the adult in selecting an option that is safe.

Choice must be **owned** by the person.

Will the solution resolve the situation described initially?

How will you pull it off?

Does the solution involve interaction w/another person?

•Follow-up:

Asking & Discovering

•Possible Questions for Defining the Situation

•“What is the problem?”

•“What are the feelings involved with the situation?”

–“ What do you feel?”

–“ What do family members feel when the problem occurs?”

–“How do others feel such as friends, employers, teachers etc.?”

•“What stops you from...?”

•“How do you feel when...?”

•“What happens after you...?”

•” What exactly was said when...?”

•Follow-up: Solution Did Not Resolve Situation

Normalize multiple tries for a solution

Learning opportunity for person, instead of a failure

Get new info for further problem-solving/decision-making

Give descriptive praise for effort & persistence

•Benefits to Adult Using SODAS

•Action:

SODAS Training – Read From Examples in Appendix C

•What challenges may occur when applying SODAS with a person?

•Challenge 1: Participation

Goal = get person contributing to brainstorming

Remind person that all options can be listed

Praise any attempts to participate

Foster interest though rationales or direct open-ended questions

May need to elicit options by modeling some

•Challenge 2: Facilitator Stays Non-judgmental

person may list options that are dangerous, silly, extreme, or impossible

Avoid saying: “That’s a good one, but I don’t know about this? Do you really think this is a good idea?”

•Challenge 3: Validating *all* Disadvantages

Don’t ignore **Disadvantages** of your “favored” option

person will only implement an Option if:\

person has ownership of it.

If the option holds reinforcers for the person.

•Challenge 4: person Selects Harmful Solution

Discuss potential consequences – don’t ignore advantages

Use Rationales & care statements

Refer to “Prevention Plan”

Follow-up as required

•**“The Righting Reflex”**

We helpers have a powerful desire to set things right, to heal, to prevent harm, and to promote well-being.

This is the “Righting Reflex.”

•“The Righting Reflex”

When we voice the arguments for change, persons naturally respond by defending the other side.

The more person verbalizes the *disadvantages* of change, the more *committed* they become to *avoiding change*.

•Resist “The Righting Reflex”

•Effective Usage of SODAS Exercise

•Rating Effectiveness of Usage

•*Antonio, a facilitator, is using SODAS to help Sandra solve a problem situation that arose at work. Do you think his actions are effective or not effective facilitation of SODAS?*

•The problem at work is causing Sandra to worry about losing her job. Antonio includes Sandra’s feelings in the description of the Situation.

•Effective _____

•Not Effective _____

•Sandra suggests that one option is to quit her job and move back home. Antonio reminds her that this option is not in line with her dreams and would make it less likely for her to meet her transition goals.

•Effective _____

•Not Effective _____

•Rating Effectiveness of Usage

•While brainstorming options, Antonio and Sandra begin to discuss the effects of implementing one of the options.

•Effective _____

•Not Effective _____

•After Sandra offers one Option, she claims to have run out of ideas. Antonio suggests an Option to add to the list and encourages Sandra to continue brainstorming.

•Effective _____

•Not Effective _____

•Antonio discusses Disadvantages before Advantages because he wants to get the negatives out of the way so he and Sandra can focus on the positives.

•Effective _____

•Not Effective _____

•Rating Effectiveness of Usage

•When reviewing the Options to select the Solution, Antonio asks Sandra how feasible the Option is for her to do.

•Effective _____

•Not Effective _____

•When following up, Antonio discovers that Sandra has not implemented the Solution because she is not comfortable with interacting with her supervisor, a necessary action to implement the Solution. Antonio suggests that they role-play the interaction until Sandra is comfortable. Antonio encourages her to not give up on her solution.

•Effective _____

•Not Effective _____

•**Effective.** The Situation description includes “who, what, where, when, and how” of the problem.

•**Not Effective.** When brainstorming Options, all ideas are accepted for later discussion.

•**Not Effective.** Michael’s actions are not in concert with the rules of brainstorming. Michael and Sandra should review the rules of brainstorming before beginning this activity. When tempted to discuss the merits of ideas, Michael can remind Sandra (and himself) that the merits were discussed after all options have been identified.

•**Effective.** Michael encourages Sandra to come up with Options. Only after she appears to be out of ideas does he offer one of his own ideas to spur her thinking.

•**Not Effective.** By starting with Advantages, Michael would start the discussion on a positive note which might minimize the negativity of the Disadvantages.

•**Effective.** By asking how feasible an Option is to do, Michael encourages Sandra to think about the ease of implementation as a criteria for selecting a Solution.

