

Skill-Based Psychotherapy Integration: A Practicum Handbook of Intermediate Microskills

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Skill-Based Psychotherapy Integration (SBPI) is a new practicum training method based on intermediate microskills. For three decades, graduate students in psychology and other social service fields have been trained in basic helping skills using a microskills approach. SBPI extends this training method to the level of intermediate psychotherapy skills drawn from diverse theoretical orientations. About a dozen psychotherapy microskills have been identified from each of five major approaches: cognitive, behavioral, experiential, psychodynamic, and multicultural. This catalog of psychotherapy microskills can guide trainees as they learn and practice new behaviors and as they diversify and integrate their own approach to psychotherapy. SBPI offers a systematic way for practicum-level psychotherapists to move from basic helping skills to intermediate psychotherapy skills and to translate theory into practice.

SBPI also offers a different approach to psychotherapy integration. Integrating at the level of discrete skills allows psychotherapists to draw upon the rich tradition of diverse orientations without having to make “either-or” choices between different techniques or theories. Integration becomes a less intimidating task when smaller units of behavior are combined in a “this-and-that” manner. SBPI allows intermediate psychotherapists to learn to integrate skills the way more experienced psychotherapists do; in a flexible and fluid manner based on recognition of clinical markers, multitheoretical conceptualization, and collaborative dialogue with clients.

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SECTION ONE

Introduction to Skill-Based Psychotherapy Integration

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The purpose of this practicum handbook is to introduce graduate students in psychology, counseling, social work, and other social service fields to intermediate psychotherapy skills using a new training method called Skill-Based Psychotherapy Integration (SBPI). This method uses a microskills approach to teach practicum-level psychotherapists to acquire and integrate skills from diverse theoretical orientations. About a dozen intermediate skills have been identified from each of five major approaches: cognitive, behavioral, experiential, psychodynamic, and multicultural. This catalog of psychotherapy microskills can guide graduate students as they learn and practice new behaviors and as they diversify and integrate their approach to psychotherapy. Although micro-skills have been used to train beginning psychotherapists for almost three decades, this method has not been widely used to teach intermediate skills. SBPI offers a systematic way for practicum-level psychotherapists to translate theory into practice. Therefore, SBPI is a valuable tool for psychotherapists, trainers, and supervisors.

This method also offers a new approach to psychotherapy integration. SBPI approaches integration at the level of discrete skills rather than focusing on common factors, technical eclecticism, or theoretical integration. Integrating psychotherapy skills allows psychotherapists to draw upon the rich tradition of diverse orientations without having to make “either-or” choices between different techniques or theories. Integration becomes a less intimidating task when smaller units of behavior are combined in a “this-and-that” manner. SBPI allows intermediate psychotherapists to learn to integrate skills the way more experienced psychotherapists do; in a flexible and fluid manner based on clinical markers and collaborative dialogue with clients.

What are Microskills?

Complex behaviors like psychotherapy or teaching can be described by identifying many specific behaviors that are combined to create an elaborate skill. These small component parts are called “microskills.” The use of microskills as a training method for counseling and psychotherapy was first described by Allen Ivey three decades ago (Ivey, 1971; Ivey & Authier, 1978). The greatest advantage of using a microskills approach to training is that it allows complex skills to be broken down into specific behaviors that can be described, learned, practiced, and mastered over time. For the last three decades, the microskills approach has been the dominant paradigm for training in basic helping skills that form the foundation for all forms of psychotherapy. The microskills approach continues to prove to be an effective way to acquire complex skills and has been recently extended to the arena of group counseling (Ivey, Pederson, & Ivey, 2001). The current handbook is an attempt to apply the microskills approach to intermediate psychotherapy skills. In our limited experience so far, this appears to be a very helpful way for

graduate students at the practicum level to move from basic helping skills to intermediate psychotherapy skills and to move from psychotherapy theory to practice.

From Basic Helping Skills to Intermediate Psychotherapy Skills

It is our assumption that if you are reading this handbook then you have probably already received some training in basic helping skills. Many graduate students in the social services take a basic skills class during the first year that uses a text book like Intentional Interviewing and Counseling by Ivey and Ivey (1999), The Skilled Helper by Egan (1997), or Helping Skills by Hill and O'Brien (1999). Each of these books describes the foundational skills that are common to most forms of psychotherapy. The skills described in this handbook are intended as the next step in the learning process. If you have not already read a book on basic helping skills, we recommend that you choose one of those mentioned.

From Theory to Practice

Another assumption is that you have had some exposure to a variety of theories of psychotherapy. Many graduate students in the social services take a psychotherapy theory class that uses a text book like Current Psychotherapies (Corsini & Wedding, 2000), Systems of Psychotherapy (Prochaska & Norcross, 1999), or Comprehensive Textbook of Psychotherapy (Bongar & Beutler, 1995). Each of these books describes several different theories of psychotherapy and gives the reader a sense of the history and context of diverse traditions within our field. If you have not already read a book that describes diverse psychotherapy theories, we recommend that you choose one of those mentioned.

From Simple to Complex: Skills and Techniques

The microskills approach to training involves reducing complicated tasks into simple behavioral units. SBPI applies this approach to intermediate-level psychotherapy skills. A skill is defined here as a single behavioral intervention; that is, an entire skill is often completed in a single verbal exchange between a client and a psychotherapist. In contrast, techniques are seen as larger chunks of behavior that often represent a linear arrangement of several skills into larger and more complicated interventions. SBPI focuses on the description of skills rather than techniques. We think this is a good way to start to learn about psychotherapy and to begin the task of integration. As you progress in your therapeutic work, you will probably add specific techniques to your repertoire of therapeutic behaviors. As you do, it will be important to remember that these techniques are constructed of smaller independent skills.

