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REFERENCE GUIDE FOR CAREER DEVELOPMENT COUNSELLORS
WORKING WITH INUIT CLIENTS

*Regroupement québécois des organismes
pour le développement de l'employabilité*



REGROUPEMENT QUÉBÉCOIS DES ORGANISMES POUR LE DÉVELOPPEMENT DE L'EMPLOYABILITÉ

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Glossary

CAREER CHOICE: A choice regarding employment, profession, or field that has an impact on an individual's career development.

CAREER DEVELOPMENT: A continual process in which an individual gains awareness of and explores the factors that influence their way of life and the context surrounding work, learning and leisure activities.

CENTRE: In this guide, the term means the place where career development services are offered. It may refer to an educational institution, a job search help centre, or a government employment office.

CLIENT/CLIENTS: A person seeking the services offered. In this guide, the term "client" is used when a strategy or action applies primarily to an individual counselling context. The plural "clients" may be used when information applies primarily to group counselling contexts, however, not to the exclusion of individual counselling contexts.

COUNSELLOR: In this guide, the term may apply to any individual who intervenes with Inuit clients which may include an employment or career development counsellor, a local employment agent, a facilitator, or teacher.

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS: All the skills that make it possible for an individual to find and keep a job.

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES: Individual or group activities focused on preparation for employment.

EMPOWERMENT: This term refers to an individual's or a community's capacity to act autonomously. It also refers to a process of knowledge transfer whereby an individual's or group's previously hidden or overlooked potential is developed. "Empowerment can also refer to a social intervention approach that has the specific goal to support the efforts of individuals and communities to rebuild their ability to take action."¹

HOLISTIC APPROACH: Despite their many cultural and historical differences, the First Nations, Inuit and Métis share the common belief that learning is a holistic, lifelong process. "Holistic lifelong learning models prove that the learning of culture, language and traditions is essential to the well-being of Aboriginal peoples [...] such activities play an important role in the daily lives of many Aboriginal learners and are commonplace in Aboriginal communities across Canada."²

INUIT: A plural noun that refers to members of the Aboriginal people of the North American Arctic, Greenland and Siberia.

INUK: Singular form of Inuit.

INUKSUK: A pile of stones or rocks that assists the Inuit people in finding their way. In the past, the inuksuk (or inukshuk, inuksuit in the plural) facilitated communication amongst the Inuit. It is a very powerful symbol for the Inuit.

LOG: A tool, which can take a variety of forms, that helps keep a record of the client's learning process in order to enhance self-knowledge, boost self-confidence, or recognize accomplishments.

NUNAVIMMIUT: Inuktitut word that refers to the inhabitants of Nunavik.

QALLUNAAT: Inuktitut word that refers to non-Inuit.

RESILIENCE: An individual's ability to deal with a difficult or stressful situation, and recover from traumatic experiences (e.g., bereavement at a young age, abandonment, abuse, sexual violence). Not innate, this capacity may be developed.

STORYTELLING: A traditional method used to teach about cultural beliefs, values, etc. It is also an intervention technique that consists of communicating (e.g., a fact, a life lesson, a real-life event, etc.) through a story using a narrative structure similar to tales. This technique does not require to ask a lot of questions and allows the client to decide what information they wish to share.

WORKING ALLIANCE: The working alliance is a process founded on cooperation, collaboration, reciprocity, sharing, agreement, tolerance, and respect. A good working alliance seeks to comprise three elements, i.e., (1) an agreement about the overall goals, (2) an agreement regarding tasks, and (3) the creation of a connection rooted in the emotional quality of the client-counsellor relationship.³



Introduction

Career development affects all aspects of an individual's life, including training, work, family life and leisure activities. This ever-evolving and complex field is based on academic and applied research, as well as on the experience and expertise of professionals working in the career development sector.

Given the magnitude of differences between Inuit and Euro-centric cultures, as well as the significant changes taking place with regards to Inuit identity, firmly anchoring career development services in the reality of this ancient people is essential. Faced with a near-total absence of specific metrics that might promote the Inuit's ability to find and keep employment, the goal of this reference guide is to optimize career development interventions designed for this clientele, in a northern context as well as in urban environments.

Background

The Regroupement québécois des organismes pour le développement de l'employabilité (RQuODE) developed this reference guide in the framework of its involvement in the management of two Irvitvik Centres that offer employability and pre-employability services to Inuit living in Montréal and Inukjuak (Nunavik).

Objectives

The goal of this guide is to equip counsellors working in Inuit communities or with Inuit clients so that they might better be able to identify cultural particularities in their interventions with this clientele while improving their understanding of the major issues encountered by Inuit seeking employment. For counsellors in the process of adapting their intervention techniques and tools, this guide offers strategies that highlight good practices and pitfalls which should be avoided.

Target Audience

While this resource is designed for counsellors (Inuit or non-Inuit) who work with Inuit clients going through a career development process, it is also for those working in other areas, such as social workers or teachers. Although developed based on data collected from counsellors working primarily with the Nunavimmiut, this guide can be adapted for working with other Inuit populations.

Methodology

This guide relies on two data sources; a review of the relevant literature and the expertise of professionals in the field, gathered through group discussions and individual interviews. This guide is also based on the observations made during the first phase of the study, which are summarized in the report "Understanding Inuit and Work: An Examination of Cultural Factors to Develop Tailored Employment Services." In addition, we want to thank the many employment counsellors and career development professionals who collaborated with RQuODE to draft and review this guide.

RESOURCE

[Understanding Inuit and Work: An Examination of Cultural Factors to Develop Tailored Employment Services](#) (a study conducted by RQuODE, 2016)



HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE

Reading this guide cover to cover is not required. You can choose the chapters, strategies, and tips that best meet your needs and your clients' needs. In general, unless otherwise indicated, the strategies presented apply to both individual sessions and group contexts.

This guide has four chapters:

1. **CONTEXTUALIZATION:** A brief summary of the Inuit context, major employment challenges, and culture.
2. **ISSUES:** Targeted courses of action related to 12 common issues.
3. **STRATEGIES:** 50 effective strategies for interventions with an Inuit clientele organized according to 11 themes.
4. **RESOURCES:** References and other resources to further explore various themes or subjects.

Legend



By highlighting certain nuances, these sections can help you better grasp the strategy’s context or show how to apply the suggested actions.



These sections suggest Nunavik-specific resources or information.



These sections highlight external resources you can turn to for additional information about a particular subject.



These boxes contain additional information on specific subjects.



Sample interventions or activities drawn from the counsellors consulted.

By presenting concrete ways to improve interventions, the ultimate goal of this guide is to help the Inuit clients you meet in your day-to-day practice as much as possible. Since each client and each situation is unique, this guide does not propose any specific intervention plan or strategy. Rather, it provides guidelines and suggests actions. We encourage you to select and tailor the strategies set out in this guide by taking into account the local realities (e.g., northern communities, rural regions, metropolitan areas), the particular needs of each of your clients, and both your strengths and needs as a professional.

We also encourage you to explore the “Resources” section of this guide. If you encounter sensitive situations or feel powerless in the course of your practice, we suggest you speak with your supervisor. Also, don’t hesitate to consult the specialized resources available to you in your field.

HAPPY READING!

Contextualization

A BRIEF OVERVIEW OF THE INUIT IN CANADA WITH A FOCUS ON THE INUIT OF NUNAVIK

Geography

According to the 2011 census, 59,000 Inuit live in Canada, i.e., roughly 4.2% of the country’s Aboriginal population and 0.2% of the total population nationwide.⁴ Three-quarters of the Inuit population live in Inuit Nunangat, a vast northern region that stretches from Labrador to the Northwest Territories.

FIGURE 1. MAP OF INUIT NUNANGAT



Source: Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada⁵

Political Context

Excluded from the Indian Act of 1876, the Inuit were subjected to, and endure to this day, fallout from British and Canadian colonialism, including:

- The forced relocation of several Inuit families from Inukjuak to the High Arctic (1953);
- The mass slaughter of sled dogs by the police (1950s and 1960s); and
- The residential school system (circa 1831 to 1996).

The James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA), signed on November 11, 1975, marked a turning point in the political history of the Inuit in Quebec. In exchange for some of their territorial rights, the Nunavimmiut received a certain measure of political and administrative autonomy, which included the creation of the Kativik Regional Government (KRG) the Makivik Corporation, the Kativik School Board and the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services.

Demography

With a median age of 23, as compared to 41 for Canada's non-Aboriginal population, the Inuit have the youngest population of the country's three Aboriginal groups (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit). In Nunavik, where the median age is 21, nearly 40% of the population is aged 14 or younger.⁶ The population growth in the North contributes to the situation of overcrowded housing, which in turn increases the spread of infectious diseases, due to close quarters, and the risk of abuse, due to a lack of privacy. As compared to that of other Canadians, the life expectancy rates for Inuit Nunangat residents are low partly due to limited access to health care in some isolated regions, high suicide rates, alcoholism and drug addiction, and mental health problems.

Education

According to official statistics, as of 2012, only 42% of Inuit across Canada had completed a high school diploma or the equivalent, which represents about half of the non-Aboriginal (89%).⁷ Several challenges persist with regard to education, including:

- The absence of colleges and universities in most of the Inuit territories;
- The quality of education in remote areas, especially due to a high turnover among non-Inuit personnel;
- The lack of Inuit teachers;
- Racism and discrimination that exist in educational institutions and curriculum; and
- The lack of educational services and resources (e.g., guidance counsellors, teaching assistants, and special education teachers).

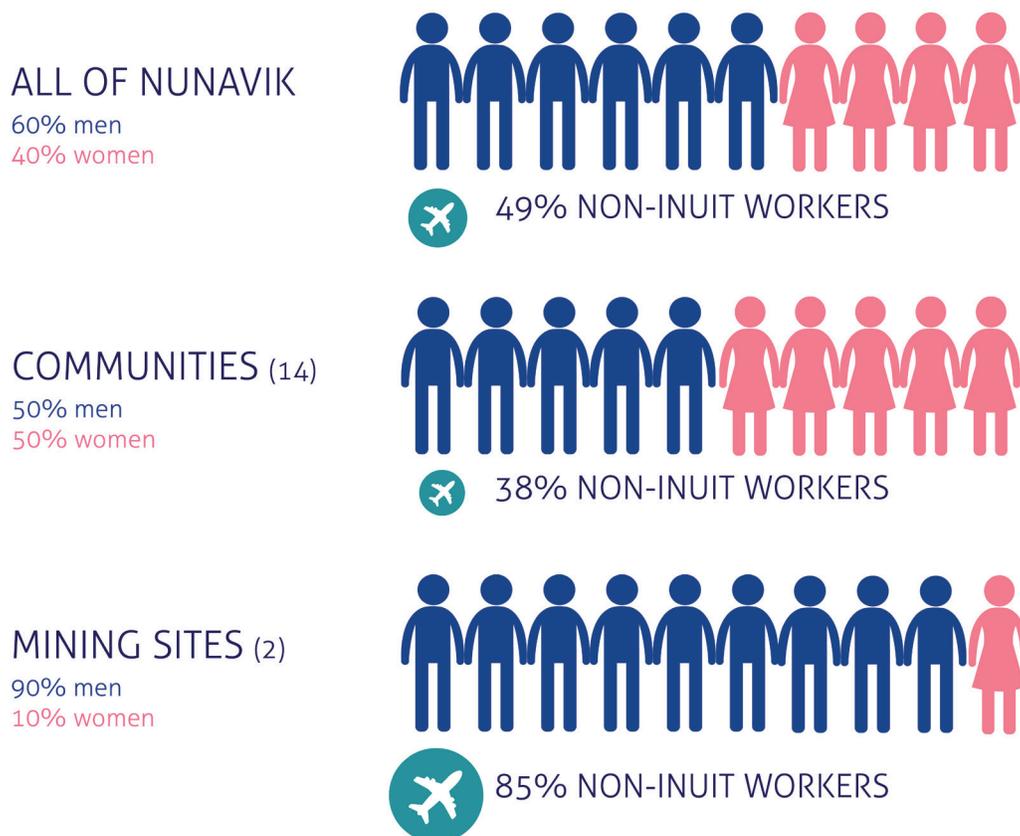
The Labour Market in the North and in the South

The Inuit entered the market economy during the 1930s when the Catholic missions opened the first sawmills and bakeries in southern James Bay. Currently the economic system in Nunavik is mixed, including both traditional subsistence activities (e.g. hunting, fishing, and gathering) and capitalist economic features based on salaried work.

For Inuit in Quebec aged 15 and over, the unemployment rate rose to 16.3% in 2011, more than double the provincial rate.⁸ Despite the increase in unemployment since the 1990s, of the four regions in Inuit Nunangat, Nunavik had the lowest rates of unemployment: 14.7% in 2001 and 18.8% in 2006. As in several regions, Aboriginal or not, the unemployment rate is especially high for men and young people aged 15 to 24.⁹

In 2011, the Kativik Regional Government counted 4,200 regular, full-time jobs in the Nunavik territory, i.e., an increase of more than 30% as compared to 2005. These jobs were shared more or less equally by men and women, as well as by the Inuit (JBNQA beneficiaries) and non-Inuit workers from the South or other Inuit territories in Canada (not covered by the JBNQA). On the other hand, the situation is quite different in the mining sector, which provides 24% of the full- and part-time jobs in Nunavik (Northern Québec).¹⁰

FIGURE 2. FULL-TIME JOBS IN NUNAVIK IN 2011 ACCORDING TO SEX, ETHNICITY AND LOCATION



Source: Kativik Regional Government¹¹

BOX #1 – THE INUIT CULTURE IN 10 KEYWORDS¹²

- 1. CULTURAL AUTHENTICITY:** Although the Inuit's cultural identity has been shaken by colonialism, this ancient people strives to preserve its strong values, language, and culture.
- 2. SURVIVAL:** To ensure the group's survival in the face of harsh weather conditions, each Inuk has a role to play (e.g., in hunting, fishing, sewing, or cooking). Inuit behaviour is generally more action- and results-oriented. Because Inuit people are accustomed to living in a difficult natural environment, they also demonstrate tremendous modesty and the capacity to adapt.
- 3. ORAL TRADITION:** Although passing on knowledge via oral tradition forms the basis of the Inuit culture, non-verbal communication also remains very important. Unless necessary, the Inuit avoid talking a lot and asking too many questions. In conversation, they are comfortable with silence. The use of Inuktitut has an impact on how the Inuit see the world and their manner of speaking, which is frequently direct and precise.
- 4. FAMILY:** In a broad sense, the family and the clan form the foundation of Inuit society. Relationships with the elders are very important, even if the rise of individualism among the young has strained intergenerational ties.
- 5. COMMUNITY:** For Inuit, mutual support and sharing are fundamental. Out of respect for individual choice and in order to keep the peace within the group, the Inuit prefer to avoid conflict and take care not to interfere in the lives of others (the principle of non-interference), unless someone's behaviour threatens the well-being or survival of the group. The group's interests generally take precedence over individual interests.

