

THE UNDERRATED DISPATCH

MONTHLY STRATEGIES FOR THE UNDERDOG CLINICIAN

THIS MONTH'S FEATURE

WHAT'S ACTUALLY DRIVING IT?

The label is where the thinking usually stops. "Resistant." "Noncompliant." "Unmotivated." One word, and the client becomes the problem — and the next clinician inherits that read without ever questioning it.

This interactive activity walks through eight real clinical moments and asks the harder question underneath the label: what's actually driving this? Mistrust earned from a system that's failed them? A material barrier you haven't named? Cultural meaning you haven't looked at yet? The skill isn't picking the "right" answer — it's learning to read past the easy word toward what's really there, especially for marginalized and justice-involved clients who pay the highest price for a lazy label.

Built for Minority Mental Health Month. Free for all subscribers.

Pairs with this month's Quick Win — the desk reference that turns this thinking into chart-ready language.

[EXPLORE THE ACTIVITY](#)

BONUS SPECIAL: AI IN CLINICAL PRACTICE

The series continues — new posts July 1 and July 1

The honest conversation about AI in behavioral health work: what it can actually do, what it can't, and where the real risks sit. Not hype, not doom — just a clinician thinking out loud about a tool that's already in the room whether we invited it or not.

QUICK WIN TOOL OF THE MONTH

What You Wrote vs. What to Write

The companion desk reference

A printable one-page reference pairing eleven of the most common stigmatizing chart phrases — resistant, noncompliant, drug-seeking, poor historian — with observational alternatives that record what actually happened. Plus a substance-use section aligned with NIDA's "Words Matter" guidance, and a simple test for any line you're unsure about: if this were audited, subpoenaed, or read by your client, how does it serve each of them?

Print it. Keep it where you write your notes.

Free for all subscribers.

IMPLEMENTATION NOTES

This isn't about softer words — it's about accurate ones. A blunt, accurate description always beats a gentle, misleading one. The reference shows you the rewrite; your clinical judgment fills in the specifics.



[ACCESS THE DESK REFERENCE](#)

JULY MISSION UPDATES

- **Featured Highlight (7/1)** — What's Driving It
- **Featured Board (7/1)** — BIPOC Board
- **Monthly Content Drop (7/15)**
- **AI in Clinical Practice (7/1, 7/15)**
- **New Clinician Survival Series** — on a one month hiatus-back in August
- **Minority Mental Health Awareness Month** — all of July

Underrated Tactic: Read the Driver Before the Label

Before you write "resistant," ask what you'd be missing if you're wrong. The cost of a lazy label isn't evenly distributed — for a client moving through systems that have already misread them, "minimally engaged" in a chart isn't neutral. It follows them. It confirms the system's existing read. It can shape decisions about their liberty.

Reading the driver first doesn't lower the bar. The client stays capable, accountable, held to the work. The lens just decides whether your accountability lands as respect — or as one more rupture.

PAIRS PERFECTLY WITH THIS MONTH'S
FEATURE AND QUICK WIN TOOL