Obviously, there is an important relationship between skills and techniques. Many of the skills described in the catalog of intermediate psychotherapy microskills are similar to more complicated techniques. For example, Cognitive Skill 2: Illuminating self-talk, automatic thoughts, and cognitive patterns, can be enacted as a skill with a simple question like, "What was going on in your head as you entered the apartment?" The same goal can be accomplished more formally by having a client complete an Automatic Thought Record worksheet. In this case, asking a single question is considered a skill whereas completing a worksheet is considered a technique. The same relationship between skills and techniques can be seen in the parallel between Behavioral Skill 9: Constructing a

hierarchy of related behaviors, and the more complicated technique known as systematic desensitization. Likewise, there is a parallel between Experiential Skill 7: Identifying, connecting and integrating different parts of the self, and the two-chair dialogue technique.

Phase One: Acquiring a Repertoire of Diverse Skills

Skill-Based Psychotherapy Integration is divided into two overlapping phases of training. The first phase emphasizes the acquisition of diverse psychotherapy skills. The acquisition phase of training includes the following methods that will be applied throughout the next several sections of this practicum handbook:

- Catalog of Intermediate Psychotherapy Microskills
- Identifying Preferences
- Rating Skills
- Identifying Strengths and Areas for Growth
- Written Practice
- Role Play Practice
- Treatment Planning
- Reflecting on Single Sessions

Phase Two: Integrating Psychotherapy Skills in Clinical Practice

The second phase of training in Skill-Based Psychotherapy Integration focuses on using diverse skills in integrative clinical practice. Several training methods are used in the integration phase of training and will be described in the eighth section of this handbook:

- Identifying Clinical Markers
- Multitheoretical Conceptualization
- Engaging in Collaborative Dialogue
- Identifying Clusters of Integrated Skills
- Treatment Planning
- Reflecting on Single Sessions
- Case Presentations
- Tracking Progress

Catalog of Intermediate Psychotherapy Microskills

The first step in SBPI training is to become familiar with a catalog of skills that has been drawn from several different psychotherapy traditions. This catalog provides a brief overview of over sixty skills from five major approaches. Subsequent sections of this handbook will describe these skills in more detail and provide guidelines for their application and integration.

Identifying Your Preferences

The second step in acquiring and improving psychotherapy skills from this catalog will be to identify your own preferences and to understand where they come from. As you read through the catalog for the first time, you might want to think about the following questions:

- With which psychotherapy skills do you feel most comfortable?
- How has your training and experience shaped these preferences?
- How does your personality or worldview influence your preferences?
- Which skills fit the types of clients you have worked with most?

Please use the Identifying Your Preferences worksheet to reflect on your preferences and their influences.

Cognitive Psychotherapy Microskills

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- Clarifying the impact of thoughts on feelings, actions, and interpersonal relationships. (CS1)
 - Illuminating self-talk, automatic thoughts, and cognitive patterns that impact and interact with feelings and actions. (CS2)
 - Challenging or disputing irrational thoughts or inaccurate beliefs. (CS3)
 - Identifying core beliefs or schemas by exploring the meaning of thoughts and patterns. (CS4)
 - Evaluating evidence that confirms or disputes a client's cognitions. (CS5)
 - Forming and testing hypotheses about a client's beliefs and perceptions. (CS6)
 - Modifying specific beliefs to be more accurate and adaptive. (CS7)
 - Reinforcing adaptive cognitions and extinguishing dysfunctional ones. (CS8)
 - Encouraging accurate perceptions of the realistic constraints that impact a client's current situation. (CS9)
 - Brainstorming alternative solutions as a part of active problem solving. (CS10)
 - Educating clients by sharing information from psychological theory and research. (CS11)
 - Recommending relevant books or articles that support therapeutic learning. (CS12)
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Behavioral Psychotherapy Microskills

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- Clarifying the impact of actions on thoughts, feelings, and interpersonal relationships. (BS1)
 - Illuminating how current behavior patterns have been shaped by environmental reinforcements and paired associations. (BS2)
 - Determining the frequency and duration of specific behaviors in order to establish baselines and gauge progress. (BS3)
 - Identifying specific behaviors that a client wants to increase or decrease. (BS4)
 - Encouraging clients to make active choices based on a realistic assessment of the likely consequences of their own actions. (BS5)
 - Assessing a client's ability and motivation to take autonomous action and participate in contingency management. (BS6)

- **Establishing schedules of reinforcement and punishment in order to increase or decrease targeted behaviors. (BS7)**
 - **Activating change by prescribing specific action or assigning homework that alters long-standing behavior. (BS8)**
 - **Constructing a hierarchy of related behaviors or situations that result in different levels of distress in order to identify an intervention strategy. (BS9)**
 - **Exposing a client to images or real-life experiences in order to desensitize or extinguish problematic paired associations. (BS10)**
 - **Providing skills training and behavioral rehearsal related to therapeutic goals. (BS11)**
 - **Understanding the impact of systemic patterns and structures on client behavior. (BS12)**
 - **Intervening strategically to change systemic patterns by prescribing behavior that will impact the entire system. (BS13)**
 - **Identifying effective behaviors that can be generalized from one environment to another in order to focus on solutions. (BS14)**
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Experiential Psychotherapy Microskills

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- **Clarifying the impact of feelings on thoughts, actions, and interpersonal relationships. (ES1)**
- **Identifying specific emotions and distinguishing them from thoughts and physical sensations. (ES2)**
- **Encouraging awareness and expression of feelings in order to optimize the adaptive value of emotional experience. (ES3)**
- **Celebrating the desire for growth and self-actualization as innate human needs. (ES4)**
- **Communicating unconditional positive regard, congruence, and empathy to provide an environment that encourages growth. (ES5)**
- **Supporting the discovery and expression of a client's personal sense of authenticity. (ES6)**
- **Identifying, connecting and integrating different parts of the self. (ES7)**
- **Focusing attention to increase awareness of feelings, thoughts, or actions. (ES8)**
- **Exploring the here-and-now relationship in order to promote insight and growth. (ES9)**
- **Creating novel in-session experiments to facilitate discovery and change. (ES10)**
- **Promoting an acceptance of freedom and responsibility that leads to mature decision-making. (ES11)**
- **Facilitating recognition of existential limitations that impact thoughts, feelings, and actions. (ES12)**

Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Microskills

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- Clarifying the impact of interpersonal relationship patterns on thoughts, feelings, and actions. (PS1)
 - Clarifying the impact of unconscious impulses, motives, and defense mechanisms on thoughts, feelings, and actions. (PS2)
 - Interpreting subtle processes that may be outside a client's awareness and highlighting the dynamic interplay between different parts of the psyche. (PS3)
 - Recognizing dysfunctional patterns that were effective earlier in life but may not be adaptive now. (PS4)
 - Facilitating the reduction of internal conflicts by gratifying needs in new, socially appropriate ways. (PS5)
 - Revealing the impact of early childhood experiences and family dynamics on current interpersonal expectations, social patterns, and identity. (PS6)
 - Illuminating the importance of early and ongoing attachment experiences and negotiating appropriate ways for clients to fulfill these needs. (PS7)
 - Examining transference as a way of seeing how the client views the world. (PS8)
 - Attending to your own reactions to clients to gain insight on how others may experience them. (PS9)
 - Maintaining therapeutic neutrality and encouraging non-directive expression to allow clients to reveal unconscious material. (PS10)
 - Listening to clients without pushing for change in order to enhance intrinsic motivation and increase the chance for personal insight. (PS11)
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Multicultural Psychotherapy Microskills

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- Clarifying the impact of cultural context and family background on thoughts, feelings, actions, and interpersonal relationships. (MS1)
- Celebrating diversity in order to help clients accept and express their uniqueness. (MS2)

- **Facilitating the awareness and development of cultural identity in order to promote self-acceptance and empowerment. (MS3)**
 - **Recognizing how identity development impacts attributions of personal success and failure. These attributions can be either internal (e.g., internalized oppression) or external (e.g., perceptions of pervasive discrimination). (MS4)**
 - **Appreciating the interaction between multiple identities including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, ability, and age. (MS5)**
 - **Highlighting the impact of societal oppression, privilege, status, and power on thoughts, feelings, and actions. (MS6)**
 - **Creating an egalitarian collaboration within the therapeutic relationship that highlights and subverts societal power dynamics. (MS7)**
 - **Exploring societal expectations and supporting informed decisions about which roles to embrace and which to discard. (MS8)**
 - **Integrating a client's spiritual awareness or faith development into holistic growth. (MS9)**
 - **Understanding your own worldview and how it impacts your role as a psychotherapist. (MS10)**
 - **Presenting options with as little bias as possible. (MS11)**
 - **Illuminating differences between psychotherapist and client identity and how they impact the therapeutic relationship. (MS12)**
 - **Observing and understanding a client's nonverbal and verbal behavior from a cultural point of view. (MS13)**
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SECTION THREE

Cognitive Psychotherapy Microskills

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This section describes twelve psychotherapy microskills that promote cognitive change. They emphasize the importance of thinking as an essential aspect of human functioning. These skills are drawn from rational-emotive behavior therapy (Ellis, 1962; Ellis & Maclaren, 1998), cognitive therapy (Beck, Rush, Shaw, & Emory, 1979; Beck, 1995), cognitive-behavior modification (Meichenbaum, 1977), reality therapy (Glasser, 2000), and problem-solving counseling (Dixon & Glover, 1984).

A. Rating Your Cognitive Skills

As you read the descriptions of these skills, please rate your abilities for each of the cognitive microskills. The purpose of the evaluation is to identify areas of current strength as well as other areas that need more practice and refinement. Please use the following scale to evaluate your skills:

A: I ALREADY use this skill with comfort and success.

B: I'm okay at this skill; I would like to be **BETTER**.

C: I CAN'T implement this skill very well.

D: I DON'T want to include this skill in my repertoire.

CS1. _____ Clarifying the impact of thoughts on feelings, actions, and interpersonal relationships.

Psychotherapy can play an important role in recognizing and addressing the ways that thoughts impact feelings, actions, and relationships. For example, thoughts like, “my boss doesn't like me”, may lead to feeling fearful, not applying for a promotion, or avoiding interpersonal contact. Understanding the impact of thoughts on other aspects of functioning is an important step in helping clients change the way they think.

CS2. _____ Illuminating self-talk, automatic thoughts, and cognitive patterns that impact and interact with feelings and actions.

The first step in cognitive psychotherapy often is to help clients become aware of the way they evaluate situations or process information. Attending to thoughts about certain situations within session or monitoring thoughts between sessions are both ways to detect common patterns of thinking that may contribute to distress.

CS3. _____ Disputing irrational thoughts or beliefs.

One approach to working with client's thoughts is to actively challenge them or to identify alternative thoughts that may result in different feelings or actions. This type of disputation is often helpful with thoughts based on misinformation. Deeply held beliefs or those learned from early life experiences may be more resistant to direct challenge.

CS4. _____ Identifying core beliefs or schemas by exploring the meaning of thoughts and patterns.

In order to support cognitive change, it is often helpful to explore underlying beliefs or long-standing cognitive structures that support automatic thoughts. Asking questions about the meaning of an automatic thought often leads to an identification of these core beliefs. Core beliefs or schemas are often long-term cognitive patterns that influence thinking across situations.

CS5. _____ Gathering evidence that confirms or disputes a client's cognitions.

Another way to foster cognitive change is to encourage clients to look at evidence related to the conclusions they have made about their situation. Sometimes this data-gathering process will stimulate change when a client realizes that their conclusions are not well founded. At other times, the evaluation process can be more complicated and lengthy.

