Case study 'Anya', evidence 3: Outcome ladders

Key
- 1-2 I am not ready to seek support
- 3-4 I am ready to seek support but not sure where to get help from
- 5-6 I am getting support but I am not ready to make crucial decisions on my own yet
- 7-8 I am making decisions about my life and making my own choices with the assistance of my support worker and relevant agencies
- 9-10 I am confident and able to make decisions on my own I do not need any support from my support worker or any agencies

Safety

Petra scored 4 on safety.

Through discussions with Petra I discovered that although she felt safe at the hostel she remained fearful that her husband would try to find her. Her husband had been contacting her via her mobile and making threats towards her. We discussed potential safety strategies that may alleviate Petra's fears and anxieties that her husband may find her at the refuge.

I asked Petra what her goals were in terms of safety and she said that she would like to be able to feel safe, particularly when she was "out and about in town". This led us onto a discussion about strategies that are used within the refuge that could help Petra to feel safer - including the option for regular texting when out and about.

Petra's score indicates that she is ready to seek support but is unsure where to get this from. I identified that it might be useful to develop a safety plan with Petra. Petra was happy for us to discuss and develop this. The plan included Petra changing her mobile number, recognising that the refuge was staffed 24 hours a day, ensuring that Petra could easily access and use the emergency call button in her room. We agreed that we would continue to discuss safety strategies and that we would return to this score in a few weeks.

Accommodation

Petra scored 3 on accommodation.

Indicating that she is ready to seek support but not sure where to get help from. I advised Petra that she had made the first, perhaps most difficult, steps in moving away from her abusive relationship.
I would expect Petra to score low on accommodation at this point. She has only been in the refuge for a few days, and this is a very daunting experience, moving miles away from her family and friends to a place that she does not know. I discussed the support that I would be able to offer Petra when she feels ready to move on from the refuge. I advised Petra that at this stage there was no need for her to rush decisions and advised that she could use our one-to-one sessions to explore her feelings about the decisions she would be making about her future accommodation needs.

We began to talk about the options when Petra felt ready to move from the refuge. She asked what support would be available and we discussed homeless interviews, relevant homeless application paperwork, etc., and the support that I could offer here.

Petra said she is not yet clear on where she would like to live, but her ultimate goal is to have her own accommodation. We agreed to revisit this issue in a few weeks' time.

**Support Networks**

**Petra scored 7 on support networks**
This indicates that she feels she is making decisions about her life and making her own choices with the assistance of my support work and relevant agencies. She felt that she had good support networks.

I feel that it would be useful to explore Petra’s support networks and how there may be some changes in them while she is at the refuge. It will be useful to complete an ecomap to enable Petra to view her networks visually and we agreed that support networks is something that we will look at in future one-to-one sessions even though Petra has scored quite highly in this area.

**Legal Issues**

**Petra scored 4 on legal issues.**
She informed me that she wanted to apply for a divorce.

Although Petra is at the stage where she wants to get support, she is new to the area so needs some support to locate a solicitor. Petra said she feels able to do this herself with support. In order to enable Petra to build on her confidence and her desire to be self-directing in this area, we agreed that I would assist Petra to conduct internet and telephone directory searches to find a solicitor.

**Health & Wellbeing**

**Petra scored 3 on health and wellbeing.**
This indicates that she is ready to seek support but not sure where to get help from. Information on the risk assessment states that Petra had been attending Alcoholics Anonymous regularly before moving to the refuge. We discussed the fact that Petra has experienced a lot of change recently. I asked Petra what she had found the most stressful and how she felt about managing this stress. Petra said that moving to a
different area and having to deal with giving up her job were the most stressful and that she had not thought about using alcohol, but that she would like the opportunity to discuss her alcohol dependency - she said she had found AA very useful and that she would like the opportunity to continue with AA meetings.

We researched together where the nearest AA meetings are and Petra would like to commence attending sessions ASAP. The meetings are in the evening which raises issues around child care. I agreed that I would discuss this with the children's worker to look at what support could be offered. I offered to accompany Petra to the local health centre so that she could register with the local GP.

**Money**

**Petra scored 4 on money.**
This indicates that she is ready to seek support but not sure where to get help from. Petra was working part time before she came to the refuge. We discussed Petra's options, e.g. looking for another job or claiming benefits while she is living at the refuge. Petra is already in receipt of Chid Benefit and Child Tax Credit. She is currently three months pregnant. Petra decided not to return to work at this time as she feels she needs the time to focus on the significant changes in her life. We agreed that I would assist Petra to apply for income support while she was not working and would make referrals to the Benefits Agency. I will also make a Citizens Advice Bureau appointment to assist Petra to sort out other financial issues.

**Children**

**Petra scored 4 on children.**
This indicates that she is ready to seek support but not sure where to get help from. Petra said that she was worried that her son Sean would fall behind with his school work if he was out of school for a prolonged time. We agreed that I would make an immediate referral to the Children's Team workers based at the refuge who would assist in finding a school place for Sean. The Children's Team will also refer Tina to the local nursery and secure her a place there. We agreed that when we are at the local health centre Petra will register the children with the GP and that she will also make contact with the health visitor and midwife.

**Work & Learning**

**Petra scored 4 on work and learning.**
This indicates that she is ready to seek support but not sure where to get help from. Petra had a keen interest in taking part in educational groups that the refuge runs. I provided Petra with information about the educational courses that the refuge runs, and I also gave her information about where to find out about courses within the local area.

We agreed that I will make a referral for Petra to attend the next Self Help and Life Coaching course run by the refuge.
**Empowerment & Self-esteem**

**Petra scored 4 on empowerment and self-esteem.**
This indicates that she is ready to seek support but not sure where to get help from. Petra said that she felt very low about herself following the prolonged abuse from her husband. I advised Petra that she had demonstrated that she was a powerful woman in that she had left the abusive relationship. We agreed that this area is linked to many of the other areas and that as Petra feels more secure about the changes she is making in her life this score is likely to increase.

**Analysis**
Petra scored herself in a way which I would expect at this stage of her involvement with us. I have some concerns that although Petra scored quite highly on support networks this may go down in the coming weeks as she is geographically so far away from her informal support networks. Completing an ecomap should assist with this, as I can support Petra to recognise how she now has more formal support networks available to her. It will also be important for Petra to try to maintain contact with her existing networks in whatever way is possible.

It is clear that Anya made the break from her abusive relationship on this occasion because she was concerned that her son became involved in the last incident. It will be important to support Petra to raise her self-esteem so that she recognises the right to be free from abuse not only for her children but also for herself. The self-help and life coaching courses will be useful in this respect. It is also very important that progress is made as quickly as possible in meeting the children's educational needs as this will reinforce for Petra that she is meeting the children's needs and empower her in relation to effective parenting.