Identity, Uncertainty, & Discovery

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Outline

- Part One:
  - Discussion/Exercise: What is your identity as a therapist?
  - How do you describe what you do?
  - What role do you play with your clients?

- Part Two: 5 Questions to Ask Clients - Explore Client's preferences about your role

- Part Three: Client-Oriented/Alliance Focused

- Part Four: Uncertainty/Discovery

- Role Play

- Part Five: Critiques
The Story of Wizard of Oz

Scarecrow: I am a failure, because I haven’t got a brain.
Tin Man: …that I could be kind-a-human, if I only had a heart.
Lion: My life has been simply unbearable…if I only had the nerve.
Dorothy: a home.
The Story of Wizard of Oz

• Humbug:
  – Grants the Scarecrow a diploma
  – Awarded the Lion a “Triple Cross” for valor
  – Wrote a testimonial and gave a watch to Tin Man so that it looks and sounds like a human heart
  – Gave a hot air balloon to Dorothy

• Glinda, the Beautiful and Good Witch of the North, say to Dorothy:
  – “You don’t need to be helped any longer. You’ve always had the power to go back to Kansas.”
The Wizard of Oz & Psychotherapy

- Humbug: technique-driven therapy—a skilled technician delivering the latest empirically supported treatment and of a salesman of sorts, enthusiastically convincing the client that the intervention is just what he or she needs
- Therapist: should fix the client’s problems
- Drawbacks: limited tolerance for uncertainty, adventure and co-discovery
- [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y0teJ85qlqY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y0teJ85qlqY)
The Wizard of Oz & Psychotherapy

• Glinda: the Good Witch of the North: Helped Dorothy to discover her own resources, offering help when needed.

• Therapist: help clients harvest resources and find solutions to discover what works.
What is Your Identity? (Individual Task)

- What is your identity as a therapist?
- How does your identity impact your clients?
- How do you describe what you do?
- What role do you play with your clients?
IDENTITY

- Creations
- Choices
- Values
- Beliefs
- Appearance
- Ethnicity
- Practices, Habits
- Work, Hobbies
- Friends, Family
- Interests, Possessions
- Objects, Possessions
Group Discussion

- What is your identity as a therapist?
- How does your identity impact your clients?
- How do you describe what you do?
- What role do you play with your clients?
Exercise Summary

• What we do is a measure of who we are. If we imagine our work as labor, we become laborers. If we imagine our work as art, we become artists.

  ---Jeffrey Patnaude

• Identity is such a crucial affair that one shouldn’t rush into it.

  ---David Quammen
Exploring Client’s Preferences
About Your Role

- How do you see me fitting into what you would like to see happen?
- How can I be of most help to you now?
- What role do you see me playing in your endeavor to change this situation?
- In what ways do you see me and this process as helpful to attaining your goals?
- Let me make sure I am getting this right. Are you looking for suggestions from me about that situation?
Client Directed, Alliance-Focused Therapy

- Continuous **reflection** and an attitude of **openness** to new learning is a prerequisite for professional development at all levels of experience.
Client Directed

- Focus attention on the common factors, especially clients’ contribution to outcome-their resources, ideas, and views of the alliance
- Not theory-driven
- A relational rather than a medical model
Client-Directed, Outcome-Informed (CDOI):

- Use **client’s ideas** and **preferences** (theories) to guide choice of technique and model.
- Inform the work with reliable and valid **measures** of the consumer’s experience of the alliance and outcome.

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bY51IZKq-9I

(Client Directed Focus)
Discovery-Oriented

- Embracing many possible causes, effects, and understandings
- Discovering what works entails embracing the strong probability
- Clients not only have all that is necessary to resolve problems but also may have already solved them, started to solve them, have a very good idea about how to do it, or are just about ready to figure out something important
- Every technique is used for the first time, invented by clients and therapists to fit the client’s unique attributes and circumstance
- You and the client are co-explores
Uncertainty

- Certainty: In the world nothing is certain but death and taxes (Benjamin Franklin)
- Knowledge about the relative indeterminacy and unpredictability of life and ways to manage (Bsltes and smith, 1990)
- Uncertainty is the place of unlimited possibilities for change
- Allows for the “aha moments”, all the spontaneous ideas, connections, conclusions, plans, and insights
- Tolerance for uncertainty creates the space for new directions and insights to occur to both the client and you
- An awareness of complexity which is a precondition for maintaining constructive professional development
- Gives therapy its texture and infuses it with the excitement of discovery
- It creates the space the new directions and insights to occur to both you and client
- It is the key that unlock the potential for discovery
Role Play

**Mandated Client:**
- John, 54 years old, referred by his probation officer
- Believes he should not be here (counselling)
- PO believes he has some gambling issues
- Got caught due to indoor marijuana growing
Critiques

• Client directed approach may not work for mandated clients
• Focus so much on the client
• Some agencies have standardized structures/procedures, client directed approach may not fit in those settings