CS6. _____ Forming and testing hypotheses about a client's beliefs and perceptions.

Cognitive change also can involve the more formal process of identifying specific hypotheses and devising ways of testing them with real-life or in-session experiments. Hypothesis testing allows a client's thoughts to be exposed to new evidence that may not have been present in the past.

CS7. _____ Modifying specific beliefs to be more accurate and adaptive.

Once a client has evaluated specific beliefs associated with troublesome feelings or actions, these cognitions may be modified. When more accurate and adaptive beliefs are identified they can be testing in new situations to see how they impact mood, feelings, or actions.

CS8. _____ Reinforcing adaptive cognitions and extinguishing dysfunctional ones.

One of the important implications of the cognitive approach is that thoughts are, in fact, behaviors that are responsive to operant conditioning. Psychotherapy should be an ongoing attempt to reinforce adaptive thought patterns and extinguish dysfunctional thinking.

CS9. _____ Encouraging accurate perceptions of the realistic constraints that impact a client's current situation.

Unrealistic expectations and inaccurate perceptions often support psychological distress. Psychotherapy should encourage clients to honestly look at their life situation and to make choices based on this accurate information.

CS10. _____ Brainstorming alternative solutions as a part of active problem solving.

Using cognitive skills to solve problems more effectively is a skill that clients often acquire in psychotherapy. The problem solving process often involves specifying a problem, generating possible solutions, selecting a solution, implementing it, and evaluating the outcome. For many clients, the key is to learn to identify multiple possibilities rather than repeatedly implementing the first solution that comes to mind. Psychotherapy can be a place where clients can learn to generate many alternative possibilities before selecting the solution with the greatest chance for success.

CS11. _____ Educating clients by sharing information from psychological theory and research.

Psychological distress is often supported by misinformation. Psychoeducation can be a helpful tool in helping clients view themselves and the world around them more accurately. Psychotherapists often help clients by informing them that their concerns are part of a common pattern. For example, it might be helpful for a client in an abusive

relationship to be educated about the cycle of abuse that describes the way there is often a honeymoon phase between abusive episodes. In other situations, psychotherapists can help clients understand their symptoms as part of a defined problem or diagnosis. It is often helpful for clients to know that they are not the only ones who have experienced a particular reaction or set of symptoms.

CS12. _____ Recommending relevant books or articles that support therapeutic learning.

Bibliotherapy can extend psychological learning and growth beyond weekly psychotherapy sessions. Reading and learning about one's concerns is a helpful way to promote psychological change and to reinforce gains made in psychotherapy. For example, thousands of clients have benefited from reading The Courage to Heal (Bass & Davis, 1994) while working in psychotherapy on resolving the trauma of sexual abuse.

B. Practicing Cognitive Skills

Identifying Strengths and Areas for Growth

Now that you have had a chance to read descriptions of these twelve cognitive skills, the next step is to identify your strengths and areas for growth. What skills are you already comfortable with? Where do you still need more practice and refinement? Please complete the [Identifying Strengths and Areas for Growth](#) worksheet focusing on cognitive skills.

Written Practice

Next, we would like you to write a specific example for each of the cognitive skills described in this section. Examples should be something that you could say to a client that would demonstrate an application of a particular skill. Your example should include something that a client might say that would suggest the usefulness of a particular skill and your response that demonstrates that skill. Here is an example of what your written practice might look like for Cognitive Skill 1: Clarifying the impact of thoughts on feelings, actions, and relationships:

CL: “So making a fool of myself at the party is just another example of how I mess everything up and get myself in all sorts of stupid situations all the time.”

PS: “As you were talking about the party, I noticed that you used lots of negative words to describe yourself. You described yourself as a fool who messes everything up in stupid ways. When you think of yourself in that way, I wonder how it impacts your mood.”

Role Play Practice

After writing examples of each of these cognitive skills, the next step is to practice them in a role-play. You may want to choose some of the skills that you identified as areas for growth and practice them with a classmate or colleague. Usually, a single skill is not used in isolation so don't be surprised if you use several cognitive skills in your role-play. Also, there is often considerable overlap between different types of skills and you may end up using skills

from other areas as you try to practice cognitive psychotherapy. If you have a other classmates or an instructor observe the role-play, they can provide valuable feedback about the skills they saw you put into practice and their effectiveness.

Treatment Planning

Another way to practice these cognitive skills is to use them in treatment planning. You may want to think about a specific client who would benefit from a cognitive approach and identify the skills that you would like to use. A Treatment Planning Worksheet is provided for this purpose. The worksheet asks you to identify the “SBPI code” for the skills plan to use. This code refers to the letters and numbers that identify a specific skill in the catalog. For example, the first cognitive skill is identified as CS1.

Reflecting on a Single Session

You also can gain an understanding of your use of cognitive skills by reflecting on a single psychotherapy session. You may want to identify a session in which you used a cognitive approach and identify the specific skills from the catalog that you used. A worksheet for Reflecting on a Single Session is provided for this purpose.

SECTION FOUR

Behavioral Psychotherapy Microskills

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This section of the training manual describes fourteen psychotherapy microskills that focus on action. These skills emphasize the centrality of behavior in human functioning. These action-oriented skills are drawn from behavior therapy (Wolpe, 1990; Goldfried, 1994), cognitive therapy (Beck, Rush, Shaw, & Emory, 1979; Beck, 1995), reality therapy (Glasser, 2000), systemic therapies (Satir, 1967; Haley, 1976), and solution-focused therapy (DeShazer, 1985).

A. Rating Your Behavioral Skills

Please rate your abilities for each of these behavioral microskills in order to identify current strengths and areas that need more practice and refinement. Please use the following scale to evaluate your skills:

A: I ALREADY use this skill with comfort and success.