MAJOR OBSTACLES RELATED TO THE LABOUR MARKET

IN THE NORTH	IN THE SOUTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remoteness of communities and workers' limited mobility• Limited diversity of available jobs in northern communities• Local and regional employment opportunities that require more skilled labour• Limited number of professional Inuit role models	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More competitive labour market in urban settings• Discrimination based on mutual prejudice and stereotypes• Culture shock upon arrival• Lack of understanding about the more rigid urban labour market• Lack of a professional network

- 6. CLOSENESS TO THE LAND:** Once a nomadic people, the Inuit population expresses deep love for the land and maintain a strong connection with it as the source of life, provider of food, and teachings. For the Inuk, traditional subsistence activities on the land contribute to identity building.
- 7. RELATIONSHIP TO TIME:** Many Inuit experience time as a series of present moments and focus on the short term. They like to take their time to complete a task and know how to enjoy downtime. Since the Inuit don't ascribe to predict nor control what may be, they tend not to project themselves very far into the future.
- 8. WORK AND CAREER:** For most Inuit, salaried work enables them to address an immediate need (e.g., having money to buy something) and to take care of their families' needs. In general, they don't see their job as a way to accomplish personal and professional plans. As a result, the idea of a career that spans a lifetime remains often an abstract concept.
- 9. OBSERVATION:** In the Inuit culture, learning is based primarily on observation and the replication of others' behaviours. As a result, all members of a community can contribute to the development of a child and become role models.
- 10. EXPERIMENTATION:** Generally endowed with practical intelligence, rather than learning through theory or reading, the Inuit tend to prefer a hands-on, experiential approach. In learning situations, they particularly enjoy visual elements, humour, and problem-solving exercises.

Challenges Encountered by Clients

This chapter, based on feedback from the counsellors consulted, describes the major challenges Inuit clients may encounter when seeking employment. Although far from insurmountable, these challenges can make finding and keeping a job more complicated, particularly if they are not addressed.

1. Poverty
2. Weak scholastic achievement and literacy
3. Low self-confidence
4. Lack of motivation
5. Lack of familiarity with government systems and community resources
6. Dependency (e.g., alcohol, drugs, gambling)
7. Criminal record
8. Mental health issues
9. Homelessness or lack of housing
10. Violence or abuse
11. Disabilities
12. Teenage pregnancy

While most issues related to teenage pregnancy require more comprehensive intervention on the part of the relevant authorities and, thus, fall outside the scope of this guide, some strategies can be used to mitigate the impacts. As a result, in addition to sketching out the situation and summarizing the major impacts of these challenges on clients' employability, this chapter suggests several targeted strategies. In all cases, collaboration with and referral to specialized resources are recommended.

1. Poverty

According to Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami, the revenues for the Inuit in Northern Quebec are the lowest among all Inuit communities in Canada.¹³ In 2004, 58% of Nunavimmiut earned less than \$20,000 a year while working precarious jobs.¹⁴ In Nunavik, poverty is linked to low levels of education and limited employment opportunities, and affects a large number of families (from 21% and 28% of households according to conservative estimates).¹⁵

Widespread poverty affects all areas of clients' lives and all the accompanying challenges presented in this section, from mental and physical health to self-confidence and motivation. This phenomenon explains in part the urgency counsellors sense from some clients who may grow impatient with a process that they often find long, given their critical need for money.

.....
SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Establish the level of urgency of the situation: Are children being affected? Does the client and their family have enough to eat?
- To reduce the precariousness of their situation, prioritize the client's fundamental needs.
- Share information with the client about local or regional resources that might be helpful, like social programs (e.g., employment insurance, social assistance, the Quebec Parental Insurance Plan).
- Develop a two-step action plan: A short-term plan that meets the client's high-priority or urgent needs, and a second, medium-term plan that is designed to improve the client's precarious employment situation (e.g., resume studies in order to complete a high school diploma).

FIGURE 3. MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS FROM WESTERN AND ABORIGINAL PERSPECTIVES



Sources: Abraham Maslow¹⁶ and Cindy Blackstock¹⁷

2. Weak Scholastic Achievement and Literacy

With a secondary school graduation rate of 42% nationwide, official statistics paint a grim picture of scholastic achievement among the Inuit in Canada.¹⁸ Observers and front-line professionals, however, put the rate at between 5 and 10%. As a result, functional illiteracy, i.e., difficulty reading or writing a text, also affects a large segment of Nunavik's population. Several factors affect performance and school attendance for young Inuit, including food insecurity, overcrowding, health problems, drug addiction and alcoholism, learning disabilities, high poverty, domestic and family violence, high suicide rates, and the lack of colleges and universities in Inuit regions.

Faced with stiffer job requirements in the increasingly knowledge-based economy, weak scholastic achievement limits professional choices and/or vocational training options for many Inuit people. Jobs that require fewer qualifications are often more precarious and poorly paid.¹⁹ Clients who are functionally illiterate face even greater barriers to obtaining employment as they may struggle to complete job applications, making the job search more complicated. In addition, weak scholastic achievement and illiteracy can also lead to poor health, a sense of exclusion, and a higher dependency on social services.

..... SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Set up programs that recognize prior learning (e.g., *Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition* (PLAR) offered by Nunavut Arctic College).
- Organize activities and workshops aimed at acquiring concrete experience and building self-confidence (e.g., day-long workplace internships).
- Encourage clients to participate in short-term training (e.g., First Aid, CPR, Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)).
- Recognize experience and skills acquired outside of the academic or professional environment (e.g., parenting, traditional activities, supporting an elderly member of the family, volunteer work).
- To recognize their skills and abilities, include clients in the planning and performing of tasks (e.g., scheduling, developing activities for the centre, facilitating activities, acting as a big brother/big sister for new clients) (see Strategy #35 in the following chapter).
- To recognize the skills and know-how acquired in group or individual sessions, include a period of reflection and discussion after each activity or at the end of every day.
- Offer second language learning workshops (e.g., French, English, or Inuktitut).
- Encourage clients to resume their studies to obtain a diploma (upgrading).

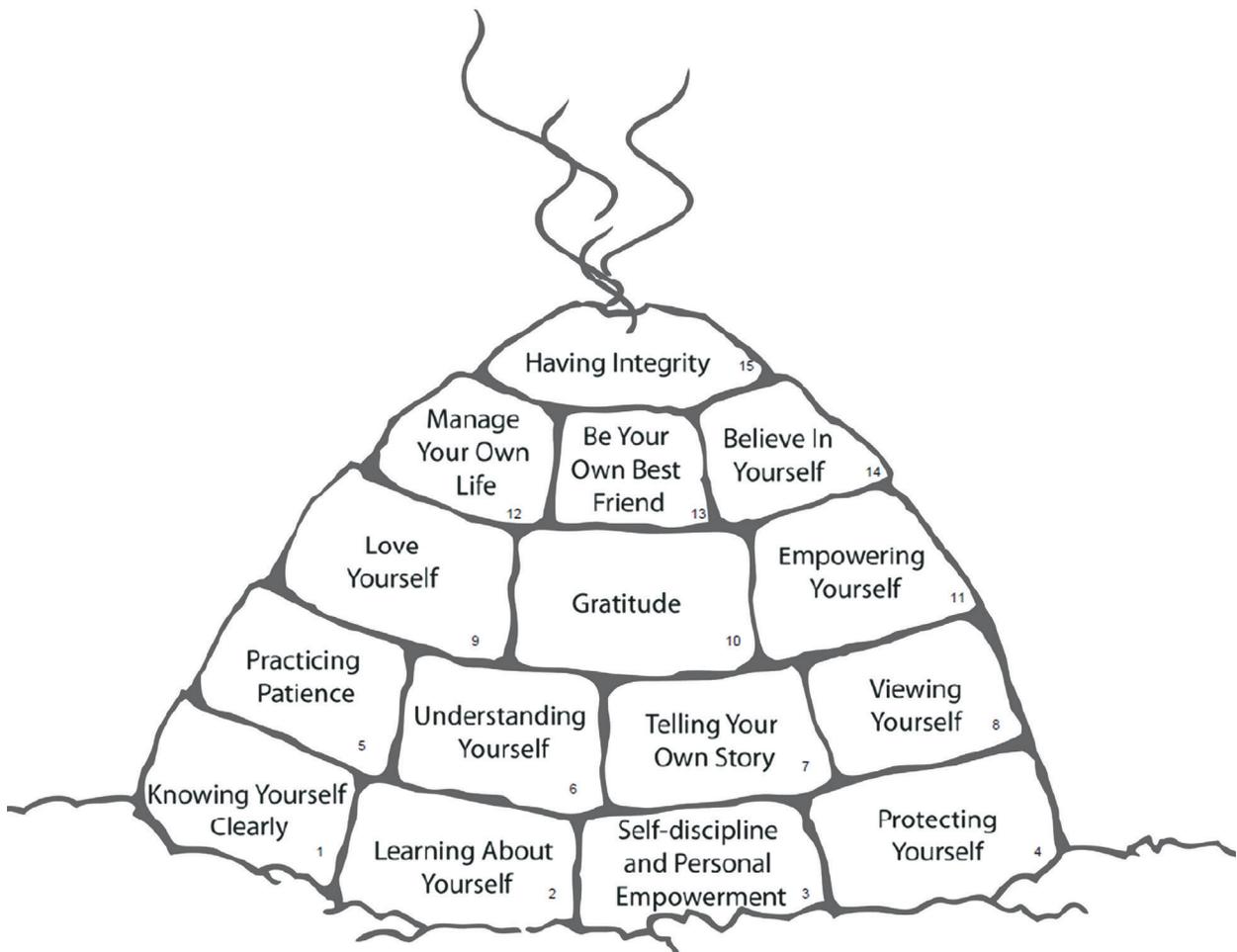
SAMPLE ACTIVITY

THE IGLOO OF LIFE TO FOSTER PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The PLAR (Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition) program was developed by Nunavut Arctic College and Human Resources and Social Development Canada (now Employment and Social Development Canada). The goal of the PLAR program is the creation of a portfolio of life learning experiences. It is available online, free of charge, and includes many activities adapted to the Inuit culture.

Throughout the program, links are established with the Igloo of Life, an Inuit model of personal development designed by Meeka Arnakaq. Each of the 15 blocks of the igloo represents an aspect of the self, working together as a whole, healthy human being. This self-assessment tool can be used to develop and strengthen the various components of one's identity, to build a full and healthy life.

FIGURE 4. MEEKA ARNAKAQ'S IGLOO OF LIFE



Sources: Meeka Arnakaq and Nunavut Arctic College²⁰

3. Low Self-Confidence

Many external forces, both past and present, including colonialism, the rapid introduction of Western culture (Internet, television) and the rise of the market economy, have shaken the Inuit people's self-confidence. Some Inuit boldly display their personal identity, while others struggle to assert and take pride in their identity. In addition, family support varies from one client to another, due to the weakening of parenting skills caused by the residential schools.

To better lay the groundwork and prepare less confident clients for the job search, a longer-term and more sensitive approach may be in order. As coaches and motivators, employment professionals should communicate confidence in their clients' abilities through words and actions.

..... SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Encourage the client to take action, no matter what that action might be (as long as it's positive).
- Validate the client's actions (e.g., recognize that the client has made an effort to come see their counsellor).
- Help your clients gain awareness of the abilities and skills they acquire through accomplishing projects and the related tasks.
- Validate and document clients' accomplishments (e.g., portfolio, log).
- Encourage the client to get involved in the community and participate in traditional activities (if possible).
- Stimulate and encourage the client's individuality (e.g., Inuit identity, interests, or strengths) (see Strategy #22 in the following chapter).
- Hold workshops on self-esteem and self-confidence.

4. Lack of Motivation

“It is hard to reach people who are unemployed, to motivate them. If we invited all the unemployed people in the community and offered help, few would come. They always think that [this help] is for someone else, not them. The community tried several ways to motivate people. They come once and that’s it. It’s as if they want to stay in their shell. It’s up to the individual to want to do something. [...] If the person is motivated, anything is possible.”

– Counsellor, Inukjuak

According to feedback from the field, many clients lack motivation, particularly due to limited professional options, lack of family support or self-esteem, weak scholastic achievement, personal issues, or a string of temporary or precarious jobs. An ever-evolving dynamic, it is normal that individuals’ motivation fluctuates during the process of searching employment. Maintaining and sparking motivation on a regular basis, however, is important. A lack of motivation has a palpable impact on the client’s determination, on their commitment to pursue the job search process, and on their attentiveness during workshops and meetings.

A lack of motivation has an impact not only on the career development process, but also on a client’s ability to integrate into the labour market and to maintain their job. Low motivation often leads to a cycle of quitting jobs or being let go from jobs, which further amplifies a lack of motivation. The career development process can support clients by renewing their desire to take action and identify goals that support healthy life habits and simultaneously increase their odds of getting and keeping a job.

..... SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Create activities outside the Centre that draw upon the client’s ability to contribute to the community.
- To “rope clients in” and foster a sense of belonging to the Centre, prioritize fun-filled, interactive group workshops.
- Before introducing the more theoretical concepts of the career development process, take time to boost your client’s or group’s motivation.
- Identify the client’s key motivation(s) (see Strategy #14 in the following chapter).
- Encourage the client to take action by setting small goals, and then validate their accomplishments and what they have learned.
- Develop the client’s self-confidence (see Challenge #3 – Weak Self-confidence).
- Stay in touch with clients who drop-out of the process due to lack of motivation.

IMPORTANT Motivation has to come from the client. Rather than spending energy on an unmotivated client, it is recommended that you revisit your expectations or simply wait until they are ready to take action. You can follow up with the client on a regular basis and encourage them. Don’t forget to remind the client that your door is always open and that you believe in them!

5. Lack of Familiarity with Government Systems and Community Resources

Often seen as heavy and complicated, government bureaucracy can easily intimidate and even discourage Inuit clients. Getting a social insurance number or applying for employment insurance benefits can be a big challenge, particularly when these services are offered in a second language—sometimes in French only.

For the Inuit, who prefer simple, brief, and direct information, the multitude of forms and administrative steps can sap motivation and lead to inaction, especially for those who are illiterate or struggle with reading and writing. The lack or loss of official documents (like an ID or social insurance number) can also slow down or interrupt the process.

IN NUNAVIK In the northern communities of Nunavik, local employment officers (LEO) can help address clients' needs pertaining to government services (e.g., social insurance number, social assistance, employment insurance, birth certificates). It is recommended that you familiarize yourself with the most useful services for your clients.

..... SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- From the beginning of the intervention, make sure that clients have the documents they need to work or, if they don't, take the steps required to get the documents.
- Point out that, while it is normal to be frustrated by administrative delays and complications, getting IDs or filling out forms is necessary and/or required to continue the process or to get a job.
- Develop your client's autonomy by holding workshops on how government bureaucracy works (e.g., provincial and federal government structures, available services and programs, general information about various departments, individual and workers' rights).
- Summarize information in documents adapted to the clientele.

IMPORTANT Some clients that were born in one province and adopted in another province or territory, may have difficulty obtaining a social insurance number because their birth certificate (in the name of their adoptive parents) does not correspond to their birth record (in the name of their biological parents). This situation is more problematic for clients born in Northern Ontario, where an official name change is often required, than for those born in Quebec. Sometimes clients use a family member's social insurance number because they don't have their own and may not understand the purpose of the number. Take the time to verify your client's SIN and to explain its purpose.

6. Addiction

In Nunavik, excessive drinking (binge drinking), the use of drugs and other psychoactive substances (e.g., solvents), as well as compulsive gambling are real problems. The consequences not only affect the individual's personal and professional situations, but the entire community as well. In addition to contributing to violence, negligence, health problems, accidents, and poverty, addiction is a sign of significant psychological distress. Many criminal acts stem from alcohol and drug abuse (nearly 80% of crimes are committed while under the influence of psychoactive substances in Nunavik)²¹ and can set into motion a vicious cycle of physical, sexual, and psychological abuse).

When attempting to enter the labour market or even participate in an employment preparation program, addiction severely limits the client's availability and cognitive and emotional involvement. When it comes to any job search process, any addictions must be discussed with the client. Referring clients to resources that specialize in addiction treatment is critical.