•**Effective.** Michael found out why Sandra had not implemented the Solution and offered assistance to address the reason why.

•Help person Use SODAS on their Own

Remind person of a situation where SODAS could be useful

Ask person to practice – commit to reviewing at next meeting

Review rationales for learning & using SODAS

Provide encouragement & descriptive praise

Remind person – we all need help at times thinking through tough problems

•Additional Useful Qualities of **SODAS**

•SODAS links thought with action.

–In order to help Adult (or Adult) with this, it is necessary to be both *thorough* and *efficient*

•Facilitator must help person (and self!) to stay *organized* in process

–*Summarize* and record *each component of process* or, when appropriate, have person do these things.

•Preparation of Adult for SODAS

•The Facilitator makes the Adult feel comfortable

•Introduces the person to the SODAS process

•Explains how using problem-solving and decision-making can benefit the person

•S = Situation

•Facilitator gets a clear and complete picture of the situation

•What is the problem?

–Who, what, where, when, & how.

–As clear and behaviorally specific as possible.

•What are the feelings involved with the situation

–person's feelings?

–What do family members feel when the problem occurs?

–How do others feel, e.g., friends, employer, teacher?

•Sample questions

–What happened after you...?

–What exactly was said when...?

–How do you/others feel when...?

•O = Options

•Assist Adult in generating possible options

- Accept all of the options – evaluate later
- Reinforce Adult for ideas and options – no matter what you think of the specific items
- Questions that can assist in generating options...
 - How can you achieve your goal?
 - What can be done to solve the problem?
 - What do you want to do?
 - What else could you do? What about...?
 - We have _____ on the list, might you want to consider _____?

•**A = Advantages**

D = Disadvantages

- Help the Adult explore the realistic **A & D** of **each option**
- May involve revising or combining aspects of options
 - What are the possible benefits? Why are those things important to you?
 - What are the negatives or costs? What potential danger or harm could come of this option? Why are those things important to you?
 - How might family members and others who support you feel or be affected? What might happen for you as a result of their feelings or the impact on them? How about other people (e.g., employers, friends, teachers)?
 - What might happen right away? How about a week or a month from now? What if you changed the option a little?

•**S = Solution**

- Guide the Adult in selecting an option that is safe & can use
- Choice must be **owned** by the Adult

- Ask the person to remember the situation identified in the beginning. Will the selected option help resolve the situation?
- How feasible is the option? Can the person and his/her support system “pull it off”?
- How to do it? Get at the specifics of who, what, when, where, etc. Again, options and strategies may be refined as you go.

•Practice? Options involving human interaction may need to be role-played. What if the person does or says X or Y? Help person practice, reinforce appropriate behavior, and plan ahead for possible outcomes.

•Challenge 1: Participation

- Getting the Adult to participate in generating options
 - Goal is to get Adult contributing to the brainstorming
 - May need to remind Adult that all options can be listed
 - Praise any attempts to participate
 - Foster interest through rationales or direct questions
- If Adult is still not on board
 - May need to elicit options by modeling some
 - Make sure these are person-centered and strength-based

•Challenge 2: Non-Judgmental

- Facilitator stay open, objective, and non-judgmental
 - Adult may list options that are dangerous, silly, extreme, or impossible to implement
 - Avoid saying: “That’s a good one, but I don’t know about this? Do you really think this is a good idea?”
 - The Option component is to generate as many options as possible
 - The Advantages and Disadvantages component is more evaluative

•**Challenge 3:**

Validating *all* Advantages

•Advantages shared by person to explain “negative” behavior should be validated. For example:

–Adult lists “getting high” helps me relax.

–Invalidating responses:

•“Well it may, but drugs are really bad for you.” OR

•“Well, yes I suppose that is an advantage.”

–*Better*: Facilitator “Okay, that could be an advantage.”

•**Challenge 4:**

Validating *all* Disadvantages

•Don’t ignore **disadvantages** of your “favored” option.

–Option favored by Facilitator: Don’t hang out with friends as a way to avoid shoplifting.

–Adult sees **disadvantage** of not having time with friends.

–Facilitator glosses over Adult’s concerns and emphasizes advantages of option.

•Adult will not implement Facilitator favored options if:

–They do not feel ownership of them.

–If they hold no reinforcers for the Adult.

•**Challenge 5:**

Person Selects Harmful Solution

•Discuss potential harmful consequences – but don’t ignore advantages (though you may respectfully disagree).

•Encourage person to avoid harmful behavior.