B: I'm okay at this skill; I would like to be **BETTER**.

C: I CAN'T implement this skill very well.

D: I DON'T want to include this skill in my repertoire.

BS1. _____ Clarifying the impact of actions on thoughts, feelings, and interpersonal relationships.

People engage in a wide variety of behaviors everyday. Obviously, an individual's actions have a direct impact on the situations they encounter and the thoughts, feelings, and relationships that result. However, psychological distress is often created and maintained by behavioral choices that clients may or may not be aware of. If the impact of behavior is not within a client's awareness, then you can encourage insight. In other cases, when awareness is already present, psychotherapy can begin to focus on behavior change.

BS2. _____ Illuminating how current behavior patterns have been shaped by environmental reinforcements and paired associations.

Many clients enter psychotherapy without insight about why they are engaging in particular behaviors. One way to help these individuals is to attend to and explore the ways that the physical or interpersonal environment may reinforce behaviors in direct and indirect ways. As an expert in human behavior, you are likely to recognize ways that behavior is related to classical or operant conditioning. Exploring the ways that behavior has been reinforced in the past is often the first step toward effective behavior change.

BS3. _____ Determining the frequency and duration of specific behaviors in order to establish baselines and gauge progress.

In many cases, it is helpful to determine how frequently a certain behavior is exhibited. Measuring baseline behavior provides information that will guide intervention as well as provide a benchmark with which to measure progress. It will be important to work with a client in order to determine what actions to target and how to effectively measure baseline behavior.

BS4. _____ Identifying specific behaviors that a client wants to increase or decrease.

Clients often enter psychotherapy with a vague desire to change. An important step is transforming a general desire into behavioral goals that can be measured. In most cases, behavioral goals should describe positive behaviors that can be increased, rather than focusing only on negative behaviors to be decreased or eliminated.

BS5. _____ Encouraging clients to make active choices based on a realistic assessment of the likely consequences of their own actions.

People often engage in behavior that is unlikely to result in a desired outcome. As a psychotherapist, it may be your role to help a client make a realistic assessment of whether a particular behavior is the best strategy. Then, specific actions can be identified that are most likely to result in desirable consequences. This allows clients to focus on things they can change rather than those they can't control.

BS6. _____ Assessing a client's ability and motivation to take autonomous action and participate in contingency management.

In order for a client to engage in behavioral change that involves any system of self-reinforcement, there must be sufficient ability and motivation to change. In order to select appropriate interventions, you will need to assess these qualities to decide how actively and directly to involve a client in self-regulation. If motivation or ability to take action is low, it may be because a client is not yet ready to change. In this case, it may be important to engage in consciousness raising and explore the reasons for change rather than focusing directly on action.

BS7. _____ Establishing schedules of reinforcement and punishment in order to increase or decrease targeted behaviors.

Once target behaviors and specific goals have been chosen it may be helpful to identify specific rewards that can be used to reinforce behavior change. Primary or secondary reinforcers vary widely between individuals and it will be important to choose rewards that are personally desirable and are meaningfully related to the target behavior.

BS8. _____ Activating change by prescribing specific action or assigning homework that alters long-standing behavior.

In order to change long-standing patterns, initiating any type of action that alters behavior may be useful. It may be helpful for you to suggest behavior change that offers a new experience from which a client can learn. Suggesting between-session assignments that allow clients to practice new behavior or experience different consequences will support the beginning of behavior change.

BS9. _____ Constructing a hierarchy of related behaviors or situations that result in different levels of distress in order to identify an intervention strategy.

Understanding how different levels of anxiety or distress are associated with distinct situations or behaviors is often a useful strategy to support behavior change. Once a hierarchy has been established, behavioral strategies can be

used to successfully increase comfort with low-distress behaviors or situations before moving on to more challenging ones.

BS10. _____ Exposing a client to images or real-life experiences in order to desensitize them or extinguish problematic paired associations.

Using mental images or in-vivo exposure as a method of reducing anxiety is one of the most robust interventions in all of psychology. By spending time with distressing objects, situations, thoughts, images, or feelings, clients will become desensitized to their presence and the conditioned response of anxiety may decrease. Through exposure to a fearful situation, the client begins to experience a decrease in its negative emotional impact.

BS11. _____ Providing skills training and behavioral rehearsal related to therapeutic goals.

In order to adopt new, more effective behavior, clients often need instruction in specific skills such as relaxation, assertiveness, or social skills. Psychotherapy also can be a safe place to practice new skills and get feedback on how to improve. Skills training and behavioral rehearsal can prepare clients for effective behavior change outside of psychotherapy.

BS12. _____ Understanding the impact of systemic patterns and structures on client behavior.

Behavior patterns are often supported by interpersonal or institutional systems. Understanding the structures that support specific behavior patterns is an important part of intervening for change. Looking at family systems or institutional structures that reinforce or maintain undesired behavior is an important task for many clients in psychotherapy.

BS13. _____ Intervening strategically to change systemic patterns by prescribing behavior that will impact the entire system.

Once a behavior is understood within its systemic context, a psychotherapist can design interventions that are most likely to change the structures that maintain undesired behaviors. Because systems are often rigidly maintained, change in one part of the system is likely to impact other parts of the system. It is often helpful to help clients understand how others may resist or undermine their progress. Helping a client view the whole system will support their ability to change and to deal with the consequences of change.

BS14. _____ Identifying effective behaviors that can be generalized from one environment to another in order to focus on solutions.

Recognizing one's own efficacy and ability to change is often a key ingredient for success in psychotherapy. By focusing on the solutions that clients have discovered and cultivated in the past can provide important clues for future growth. By celebrating success, we can foster confidence that supports long-term change and more successful living.

