

## 4.2.2: Engagement

The concept of *engagement* is essential to outreach and HCH services. In fact, one 20-year HCH veteran suggests we consider all our interactions – in the waiting room, in the exam room, or outside of the clinic – as outreach opportunities where we can engage people experiencing homelessness. In this module, you'll learn more about how engaging people experiencing homelessness demonstrates person-centered, trauma-informed, and recovery-oriented care; takes patience and time; and is essential to providing appropriate health services for people experiencing homelessness.

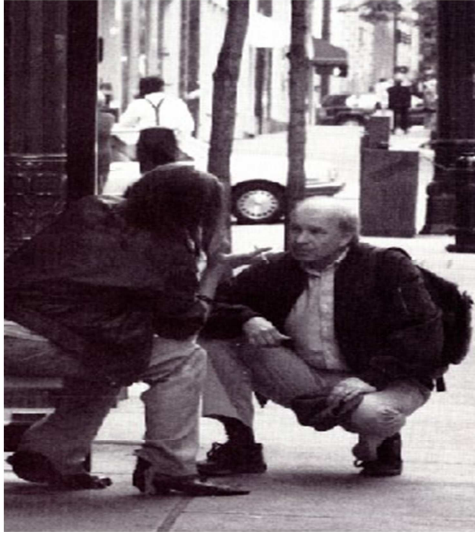
## Healing and Relationships



Cheryl Kane, a nurse on Boston HCH's Street Team, brings medication to a man living under a bridge near the Charles River.  
Photo by Stan Grossfed

All care providers know that any therapeutic work that happens—any healing at all—emanates from the basic human connection that happens between “doctor and patient” or “therapist and client” or “shelter volunteer and resident.” The foundation of helping work is to be able to connect well with the person sitting there in your office, shelter, or on a street corner.

## Four Phases of Relationship



- Approach
- Companionship
- Partnership
- Mutuality

Spend a moment observing this picture. What do you notice about body language? Dress? The physical positions of each person? Items attached to each person?

These two people are in some phase of engagement. HCH workers know how critical engagement is to the overall care of an individual. Mental Health Chaplain Craig Rennebohm, pictured here, describes engagement as a movement through four phases of relationship: approach, companionship, partnership, and mutuality. This understanding of engaging another person reflects person-centered, trauma-informed, and recovery-oriented care.

“Relational Stages of Outreach”

## **Reading Assignment 4.2.2**