•Using SODAS with Person

- Facilitator applies SODAS with person to address several “real life” problems

- Facilitator teaches the process to person

- person learns to apply SODAS on his/her own

- Time to Role Play!

ROLE PLAY all three Training Scenarios from Appendix A

Appendix C: Examples to be Read During Training

Summary of Situation

The Adult Person (AP) and Transition Facilitator (TF) are meeting today. Previously, the TF had assisted the AP in getting a part-time job at a fast-food franchise.

The AP has been reporting that the job is okay and that the paycheck is really cool. In today's meeting, the TF is asking the AP how things have been going. The AP announces that he/she is going to quit the job.

TF: Well, sometimes when you are making a big decision it helps to take a step back and think about it. People tell us that learning problem solving has helped them make good decisions about their futures. Is it okay if we spend a few minutes talking about work and problem solving? Great!

When the person suddenly change their plans and activities, it can be a signal to the TF that a problem may have arisen and that SODAS might be a useful tool.

S = Situation

TF: One of the first steps is really understanding what's happening for you right now. And if you are bouncing ideas off of someone else, being really clear helps the other person be more supportive, understanding, and helpful. So let's see if we can get a clear picture of the **situation**. If it's okay, I'll ask you some questions so I can understand what has happened to bring you to wanting to quit your job.

AP: I guess.

TF: So you are really thinking about quitting your job? What's up with that? Last week you were pretty happy with that paycheck.

AP: Yeah, but I can get another job.

TF: Is something bothering you about your job? Starting a new job can be a real challenge sometimes. Lots to learn, new people.

Do offer empathy and prompts and be curious. Don't lecture or argue about how hard it is to get a new job.

AP: Yeah, well some people think they can just push you around and I don't have to take that crap.

TF: Sounds tough. Who's pushing you around? Your boss?

AP: Naw, it's this other guy, Frank, who keeps raggin' on me.

TF: What's his problem?

AP: He's always telling me what to do when I know what I'm supposed to be doing. Anyway he is not the boss.

TF: Is Frank a shift supervisor?

AP: No, he just works like me on the same shift.

TF: Let me see if I'm starting to understand the situation? Frank is not a supervisor, but he gets on your case a lot. So, like what kinds of things does he say?

Gently ask questions to get all the information, much like a "reporter" discovering who, what, when, where and how often. Try to get at the specifics by using words like "what did he say" "what did you do". Words such as "do" and "say" are more likely to elicit behavioral descriptions. Such behavioral descriptions help you see what is happening for the youth. You and the youth need a very clear picture of what's happening in order to generate options and evaluate them.

N: *The youth goes on to describe being called stupid and told to hurry up.*

TF: So, Frank is on your case a lot about moving faster and is calling you "stupid" but your boss says you are doing okay. And this is happening a bunch of times every time you have to work with Frank?

AP: Yeah, and I don't have to take it so I am leaving that job.

O = Options

TF: Okay, so I think I've got a clear picture of your **situation**. The next step in problem solving is getting a bunch of different ideas on the table about what you can do about the situation. People call these **options** because what you are doing is thinking about the different choices you could make before you do something. Sometimes our first ideas are great, but sometimes we can come up with better ones when we take time to think. Let's see what we can do together to come up with more ideas. I'll keep track of them on paper for us [*or let the youth do this*].

TF: So one choice you could make is that you definitely can quit. So "quit my job" is the first idea. *It's a challenge for many adults to just accept an option that the adult does not feel is a good one. But remember that at the end of the day the youth WILL make his or her own decision. By letting options stand for examination you show you respect the youth's opinion, you keep the dialogue going and you create the opportunity for the youth to learn to solve problems more systematically and carefully. But it does not mean that the youth will choose the same path you would choose!*

TF: What else could you do?

AP: I could meet him in the parking lot and tell him to back off or he's gonna hear from me!

TF: Okay, so another option is to confront him in the parking lot and it sounds like you think threatening him would be an option?

AP: Yeah, but I wouldn't really do nothin'.

TF: Well, let's write that one down too, "meet him in the parking lot and tell him to back off or he's gonna hear from you".

Avoid lecturing. Notice that the Transition Facilitator labeled the behavior as confrontational and threatening, but went back to a behavioral description in the youth's words of the option. Sometimes you can help the youth build on an option that at first seems problematic.

TF: Any other ideas?

AP: Nope.

Some youth can be frustrated by the process or feel 'put on the spot' to come up with other options.

Offering ideas and empathy is appropriate.