IN NUNAVIK There are two treatment centres in Nunavik: Isuarsivik (Kuujjuaq), which offers a 28-day treatment programs for adults, and the Aanarraapik Reintegration Centre (Inukjuak), which treats minors. The Aanarraapik Crisis Centre (Puvirnitq) is a regional resource whose mission is to temporarily stabilize clients suffering from a mental health crisis.

..... SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Direct the client to addiction treatment resources.
- Make sure that trust has been established, preferably during an individual interview, before questioning clients on this subject.
- To avoid putting too much pressure on the client, use an indirect approach when addressing this subject (e.g., ask about their reasons for their repeated absences).
- Remind the client that employment services are offered in order to help them find work.

EXEMPLE D'INTERVENTION

IF A CLIENT SHOWS UP UNDER THE INFLUENCE

You should not tolerate the presence of clients who have been drinking or taking drugs. Tolerating intoxicated clients could have a negative impact on the whole group and on the program's reputation.

- If you intend to deal with an intoxicated client, notify a colleague to make sure you have back-up in the event the intervention triggers aggressive behaviour (due to the influence of alcohol or drugs like speed, GHB, or ecstasy).
- Take the time to reassure an intoxicated client and be extremely sensitive when intervening. It is especially important to assure them that they are not being judged.
- Encourage such clients to return to the Centre when they are sober.
- Make sure to follow up on a regular basis (e.g., every three weeks) with clients before, during (if possible), and after they participate in an addiction treatment program, even in cases where clients abandon the process.

RESOURCE

[Alcohol and Drug Use in Nunavik: Converging Views on the Future. Inuit's Viewpoints and the Researchers' Perspective](#)
(a book by Chantal Plourde, Natacha Brunelle et Michel Landry, 2011).



7. Clients with a Criminal Record

Several factors explain the high rate of criminality in Northern communities, including trauma caused by colonialism, the establishment of law enforcement and judicial systems that separated the Inuit from their traditional practices of social regulation, overcrowded housing, and the lack of work. A growing number of Inuit have a criminal record or are awaiting trial in Nunavik. Also, since 2008, the itinerant court's caseload has increased.²²

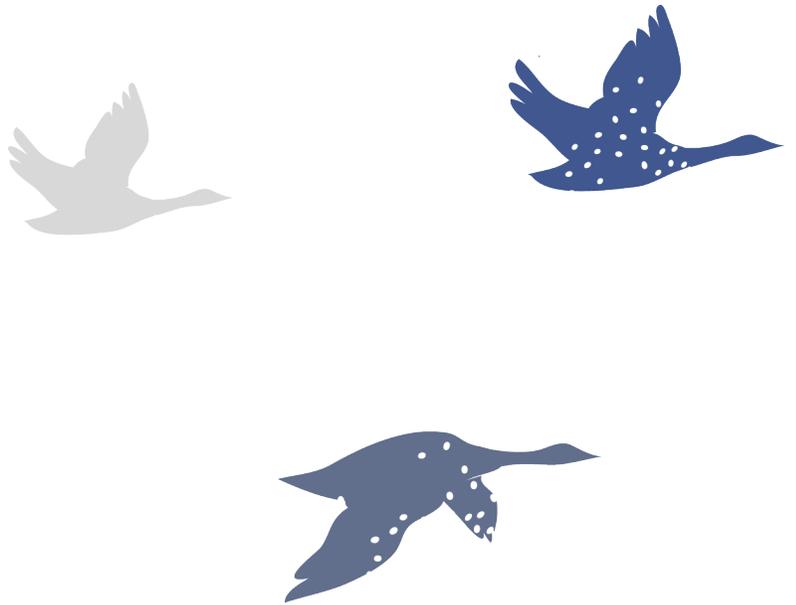
A criminal record automatically disqualifies clients from filling certain positions (e.g., early childhood educators and other positions in the education field, some jobs in the mining sector, including those that involve handling explosives). As a result, a criminal record directly affects employability and, in some fields, makes the hiring process that much more complicated.

IN NUNAVIK In Nunavik communities, clients with a criminal record are more likely to find employment working for local, rather than regional, businesses (e.g., at a coop or supermarket).

..... SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Make sure that trust has been established before questioning the client on this subject. The type of action plan created for a client (i.e., professional choices, targeted companies) will depend on whether a client has a criminal record or not. This issue should be addressed during the initial interview or relatively early on during the process.
- When establishing an employment action plan, take into account any special conditions pertaining to probation that the client must respect (e.g., ban on long distance travel, ban on working with children or in an establishment where alcohol is served, etc.).
- In cases of clients with a criminal record, find out about what employment opportunities are available.
- Draw a realistic picture of the situation and the impact a criminal record has on the job search process.
- Prepare clients to answer questions about their criminal record that may come up during an interview.
- Provide information about legal aid services (e.g., eligibility criteria).
- Explain the record suspension (pardon) process (e.g., length, fees involved, expected outcomes).

IMPORTANT There seems to be a significant lack of understanding about the role of the Child Protection Branch (CPB), particularly in the South, where caseworkers are not necessarily aware of the Inuit's cultural traits and education methods. Since the CPB may be seen as an extension of the residential school system, informing clients about its role may be useful. For clients with a CPB file, it is advisable to integrate caseworker's requirements into individual client's action plans. The CLSC's *Nobody's Perfect Program* (NPP), a personal enrichment course on the parenting experience, is a helpful resource (see Chapter 4).



8. Mental Health Issues

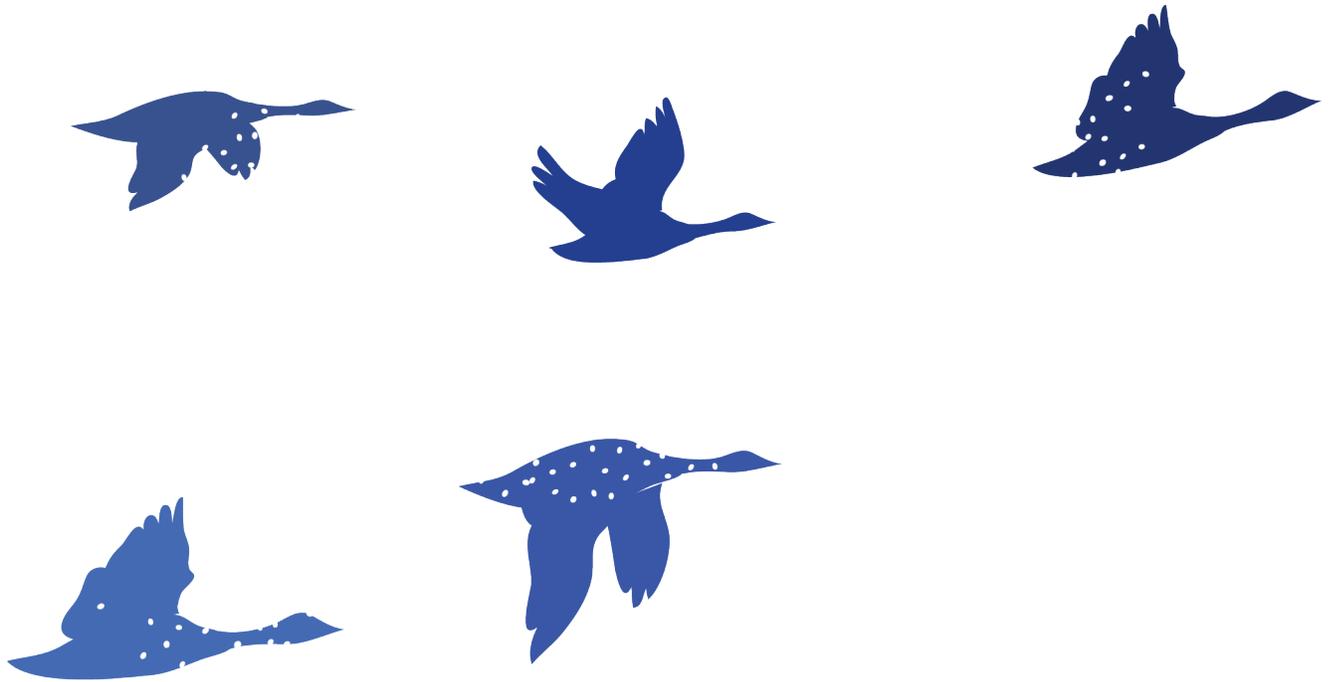
As in other cultures, mental health disorders remain taboo for the Inuit, due in part to a lack of information on the subject and the many prejudices that are perpetuated. The treatment offered to Inuit with mental health disorders differs little from that offered to other clientele with similar problems. The two major differences are the lack of resources available to treat mental health problems in Northern communities and the lack of plain language information available in Inuktitut.

This issue has an impact on clients' social and professional integration by affecting their reputation and limiting their employment options. Hiring someone with, for example, schizophrenia or bipolar disorder may scare some employers. Clients suffering from mental illness, or suspected of having mental health problems, will probably be subjected to prejudice and rumours within the community, which in itself can undermine their determination and self-confidence. For many Inuit patients, taking medication can also be problematic.

RESOURCE

A Contextual Study of Mental Health Services in Nunavik
(a study conducted by the *Institut national de santé
publique du Québec*, 2008).





..... SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Early on in the process, verify the client’s overall health by bringing up their mental health history. Since trust may not yet be established, take care not to upset the client. In order to avoid confrontation, ask general questions about your client’s health (e.g., How do you feel in general? Are you often tired? Have you taken medication in the past? Do you see other professionals? Do you often visit the clinic?)
- When in doubt, refer clients to a health professional (e.g., doctor, psychologist, social worker, or community worker).
- If necessary, accompany clients to their first visit with a medical professional.
- After referring clients to an appropriate treatment service, make sure to follow-up.
- Talk with your clients about taking their medication and following the recommended treatment guidelines by pointing out and discussing the benefits with them.
- Give examples of individuals with mental health problems who have spoken openly about their problems and still found work (e.g., Inuit or celebrities like hockey players, singers, and actors).
- As part of the Centre’s activities, offer sensitivity training and informational workshops that demystify mental illness.
- Collaborate with other service providers in the community (e.g., the Health and Social Services Board, community organizations) to raise awareness amongst community members about mental health.

9. Homelessness and Lack of Housing

In southern cities, Inuit homelessness is a real and visible issue. For example, in Montreal, more than half of the Inuit from Nunavik live beneath the poverty line or are homeless.²³ In urban settings, securing lodging often requires proof of a stable income. As a result, clients find themselves in a vicious cycle that threatens to discourage and paralyse them. In Northern communities, the shortage of housing combined with the growing population results in overcrowding and hidden homelessness. The latter refers to people who do not have a fixed residence and must move from house to house, by staying temporarily with friends or family members. Some must endure unhealthy living situations in order to stay off the street.

When the basic need of housing is not met, a person's mental and physical health is susceptible to being affected by lack of sleep, depression, and substance abuse. It is essential to refer clients to resources and/or supports that can help them stabilize their housing situation and have that basic need met.

IN NUNAVIK The Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services, the Kativik Regional Government, the Makivik Corporation and the Kativik Municipal Housing Bureau take measures to reduce homelessness and to improve living conditions in the 14 communities in Nunavik. For more information, please visit the internet sites of these regional organizations.

..... SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Ensure your clients' health and safety by working with them to prioritize their needs.
- Refer clients to appropriate resources and/or service providers.
- Try to meet clients' top employment priorities.
- Focus on providing a reassuring and structured social and professional integration process.
- Ask clients about their support network. Include their networks in the process or, if necessary, help clients strengthen their networks.
- Use humour and games to make clients' situations seem less daunting.
- Listen to, encourage, and reassure clients, especially when they are discouraged.
- Reward change and provide structure for clients.
- Counter feelings of exclusion by urging clients to contribute to their society or community.

10. Violence and Abuse

In Canada, Aboriginals are generally over-represented among the perpetrators and victims of crime when it comes to spousal and non-spousal violence. In northern communities, elevated rates of criminality produce a high number of victims who do not always have access to services or an environment to meet their needs.

Violence and abuse affect many aspects of victims' lives, including their physical and psychological health, support networks, housing situations, and self-confidence. As with the other issues explored in this chapter, a person's well-being should take precedence and referrals to appropriate services remain the priority.

RESOURCE 

Fireproof (a film directed by Kirk Cameron, 2008).

..... SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Wait for clients to bring up the subject themselves (unless you suspect ongoing abuse or violence) or make sure that trust is established before bringing the subject up yourself.
- Try to avoid directly addressing the issue. Find alternative ways to bring up the subject (e.g., a relevant film, like Fireproof).
- Refer clients to appropriate resources and/or services.
- Encourage clients who are victims of crimes to file a police report and accompany them if necessary.
- In collaboration with police officers who specialize in this area, organize violence and abuse prevention workshops.
- Offer workshops on assertiveness, expressing one's needs, and boundary setting.
- Compare the characteristics of a healthy relationship (love, friendship, family) and an abusive relationship (e.g., abuser/abused dynamics).

IMPORTANT Demonstrate sensitivity in individual interventions or group activities that address themes related to violence and abuse that can come into conflict with certain values (e.g., religious, social, community, etc.) or gender stereotypes.

IN NUNAVIK There are women's shelters in the 14 communities of Nunavik, including Tungasuvvik (Kuujuuaq), Tunngavik (Kuujuuarapik), Ajapirvik (Inukjuak) and Initsiaq (Salluit). Other resources are also available in most urban centres and semi-rural areas.

SAMPLE ACTIVITY

HELPING YOUR CLIENT DEAL WITH ANGER

Objectives: To help clients understand what anger is and put systems in place to deal effectively with their anger.

Introduction: Anger comes from two sources: threat/fear and frustration (sometimes both at once). We may be aware of the specific cause or we may be blind to it. Fear or frustration leads to feelings of hurt or helplessness and the energy that builds up is called anger. A first step may be the realization that anger is not something bad or something to be ashamed of. We must acknowledge it in order to deal with it.

Steps:

1. The counsellor identifies three things we generally do with anger:
 - Redirecting it: Taking it out on someone or something else. This does not help the real issue get resolved and therefore does not meet our needs. It tends to alienate others and the anger remains within us and keeps building.
 - Turning it inward: This affects one's self-esteem. This can lead to great pain, addiction to numb the pain, and even physical illness.
 - Turning it outward: This can also alienate people due to the physical or mental cruelty inflicted on others (manipulation, bullying). It does not get to the real issue and can become a cycle of abuse.
2. The group then discusses the following issues : Is anger so bad for us? Do we hold it in or put it out there? What can we do about it?
3. The counsellor leads a discussion on the *Four Steps to Deal with Anger* (a handout on the steps can be distributed if needed).

FOUR STEPS TO DEAL WITH ANGER

STEP ONE

- Allow yourself to feel the anger.
- Admit that you are angry.
- Acknowledge it if others notice.
- Do not deny it, rationalize it or wish it away.
- Anger is a feeling, an emotion – it is real.
- Accept it.

STEP TWO

- Try to identify the true source of your anger.
- Anger is not done “to us”, it is a natural reaction to something.
- Ask yourself what you are reacting to.
- Check that you are not misplacing your anger.

STEP THREE

- Try to understand why you are angry.
- Ask yourself what other feelings are associated with your anger.
 - What are you afraid of?
 - Do you feel threatened?
 - Do you feel embarrassed?
 - Do you feel attacked?
 - Do you feel put down?
 - Do you feel frustrated?
 - Do you feel abandoned?
- These feelings may be for the cause of your anger. They can then be expressed and perhaps eliminated.

