

Overcoming Therapeutic Impasses In The Client Or Therapist Using Schema Therapy Interventions

Presented by

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Day one will focus on impasses due to the client.

Clients typically “get stuck” because of barriers to engagement such as avoidant coping styles, mistrust-abuse schemas, low motivation, lack of connection, defining problems differently to the therapist and feelings of being unsafe, misunderstood or hopelessness. ST approach identifies the early emotional learning deficits of childhood, which are at the source of clients’ presenting difficulties. Experiential or emotion-focused interventions form a major part of ST and directly address early maladaptive schemas (EMS) and entrenched patterns of dysfunctional coping styles. ST includes cognitive and behavioral interventions as well, but as these will be more familiar, the workshop will focus primarily on experiential interventions. Participants will learn ways to identify what the impasses are and help clients work through them. Interventions will include experiential work to connect and get through the resistance of dysfunctional coping styles, imagery rescripting and storytelling to introduce the Vulnerable Child Mode and mode role plays (aka Schema Mode Chair work).

Day 2 will focus on impasses due to the therapist.

Therapists often “get stuck” due to their own early maladaptive schemas and dysfunctional coping styles being activated, difficulties in connecting with the client, establishing safety, defining problems in a way that the client can identify with and lack of confidence implementing experiential

interventions. The workshop leaders will use exercises from their latest book: *Experiencing Schema Therapy from the Inside Out: A Self-practice/Self-reflection Workbook for therapists* (Guilford Press, 2018).

The work of James Bennett-Levy and associates on Self-Practice/Self-Reflection (SP-SR) has demonstrated that increases in therapist confidence and competence result from attending the CBT SP/SR Training. In the workshop the SP exercises will help participants experience what their clients have been asked to do during emotion-focused exercises, such as identifying and working with EMS related to childhood memories. Participants will have the opportunity to use exercises to sensitize themselves to their own EMS being activated, understand their effect on the clients, learn ways of accessing their Healthy Adult mode and repairing any ruptures. Good therapist self care will be discussed and ways to identify and meet therapists' needs in this area. Participants will also experience being in a Schema Therapy Group session, which will meet the self-therapy requirement for International Society of Schema Therapy certification in Group Schema Therapy.

The workshop incorporates: didactic sections, group discussion, demonstrations by trainers in which the workshop participants play patients, and opportunities for participants to practice these interventions with coaching and feedback. Participants will receive handouts which they can use in their clinical work.

The workshop is suitable for Schema Therapists at all levels and clinicians who have some knowledge and experience in using the basic Schema Therapy Model and want to learn more about core ST interventions.