Social Work

“Tell me about your relationship with your daughter.” “How satisfied were you with the services provided by your last family center?” “Describe a time when you thought your alcohol usage affected your job performance.” Unstructured interviews using questions like these often are used to gather information that might be subjective or specific to only one person. An unstructured interview is a conversation-based approach that is especially helpful in establishing rapport between interviewer and interviewee. Unstructured interviewers use strategies such as active listening and paraphrasing and summarizing, among others. A challenge with unstructured interviews is that interviewees tend to deliberately or subconsciously avoid subjects that make them uncomfortable. This can make it difficult to accomplish the goals of the interview. In this Discussion, you will explore the challenges of unstructured interviews and consider strategies for maintaining focus to accomplish interview goals. Reflect on the challenges of completing a successful unstructured interview. How would you determine what questions to ask? How would you control the topics covered? Consider the following scenario: You are a human services professional who works for an organization that offers parenting classes. A woman has been referred to the program because she has lost custody of her baby and must take the classes in order to regain custody. You are asked to interview her to determine her eligibility for the program and the type of parenting classes that would be the most helpful. She starts out answering your questions, but soon veers into a tirade against the food at the hospital where she gave birth and how badly the nurses treated her. With these thoughts in mind: Post a description of two strategies you might use to elicit the information you need from the woman in the scenario while still maintaining focus.