### Goal Development Techniques

A case manager can approach goal-development a variety of ways. The following are a few different approaches through the Family Systems model to interviewing participants to get at the “issue” and begin the process of developing goals.

##### Exceptions Sequence

Ask questions that direct the participant to describe situations when the barrier isn’t present:

* + When don’t you have that problem?
  + What is different about those times?
  + What happens instead?
  + Who does what differently? (You, family members, etc.)
  + What will have to happen for that to happen?
  + Who will have to do what more often?
  + Who is most likely to want to do it?
  + How will you know that the problem is really solved?

##### Miracle Question Sequence

Sometimes taking the “magical” approach of having the participant wave the magic wand and “poof” the problem disappears helps focus the participant identify what would be different after the change.

* + If a miracle happened and you woke up tomorrow and your problem was solved, what would be different?
  + What do you think will have to be different for that to start happening?
  + Are there times when it already happens, if only for a little while?
  + Why – what is different?
  + What will have to happen for that to happen more often?
  + Who will make it happen?
  + What will be the sign that it is happening more often?
  + How will you know that your problem is really solved?

##### Coping/Pessimistic Sequence

One approach is to take the other side and see if it isn’t really that bad – in other words, what if it was worse?

* + Why aren’t things worse?
  + What are you doing to keep it from getting worse?
  + How has that been helpful?
  + What could make it worse than it already is?
  + What do you think will happen if things don’t get better?