

Using the Purposefulness of Behavior in Therapy: Encouraging Clients to Develop More Courage to be Imperfect

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Agenda

- Introductions – who am I and who are you?
- Terms Adler used as he developed his ideas about purposefulness of behavior
- Video clips to display behaviors and discuss the “why”
- How to apply the concept in counseling
- Integrating purposefulness of behavior with courage to be imperfect

Terms Related to Purposefulness of Behavior

- Guiding fiction
- Biased apperception
- Private logic
- Fictional goal
- Fictional finalism
- Teleology – Greek *telos* = end
- Goals
- Striving for perfection/security/completion
- Self ideal
- Felt minus to felt (or perceived) plus
- Creative power

Let's Start with Us...

- Self awareness activity #1
 - How do you put on your shoes and socks?
 - Why do you do it this way?
 - Video clip and discussion (shoes and socks)
- Self awareness activity #2
 - How do you make a sandwich?
 - Why do you do it this way?
 - Video clip (make a sandwich)

More examples

- When Harry Met Sally
 - What is Sally's unique, individual perspective about what tastes good?
- As Good As It Gets
 - What might the reasons be that he avoids stepping on cracks?
- Big Bang Theory
 - It can even create groupthink; what is the group's reason to buy into Sheldon's behavior

Case Discussion and Examples

- Clients who report symptoms of:
 - Depression
 - Anxiety
 - Eating disorders
 - Psychotic symptoms
 - OCD
 - Borderline personality disorder
 - Narcissistic personality disorder
 - Avoidant personality disorder
 - Others from audience???

How to use this in counseling

- Lasting change of behaviors becomes probable when we understand why we do what we do and can see the problems that behavior creates
- Teach clients the concept, what it means, and how to identify the deeper meaning/reason
- Four core fears that sit at the heart of purposefulness (in order from least to most fearful)
 - Fear of failure
 - Fear of rejection
 - Fear of not being good enough/worthy
 - Fear of not being loved or loveable
- Use thought chains to help clients get to the essential fear
- Discuss the behavior in terms of courage to be imperfect as they strive to make changes and move beyond the fear and mistaken beliefs

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