B. Practicing Behavioral Skills

Identifying Strengths and Areas for Growth

Now that you have had a chance to read descriptions of these fourteen behavioral skills, please complete the Identifying Strengths and Areas for Growth worksheet focusing on behavioral skills.

Written Practice

Next, please write a specific example for each of the behavioral skills described in this section. Here is an example of what a written example might look like for Behavioral Skill 4: Identifying specific behaviors that a client wants to increase or decrease:

CL: “So, my most important goal is to get better grades this semester.”

PS: “That's a good goal. What I'd like to do is to make that goal a bit more specific. First, I'd like you to decide what 'better grades' means to you. For example, do you need to get all A's or is there another specific target that you'd like to aim for?”

CL: “I want to get either A's and B's with at least a 3.5 g.p.a.”

PS: “Good. Now I'd like for us to identify specific behaviors that would help you accomplish that goal. For example, it might be helpful to figure out how many hours a week you'd like to study and to make a weekly schedule...”

Role Play Practice

After writing examples of each of these behavioral skills, the next step is to practice them in a role-play. You may want to choose some of the skills that you identified as areas for growth and practice them with a classmate or colleague.

Treatment Planning

You may want to think about a specific client who would benefit from a behavioral approach and identify the skills that you would like to use. A Treatment Planning Worksheet is provided for this purpose.

Reflecting on a Single Session

You may want to identify a session in which you used a behavioral approach and identify the specific skills from the catalog that you used. A worksheet for Reflecting on a Single Session is provided for this purpose.

SECTION FIVE

Experiential Psychotherapy Microskills

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This section describes twelve psychotherapy microskills that focus on emotions and the fulfillment of human potential. These skills emphasize the role of feelings and the desire for growth and as central parts of the human experience. These skills are drawn from a variety of experiential, humanistic, or existential approaches including humanistic psychology (Maslow, 1998), person-centered psychotherapy (Rogers, 1995), Gestalt psychotherapy (Perls, Hefferline & Goodman, 1951; Polster, 1995), emotion focused therapy (Greenberg & Paivio, 1997), and existential psychotherapy (Bugental, 1965; May, 1969; Yalom, 1980).

A. Rating Your Experiential Skills

Please rate your abilities for each of these experiential microskills in order to identify current strengths and areas that need more practice and refinement. Please use the following scale to evaluate your skills:

A: I ALREADY use this skill with comfort and success.

B: I'm okay at this skill; I would like to be **BETTER**.

C: I CAN'T implement this skill very well.

D: I DON'T want to include this skill in my repertoire.

ES1. _____ Clarifying the impact of feelings on thoughts, actions, and interpersonal relationships.

Emotions play a key organizing and motivating role in human functioning. They summarize our experience and organize us for action. Emotional experience has a direct impact on thinking and behavior. Unfortunately, many people are not aware of the ways that their feelings impact their day-to-day lives. Psychotherapy is a place where people can become more aware of their emotions and the impact they have on other areas of their life.

ES2. _____ Identifying specific emotions and distinguishing them from thoughts and physical sensations.

If a client enters psychotherapy with limited awareness of his or her own emotional experience, it may be helpful to attend to and identify specific emotions. If someone feels vaguely uneasy or upset, it may be helpful to identify whether they feel angry, sad, afraid, or ashamed. Emotions can also be distinguished from thoughts. "I feel like my brother is a jerk" is not an accurate description of an emotion and further exploration may illuminate important feelings. Emotions may be related to particular physical sensations but it is important to identify which feelings are associated with specific physical cues. "Are the butterflies in your stomach an indication of excitement or fear?"

ES3. _____ Encouraging awareness and expression of feelings in order to optimize the adaptive value of emotional experience.

When emotions emerge as natural reactions to experiences in life, it is helpful to be aware of and express these feelings. Emotions that are openly experienced, accepted and expressed are associated with adaptive functioning, accurate thoughts, and congruent actions. Unfortunately, some people ignore their feelings or avoid their expression because of societal expectations or previous experience. Psychotherapy can be a place where people learn to attend to and express their emotions in ways that will lead to adaptive human functioning. Learning how to appropriately express unexplored emotions can be a key healing ingredient in psychotherapy.

ES4. _____ Celebrating the desire for growth and self-actualization as innate human needs.

Humanistic and experiential psychotherapy developed around the assumption that humans have an innate desire to grow, develop and improve themselves. If this assumption is true, then dysfunctional behavior often occurs when one's innate potential for growth is blocked or thwarted. Psychotherapy can be an important tool for people who are trying to rediscover their innate potential for growth and self-actualization. Encouraging clients to discover and pursue their dreams and aspirations can be an instrumental force for change.

ES5. _____ Communicating unconditional positive regard, congruence, and empathy to provide an environment that encourages growth.

Another experiential and humanistic assumption is that individuals need a safe place to explore themselves and grow. A psychotherapist can create safety and facilitate self-discovery by consistently searching for the best, communicating a sense of appreciation, sharing one's true self, and emotionally putting oneself in the client's place. When these human needs are met in a psychotherapeutic relationship, it allows clients to discover their own path toward growth and wholeness. For many clients, this type of therapeutic relationship is sufficient to stimulate insight and change.

ES6. _____ Supporting the discovery and expression of a client's personal sense of authenticity.

Many clients enter psychotherapy without a clear sense of their identity or the kind of person they want to become. Individuals may have learned to hide essential parts of themselves from disapproving others. Psychotherapy can be a place of rediscovery in which clients can reclaim who they really are. Individuals can learn to express actions that are congruent with their inner thoughts and feelings. Because this expression of one's authentic self may be difficult at first and may bring about unexpected interpersonal reactions, psychotherapy can be a supportive environment in which to understand and adapt to new interpersonal interactions.

ES7. _____ Identifying, connecting and integrating different parts of the self.