TF: I know it can be frustrating to think through this stuff and that right now you just want to quit. But hang in with me for minute and let's see what we can come up with. Okay?

AP: I guess.

TF: So you can quit or you can meet him in the parking lot and talk to him. Do you think talking to your boss about it is an option?

AP: No way am I gonna rat him out. That would so not be cool.

TF: A. Okay, let's take that off the table for now then.

or

B. it doesn't sound like you're too excited about that idea, but how about if we leave it on the list for now?

Use your own judgment, given the youth's reaction, about whether or not to pursue an option in the next phase.

TF: What else could you do?

The conversation continues until the adult and TF feel they have a few good ideas to explore. More options can arise as the disadvantages and advantages are pursued. It is best to generate a few options before beginning to examine advantages and disadvantages of each so that the youth can contrast and compare the options.

D = Disadvantages and A = Advantages

TF: You've done a great job of coming up with options!

Remember to praise the youth for engaging in the process!] Well at this point, you've got three **options** listed for yourself:

1) Quit your job.

- 2) Talk to Frank in the parking lot and tell him to back off.
- 3) Ignore Frank and just go on with your work.

The next step is to take a look at each of these and see what the positives and negatives or the upside and downside is for each of them. By looking at the **advantages and disadvantages** you can choose the consequences you want to deal with and pick a solution that makes the most sense to you. Every idea has its good points and bad points.

TF: Okay, so let's look at this "quitting the job" idea you mentioned first.

What are the advantages of that idea? *Or, What good things might happen if you choose that idea? Or, What are the benefits of quitting?*

Use language that fits for the youth.

AP: Well, I won't have to take that crap anymore.

TF: So are you saying you would feel relieved and less frustrated because you wouldn't have to put up with Frank's comments on the job?

Explore the emotional side of the choices. This can be a great opportunity to broaden a youth's emotional vocabulary as well as giving the youth an opportunity to confirm what you are saying or correct you.

AP: Yeah, and I wouldn't be so pissed off!

TF: Any other positives to quitting?

AP: Well, I would have more time to spend with my friends instead of working.

TF: And that could be a lot of fun couldn't it? So, you would be free from Frank's bugging you and you could spend more time with your friends if you quit your job. Anything else good about it?

Summarize as you go.

AP: That's all I can think of now.

TF: Might there be some disadvantages related to quitting your job? --- anything you might not like about quitting?

AP: Well, I wouldn't have any money to spend.

TF: What do you like to spend your money on?

AP: Food, movies and my girlfriend.

TF: So, while you might have more time to spend with your friends you might not have as much money to spend. So less food, fewer movies and less money to spend on your girlfriend are part of the picture if you quit your job.

AP: But I can get another job, a better one.

TF: Okay, let's put that back up with the advantages of quitting, you might get a better job. Any disadvantages of having to look for work?

AP: I might not find work right away.

TF: That's true. So it might take a while to get back to having spending money. Are you thinking of quitting right away?

AP: Yeah, tomorrow.

TF: Hmm. I wonder if your boss will give you a good recommendation if you quit all of a sudden. What do you think he says about employees who up and quit without any notice? Why is that hard on him?

Part of teaching youth to think about consequences involves helping them learn to consider the point of view of other people and the likely outcomes that result from the impact of their behavior on others.

AP: Maybe not but what if I told him I was quitting in a week?

TF: That might help him out because then instead of thinking, "Man this kid is trouble and not very responsible, I hope he doesn't screw the next boss." He might think, "Well, at least he didn't just quit and not show up for work and leave me hanging...that was pretty responsible of him. I think I can give him a good recommendation."

Some Transition Facilitators find it effective to 'role play' what others might say or think to make the youth's impact on others more real to the youth.

TF: So maybe you've changed that first idea a little by saying you are going to quit but you will give your boss at least a week's notice? Good thinking.

Options frequently get modified and improved as the advantages and disadvantages are explored.

AP: Yeah, that sounds good. Maybe I won't even quit until I get me a new job!

TF: Wow! There's an idea. Why does that sound good to you?

*The Transition Facilitator and the Youth continue to review each option, the advantages and disadvantages and make revisions as they go. At the end of this section the youth or the Transition Facilitator can summarize each option and the advantages and disadvantages in order for the youth to choose a **solution**. Sometimes the youth clearly gets very committed to an option along the way. There is no rigid rule that says you must go through every option if in fact the youth has settled on a safe option along the way.*

S = Solution

TF: You have done a terrific job of thinking things through. You have several options and you came up with advantages and disadvantages for each one! Now it's time for you to choose your option and the advantages and disadvantages that go with it.