STEP FOUR

- Deal with the anger realistically.
- Try to learn something through the process of becoming more aware of your emotions. Some suggestions:
 - Talk it out: It is preferable to talk with the person involved. If that isn't possible or comfortable, talk with a friend who is a good listener or with a counsellor, teacher or co-worker –someone who you respect and trust. Talk about your feelings and your reactions. Use “I” statements.
 - Write it down: Some of us find it easier to write things down, in a letter to someone or to ourselves. This can be helpful if you are confused about your feelings as sometimes looking back and reading it later can help you to gain clarity. Defining your feelings when you write them down helps to make them real. Making your feelings real makes them harder to ignore.
 - Make a plan: How are you going to change the situation so that it doesn't keep happening? What can you do about the feelings that are associated with the anger? Admitting our feelings to ourselves and others is often an important step.

Adapted from ASPECT – *Employability Skills Curriculum*

11. Disabilities

Little information is available about the situation of Inuit with disabilities and even less about their needs with regards to employment. Similarly to other clientele with physical or mental disabilities, for Inuit clients, above all it is important to identify and analyze the existing and ongoing obstacles to finding and maintaining employment, and to find possible solutions. One first step could be to raise awareness about this issue amongst employers and community members.

There can be many employment-related challenges, especially in northern communities where some work environments and community infrastructures are not adapted to the needs of clients with physical disabilities. In urban contexts where the Inuit culture is the minority, employers may view hiring a disabled Inuit person as “double trouble.”

.....
SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Discuss with clients their perspective on the situation and their disabilities (limitations, solutions, and possible alternatives).
- Collaborate with the clients to develop action plans so that they can execute the plans with confidence.
- Raise awareness and mobilize the community and employers through projects carried out with clients or through consciousness-raising workshops on the subject of disabilities.
- Create internship and volunteer opportunities.
- Explain the available resources to clients and employers (e.g., Kativik Regional Government’s Persons with Disabilities Program).
- Facilitate work integration and retention for employees with disabilities by providing support to employers and guiding them with strategies.
- When clients are hired, follow up closely with them in order to help them express their needs (e.g., adapted workstation or tools).

IN NUNAVIK Nearly 20% of children have hearing disabilities, a proportion nearly 10 times higher than for other children in Quebec. This is also the case for 75% of older men. Ear infections are often the cause of hearing loss in children, while noise is often the culprit in adult hearing loss. It is important to speak clearly to your clients, at an appropriate volume, and to monitor body language. Don’t hesitate to verify comprehension by asking an open-ended question (e.g., “What did you get from our conversation?”) instead of a closed question (e.g., “Do you understand?”).

12. Teenage Pregnancy

Every year in Quebec, 2,000 babies are born to teenage mothers (15 to 19 years old). The rate of teenage pregnancies is much higher in Nunavik (12.9%) than the overall rate in Quebec (3.5%).²⁴ According to the feedback collected from the field, increasingly, the age of teenage mothers is dropping to as young as 13 or 14 years old.²⁵

Early maternity—or paternity—can have a significant impact on whether these young people stay in school and find employment. Clients who abandon their studies will have a difficult time finding a job due to their low education levels. Others will face a lack of available spaces at childcare centres (CPE) or nursery schools and will therefore most likely stay home and not be available for employment.

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SUGGESTED STRATEGIES

- Prioritize the client’s needs and objectives and, if necessary, refer them to specialized services and/or resources.
- Set up an action plan to identify ways to eliminate obstacles when developing the client’s professional project (e.g., finding childcare service, identifying support resources, etc.).
- Support young women by raising their awareness on a range of topics and provide them with information (e.g., birth control, healthy relationships, drug and alcohol addiction, empowerment, skills recognition, the benefits of working, finding a balance between the demands of work, family, and studies).
- Offer internships (e.g., job shadowing, career exploration, etc. to help clarify their interest and motivations and to drive home the reality of the job market.)
- Identify financial aid programs that might help young women to commit to a career development program (e.g., babysitting, tuition support, etc.).
- Support couples in their new role as parents (e.g., parenting workshops, in-home support, mentoring, etc.).
- Raise awareness amongst employers about work-family balance.

IMPORTANT We suggest that you encourage your clients to attend meetings even if they cannot find childcare for their children. That said, in order to adequately prepare clients for the reality of the job market and increase their chances of keeping a job, it is wise to prioritize finding a reliable childcare centre or nursery.

Strategies for Working with Inuit Clients

Drawn from consultations conducted with employability and other professionals working with Inuit clients, this chapter suggests intervention strategies to help counsellors adapt their practices in keeping with the unique characteristics of this ancient culture. Since they are far from exhaustive, when applying these strategies, basic support principles (see Box #2) should be respected and adjusted depending on the context and the unique characteristics of each client. If it is not possible to build a team that includes exclusively Inuit counsellors, nothing can replace the presence of at least one Inuk on any team working with this clientele.

BOX #2 – BASIC SUPPORT PRINCIPLES

The support relationship is based on a number of values and basic principles. This guide stresses these primary values: respect, empathy (top priority), and authority (professional priority). In the course of one's practice, and regardless of the clientele, the counsellor must provide an empathetic presence, demonstrate an ability to listen actively (by paying special attention to non-verbal cues and spontaneity, adopt an open-minded attitude and remain self-aware. Based on the principle that clients can change if they want to, the counsellor's primary objective is to bolster the client's autonomy. It is important not to see clients as victims or to exaggerate the client's fragility. The counsellor's goal should be to support clients to participate in the process (group or individual) and to focus on teaching rather than on helping.²⁶

FOR NON-INUIT COUNSELLORS

1. Get to Know the Inuit Culture

The Inuit have been studied and consulted for many years. Having been asked many questions about their culture has led to a certain redundancy. As a result, letting Inuit clients share their know-how in their own time and according to their own traditions is advised.

- If possible, learn about their customs and mores (e.g., through books and films) before arriving in the community. Refer to Chapter 4 - Resources
- Be an independent learner; observe to understand.
- Avoid asking too many questions; express interest but don't be overbearing.
- Don't wait for a formal invitation; participate in community activities.
- Demonstrate openness and patience.

IMPORTANT Respect for cultural codes and open-mindedness are very important. For example, it is important to gently shake hands with anyone you meet for the first time or are meeting again after not seeing them for a long time. It is also important to speak calmly, share food and taste food that is offered.

RESOURCE

[The Inuit Way. A Guide to Inuit Culture](#) (a guide developed by the Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada, 2006).



2. Think about Your Own Personal and Cultural Biases

“Intercultural competence is the ability to learn, analyze the differences of another culture, adapt, evolve, and meet objectives within this difference.”²⁷

Every individual is a cultural being, with his or her own values, beliefs, and practices. Although invisible, these filters are so powerful that they can create different perceptions and interpretations within the same culture. As a counsellor, it is important—particularly in an intercultural context—to be self-aware and conscious of the impact your personality and your culture might have on your practice.

- Explore the client’s culture and cultural characteristics.
- Be aware of your own culture.
- Seek to understand the other’s culture by learning about it and being observant.
- Develop a working alliance that recognizes the client’s cultural characteristics.
- Think about the impact of culture on counselling theory and practice.
- Remember, culture is not static. Every individual embodies a culture that changes over time depending on social economic, environmental, political and geographical influences.

RESOURCE

[Culture-Infused Counseling](#) (a book by Nancy Arthur and Sandra Collins, 2010).



3. Revise your Intervention Expectations and Objectives

Many Inuit see salaried work as a way to meet an immediate need, not as a path toward personal and professional accomplishment or fulfilment. As a result, many clients will prioritize other aspects of their lives (e.g., family, friends, and community) rather than the job search. Similarly, once a salary is secured and material needs met, some Inuit will quickly lose interest in their job.

- Respect the client’s rhythm and take into consideration the other facets and priorities in their life.
- Don’t want more than the client wants; stay focused on the needs expressed by the client.
- Focus more on the attainment of specific goals rather than on how the whole process should play out.
- In collaboration with the client, agree upon what constitutes success (e.g., sending out three job applications, calling to follow up with two employers this week, etc.).
- Appreciate and emphasize each step forward taken by the client.
- Identify strategies to prevent discouragement (e.g., speaking with your colleagues, recasting the work in the context of an overall perspective when one effort fails, etc.).



4. Stay True to Yourself

For the Inuit, authenticity and honesty are very important. Some Qallunaat counsellors might try to downplay their cultural differences in order to better integrate. Embracing your differences, however, can be very useful to the process. For example, as an objective outsider, a non-Inuit counsellor or a counsellor from outside the community may put some clients more at ease.

- Foster honest communication.
- Rather than trying to mask your differences, own your “foreignness” by acknowledging it.
- Treat clients as equals, speak openly about the unique characteristics (good and bad) of your culture.
- Recognize the unique value that your differences bring to the career development process.



DEVELOPING A RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR CLIENT

5. Prioritize Developing and Maintaining a Trusting Relationship with your Client

Inuit society is based on human relationships and sharing. As in any support relationship, the working alliance must be a priority. For the Inuit, trust is earned over time through the demonstration of know-how (both “soft” and “hard” skills). Given the high turnover rate of personnel, however, building trust may take longer in northern communities. Building a personal relationship with the client first, rather than focusing on the creation of a productive professional relationship, may be a useful approach.

- When possible, refer to “us” (e.g., we are going to do this together).
- Put aside more “conventional” approaches (e.g., take the time to talk about lighter topics, offer the client a coffee or water, etc.)
- Don’t try to rush the relationship or the working alliance. The Inuit are known for their patience and their keen sense of observation. Even if they don’t mention them directly, they notice efforts, intentions, and interests.
- Democratize the client-counsellor relationship. Despite your role as an “expert,” demonstrate humility and openness because, after all, the client is the expert when it comes to their own life. Remember: it is all about sharing knowledge.
- Speak about personal and professional experiences with the client (self-revelation), while taking care to respect boundaries.

IMPORTANT Speaking about your own career development experience with your clients, emphasizing the difficulties encountered and the solutions discovered, can be helpful. It can also be useful to reverse roles and invite the client to ask you the same questions. This exchange will allow the client to feel less intimidated by the process and understand the reasons behind the personal questions.

SAMPLE INTERVENTION

CLARIFY THE ROLES OF THE CLIENT AND COUNSELLOR USING METAPHORS

As an example, use the image of a dog team leader (a musher) to describe the client’s role. The musher is responsible for the team’s survival (or well-being and success) and for establishing the rules to follow so that the team gets to the destination the musher chooses. You can also draw parallels between a dog team expedition and the career development process, which both involve certain context-specific stages and rules (planning, perseverance, weather conditions, etc.) that allow for the achievement of a fixed objective. When working with a younger clientele, this metaphor could be replaced by the image of a snowmobile expedition.

6. Clarify your expectations, but stay flexible

From the very first meeting, it is important to clarify your expectations and your client's expectations. Throughout the process, clients need to know the point of activities and interventions, particularly if they are not very familiar with a counselling context.

- Demonstrate transparency and ask that the client do the same.
- Use metaphors, stories, or diagrams to explain the career development process and introduce the respective roles of the client and counsellor.
- Introduce and discuss the specific objectives by asking clients how they plan to achieve them.
- Clearly state your expectations in light of the client's behaviour and actions.
- Ask clients to state what they expect from their counsellor.
- Throughout the process, restate and adjust expectations.

SAMPLE INTERVENTION

EXPLAIN THE CAREER DEVELOPMENT PROCESS TO THE CLIENT

There are several ways to broach the career development process with your clients. Here's an example of an approach that can help the client better understand the counselling process.

Counsellor : "Pauloossie, I am going to explain to you a little bit about what we will be doing together during our next meetings. First, I have to tell you that we have to meet several times depending on your needs. We won't be able to find you a job in one meeting. It will take time. Also, in order to be able to help you find a job, I have to ask you some questions, some of them personal, because I have to get to know you better in order to support you in achieving your goals. Is that all right with you? If some of my questions make you uncomfortable and you don't want to answer, please tell me. If you want to ask me questions, please do. I'll also let you know if I don't want to answer. Are you okay with that? "

While this type of information may seem formal, it allows you to justify the questions you will be asking, to build trust by opening the door for self-expression (and the client's needs), and to let the client know how much time is required for the process of finding employment .

7. Be Available, but Set Boundaries

In northern communities, maintaining the same professional distance with clients as in urban settings can be impossible. Geographic isolation and the small size of Inuit villages increase social contact between counsellors and clients. This increased contact can often blur personal and professional boundaries. For example, clients may turn up at a counsellor's home outside of office hours or ask questions of a professional nature at the grocery store. It's up to counsellors to clarify, from the outset and in an empathetic way, their boundaries and conditions. Failing to do so may lead to overwork, compassion fatigue, and professional burn-out (see Box #3).

BOX #3 – COMPASSION FATIGUE

Compassion fatigue “can affect us if we are repeatedly exposed to intense suffering. It involves profound, painful weariness brought on by the distress of others. We become hypersensitive to their emotional state or to violence in general. We are drained of all energy, unable to give, to help, or to support. “Others” become synonymous with suffering, with responsibilities that outstrip our capacities, leaving us wishing for just one thing: to avoid others or to cease caring about them. We might feel a strong sense of fundamental powerlessness.”²⁸ Different factors can explain the development of compassion fatigue, including emotional overload, the creation of a post-traumatic fear response, the accumulation of risk factors, etc. Nevertheless, note that no counsellor is immune from experiencing such reactions, which are not in any way a sign of weakness or incompetence.

- Define the criteria that make it possible to maintain a balance between the personal and the professional.
- At the beginning of the process, clearly, but kindly, state boundaries.
- Develop a more relaxed relationship with the client and make room for spontaneity.
- Accept that some interventions may occur out of context or in a more informal way (e.g., at the supermarket or the airport) while respecting the boundaries established between you and the client at the beginning of the process.
- If the task becomes too heavy, consult with a colleague or a supervisor. If necessary, do not hesitate to seek psychological assistance from a professional.

SAMPLE INTERVENTION

SETTING BOUNDARIES

Given the proximity of services in their communities, the Inuit are not in the habit of making an appointment to obtain a service. As a result, clients will often turn up on the spur of the moment.

When a client comes to the Centre unexpectedly, it may be useful—time permitting—to seize the opportunity to meet with them. You might say, “I’m happy that you came to see me today, Tommy, but my schedule is already very full. Do you mind if we chat for 5 or 10 minutes now and continue our conversation tomorrow?”

If a client approaches you at the grocery store—and you don’t think it’s the right moment for an intervention—you might say, “Annie, I hear you and I want to give you my full attention in order to help you out. I also really want to be sure that everything you tell me stays between us but there are people around. Could you come and see me at the Centre tomorrow so that we can talk about it privately?”

8. Simplify: Proceed Step by Step by Setting Simple but Attainable Goals

Like many Aboriginal peoples, the Inuit focus on the here and now. For an Inuit client who lives more in the short term, a conventional job search process that lasts for weeks or even months may seem endless. In order to avoid frustration, it’s better to aim for short-term, tangible, and attainable goals by regularly revisiting these targets with the client.

- Break down a situation and proceed gradually.
- Work with clients in the present. Ask clients about their immediate aspirations and the actions they wish to take quickly.
- Create two action plans: the first (very short term) to meet a client’s immediate needs, and the second (medium term) to aim for a longer term career objective for the client.
- When undertaking actions with clients, check in with your client to see how realistic the actions are for them.
- Taking action, rather than the final goal, should be the priority.

9. Respect Your Client's Privacy and Be Sensitive to their Rhythms, Particularly When Addressing Sensitive Subjects

"I let clients talk when they are ready. If you push them to speak, without giving them the time to think about what they want to say, then they will only tell you what they think you want to hear. You have to give them time to open up."