In the course of human development, people often develop different parts of themselves to adapt to distinct situations. Sometimes these different selves become rigidly fragmented rather than fitting together in an adaptive whole. Psychotherapy can provide an opportunity to identify and explore these different aspects of oneself. The goal is usually to create contact between these different selves so that they can be integrated and work together. For example, a client may have a strong side that is expressed at her job and a needy side that is expressed in intimate relationships. Creating dialogue between these strong and weak selves may allow the client to be less intimidating to her coworkers and to be more supportive in her relationships.

ES8. _____ Focusing attention to increase awareness of feelings, thoughts, or actions.

In a fast-paced society, many people have lost conscious contact with their own bodies, emotions, or intellect. Psychotherapy can be a place where clients come to slow down and reconnect to themselves. The most basic tool to increase this type of awareness is simply to focus attention on the overlooked aspect of experience. Asking clients to begin by attending to physical sensations or nonverbal behaviors can provide valuable information about feeling, thoughts, or desired action. For example, when a psychotherapist makes an observation about the way a client clenches his fists and tightens his jaw when he talks about his sister, this may result in greater awareness of feelings of anger and a desire to create distance in the relationship.

ES9. _____ Exploring the here-and-now relationship in order to promote insight and growth.

An important tool for understanding interpersonal relationships is attending to moment-to-moment interactions between the client and psychotherapist. If a psychotherapist shares his or her personal reactions, this can provide important information for the client. For example, if a psychotherapist discloses that hearing a story from the client's childhood resulted in sadness, this might help the client to experience unexplored emotions from the past. Likewise, talking openly about the current relationship between the psychotherapist and client can result in insight about interpersonal patterns. The key here is to share personal thoughts and feelings in manner that is both authentic and enhances the client's personal understanding.

ES10. _____ Creating novel in-session experiments to facilitate discovery and change.

Insight and behavior change does not always flow easily from conventional conversations. In order to create new experiences within a psychotherapy session, it may be helpful to suggest behavior that is outside the normal range. Asking a client to express their feelings with dramatic inflection or to exaggerate physical gestures may result in greater emotional awareness. Allowing a client to express their unspoken thoughts or to use “inappropriate” language may promote acceptance of disowned experience. Asking a client to physically act out their situation in a symbolic manner or engage in unconventional actions may allow a client to experience or express unexplored aspects of oneself.

ES11. _____ Promoting recognition of freedom and acceptance of responsibility that leads to mature decision-making.

Clients who seek psychotherapy often feel trapped or helpless, unable to make desired changes. A psychotherapist can help a client become aware of the freedom they have and the active choices that have resulted in particular consequences. With the recognition of freedom comes the responsibility to make active choices. Once we acknowledge the choices we make, we can begin to accept the consequences. If a client in psychotherapy begins to accept responsibility for their choices, then positive change is more likely to occur.

ES12. _____ Facilitating recognition of existential limitations that impact thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Existential limitations like death, freedom, isolation, and meaninglessness are rarely acknowledged in day-to-day life. Some events, like the death of a loved one, may bring these issues into clearer focus. However, these realities of existence may impact individuals on an ongoing basis without conscious awareness. Psychotherapy can allow an individual to explore and understand the limits of human existence and the individual meaning that is constructed to cope with these limitations.

B. Practicing Experiential Skills

Identifying Strengths and Areas for Growth

Now that you have had a chance to read descriptions of these twelve experiential skills, please complete the Identifying Strengths and Areas for Growth worksheet focusing on experiential skills.

Written Practice

Next, please write a specific example for each of the experiential skills described in this section. Here is an example of what a written example might look like for Experiential Skill 8: Focusing attention to increase awareness of feelings, thoughts, or actions:

CL: “So, I’m not really sure what to do next.”

PS: “As you said that, I noticed that your lower lip was quivering. What do you think that might mean?”

CL: “I guess it’s kind of scary to not know what I’m doing after I graduate.”

PS: “So, even though you haven’t talked much about that fear, it looks like it might be expressing itself in your body. What do you think your quivering lip is trying to tell you?”

Role Play Practice

After writing examples of each of these experiential skills, the next step is to practice them in a role-play. You may want to choose some of the skills that you identified as areas for growth and practice them with a classmate or colleague.

Treatment Planning

You may want to think about a specific client who would benefit from an experiential approach and identify the skills that you would like to use. A Treatment Planning Worksheet is provided for this purpose.

Reflecting on a Single Session

You may want to identify a session in which you used an experiential approach and identify the specific skills from the catalog that you used. A worksheet for Reflecting on a Single Session is provided for this purpose.

SECTION SIX

Psychodynamic Psychotherapy Skills

Jeff E. Brooks-Harris & Michael F. Gavetti

This section describes eleven psychodynamic psychotherapy microskills that focus on interpersonal relationship patterns and the role of the unconscious. These skills emphasize the importance of gaining insight into unconscious patterns in order to enhance human functioning. Many of these skills go all the way back to Freud's notion that the goal of psychoanalysis was to make the unconscious conscious. Other skills are drawn more directly from contemporary forms of psychodynamic psychotherapy including time-limited dynamic psychotherapy (Strupp & Binder, 1984) and the core conflictual relationship theme method (Luborsky & Crits-Christoph, 1997; Book, 1998).

A. Rating Your Psychodynamic Skills

Please rate your abilities for each of these psychodynamic microskills in order to identify current strengths and areas that need more practice and refinement. Please use the following scale to evaluate your skills:

A: I **ALREADY** use this skill with comfort and success.

B: I'm okay at this skill; I would like to be **BETTER**.

C: I **CAN'T** implement this skill very well.

D: I **DON'T** want to include this skill in my repertoire.