Youths don't always realize that while they can choose any option, they may not be in control of the consequences of their choice. So reminding them that they are choosing an option and the associated advantages and disadvantages can be helpful and educational. Also, sometimes the best option comes from combining or re-working the options to maximize the advantages for the youth.

AP: I think I better get me a new job first and then quit!

TF: Okay, so let's review the advantages and disadvantages of that choice:

The good news is that you would continue to have spending money and, if you give notice, you stand a better chance of getting a good recommendation from your employer. The bad news is that you are going to have even less free time because you are going to be working AND looking for a new job. Anything else to think about?

AP: Can you help me find a new job?

TF: Sure. When do you want to start?

Appendix D: Scoring Form on Participant’s SODAS Components

Components Performed by the Participant Guiding the SODAS Process		
Participant (P) asks the Role-player (RP) to describe the Situation. S	Y	N
P guides the RP to generate at least 3 Options related to the problem situation. Option 1 Option 2 Option 3 O	Y Y Y	N N N
Option 1 Advantages (at least one is generated for each A and D) Disadvantages Option 2 Advantages Disadvantages Option 3 Advantages Disadvantages D A	Y Y Y Y Y Y	N N N N N N
P guides the RP to select an Option, modify Options, or combine Options to create a “Solution” to the situation. S	Y	N
Total Essential Components of SODAS		11
Qualitative Interactional Features: P solicits input from the RP at least once. P provides descriptive praise to the RP about participation in the process at least once during the process. P summarized the RP’s Situation at least once. P summarizes RP’s Options at least once. P summarizes RP’s Advantages/Disadvantages at least once. P asks for confirmation from RP of one of the summaries that P has provided. P remains open to all Options (e.g. does not comment negatively about an Option, or make negative facial expressions).	Y Y Y Y Y Y Y	N N N N N N N
Total		7

Adapted from Skelton (2013)

Appendix E: Fidelity Check on the Role Player for Scenarios

Components Performed by the Role Player during the SODAS Process		
Role Player describes the situation when guided by the Participant.	Y NA	N
RP describes options, and advantages and disadvantages to each when prompted by P.	Y NA	N
RP selects solution to problem being faced.	Y NA	N
RP ends the scenario if one of the two following scenarios should occur. RP ends the scenario if P “solved” the problem for RP (e.g. Participant says, “Well, what you need to do is…”). RP ends the scenario if P stops providing guidance in moving through the components of the SODAS process.	Y NA	N
Total		4

Adapted from Skelton (2013)

Appendix F – Scenarios for Baseline and SODAS Condition

Scenario 1: Today, a friend approached you and said they heard a rumor that you supposedly had spread about them (which in actuality, you did not). Due to the severity of the rumor, they not only no longer want to be your friend, they begin spreading horrible, untrue rumors about you in retaliation. You confront your friend about it to try to discuss the situation reasonably, but instead they tell you they want to settle it by fighting tomorrow at the park.

Option 1: Go to the park and refuse fight your friend, try to talk instead.

ADV – Confront Friend in positive manner.

ADV – May Reconcile

ADV – Save face in front of others so they don't think you're a coward

DIS – People think you're cowardly

DIS – Friend might not talk

DIS – May get attacked

Option 2: Don't show up to the park at all.

ADV – Avoid the confrontation altogether

ADV – Can't get hurt

DIS – People think you're cowardly

DIS – Rumors will continue to be spread

Option 3: Go to the park and fight your friend.

ADV – People would think you're brave

ADV – Would put an end to the situation

DIS – Might hurt your friend

DIS – Might get hurt

DIS – Might get arrested

Scenario 2: You've been smoking cigarettes for many years, and although you want to quit, you haven't been able to in the past. Your best friend is also a smoker, and was recently diagnosed with emphysema and you are concerned with his health. Your friend said he would not quit unless you quit with him. You see your friend almost daily and he/she wants you to commit to not smoking whether they are around you or not. You, on the other hand, don't feel ready to quit, but you are concerned with your friend's health.

Option 1: Agree to quit smoking and try your hardest to follow through

ADV – Your friend would try to quit, too

ADV – You might actually be able to quit

ADV – Your friend might not die as quickly

DIS – You would have to try to quit when you don't want to

DIS – Your friend might go back if you can't quit

Option 2: Lie to your friend and tell them you will quit when you have no intention of actually quitting. It's for their own good anyhow

ADV – Your friend would at least try to quit then

ADV – Your friend's health might improve, even if he resents you lying

DIS – You would have to keep it from your friend and lie to him

DIS – Your friend might stop trying when he finds out you lied

Option 3: Tell your friend you don't want/can't quit smoking, and encourage them to quit regardless of your decision.