– Counsellor, Montreal

In the Inuit culture, children learn very early on to control their emotions. So as not to put the group's survival in jeopardy, they only express emotion when the time is right. As a result, they express emotion differently. Another result is that since sensitive issues, such as abuse, dependency, and violence, remain fairly taboo in Inuit society, it might be difficult for clients to talk openly about these subjects. Insisting too vigorously that they share secrets can rush clients and undermine trust and the working alliance. As a result, a client may prefer to opt out of the process.

- Avoid insisting on difficult discussions and follow the client's rhythm.
- To address sensitive issues, opt for individual counselling.
- In a group context, broach these subjects very cautiously to make sure that individual clients don't feel put on the spot.
- Use metaphors and storytelling to draw attention to the subject rather than to the clients.
- Show films or present theme-based conferences to inform clients and help them to bring up the subject in individual counselling. Refer to Chapter 4 - Other Documentary Resources.
- Use humour to lighten the seriousness of heavy situations.
- Repeat that all information is and will remain confidential (see Box #4).

IMPORTANT Most Inuit have a great sense of humour. While humour might be inappropriate in some situations, finishing interventions on a humorous note by making the client laugh—when the situation allows—can also really advance the working alliance.

BOX #4 – CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION IN CASES OF THREATS TO SAFETY

According to the Code of Ethics of the members of the Ordre des conseillers et conseillères d'orientation du Québec (OCCOQ), which is identical to the code of ethics that governs psychologists, a counsellor can "communicate information protected by professional secrecy to prevent an act of violence, including a suicide, where they have reasonable cause to believe that there is imminent danger of death or serious bodily harm to a person or an identifiable group of persons."²⁹ Otherwise, a counsellor can only reveal information protected by professional secrecy if legally required or, after having informed their client of the potential consequences and obtaining their authorization.

SAMPLE ACTIVITY

ACTION PLANS CAN TAKE MANY FORMS

The action plan can take many forms. Some counsellors prefer to make two action plans: the first is very short-term (informed by the client's immediate needs) and the second has a middle-term career objective (that includes going back to school, for example). Other counsellors create a professional action plan and a second, more personal plan (e.g., quit smoking, learn to express emotions) for each client. It's up to you to decide which approach will work best for your clients!

1. WEEKLY ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

My Weekly Objectives Week of:		
My job search objectives	Reached	Not reached
1. _____ _____		
2. _____ _____		
3. _____ _____		
Have I reached my goal? If not, what can I do to reach it? _____ _____ _____		
Client's signature: _____		
Counsellor's signature: _____		

2. CONVENTIONAL ACTION PLAN TEMPLATE

My Action Plan	
Client's name: _____	
My short-term goal: _____	
My mid-term or long-term goal: _____	
My actions	Timeline
1. _____	_____
2. _____	_____
3. _____	_____
4. _____	_____
5. _____	_____
My resources	

The challenges I may have to face	

The success of my action plan will look like this	

Client's signature: _____	
Counsellor's signature: _____	
Date: _____	

CAREER: AN EVOLVING CONCEPT

10. Explain the Steps and Concepts of the Career Development Process

"The first contact is very important. Some clients expect immediate results. Explain the process fully. Also, point out that instant results are very unlikely."

– Counsellor, Inukjuak

For the Inuit, getting a job is often a way to meet their families' needs, not a path to individual self-fulfilment. Because some Inuit people may have limited experience when it comes to employment counselling, they are often surprised by steps involving introspection and reflection. Inuit people may view these steps as useless, but also intimidating. Employment assistance services are seen more as placement agencies that don't require a lot of personal engagement.

- To clarify the career development process, help clients visualize it in its entirety (e.g., by using a poster that illustrates all the steps of the career development process).
- In order to clarify the steps and concepts, create a job search guide with clients.
- Give the client an estimate of how much time or how many meetings are required, emphasizing that the length of the process depends on the client's needs and their motivation.
- Explore the advantages of setting long-term objectives by presenting the benefits associated with them (e.g., opportunities for advancement, better salary, increased stability for the family, for children).

BOX #5 – SOME TECHNICAL JOB SEARCH TIPS

- Downplay the formality of interviews by conducting simulations that use exaggeration and humour.
- Conduct mock interviews, either individually or in a group setting.
- To practice writing resumes and cover letters, use templates and ask clients to fill in the blanks.
- As an exercise, ask clients to draft a resume for a friend/child/parent.
- Go with clients to drop off resumes to businesses in person.
- Survey businesses in the region to find about their recruitment needs (e.g., is a letter stating an applicant's motivation necessary for this business?).
- Demonstrate how the stress experienced by clients is normal and explain that looking for a job is stressful for everyone (e.g., due to fear of failure, rejection, disappointing others). Help your client to pinpoint their stressors, the consequences of their stress and different ways to manage their stress.

11. Suggest a Simple, Clear and Flexible Structure

Although a clear framework has its advantages, it is essential to relax the overtly rigid structures of the formal process without scaling down objectives or lowering expectations. Historically, the unpredictability of nature shaped the Inuit's day-to-day life. Comfortable with the unexpected, the Inuit prefer simplicity, informality, and efficiency as opposed to the complexity that the career development process often involves. The idea is to relax the intervention's form, not the content.

- Explain the specific objectives of each activity.
- Establish a routine in the intervention process. For example:
 - Schedules (i.e., hold meetings the same day each week, and schedule additional meetings as needed).
 - Form (e.g., follow the same steps every time).
 - Content (e.g., when asking questions during interventions use the same terms (concepts previously introduced and understood) even if doing so seems redundant).
- Insist on punctuality and don't tolerate repeated or unexplained absences.
- Without being authoritarian, prepare clients for the consequences of not respecting established criteria.

12. Consider the Impacts of the Employability Process on all Aspects of your Client's Life

In Inuit culture, a person's spiritual, physical, emotional, and intellectual well-being are intimately linked. As a result, the career development process must also respect this holistic philosophy. Clients must be helped to understand the impact of their choices on all aspects of their lives.

- Identify what areas of the client's life matter most to them.
- Explore the familial and social dynamics that affect the client (e.g., possible pressures, availability, motivation, or children).
- When faced with a decision, encourage the client to consult loved ones and friends.
- Explore the impact of choices and decisions on the client's various roles (e.g., as a parent, spouse, or child) and the various areas of your client's life.

13. Avoid Making the Client the Centre of Attention

Modesty is an important value in the Inuit culture. As a result, talking about oneself or being the centre of attention, perceived as a form of boastfulness, can make clients uncomfortable. Although the career development process is largely based on self-awareness activities, it is important to lighten the individualist nature of the job search process.

- Refocus the client’s career choices on the potential contribution those choices will make to their family or community.
- Use familiar metaphors to justify employment preparation (e.g., liken it to preparing for a hunting expedition in order to meet their families’ needs).
- Encourage the client’s resources and support networks (e.g., family and community members, elders) to participate by inviting them to get involved in the client’s process (e.g., discussion with a friend or family member that the client admires, community activity, etc.)
- Use simulations and role-playing to enable clients to talk about themselves and their problems without feeling as if they are the centre of attention.

RESOURCE

Techniques d’impact en psychothérapie, en relation d’aide et en santé mentale (a book by Danie Beaulieu, 2010).



14. To Avoid Discouragement, Regularly Remind Clients of their Initial Motivations

Most Inuit are results-focused. They like to know and understand the ramifications of their actions. The career development process, however, can be lengthy, especially when the client is far from the labour market. The initial motivation may quickly be forgotten, so the client may easily lose sight of their goal. This perspective based on immediate needs can also affect the client’s ability to keep a job.

- Draw on the client’s essential motivations.
- Ask clients to draw, write, or make a collage about their personal motivations and display them in the classroom in order to refer to them frequently.
- Remind clients how the process will affect the various aspects of their lives (e.g., familial, financial, social, and community aspects).
- Invite a model of “true grit” (e.g., an elder, a leader) to meet with the client and tell them their story.
- Help clients to develop a more long-term vision of their needs (see Strategy #48).

SAMPLE INTERVENTION

HOW CAN YOU BOOST CLIENT MOTIVATION? GO TO THE SOURCE!

Many professionals have stated that clients have a hard time setting an objective because they don't see the point. Very often, for clients, the primary motivation is money. To motivate them, and in order to get them to think about the advantages of setting goals and, potentially, having a career objective, we suggest exploring the real sources of their motivation. Here is a sample intervention:

Counsellor: Why do you want a job?

Client: Because I want money.

Counsellor: What will you do with this money?

Client: I want to buy a snowmobile

Counsellor: What will you do with this snowmobile?

Client: I want to go hunting on the tundra and bring back country food for my family.

Counsellor: So, the reason you're buying a snowmobile is so that you can bring back traditional food for your family. The job you are looking for will make it possible for you to buy the snowmobile. There's your motivation.

This type of intervention also makes it possible to clarify the client's interests and increase their self-awareness by giving them the chance to verbalize what they hope to achieve or gain.

15. To Stimulate Reflection about Career Choices, Support Your Clients as they Explore Different Possibilities

“You have to think outside the box and encourage the client to explore all the possibilities.”

– Counsellor, Inukjuak

In northern communities, non-indigenous workers fill nearly half of the regular, full-time jobs. Since the Inuit learn through observation, it can be more difficult for them to identify with a trade or profession with which they are unfamiliar or that they automatically associate with Qallunaat (i.e., if they have never seen an Inuit hold a certain job). Despite their lack of experience with the “conventional” labour market, it is important to encourage clients so that they can picture themselves working at a particular job.

- Develop internship opportunities with Inuit and Qallunaat.
- Organize themed professional discovery days (e.g., student-for-a-day, employee-for-a-day).
- Suggest various activities that explore the labour market and trades/professions (e.g., identify all the jobs depicted in a movie, describe the client’s dream job or a person the client admires as a professional, or play a job-related memory game).
- Invite Inuit and Qallunaat to come and talk about how they chose their occupations.
- Underscore the value of non-traditional career paths.
- Take context into account and be aware of the limits imposed on clients by their environment.

16. Explain the Realities of the Labour Market and Differences between the North and the South

Since most clients lack knowledge about and experience of the labour market, they often have unrealistic expectations. One example would be the salaries offered in the South, which vary significantly from those offered in northern communities, where the cost of living is higher. Also, clients who wind up in an urban setting contend with a much more rigid and, above all, culturally different labour market. Solid preparation is essential.

- Describe the local, regional, and provincial labour markets (e.g., the types of work available, required vs. desirable qualifications, and work schedules)
- Provide basic information about how to get a new job (e.g., banking details, employers’ and co-workers’ expectations, dress code).
- Draw up a list of information that an employer might require.
- Inform clients about work standards.

A COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH

17. Let the Community Get to Know You

If you are a newcomer, demonstrating your concern for the well-being of the community and its residents is important. Take advantage of community occasions and events to let people get to know you as an individual, create ties and work to better understand the culture.

- Show interest and get involved in the community.
- As an individual and/or professional, attend or participate in community activities (e.g., festivals, athletic events, competitions, games, etc.).
- Introduce yourself to important members of the community (e.g., the mayor, elders, elected officials, heads of organizations, etc.).
- Keep introductions simple: a warm handshake and a brief explanation clarifying your role.

18. Explain the Services you Provide and Invite the Community to Come Visit You at Work

It is essential for the Centre (and the services it offers) to be recognized as a resource for the whole community and, ideally, as a place for sharing and exchanging. An organization that fails to become an integral part of the community will be considered foreign and; as a result, jeopardize its reputation and the degree to which people rely on it.

- Explain the Centre's mission, the services it offers and its projects by emphasizing the positive impacts for the community.
- Create an inviting and supportive environment for all the members of the community (e.g., set up chairs at the entrance or in the waiting room, provide coffee and water).
- Invite community members to come and visit the Centre (e.g., during open-houses). Take advantage of such opportunities to showcase the clients' accomplishments (e.g., success stories, projects underway, client endorsements).
- Encourage courtesy calls or informal visits (e.g., invite members of the community to come by for coffee during the break).
- Consult community members about their vision for the Centre and the employment and skills development needs they have identified
- Introduce Centre employees to important members of the community.
- On a regular basis, publish news from the Centre in the media (e.g., the Nunatsiaq News, social media, local radio).

19. Encourage Clients to Get Involved in the Community

If a sense of belonging and making a contribution are essential to one's well-being, they are even more important to Inuit society because of its collectivist values. To increase the sense of group belonging, self-confidence, and pride while also developing skills through experience and increased visibility, it is beneficial for the job seeker to participate in community activities.

- Explain the advantages of community involvement for both clients and the community.
- Ask the community what volunteer services it needs.
- Organize events and activities (volunteer) by involving clients in every stage of development and execution (e.g., organize a litter clean-up in the village or neighbourhood, put on a show, help elders carry their groceries, etc.).
- Encourage the community to recruit and involve clients in the roll-out of various community activities.

20. Encourage Elders to Participate

Elders, by contributing to Inuit identity building, are a source of knowledge, wisdom, and experience. The rise of individualism, particularly among the young, has disrupted intergenerational relations. To play a role in re-establishing some measure of balance, including the elders throughout the process is essential.

- Ask clients or other community members if they know elders who would be interested in participating in Centre activities.
- Invite elders to act as guides during outings in the territory.
- Invite them to the Centre to speak to the group about their history or the traditional way of life or to simply share their knowledge about certain subjects.
- If possible, offer them an honorarium or gift on the group's behalf to thank them for their participation.
- Ask clients about their perception of the elders and their role in the community and the clients' personal lives.

RESOURCE

[Guidelines for Working with Inuit Elders](#) (a guide developed by Pelagie Owljoot, 2008).



IMPORTANT Fully preparing clients for the arrival of an invited guest by explaining the meeting's objectives and emphasizing their relevance to career development is essential. Preparing a list of questions or subjects that clients want to discuss with the invited guest can also be helpful. It is also recommended to thoroughly prepare invited guests before they visit by explaining the activity's objectives and desired outcomes (e.g., telling their life story, explaining their professional path or their work tasks and responsibilities).

21. Involve the Community's Resources in Centre Activities

Traditional know-how and values can be passed on through observing and imitating models. Involving people familiar to clients—for example, parents, friends, elders, respected members of the community, or workers from outside the community—and with whom they might identify, can boost clients' confidence.

- Bring clients to meet role-models in their professional environment so that they can observe them at work.
- Invite inspiring people from diverse fields to come share their life paths through storytelling (e.g., a pilot, political leader, engineer, cultural teacher, or architect from the village or just visiting).
- Encourage the group's more experienced clients (positive leaders) to participate during group activities and discussions.

A QUESTION OF SELF-CONFIDENCE AND EMPOWERMENT

22. Encourage your Client's Individuality

People's individuality encompasses all the characteristics that make them unique. In a collectivist society that prioritizes the interests of the community, asserting individual choices and interests or talking about oneself is often frowned upon. Colonization, particularly the residential school system, has also had an impact on the Inuit's ability to assert their collective and individual identities. As a result, many members of the Inuit community don't feel comfortable talking about their individual traits, interests, abilities, aspirations, and potential. It is therefore important to encourage clients to recognize and appreciate their individuality, which forms the basis of their career development process.

- Help the client become aware of who they really are by encouraging exploration without imposing limits.
- Suggest self-awareness activities (e.g., values, interests, etc.) by explaining how they are helpful to the job search process (e.g., self-knowledge in the interview context).
- Stimulate self-affirmation by asking clients to express themselves about various issues (e.g., social, cultural, or sports-related).
- Encourage clients to get involved and express their opinion during activities.
- Foster cultural expression by suggesting creative projects.
- Whatever the project, give clients time to personalize it.
- Reinforce interests and abilities through concrete experiences (volunteer opportunities, work placement opportunities).

