

CHRISTINE: So Frankie, let's talk about your work now. You said you wanted us to think about some of the clients you have been finding it difficult to connect with.

FRANKIE: Yeah. I guess I want to be like you are with Valerie. You really see things through her eyes. You are both so different but it feels like there is a real connection. How do you do it? I mean where would I start with Fayek and his family? I don't know where my empathy has gone with these clients.

CHRISTINE: Why don't we use some chairs and bring them all here.

FRANKIE: (Scared, looking at the door.) What, are they here now?

CHRISTINE: Figuratively. I meant bring them here figuratively. And what about your client, Malik? What about him? Have you worked out yet why he is such a challenge for you?

FRANKIE: Well he doesn't really think I get him at all. And the truth is, I don't. I keep trying out strategies like cognitive reframing. But even when I am doing them, I can tell I am wide of the mark. What is getting in the way?

CHRISTINE: I've just had a thought, Frankie. Didn't you tell me once your mother is Italian?

FRANKIE: Well yes. But I don't see the relevance. Malik is South Asian.

Film Frankie typing/writing his journal and then we "hear" what he is writing.

FRANKIE: Malik and my mum are different but what links them together is shame – Malik's shame about his accent and my shame about having a mum who didn't sound like all the other mums, at parents' evenings and sport days, or at the doctor's.

When I think about that now, it is painful. Right now, I am trying not to feel so ashamed of having felt ashamed of her! It's not very comfortable. I always thought she didn't understand anything I was trying to say. I just get annoyed with her. I don't think I ever tried to imagine life through her eyes. And yet that is what I am supposed to be doing as a therapist!