

# Promoting Change Through Growth-Focused Brief Therapy

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## Introduction

- A. What's Christian about your approach to Christian counseling?
- B. The key components of meaningful integration:
- C. The importance of putting the WHO before the WHAT !

## The Challenge of Helping People Change

- A. The Many Meanings of Change
- B. Roadblocks/Barriers to Change
- C. How Much Change Is Enough Change?

- |                       |              |                       |              |
|-----------------------|--------------|-----------------------|--------------|
| 1. <u>UNCONSCIOUS</u> | Incompetence | 2. <u>CONSCIOUS</u>   | Incompetence |
| 3. <u>CONSCIOUS</u>   | Competence   | 4. <u>UNCONSCIOUS</u> | Competence   |

- D. Moving from Change to GROWTH

## E. Primary Approaches to Helping People Grow

1. Focus on PROBLEMS      2. Focus on SOLUTIONS      3. Focus on GROWTH

## F. Stages of Change: The Prochaska/DiClemente Change Model

- |                           |                      |
|---------------------------|----------------------|
| Stage 1: Precontemplation | Stage 4: Action      |
| Stage 2: Contemplation    | Stage 5: Maintenance |
| Stage 3: Preparation      | Stage 6: Termination |

## G. What Does Research Tell Us About Effective Therapy?

- |            |  |
|------------|--|
| <u>40%</u> | Extratherapeutic Factors: Clients and Their Environments |
| <u>30%</u> | Therapeutic Relationship: Client and Therapist Together  |
| <u>15%</u> | Expectancy, Hope and Placebo                             |
| <u>15%</u> | Therapeutic Technique: What We Do                        |

# Brief Therapy: Where Did It Come From and What Is It?

## A. Where Did Brief Therapy Come From?

1. In the Beginning:
2. Bill O'Hanlon's Three Waves of Psychotherapy
3. The Milwaukee Model: Solution-Focused Brief Therapy

## B. What is Brief Therapy?

1. Definitions
2. Some Differences Between Brief and Long-Term Therapy

<u>SPECIFIC</u> Objectives	<u>CLEAR</u> Plan
Directive Techniques	Treatment of <u>SYMPTOMS</u> is Legitimized
Communication: Solution-Focused	Responsibility for <u>ACCOMPLISHING</u> Goals
3. Core Assumptions of Brief Therapy
  - a. A conscious and conscientious use of time
  - b. A belief that therapy is not "timeless" but rather may be intermittent throughout a person's life
  - c. An emphasis on pragmatism, parsimony and change versus "cure". The client receives the amount of therapy needed. No more and no less.
  - d. Limited and specific goals, maintenance of a specific treatment focus with clearly defined outcomes.
  - e. Small changes are all that is necessary.
  - f. The strengths and resources of the client are emphasized and utilized
  - g. Creative, pragmatic and flexible use of techniques
4. Growing African Violets

# Core Concepts of Growth-Focused Brief Therapy (GFBT)

## A. GFBT: A Strong Start and a Solid Foundation

## B. GFBT: An Integrative Model

1. Biblical/Theological Foundations
2. Psychological/Theoretical Foundations

## C. Key Assumptions of Growth-Focused Brief Therapy

1. All people are created in the image of God and as image bearers have INFINITE value and worth.
2. All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
3. The most effective treatment takes into account the WHOLE person: mind, emotions and will.
4. Different approaches can be helpful with different kinds of people presenting with different kinds of problems at different stages in their life. GFBT acknowledges the value of DIFFERENCES.
5. Change is INEVITABLE, growth is optional.
6. SMALL changes can be significant.
7. People bring many RESOURCES into the counseling session. Effective therapy builds on a client's STRENGTHS rather than identifying and dwelling on their weaknesses.
8. Problems are solved, people aren't CURED.
9. FAILURE can be an invaluable resource for learning (II Corinthians 12: 7-10)
10. The Psalm 139:23-24 Principle

## **D. Important Focal Shifts of Growth-Focused Brief Therapy**

1. From Change to GROWTH
2. From Weaknesses to STRENGTHS
3. From the Past to the PRESENT
4. From Problems to POSSIBILITIES
5. From Excuses to EXCEPTIONS
6. From Uniformity to UNIQUENESS

## **The Process of Growth-Focused Brief Therapy (GFBT)**

### **A. Pre-Session Distinctives**

1. The initial phone call
2. Pre-session assessment and seeding of a “growth-focus”

### **B. 1<sup>st</sup> Session Distinctives**

1. Determine the status of your clients:      Visitor      Complainant      Customer

**Key Question: What ARE clients a customer for?**

2. Clarify the CONTEXT of their call for counseling:
3. Clarify the TERMINATION criteria . . . that then informs your treatment plan:
4. Other 1<sup>st</sup> Session Tasks
5. Growth-Focused Interventions: The Search for Solutions & Growth Points
  - a. Miracle Question
    - 1a) An EXTERNAL Miracle
    - 1b) An INTERNAL Miracle
  - b. Exception-Finding Questions
  - c. Scaling Questions
  - d. Coping Questions
  - e. Other Interventions
6. Co-constructing Well-Formed Goals
  - a. Focus of Goals
  - b. Size of Goals
  - c. Characteristics of Goals

## 7. Homework

### a. Value of Homework

- (1) It can help strengthen the individual's commitment to take responsibility for their growth.
- (2) It helps clients to gain new perspectives.
- (3) It reinforces insights and knowledge the client has gained in the actual counseling session.
- (4) It builds a sense of self-efficacy.
- (5) It helps to develop dependency on God rather than on the therapist.
- (6) It makes it possible to communicate more information in a shorter period of time.
- (7) It helps the client to experience growth in between sessions.

### b. Kinds of Homework

## 8. The Role of Diagnosis & Assessment in GFBT

### a. GFBT & Diagnosis

#### (1) The Significant Value of Diagnosis

- (a) SIMPLIFICATION of complex data.
- (b) Simplification of COMMUNICATION between professionals.
- (c) IMPROVED prognostic judgments.
- (d) Assistance in selection of APPROPRIATE treatments.

#### (2) Potential Dangers of Inappropriate Diagnosis

### b. GFBT & Assessment

#### (1) The Value of Assessment

- (a) Provides a lot of information in a SHORT period of time
- (b) Is a good source of additional insights
- (c) Is like having a "SECOND" opinion
- (d) Is COST -effective and TIME -effective
- (e) It helps the counselor not to leave out important areas
- (f) Provides an objective BASELINE to measure change and growth
- (g) Facilitates communication and case-consultations with other counselors

#### (2) Different Kinds of Assessment Tools

## C. 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Suggestions

### 1. Opening the 2<sup>nd</sup> session

### 2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Session Interventions

Cognitive  
Emotional  
Assess Physical  
Medical evaluation

Exercise  
Environmental Interventions  
Psycho Educational  
Psychological Testing

Handouts  
Utilization of failure

## D. What happens AFTER the 2<sup>nd</sup> Session?

## Conclusion & Questions