SAMPLE ACTIVITY

TIME LINE OR CIRCLE OF LIFE ACTIVITY

Objectives: Help clients to

- Gain a better understanding of their personality traits, strengths, needs and motivations.
- Gain awareness of their past experiences and the lessons learned.
- Identify obstacles encountered and find solutions (e.g., networks, resources, strengths).

Characteristics: A very concrete, personal, and visual activity. Depending on the client's creativity, you may encourage them to include photos, souvenirs, and descriptors.

Steps:

1. Ask clients to make a drawing that represents their life up to the present (a line, a circle, a spiral). Ask clients to start with their birth and to make note of positive events. Let clients know that they also have the option to include negative events as well. Tell the clients that they must share their drawing with the group but that they won't have to explain all of their experiences.
2. Ask clients to put keywords next to each experience.
3. Invite clients to share their time lines with the whole group or, if it is an individual activity, with the counsellor.
4. After presenting their time lines to the group, give clients more time to improve upon it (e.g., by adding more keywords or events).
5. Display timelines in the classroom (if the information is not too personal).
6. Now and then, suggest that clients add more material to their time lines.

Alternate approaches: Create a collage or a professional time line.

Caution: Some personal elements may stir up emotions not only for clients but also for the group. Before doing this activity, it is important to verify how comfortable clients are with the idea of sharing certain personal information with the group and to establish parameters.

Sample questions to ask clients:

(during the group presentation or in an individual meeting)

- What did you learn from this experience?
- What did you like best about this experience? (if positive)
- How did you feel after this experience?
- When this particular experience happened, did people in your life help you?
- What part of this experience would you like to experience again? What would you do differently the next time?
- What elements of this situation could you control?
- What behaviour in this situation might prove useful in a professional situation?

23. Aim for Client Autonomy

*"In the end, it's the client who decides. But reminding him
'it's your decision' must become a reflex."*

– Counsellor, Inukjuak

Autonomy and nurturing individual accountability play a central and necessary role in the collective survival of the Inuit. Involvement, empowerment and accountability not only serve to motivate, but also to help clients gain confidence in themselves and their abilities.

- Help clients gain awareness of their power to make decisions and the consequences of their actions through the use of basic empowerment principles (see Box #6).
- Explore the client's decision-making abilities by asking how they made decisions when they were in similar situations in the past.
- Reassure clients about their ability to make the right choices for themselves (and their families).
- When faced with a first visit (e.g. to a school, to see another professional, to a new company), ask clients if they want to be accompanied.
- Throughout the career development process, make clients accountable for completing tasks and managing their time.
- As much as possible, ask clients to fill out forms themselves by preparing the forms then revising them together.
- Without patronizing them, reassure clients (e.g., don't constantly look over their shoulders).

BOX #6 – BASIC EMPOWERMENT PRINCIPLES

The literature on the empowerment of individuals and communities is very varied. Among the most common principles of empowerment, it is important to note:

- Building on the strengths and resources of each individual;
- Supporting active and ongoing contribution of all concerned, by developing modes of communication and consultation consistent with their reality and experiences;
- Establishing equal relationships based on shared power and expertise;
- Considering the individual and collective dimensions of the problems;
- Negotiating the definition of problems or targets and recognizing the diversity of possible solutions;
- Establishing concrete and meaningful actions from the perspective of those concerned, at all levels (individual, group, organizational, etc.);
- Taking the time needed!

SAMPLE INTERVENTION

REASSURE AND ENCOURAGE THE CLIENT WITHOUT TREATING THEM LIKE A CHILD

It is important to encourage clients to take action, by preparing them to face different scenarios and potential obstacles, while taking care not to act in their place. Even if the client lacks motivation, continue to encourage them, one action at a time. Here is a sample intervention.

Counsellor: So, Tommy, did you bring your resume to the Co-op yesterday afternoon?

Client: No...

Counsellor: Okay, so what happened?

Client (looking down): I didn't have the time.

Counsellor: I understand. You seem nervous to me; would you like to talk about it?

Client (shrugs): Asuu. ("I don't know" in Inuktitut.)

Counsellor: Does bringing your resume make you nervous?

Client: Atsuuk. ("Maybe" in Inuktitut.)

Counsellor: You know, being nervous is normal. I was really nervous too the first time I brought my resume to someone. You worked so hard on your resume. It's really good. I'm sure the manager at the Co-op will be impressed. What would give you the courage to bring it to him?

Client (after a long silence): Asuu ("I don't know"). Maybe going alone makes me nervous.

Counsellor: I understand. Don't forget that we have gone through the scenario a few times now and you did really well. Who would you like to go with you?

Client: I think I'll ask my cousin. He has a 4-wheel drive.

Counsellor: Super, when will you go?

Client: Tomorrow.

Counsellor: Perfect, Tommy! I'm really happy. I'm sure it'll go really well. If you want, come and see me after and tell me how it went.

Client: Ok, taima? ("We're done?" in Inuktitut).

Counsellor (in a joking voice): Taima ("We're done" in Inuktituk). See you tomorrow, eh?

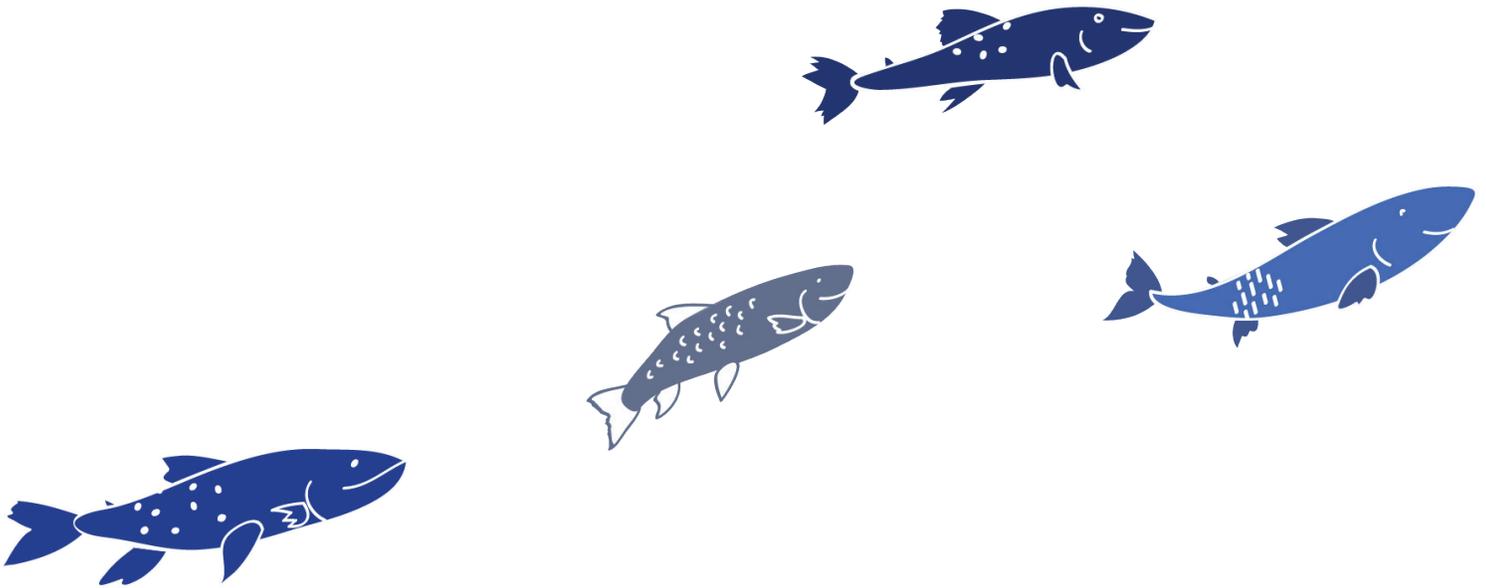
What might seem like a lack of motivation on the client's part might really be something else, for example, shyness or insecurity. This is why it is important to skillfully guide the client to encourage them to take action in their own way and in their own time. This sample intervention gives the client an opportunity to make their own decisions.

24. Help Your Client Regain Self-Confidence

Over the years, several factors have contributed to negatively impacting many Inuit's self-confidence, including colonization, residential schools, difficult living conditions, family environment, and the high number of Qallunaat in the Nunavik labour market. As a result, some insecure clients hesitate or even refuse to apply for a job that requires a secondary school diploma or several years' experience. The fears and doubts clients feel can lead to discouragement or inertia. So, it's important to take the time required to help them build or regain their self-confidence.

- To strengthen self-esteem and confidence, focus on the achievement of small goals and reward each success.
- Suggest a variety of activities that foster the client's holistic development and assure them that these activities will lead to successful experiences.
- Explore successes and moments of pride experienced by the client (professional or not) and point out the lessons learned and the problem-solving techniques the client has developed.
- Reward and validate clients' positive behaviour (e.g., arriving on time to meetings).
- Emphasize the importance of the client's efforts within the community, by offering goods and services for example (e.g., selling homemade cookies to raise money for a cultural outing).





TAKE YOUR TIME

25. Be Patient and Don't Let Setbacks Upset You

In general, the Inuit are very patient. Historically they demonstrate great modesty and when faced with elements beyond their control, they are willing to wait to get what they want. Their patience influences their relationship with time, which is related to their survival instinct and substantial resilience. The slower, cyclical rhythm of the Inuit culture may differ from the usually structured and linear intervention context.

- Respect the community dynamics and local events (e.g., during funerals or the hunting season).
- Use the environment to your advantage (e.g., when the Centre is closed due to a storm, take advantage of the time to develop new workshops).
- Follow up with clients on a regular basis and encourage them when their commitment wavers.
- Avoid pressuring clients.

26. Accept a Non-Linear Career Development Process

In the Inuit culture, the cyclical nature of time has an impact on their perceptions of work and success. For example, when dealing with personal or family problems, the client may not show up for a few days. In addition, since work is seen as a way to meet immediate needs, the link between personality (interests and values, for example) and employment possibilities may not be obvious. In this sense, a highly introspective career development process focused on the individual's needs can seem like a waste of time since the need is external (a job).

- Accept detours. Don't be offended or take it personally if a client seems disinterested or if the process is frequently interrupted.
- When it comes to form, be flexible without lowering expectations previously established with the client.
- If a client abandons the process, don't interpret it as a failure.
- Have a conversation with the client about the potential for losing motivation or interest in the process and develop an action plan for such an eventuality.

IMPORTANT If you accidentally bump into a client who no longer visits the Centre, avoid directly taking them to task. If you deem it relevant to the client's process, bring it up in a positive way by saying, for example, that the group dynamic is just not the same without them. If you happen to meet the client individually, remind them that you believe in them and that you would be happy to resume the process whenever they're ready.

27. Make Room for Spontaneity

Since the Inuit put their families and relationships first, a change in plans due to a chance meeting or unforeseen circumstances is not unusual. Although they appreciate structure, they prefer to adapt to environmental conditions, whether contextual or social or, literally, a change in the weather. For example, if it's a choice between getting to work on time and taking the time to speak with a friend encountered on the way to work, an Inuk will prefer the latter. The job search process and the Centre's activities may be affected because, frequently, the here and now trumps future priorities. It is important to make room for detours and for your clients' changing needs, and to discuss these matters openly with them.

- Be flexible and adapt to the current needs of the client, the group, or community.
- Explain the reasons for rules (e.g., why the Centre has rules or why punctuality is important)
- Take time to explain the impact of very spontaneous behaviours on the whole group, on the process, and on keeping a job.
- Don't insist that your client make an appointment. Instead, suggest a time window (e.g., between 1:00 and 4:00 pm tomorrow afternoon).
- Describe the consequences (positive and negative) of last minute changes.

IMPORTANT It is seen as very poor form to directly reprimand an Inuk, particularly in public. Traditionally, to drive home a point, elders used a legend or story drawn from real life. Rather than reprimanding the client for being late, during an individual counselling session, try to make him understand the consequences of his behaviour and explore other solutions by emphasizing their benefits for both them and their family.

28. Make Breaks and Rest Periods Part of your Plan

In general, the rigidity of an artificial schedule makes the Inuit uncomfortable. Historically, and contrary to the Qallunaat practice of packing schedules in order to always accomplish more, the Inuit work hard in order to be able to then enjoy some downtime and recreation.

- When developing the schedule, ask the group for input.
- Let clients know when breaks are scheduled during the day while also leaving some flexibility for unforeseen needs (e.g., a drop in energy, lost focus, boredom).
- Respect the agreed-upon breaks or, if a change is necessary, discuss it with the group.
- Whether in an individual or a group context, invite clients to speak up if they need a break.
- During a group or individual counselling session, allow clients to move around and change position (e.g., to sit on the ground, get up, walk around while discussing things, stand up).
- Be aware of the room temperature and, if necessary, check with clients to see whether they are comfortable.

ENDLESS LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES

29. Involve Clients in the Development of Group Activities

Traditional learning methods encourage fostering individual accountability, particularly with regard to educational choices. Clients that participate in the choice of topics addressed and the development of related activities will be more inclined to be involved in their career development and develop new skills, including self-assertion, and feel validated by this direct involvement.

- Ask clients for input regarding which subjects to be addressed and activities to undertake.
- As often as possible, make room for their know-how and experiences.
- Give them the chance to participate in directing activities or to assume a role (e.g., as time-keeper or moderator).
- Ask them for suggestions on how to improve activities.

30. Stimulate Learning by Combining Teaching Approaches

There are substantial differences between Inuit and Western teaching approaches. For the Inuit, learning happens in a holistic way, through daily activities over a lifetime, and involves the whole community (parents, elders, or any other community member with know-how to pass on). Since the Inuit are not very familiar with a more structured teaching framework, using multidimensional activities (cognitive, emotional, or spiritual) to prompt learning is a good strategy.

- Be creative as to how activities and are conducted (non-conformity).
- Create activities that incorporate visual, audio, and/or tactile elements.
- Develop different ways to conduct the same workshop or introduce a new theme (see Box #7).
- Stay on top of your clients' needs by observing non-verbal cues and adapt the learning approach accordingly.

BOX #7 – SOME SUGGESTED LEARNING APPROACHES

Building blocks
Debates
Drawing
Film or video
Internet search
Mime
Outdoor activities
Paint-by-number
Paper maché
Playdough or clay
Poster
PowerPoint presentation
Puzzles
Rally or treasure hunt
Riddles or charades
Role-playing
Scenarios
Scrapbooking
Skits
Song or music
Sports
Testimonials

SAMPLE ACTIVITY

HOW CAN LEARNING APPROACHES BE COMBINED?

Building in a variety of tasks within the same activity can be helpful. Here is a sample lesson structure for a group activity:

1. To introduce a topic, use an audio or video clip (e.g., from YouTube).
2. Ask clients to discuss the topic in group by using questions prepared ahead of time and directing the discussion.
3. Divide the group into small teams (2–3 people) and invite them to share their observations with the rest of the group through creative projects (e.g., using a poster, PowerPoint presentation, interpreting a 45-second advertising segment, performing a skit, song or poem).
4. Discuss the lessons learned with the whole group.
5. Invite clients to write about what they retained from the activity in their journal (in any form they choose).

31. Opt for Appealing and Fun Activities

Games and stories are viewed as ways to spur teaching, and play a big role in Inuit culture. Competitions or physical games can help clients refocus or burn off excess energy. Simply fun and amusing games can restore clients' ability to pay attention and concentrate. Recounting legends and telling stories, an approach used by elders to educate the young or to broach delicate subjects, prompt clients to reflect, motivates them, and generates involvement.