ADV – You would be being honest with your friend

ADV – Your friend might respect your honesty

ADV – You wouldn't have to hide your smoking from anyone

DIS – Your friend might not even try to quit
DIS – Your friend might resent you for not trying to quit with them

Scenario 3: A homeless man who is an acquaintance approached you the other day, offering to sell you a really nice bike for a ridiculously low price you couldn't pass up. They told you it was given to them at a feeding and they needed the money. You happily gave the money, and accepted the bike. Today, you saw them offering another bike to someone else; you decided to confront them and ask how they got this bike, too. They told you quietly that they stole it from another homeless person you know, who you are friends with.

Option 1: Take the bike by force back to the person it was stolen from and explain what happened.

ADV – Justice would be served. It's wrong to steal

ADV – Your friend would get back his bike

DIS – You might get into a fight

DIS – You might become a target for retaliation

Option 2: Keep your bike that you bought, and tell the person who bought the other bike about it being stolen.

ADV – You would still have your bike, after all you bought it

ADV – You would be honest with the person who got the other stolen bike about its history

DIS – The other person might resent you telling them about the bike being stolen

DIS – The person selling the bike would be angry with you about it.

Option 3: Sit down with your friend and try to come up with more honest ways of earning money.

ADV – Can help him straighten his actions out and stop stealing

ADV – Might prevent your friend from being arrested when he eventually gets caught

DIS – Might anger your friend, as money is tough to come by and he might feel judged

DIS – Your friend might stop talking to you

Scenario 4: For the last several months, there has been a caregiver at the Salvation Army where you are staying that has been giving you a hard time. The caregiver teases you about your appearance, gets you in trouble every opportunity they can, and you are starting to suspect (although have no proof) that they are stealing from your bedroom when you are not there. You're fed up with the way you're being treated and decide you really want to just get away.

Option 1: Run away.

ADV – Won't have to deal with the caregiver any longer

ADV – Can ensure nothing else is stolen from you

DIS – Will be out of a place that provides other services to you

DIS – Won't have a roof over your head any longer

Option 2: Report caregiver to her supervisor.

ADV – Can stay at the Salvation Army

ADV – Won't have to confront them in person

DIS – Might get thrown out for a false accusation if no proof found

DIS – Might cause the person to persecute you more if they aren't fired

Option 3: Confront caregiver about the issue.

ADV – Will let the person know you can't be bullied

ADV – Might cause the person to stop stealing and picking on you

DIS – Might lead to a physical fight

DIS – Might cause you to be thrown out of the Salvation Army

Scenario 5: There are some guys that have been harassing you for a few weeks now. You both frequent similar feedings, and when they see you at feedings, they drop or spill food on you, they have taken things without asking, they call you names, and generally have tried to start fights with you. You don't feel confident enough to stand up for yourself.

Option 1: Avoid feedings where you think they'll be.

ADV – Won't have to face them in person

ADV – Won't get picked on and avoid fighting

DIS – Won't eat occasionally

DIS – Might run into them in other places

Option 2: Plan to fight back.

ADV – Might stop the bullying

ADV – Would at least confront them and might stop them from picking on others in the future

DIS – Might get beat up and robbed

DIS – Might get arrested

Option 3: Tell the police or some authority at the feeding what's going on.

ADV – Would allow someone else to confront them

ADV – Might end the problem without actually fighting them and you could still eat at feedings

DIS – Authorities might not do anything and bullying might intensify

DIS – Might cause people to label you a snitch

Scenario 6: You've been given an opportunity from a man you met at church who wants to offer you a job. He wants you to work for his roofing company, but you overheard him say that he can't hire anyone without experience to someone else who asked him about a job. You have never done roofing in your life, but you really need a job, and are worried about losing this opportunity.

Option 1: Tell the man that you would love the job, but have no experience, although you are a quick learner.

ADV – You would be honest and feel good about yourself

ADV – You wouldn't set yourself up as an expert and then show up at work without any knowledge

DIS – Might not get the job

DIS – Might not get another opportunity like this for awhile and that would mean longer with not working

Option 2: Lie to the man and tell him you used to do roofing in the Northeast.

ADV – Would improve chances for getting the job

ADV – Would likely gain social approval

DIS – Would be lying

DIS – Might get found out

Option 3: Tell the man you need the money bad, and ask to work for a probationary period while he sees if you can do the work.

ADV – Would be being honest

ADV – Might still get the job

DIS – Might not get the job

DIS – Would come off as begging

Scenario 7: You recently have been staying in an abandoned house that you sneak into to sleep at night. You've been very careful to only go in when no one can see you, and you aren't loud or partying in the house, you just want a place to lay your head at night. A friend of yours who is also homeless found out about where you are staying and wants you to show them where the house is. This friend has a serious drinking and drug problem, and you don't want that temptation around you, but you feel bad that your friend has been sleeping under the bridge, and recently the cops have been harassing everyone who sleeps outside.

Option 1: Tell your friend about the house and invite them to come stay.

ADV – Would be being helpful to a friend

ADV – Might help you out in the future

DIS – Would have the temptation of drugs around

DIS – He might tell someone else

Option 2: Lie and tell your friend that you aren't staying in a house

ADV – Would be able to stay your secret

ADV – Wouldn't have to share your space

DIS – Might get caught lying and would hurt friend's feelings

DIS – Would feel guilty

Option 3: Tell your friend they can only stay if they don't drink or use drugs and must follow some simple rules.

ADV – Friend could stay if followed rules

ADV – Would keep drugs away

DIS – Friend might not respect request

DIS – Would increase the possibility that others could find out.

Scenario 8: You've been coming to the same day labor pool for two weeks straight, and haven't been sent out to work yet. You have heard that sometimes the manager will pick out certain people to toy with and purposely won't send certain people out, and you feel like he's singled you out. The next closest day labor place will require you to move where you sleep to be able to get there at 5am.

Option 1: Confront the manager and ask why you haven't been sent out

ADV – Might cause the manager to send you out to work

ADV – Would at least get some sort of reaction from the guy

DIS – Might cause the guy to not send me out at all afterwards

DIS – Might cause me to have to look for a new day labor pool

Option 2: Move where you sleep and start going to a new day labor company.

ADV – Would be able to get sent out more often

ADV – Would make more money

DIS – Would have to move where you sleep at night

DIS – Would have to rearrange schedule based on where you sleep

Option 3: Keep going to the same labor pool, and say nothing.

ADV – Wouldn't have to confront the guy

ADV – Would hopefully have the situation resolve on its own.

DIS – Wouldn't get a definite resolution

DIS – Would have to possibly go without any money

Scenario 9: You have become pretty close friends with a coworker that tends to work the same shifts that you do. You hang out with them outside work often and really enjoy their company. A couple of days ago, you saw them stealing a \$20 bill out of the cash register at work. You don't want to get them in trouble and possibly get fired, but you know stealing is wrong and you don't want to get blamed if the register comes up short.

Option 1: Confront outside of work and try to convince to put the money back.

ADV – Would be doing the right thing, even if he didn't give the money back, he might not steal in the future

ADV – Would absolve you of any guilt

DIS – Friend might get defensive or lie

DIS – Might lose their friendship

Option 2: Tell your supervisor that there is an employee that has possibly been stealing.

ADV – Would feel like you did the right thing

ADV – Would absolve you of any guilt

DIS – Would likely get your friend fired

DIS – Friend might find out you reported the theft

Option 3: Completely ignore the situation.

ADV – Your friend wouldn't get in trouble

ADV – Nothing would change, no upheaval at work

DIS – Would feel guilty

DIS – Would feel like you needed to watch your friend at work

Scenario 10: Recently you were at a feeding waiting in line to eat when you saw a guy who you are close with stealing out of someone else's bag. You didn't see what they stole, and you aren't very fond of the individual who had their bag pillaged, but you know that something was taken.

Option 1: Tell the person the next time you see them that you saw someone steal from their bag

ADV – Would have done the right thing

ADV – Might make the guy who was stolen from feel better

DIS – Might cause a fight

DIS – Your friend might stop wanting to be around you

Option 2: Confront the thief the next time you see them and ask them to return the item(s) or stop stealing

ADV- Would be doing the right thing

ADV – Would have told your friend how you feel about stealing

DIS – Might anger your friend

DIS – Would be a stressful talk

Option 3: Ignore the problem, it's dog eat dog out here.

ADV- Wouldn't have to confront anybody

ADV- The situation would remain in the past

DIS – Person was robbed and nothing happened

DIS – Might want someone to tell me, so would feel a bit guilty

Scenario 11: A good friend of yours who has been on the streets with you for the past 6 months and who you frequently associate with, has gotten a job recently and reliably shown up for work. They have been working for 2 months straight, and are about to move into an apartment. You are getting desperate, and even though you're happy for your friend, you are tired of being on the streets and want some place to stay, even temporarily. You don't want to feel like a burden to anyone, though, and are concerned this may strain your friendship.