- Suggest role plays, mime, riddles, treasure hunts, competitions of all kinds, and physical activities.
- Turn the dulllest activities into little competitive games (e.g., using the Internet, the first to find the definition of a word wins the title of "Group Researcher" for the day).
- Use a narrative approach (storytelling), like myths, legends or funny stories, to spark discussion and convey important information.

IMPORTANT Since the Inuit love competition, boost motivation and make activities more fun by adding an element of time. For example, set a time limit for finding the best definition for a term (e.g., "career") and use a timer to mark the countdown.

32. Suggest Problem-Solving Exercises and Activities

Problem solving is highly valued in the Inuit culture. In a traditional society based on subsistence activities, the unexpected happens and can threaten group survival, which makes quickly finding effective solutions essential. The Inuit are very resourceful and are endowed with excellent visual memory, which helps them to have strong problem-solving skills. This constitutes a real advantage in work settings, and is a transferable skill which deserves to be encouraged in the employability process.

- Help clients identify and analyze daily chores and traditional activities that require problem-solving skills (e.g., parenting, budgeting, sewing, hunting, or camping).
- Use case studies to encourage reflection and learning; stimulate involvement by asking the client or the group to suggest possible solutions.
- In small groups, ask clients to discuss how best to solve various problems.
- Suggest problem scenarios to allow clients to play a variety of roles.

SAMPLE ACTIVITY

PROBLEM-SOLVING THROUGH ROLE-PLAYING

Using case studies that mirror the realities that clients experience can be an educational and stimulating approach. Here's an example of a problem that could be discussed in a large group or in small group of 2–3 clients.

ROLE-PLAY SCENARIO: Markossie is 19 years old. He quit school to help his girlfriend raise their little girl who is now two years old. Markossie likes to party with his friends and he sometimes has depressive thoughts. He would like to stop drinking. He has had several jobs in the past, but he was let go due to absenteeism. Markossie is looking for a job and has applied several places, but hasn't heard anything back.

Some questions to ask clients:

- Why do you think that Markossie can't find a job?
- What could help Markossie find a job?
- What would you do if you were Markossie?

33. Use Visual Aids during All Activities

Since traditional learning methods are based on observation, the Inuit appreciate visual cues that allow them to fully understand the structure of suggested activities, particularly those conducted in a second language.

- Break down abstract concepts by using images and definitions.
- Use visual aids (e.g., notes written on paper, vocabulary lists, graphics, cue cards depicting skills, values, and interests).
- Use a range of stimulating multimedia elements (e.g., YouTube, Google Play, TED Talks, videos from Veritasium's YouTube channel, themed films, documentaries, etc.).

IMPORTANT By taking notes during individual counselling sessions, a counsellor can summarize the process and identify more concretely the progress that has been made since the beginning of the process. These notes can form the basis of a summary or a visual action plan.

34. Simplify the Concepts Presented in Order to Facilitate Understanding

Unlike French or English, Inuktitut does not have a lot of abstract terms. Since terms related to career development refer to concepts that are new to most Inuit or are poorly understood, equivalents in Inuktitut do not yet exist. More centred on the practical, Inuit clients will demonstrate little interest in theory and abstract concepts. As a result, it's important to always provide a thorough explanation of these concepts and relate them to practice.

- Define all the basic concepts presented (e.g., respect, value, interest, career, interview, action plan, motivation, determination, etc.).
- Break down abstract concepts into several themes and take the time to clarify them with clients (e.g., What is a waiting list? For the client, what does it mean to be put on a waiting list for a service? What should they do while waiting?).
- Even if it seems simple, don't assume that any concept is familiar or understood. Regularly check in with clients and make sure that clients understand.
- Limit the number of concepts presented and repeat as often as possible the same concepts.
- Encourage clients to restate a concept in their own words in English or, if they prefer, in Inuktitut.
- Clarify and simplify the structure of all oral and written communication.
- For concepts that are less well understood, encourage clients to use dictionaries or the Internet.
- For more complex (and foreign) terms, suggest a translation in Inuktitut.
- Engage in activities that require clients to explain unknown concepts in their own words (make sure that they are prepared and have the tools to carry out this task successfully).

35. Help Your Client Recognize and Value Experiences and Skills Acquired Outside the Formal Education System

Given that most clients have a low level of formal education, counsellors should encourage clients to recognize and value their informal experiences by incorporating the technique of prior learning recognition. If counsellors periodically point out the lessons learned at the Centre, clients will become more readily aware of the array of knowledge and skills they have acquired through the process. Using prior learning recognition will bolster clients' confidence and increase their ownership of the career development process, which in turn will reinforce the lessons learned.

- Encourage clients to keep a journal.
- At the end of each activity, have a group discussion to talk about the concepts that were introduced.
- Ask clients to write down the lessons learned, questions, and other information in their journal after each activity or meeting, or at the end of the day.
- Help clients create a portfolio in order to identify and give concrete expression to the skills they have acquired in all areas of their lives (e.g., the PLAR and portfolio development program).
- To reinforce the skills presented, encourage clients to use personal documentation (e.g., a photo of the client engaged in a traditional activity, a piece of writing, an object they created).
- By connecting them to the jobs available in their environment, link the clients' skills and the lessons they've learned to those valued in the labour market.

IMPORTANT Inviting clients to choose the format of their journals may make it more meaningful for them.

RESOURCE

[Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition \(PLAR\) and Portfolio Development](#) (a program developed by the Nunavut Arctic College, 2010).



SAMPLE ACTIVITY

DISCOVERING YOUR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Objective: Have clients identify their hidden transferable skills.

Introduction: What are transferable skills? They are skills that can be used in a variety of jobs. We can acquire transferable skills through paid employment, volunteer work, education, hobbies, community activities and/or life experience.

Steps:

1. With a group of clients, invite each person to make a list of all the activities they like to do, either at work, at home or during their free time.
2. In small groups, ask clients to pick one activity from their list and describe all the tasks they complete during this activity, using action words.
3. Identify the skills required to complete each of those tasks, using a skills inventory. Record the information in a table.

EXAMPLE: COOKING

TASKS	SKILLS
Go grocery shopping	Make a budget, manage money
Follow a recipe	Follow instructions Plan and organize work Pay attention to detail
Measure and mix ingredients	Calculate

4. Have the group share their tables and complete the tables as a group if needed.
5. Ask clients to pick their top five skills and write down a good example of when they used that particular skill (e.g., public speaking – I introduced the mayor at the last community meeting, it was a two-minute speech about his background in front of 100 people).

SKILLS INVENTORY: AN OVERVIEW

Working as part of a team	Making calculations	Motivating others
Public speaking	Writing clearly, concisely	Listening
Problem solving	Driving or operating vehicles	Drawing or creating art
Organizing and planning	Repairing things	Using a computer
Managing time	Operating tools or machinery	Being creative
Practicing safe work	Making decisions	Conducting research
Reading different kinds of texts	Managing conflicts	Managing a budget

IMPORTANT If activities take place in a non-Inuit setting, encourage clients to talk about their roots and their culture, and to share differences and similarities. Give clients the time and space they need to properly prepare their presentation and to be able to discuss it with their families or communities.

37. Try to Break Down Mutual Prejudices

Although Inuit and mainstream Quebec society co-exist on the same territory, a mutual lack of understanding and flawed perceptions persist and nurture many unfounded prejudices on the part of both groups. As a result, it is important, on the one hand, to take time to demystify the way clients see non-Inuit culture and, on the other, to break down the stereotypes about the Inuit held by the Qallunaat.

- Gain an awareness of your own personal prejudices and reactions about certain cultural traits.
- Help clients identify their prejudices.
- Explain the impact of prejudice on behaviour (e.g., using videos) and link them to the work environment.
- Discuss the similarities between the two cultures.
- Discuss the fears experienced when confronted with another culture.
- Show that all human beings, regardless of culture, share certain needs, for example, for love, acceptance, and respect.

IMPORTANT In urban settings, it can be useful to create a tool, similar to *The Inuit Way* (see Chapter 4), that demystifies mainstream culture in Quebec. Some existing guides, like the guide for new immigrants, can be adapted to the needs of this clientele and to those working in the field.

RESOURCE

[Qallunaat! Why White People Are Funny](#) (a film directed by Mark Sandiford, 2006).



38. Help Your Clients Find their Place in a Multicultural Context by Fostering Intercultural Exchanges

The Inuit's way of life is undergoing many transitions. Some examples of these transitions include the shift from a nomadic to a more sedentary culture and the emergence of a market economy and consumer goods. Finding a balance between preserving the traditional culture and adapting to a western way of life (seen as inevitable by many) requires time and effort. As a result, it is important to be aware of the changes underway and try to help clients find their place within these two societies.

- Validate the Inuit culture while pointing out the strengths and weaknesses of Western culture (e.g., table comparing Western and Inuit cultures, etc.).
- Openly discuss the pressures clients might feel, particularly young people, who must juggle economic constraints, their sense of cultural belonging, and their desire to meet the expectations of elders.
- To bridge the gap between Inuit and Qallunaat and put to rest the notion that Whites live a carefree existence, invite members of both cultures to come and talk about their experiences.
- Promote workplace internships that bring Inuit and non-Inuit people together.
- Present other peoples who live in intercultural situations similar to that of the Inuit.
- Organize athletic, cultural, or social activities that foster exchanges between different cultures (e.g., hikes, volleyball, sewing, collective cooking, visits to local businesses, job fairs).

39. Encourage Traditional Activities on the Land

The Inuit have a vital connection to the land and its resources. The inclusion of activities related to the land as part of the employability process can bring the two worlds closer together. The land is a setting that is both known and reassuring for clients and making it a central theme can have a positive impact on the career development process.

- Organize outings on the land (hunting, fishing, gathering, field trips to study plants and animals) accompanied by elders as guides.
- In career development activities, use metaphors, stories, or symbols related to the land.
- Adapt environmental references to the context (e.g., replace trees (absent in a northern landscape) with an inuksuk).

IMPORTANT Clients who have not been initiated into traditional ways by their parents often feel “less Inuk” or “less useful,” so, in such cases, take care not to place too much importance on the know-how related to traditional activities. Some parents who were educated in residential schools did not learn the skills necessary for hunting or fishing. Other poorer families, who lack the means to buy a snowmobile or ATV, may not have been able to take trips exploring the territory. It is better to focus on what your clients have already accomplished and to encourage them to participate in traditional and cultural activities.

IMPORTANT Organizing outdoor activities, mountain-climbing or camping, is also possible in urban settings. In addition to helping clients discover the natural world in more southern regions and creating new connections with nature, these activities can make it possible to focus on the essential role of the land in the Inuk’s life and the impact of its absence in an urban environment.

40. Focus on Lessening the Initial Shock of an Urban Environment

Inuit who leave their villages, voluntarily or not, to settle in cities risk facing several difficulties, including isolation, culture shock, and the absence of their family and social networks. When directly confronted by several external influences, it’s easy to lose your bearings. As a result, properly supporting newly-arrived Inuit clients and helping them adapt to an urban environment is critical. This support should be the first priority, even if it means delaying taking steps towards employment.

- Take time to help clients find their cultural and social bearings.
- Explain the differences between the way of life in the North and in big cities.
- Provide a list of resources available in the neighbourhood and, if necessary, visit them with clients.
- Develop welcoming orientation workshops to help Inuit clients adjust to the new milieu.

A QUESTION OF COMMUNICATION

41. Express Yourself Simply, Clearly, and Directly

The meeting of two different communications styles and two distinct languages can cause a range of difficulties. The Inuit are accustomed to frank and direct communications, a results-centred style that is often devoid of the “small talk” that is typical of Western culture.

- Use open-ended questions (e.g., “Who wants to read this sentence?”), instead of closed questions that require only a yes or no response (e.g., “Does someone want to read this sentence?”).
- Opt for direct instructions based on action (e.g., “To apply, you must complete this questionnaire.”).
- Be positive without being overbearing.
- Shorten sentences (e.g., avoid using a lot of adjectives or subordinate clauses).
- Limit the use of lengthy formalities.

42. Use Humour

The Inuit love to laugh and tease. Humour is important because it allows for taking a step back, diffusing a situation, drawing attention to a theme, spurring participation in a group setting, or alleviating the inhibitions of shyer clients. By creating a less formal dynamic, humour strengthens trust while energizing the group.

- Include bits of humour in activities (e.g., comic situations, jokes, funny stories).
- Ask clients, on a voluntary basis, to be in charge of the funny part of activities (e.g., by finding funny pictures or videos relevant to the subject at hand).
- Between activities, use “laugh breaks” (e.g., screen Just for Laughs videos, have funny story contests).
- Accept camaraderie and teasing because they demonstrate the clients’ trust in the counsellor.

4.3. Create Opportunities to Share and Learn the Inuit Language

In addition to strengthening their individual and collective identity, Inuktitut shapes the Inuit’s thoughts and communications. Using a second language can potentially dampen clients’ interest, water down the meaning of concepts, and limit the understanding of the information that was shared. As a result, sharing content and interacting in Inuktitut during the counselling process is an important priority.

- Encourage clients to express themselves in the language they prefer.
- Ask clients, if they prefer, to translate what they say.
- Invite clients to find Inuktitut translations for the concepts introduced.
- Suggest new vocabulary words (e.g., each day, write a word in Inuktitut, French and English on the board).
- Create tools with Inuit syllabics.
- Promote the writing of documents in Inuktitut.
- Learn Inuktitut words and expressions (see Box #8).

IMPORTANT In addition to dealing with racial prejudice, few Inuit clients are fluent in French. This can make the job search process even more difficult, especially in urban settings in Quebec.

BOX #8 –BASIC INUKTITUT LEXICON

TERM	TRANSLATION	PRONUNCIATION
Hi	Ai	eille
Good bye	Atsunai	a-t-sou-naille
Who are you?	Kinauviit	qui-vo-vite
My name is nguvunga	gnou-vou-gna
How are you?	Qanuikiit	ha-nou-i-kit
Thank you	Nakurmiik	na-cour-mik
Man	Angutik	a-gnu-tique
Woman	Arnaq	ar-nak
Friend	Pigatik	pi-gna-tique
Yes	Aa	a-a
No	Auka	ow-ca
Today	Ullumi	oul-lou-mi
Tomorrow	Qauppat	how-patte
Yesterday	Ippasaq	ip-pa-sak

44. Respect Silence

"Silences are a good sign. It means that the client is thinking."
– Counsellor, Montreal

For the Inuit, silence is seen as a sign of respect because it allows them to think before answering when addressed or asked a question. In individual counselling or group settings, when a client doesn't respond immediately, it is often a sign of trust. If discomfort is at the root of the silence, a client will say so or avoid the topic that was raised.

- At the end of a conversation, without making them uncomfortable by focusing on them, wait for the client to speak.
- Slow down the rhythm of conversations, without losing momentum.
- If the client is often silent, ask why.
- Resist breaking the silence. Often the clients will add relevant information that completes a thought.
- To facilitate communication with quiet clients, keep other ways of communicating at hand (e.g., paper, pens, or coloured pencils).

IMPORTANT Due to shyness or a lack of self-confidence, silences may not lead to further reflection or progress. For less talkative clients, it is important to reassure them and shift attention to a fun, more concrete, activity that may jump-start the discussion. If you are uncomfortable with silence, don't hesitate to say so to your clients. Your authenticity will please them and reduce your own discomfort. Make an effort, however, to respect silence because it allows clients to think.