Option 1: Go to your friend and ask if you can move in just temporarily

ADV – May get to stay with him for a bit

ADV – Might strengthen the friendship

DIS – Might get turned down

DIS – Friend might stop coming around or sharing things with you

Option 2: Go to your friend and ask them to recommend you for a job

ADV – Wouldn't be begging for money or a place to stay

ADV – Would possibly land a job

DIS – Friend might not want to recommend you

DIS – Friend might feel awkward

Option 3: Leave the situation alone, you don't want to be rejected or be a burden.

ADV – Wouldn't have to deal with the situation

ADV – Friendship wouldn't be burdened

DIS – Wouldn't get the chance at a place to stay
DIS – Wouldn't get the chance at a job

Scenario 12: You've been attending NA/AA meetings regularly, and recognize you have a problem with substances. You've been clean for about 2 months, and are still very tempted when you are forced to be around drugs or alcohol. Your old drinking buddy, whom you've known for about 6 years, keeps pestering you about how you don't spend any time with him and are "too good for him", he keeps saying. You don't want to cut him out of your life, but are worried about our sobriety.

Option 1: Tell your friend you are a different person and don't want to be their friend anymore.

ADV – Wouldn't have the temptation around

ADV – Would resolve the situation

DIS – Would hurt your friend's feelings deeply

DIS – Would lose a friend whom you still value

Option 2: Tell your friend you still care about them, but are too weak to be around someone who is still using.

ADV – Would remove the temptation

ADV – Would keep your friendship intact

DIS – Might hurt your friend's feelings a bit

DIS – Would possibly still want to be around occasionally

Option 3: Make plans to see your friend again because you care about him and don't want to hurt his feelings.

ADV – Would get to hang out with your friend whom you miss

ADV – Would have a good time

DIS – Might drink

DIS – Might fall into a pattern of wrong living again

Scenario 13: A friend of yours has decided to start running a scam where they will begin to collect SSN from other homeless people and begin to make false tax return requests for those people as a way to make money illegitimately. This is criminal, and defrauds both the government and the individual who has their tax return stolen. You need money desperately, but aren't sure about this.

Option 1: Tell the friend you can't participate in any fashion because it is wrong.

ADV – Wouldn't get arrested

ADV – Would be doing the right thing

DIS – Wouldn't get any money

DIS – Might upset your friend

Option 2: Tell your friend you will help them collect SSN's and apply for the tax returns.

ADV – Would get easy money

ADV – Would get to live the high life for a bit

DIS – Might get arrested

DIS – Would be doing something wrong even if don't get caught

Option 3: Tell the authorities using a tip line to collect the reward offered by the police. This results in your friends arrest.

ADV – Would allow you to collect some money for your information

ADV – Would get money without breaking the law

DIS – Would feel like a snitch

DIS – Your friend would likely get arrested

Appendix G – SODAS Worksheet

SODAS Worksheet

Name of Adult: _____ Date: _____

Person conducting SODAS with Adult _____



Define the Situation (who, what, where, when, how):



Brainstorm the Options:

Option 1: _____

Option 2: _____

Option 3: _____



List the Advantages and Disadvantages associated with each:

Option 1	
Advantages	Disadvantages
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.

Option 2	
Advantages	Disadvantages
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.

Option 3	
Advantages	Disadvantages
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.



Select a Solution:



Follow-up: _____

Appendix H – Social Validity Questionnaire

Participant Survey

Instructions: Please answer the following three questions to help us in understand your experience with the SODAS Process in your own live.

1. On what number of your own problem situations did you use the SODAS process over the last 7 days?

None, because I didn't have any problem situations or decisions where it was needed.

1 Problem situation or decision.

2 or 3 Problem situations or decisions.

4 or more Problem situations or decisions.

IF YOU USED THE SODAS PROCESS in any decision making or problem solving this past week, we would appreciate you rating the following two questions.

2. Did you find the SODAS process to be **helpful** in your decision-making or problem solving?

0	1	2	3	4
Not At all	Slightly helpful	Helpful	Very helpful	Amazingly helpful

3. Did you find the SODAS process **helpful to you in getting a better outcome** on at least one of your decisions or problem situations.

0	1	2	3	4
Not At all	Slightly helpful	Helpful	Very helpful	Amazingly helpful

Adapted from Skelton (2013).