45. Pay Attention to Non-Verbal Communication

The Inuit are generally not chatty, avoid confrontation and are not very inclined to say "no." As a result, many clients will avoid making a direct request (to save the person they're talking with the potential embarrassment of having to answer in the negative), speaking their minds, clearly expressing their needs, or asking for help.

- Pay particular attention to the Inuit's non-verbal cues (e.g., moving the eyebrows or blinking).
- In order to understand the cultural codes surrounding communication, observe other community members.
- Avoid staring at clients.
- Be aware of your own body language.

46. Make Space for Informal Communication with Your Clients

Many Inuit love social media. Some individuals find it easier to communicate on these platforms and like the distance that it creates. Compared to speaking in public, social media platforms may make it easier for some clients to express themselves. Take advantage of these informal platforms to offer shyer or more withdrawn clients other ways to communicate and build trust.

- Create a range of communication options that do not always require face-to-face meetings (e.g., writing a letter or email, drawing, video meet-ups, private messaging via a social media network, etc.) for clients seeking to confide in you.
- Organize more informal activities with the clients (e.g., going for a walk during the break, having tea, etc.).
- To promote activities and services, update the organization's Facebook page (if one exists) on a regular basis.
- Use the organization's Facebook page (if one exists) to showcase clients' successes (ask permission first).

FINDING AND KEEPING EMPLOYMENT

47. Raise Awareness among Employers in Urban Settings about Hiring Inuit Employees

"Businesses may have a difficult time attracting and hiring Aboriginal workers because of a lack of knowledge about how and where to reach out to Aboriginal workers. Once Aboriginal workers are hired, some businesses may have difficulty retaining them—for example, if they do not offer adequate career advancement opportunities for Aboriginal staff."³²

Inuit seeking to join the labour force in an urban setting face certain challenges. In addition to the mutual prejudices that work against hiring Inuit clients, when companies do hire Inuit, many Qallunaat employers and supervisors have a poor grasp of the cultural elements that need to be taken into consideration. Canvassing and raising awareness within the local business community will encourage non-Inuit businesses to hire your clients. In order to clarify mutual expectations and put any misunderstandings to rest, it is important for employers and new employees to maintain an open channel of communication.

- Invite non-Inuit employers to come and visit the Centre and meet clients on open-house days.
- Alone or accompanied by clients, visit local businesses to raise awareness about hiring Inuit employees (e.g., cultural diversity, the quality of Inuit employees, financial incentives).
- Collaborate with clients to offer informational workshops on cultural diversity in the workplace to non-Inuit employers.
- Inform non-Inuit employers about the best communication and human resource strategies to use with their Inuit staff.
- Create a bank of resources for employers that gives them the tools they need when welcoming and integrating new employees.
- Inform clients about employers' expectations and the best communication methods to use in the workplace.
- Notify employers and supervisors that if they have any problems, they can contact you.

48. Stay Available and Accessible After your Client is Hired

For Inuit that are new to the labour market, taking a job can be very intimidating. It can be especially intimidating if it is their first formal job or if the work environment is new to them. Providing support at every stage of the work integration process (following a highly-structured, and relatively reassuring, job search process) is critical for fostering job retention.

- Collaborate with the client to develop an ongoing communication plan (e.g., follow up by phone after the first day of work, and then monthly phone meetings) by deciding on a means of communication (e.g., telephone, email, in person).
- Remind clients that as soon as any issue arises (e.g., discouragement, insecurity), they can contact you any time during office hours.
- Plan a follow-up meeting within a short time-frame (1–2 weeks).
- As needed, visit your clients at their place of work. Have meetings that include both your clients and their supervisors/employers.
- Once the client's immediate needs are met, prevent them from losing interest in their new job by researching the advantages of keeping their job.
- Help the client cope with frustration by developing a plan and strategies for keeping a job.

BOX #9 – SOME TIPS TO FOSTER JOB RETENTION

- Explore the client's fears about joining the labour market.
- Explain the advantages of keeping a job (e.g., social, community, financial).
- Develop the client's ability to identify and express emotion in a professional setting.
- Discuss which behaviours are required to keep a job (and which should be avoided).
- Demonstrate how certain habits (e.g., lateness, absenteeism, drinking alcohol) have an impact on keeping a job.
- Explore the various types of situations that might arise at work (e.g., discouragement or frustration) and, in collaboration with the client, develop strategies to overcome these issues.

SAMPLE ACTIVITY

WHY DO I WORK?

Introduction: Why do I work? Why do I want to work? We work for money, but for what else? This activity encourages clients to ask themselves these questions and reflect on their motivation to find and keep a job.

Objectives:

- Discuss and reflect on the importance of work (roles, locations) in the hearts and minds of each participant.
- Discuss the numerous benefits of work with clients, using the list below.

THE 7 BENEFITS OF WORK

1. **REVENUE:** Working is the most effective, legal way to gain money and increase your purchasing power.
2. **STATUS:** Working gives us a form of social recognition. The level of respect and admiration we get is related to that accorded to our job.
3. **MANAGEMENT OF TIME AND SPACE:** The work schedule is the pivot around which each worker organizes their activities. Working encourages us to organize our time and space, both physical and psychological.
4. **INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS:** Working allows us to meet new people (colleagues, superiors, subordinates, clients). These working relationships can help us widen our circle of friends.
5. **ACHIEVEMENT:** Work allows us to make changes to things and see the results of what we are doing. We are leaving our own mark! By providing an opportunity to be physical or psychological, work makes us more productive. This productivity provides a feeling of satisfaction related to our achievements.
6. **KEY ROLES:** Work can be a supporting reference for other life roles, such as parental, emotional, social and associative roles. It can help us better define ourselves as individuals: our values, our interactions with others, our concept of self.
7. **MEANING OF LIFE:** Work allows us to add extra meaning to our lives, a feeling of fullness and completion. It allows us to give back to society, while also contributing to our own development.

Adapted from a workshop by P.S. Jeunesse

THE IMPORTANCE OF EXTERNAL RESOURCES AND PARTNERSHIPS

49. Create Partnerships with other Local and Regional Resources and Organizations (Inuit and Non-Inuit)

Although resources are limited in northern communities, more often than not they do exist. It is important to get to know them and to maintain relationships with them in order to take advantage of the community expertise and develop your own toolkit (familiarity with other programs offered, financing available). Effective communication between organizations in the field reduces the risk of redundancy of services and/or resources.

- Find out about what services are offered locally, at training centres, group homes, women's shelters, and regional hospitals.
- Meet with these resources to develop close ties and set up referral services.
- To maintain contact and update information about services and resources, schedule monthly meetings or conference calls.
- Extend an invitation to local organizations or pay a visit to them with your clients.
- If necessary, create a list of resources for your clients (e.g., a guide or quick reference).
- Work to develop collective capabilities by creating alliances with other local and regional organizations to set up joint projects.

50. When Your Skill Set Doesn't fit the Bill, Don't Hesitate to Refer Your Clients to Appropriate Resources

Given the small size of northern communities, it's easy to want to do everything for clients. It is important, however, to be aware of your own limitations as a counsellor. When appropriate, refer clients to other specialists, such as Alcoholics Anonymous, social workers, or psychologists.

- To identify clients' needs that merit a referral, develop a set of screening criteria with your colleagues (e.g., when a client drinks on a regular basis and frequently misses sessions at the Centre).
- Explain to clients that, rather than derailing the job search process, a referral is a detour that will make them stronger.
- If necessary, accompany clients to their first meeting with another specialist or organization.
- If possible, while waiting for them to be ready to resume their career development process, make sure to follow up on a regular basis with the client.

Resources

This section lists some of the many resources (books, studies, articles, films, videos, etc.) used by the counsellors that were consulted in the development of this project. Some resources are designed for counsellors, while others may be used with clients (in individual or group settings).

INUIT CULTURE

In French

- **BOOK:** Je veux que les Inuit soient libres à nouveau. By Tamasi Qumaq (2010).
- **FILM:** Martha qui vient du froid. By Marquise Lepage (2009). 83 minutes. Download for a fee at www.onf.ca/film/martha_qui_vient_du_froid-film/telechargement
- **FILM:** Maïna. By Michelle Poulette (2014). 102 minutes. Trailer at www.filmsquebec.com/films/maina-michel-poulette/

In English

- **REPORT:** Understanding Inuit and Work: An Examination of Cultural Factors to Develop Tailored Employment Services. By RQuODE – Regroupement québécois des organismes pour le développements de l'employabilité (2016). www.rquode.com/publications
- **GUIDE:** The Inuit Way: A Guide to Inuit Culture. By Pauktuutit Inuit Women of Canada (2006). www.uqar.ca/files/boreas/inuitway_e.pdf
- **GUIDE:** Guidelines for Working with Inuit Elders. By Nunavut Arctic College (2008). <http://bit.ly/1XvxeDm>
- **GUIDE:** Working with Inuit: Selected Resources to Help You Learn About Inuit Culture and Way of Life. By NAHO – National Aboriginal Health Organization (2010). <http://bit.ly/1QYuUmF>
- **BOOK:** Living in the city. By Minnie Freeman (1971).
- **BOOK:** The right to be cold. One Woman's Story of Protecting Her Culture, the Arctic and the Whole Planet. By Sheila Watt-Cloutier (2015).
- **FILM:** The Fast Runner Trilogy. Atanarjuat The Fast Runner (2001), The Journals of Knud Rasmussen (2006) and Before Tomorrow (2009). Download at www.isuma.tv/fastrunnertrilogy
- **FILM:** Chloe and Theo. By Ezna Sands (2015). 113 minutes. Available on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=G-vZogVJOqM

- **FILM:** Snow Walker. By Charles Martin Smith (2003). 103 minutes. Available on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=gXBlWZRagw8
- **FILM:** Nanook of the North. By Robert Flaherty (1992). 79 minutes. Available on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=m4kOlzMqso0
- **FILM:** Qallunaat! Why White People Are Funny. By Mark Sandiford (2006). 52 minutes. Available on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=lazUV7PEw7w
- **DOCUMENTARY:** The Uluit. Champion of the North (2011). 4 episodes. Available on Vimeo at
Episode 1: vimeo.com/19954689 (23 minutes)
Episode 2: vimeo.com/19955775 (23 minutes)
Episode 3: vimeo.com/20758961 (23 minutes)
Episode 4: vimeo.com/20769996 (23 minutes)
- **VIDEO:** Feel the Inukness. 4 minutes. Available on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=iawDXQGQsr0
- **VIDEO:** The Inuit Way of Life. 4 minutes. Available on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=Btz4LNaxF4c
- **VIDEO:** Joe Karetak on Inuit Child Rearing Practices. 6 minutes. Available on Vimeo at vimeo.com/32426885
- **VIDEO:** Shirley Tagalik on Inuit Traditional Knowledge. 1 minute. Available on Vimeo at vimeo.com/27035034

SOME EMPLOYABILITY INTERVENTION TOOLS

In French

- **GUIDE:** OPTRA : Programme-cadre pour une recherche efficace d'emploi, adapté par et pour les Premières Nations. By Jacques Limoges (2010).

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- **GUIDE:** Job Search Toolkit for Aboriginal Youth. By Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada (1999). <http://bit.ly/1RYp1X6>

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In English

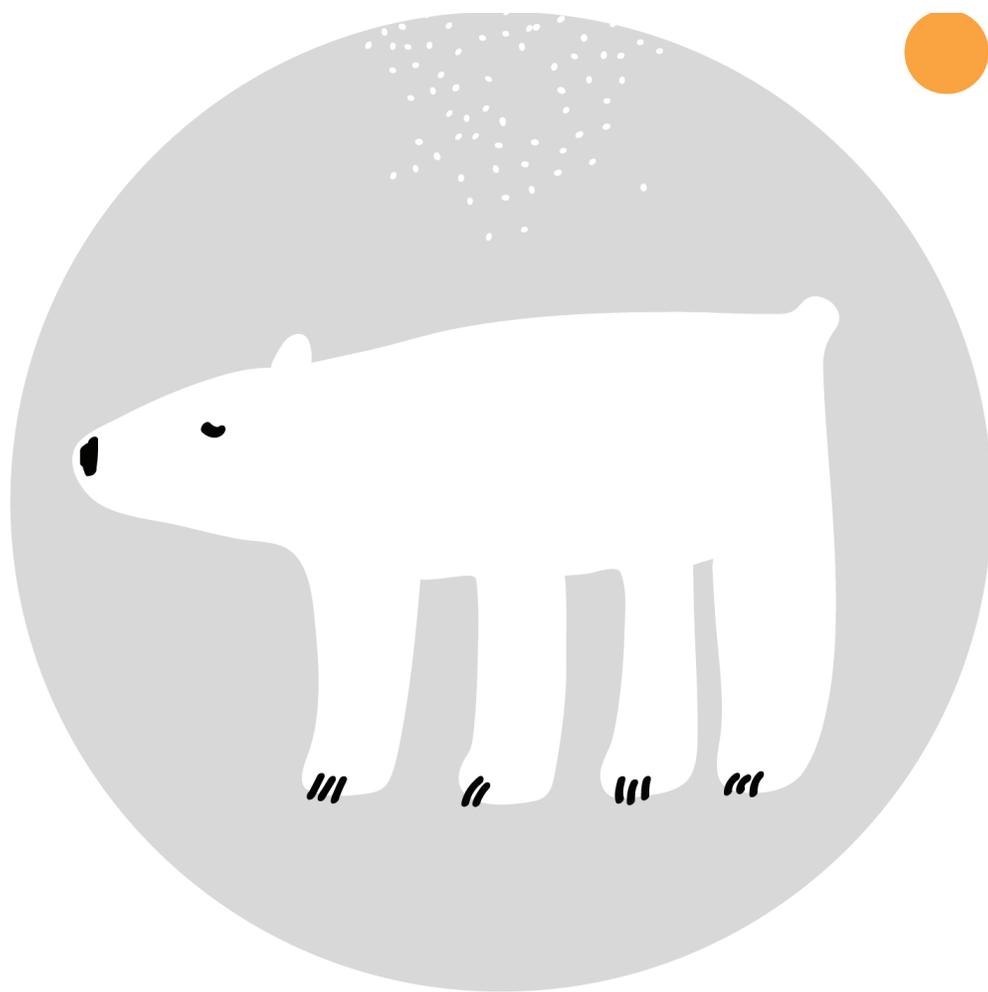
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- **BOOK:** Culture-Infused Counseling. By Nancy Arthur and Sandra Collins (2010). www.counsellingconcepts.ca
- **BOOK:** Alcohol and Drug Use in Nunavik: Converging Views on the Future Inuit's Viewpoints and the Researchers' Perspective. By Chantal Plourde, Natacha Brunelle and Michel Landry (2010). <http://bit.ly/1TvX2vO>
- **FILM:** Fireproof. Par Kirk Cameron (2008). 118 minutes.
- **GUIDE:** Engaging and Empowering Aboriginal Youth: A Toolkit for Service Providers (Second Edition). By Claire V. Crooks et al. (2010). <http://bit.ly/1RYp1X6>
- **GUIDE:** Learning About Québec: Your Guide to Successful Integration. By the Government of Québec (2012). www.apprendrelequebec.gouv.qc.ca
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SOME RELEVANT WEBSITES

- Comité consultatif des Premières Nations et des Inuit relatif au marché du travail. www.ccpnimt-fnilmac.com
- First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission (FNQLHSSC). www.cssspnql.com/en/fnqlhssc
- Fly With the Wind. Engaging Inuit Youth in the Canadian Economy. <http://pauktuutit.ca/youthecdev/>
- Inuit Communications Systems Limited. www.icsl.ca
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- Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK). www.itk.ca
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- Inuit Women in Business Network. pauktuutit.ca/iwbn
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