PS1. _____ Clarifying the impact of interpersonal relationship patterns on thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Psychological distress is often related to interpersonal patterns that are repeated across the life span. By attending carefully to past and present relationships, a psychotherapist can help a client see the impact of these patterns on their thoughts, feelings, and actions. The relationships that we experience early in life with our family members or other significant individuals often shape our experiences later. Psychotherapy can provide an opportunity to see how parts of these early relationships may be influencing current experience.

PS2. _____ Clarifying the impact of unconscious impulses, motives, and defense mechanisms on thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Psychotherapy has a long history of enhancing awareness of subtle or unconscious processes. To enact this skill, it is important to help clients see how their thoughts, feelings, and actions may be influenced by impulses and desires that may lie outside of conscious awareness. A psychotherapist can be very helpful in attending to and accepting behavior that may be ignored by a client because it is unacceptable in some way. When these defenses are recognized and acknowledged, they can begin to be understood and modified.

PS3. _____ Interpreting subtle processes that may be outside a client's awareness and highlighting the dynamic interplay between different parts of the psyche.

Attending to verbal or behavioral cues that a client may not notice is a helpful way to begin to recognize and address the unconscious. Providing interpretations that help organize one's observation can encourage insight into subtle patterns. These interpretations also may be used to point out how different aspects of a client's psyche may interact and compete for influence.

PS4. _____ Recognizing dysfunctional patterns that were effective earlier in life but may not be adaptive now.

Current distress is often the result of enacting behavior that may have been effective in the past but is no longer needed. For example, in one's family of origin it may have been adaptive to withdraw from a disapproving parent, but the same behavior may create unhealthy distance in an adult intimate relationship. Encouraging insight about how the past influences the present is an important psychodynamic skill.

PS5. _____ Facilitating the reduction of internal conflicts by gratifying needs in new, socially appropriate ways.

If psychotherapy leads to the acknowledgement of needs that previously were unrecognized, conflicts sometimes arise around the fulfillment of these desires. Part of the healing process may be to find new, more effective ways to gratify these impulses. For example, if a client is learning not to depend on unhealthy adoration from needy relationships, it may be helpful to explore healthy ways to celebrate one's unique and special qualities. Psychotherapy can provide an opportunity to find appropriate ways to fulfill emotional needs.

PS6. _____ Revealing the impact of early childhood experiences and family dynamics on current interpersonal expectations, social patterns, and identity.

Psychodynamic psychotherapy provides an emphasis on understanding how one's early family experiences provide a crucial context that impacts how individuals view themselves and shape their lives. This skill allows a psychotherapist to explore the past in order to understand the present. Examining interpersonal interactions to identify a client's wish, the response of another individual, and the client's subsequent reaction often reveals patterns that can be traced back to childhood. Illuminating these patterns can prepare a client for active choices and personal change.

PS7. _____ Illuminating the importance of early and ongoing attachment experiences and negotiating appropriate ways for clients to fulfill these needs.

One crucial aspect of early experience is whether an individual was able to experience secure relationships with significant caregivers. If a client has not had healthy attachment experiences as a child, it will be more difficult to create secure relationships in adulthood. If attachment is a concern in psychotherapy, the relationship between the client and the psychotherapist can be used to understand and repair past injuries. This process is sometimes described as "reparenting" and, ideally results in a greater ability to connect and separate in healthy ways. A psychotherapist can also guide a client as new choices are made that may lead to more secure relationship experiences.

PS8. _____ Examining transference as a way of seeing how the client views the world.

The relationship between the client and the psychotherapist provides a small window that illuminates how a client views the world and reacts to others. Investigating the assumptions that a client may have about the psychotherapist

can lead to insight into how clients experience significant others in their personal life. In addition, the interactions created by these assumptions may play out in session, and can lead to insight about pervasive interpersonal patterns in the client's life. Understanding transference can provide valuable information about the client that may facilitate positive change.

PS9. _____ Attending to your own reactions to clients to gain insight on how others may experience them.

Another way of learning from the client-psychotherapist relationship is to attend to countertransference. By paying attention to their own reactions to the client, psychotherapists can begin to understand how other people may experience the client. This insight can be invaluable for a client trying to understand his or her own interpersonal experiences.

PS10. _____ Maintaining therapeutic neutrality and encouraging non-directive expression to allow clients to reveal unconscious material.

Taking charge and directing psychotherapy sessions may interfere with clients' ability to explore their own issues and make important self-discoveries. The psychodynamic tradition emphasizes the importance of maintaining therapeutic neutrality. If a psychotherapist plays a less active role in psychotherapy, he or she is more likely to view and have access to a client's unconscious impulses and desires.

PS11. _____ Listening to clients without pushing for change in order to enhance intrinsic motivation and increase the chance for personal insight.

A psychotherapist's desire and expectation for change may interfere with a client's intrinsic motivation and sometimes results in resistance. Psychotherapists who take a less active role and monitor their own anxiety may be able to enhance the client's motivation to gain insight and work for personal change. Personal transformation may be facilitated best by a client's acceptance of personal responsibility for change without direct pressure from the psychotherapist.

B. Practicing Psychodynamic Skills

Identifying Strengths and Areas for Growth

Now that you have had a chance to read descriptions of these eleven psychodynamic skills, please complete the Identifying Strengths and Areas for Growth worksheet focusing on psychodynamic skills.

Written Practice

Next, please write a specific example for each of the psychodynamic skills described in this section. Here is an example of what a written example might look like for Psychodynamic Skills 6: Revealing the impact of early childhood experiences and family dynamics on current interpersonal expectations, social patterns, and identity:

CL: “It seems like all my boyfriend can do is criticize me. All I want is for him to compliment me or do something nice and all he does is put me down. So, I just try harder hoping he'll notice all the nice things I do.”

PS: “That pattern sounds kind of familiar. It's not all that different from the way that you've described your relationship with your father. I'm wondering if you see any of the parallels that I'm noticing.”

Role Play Practice

After writing examples of each of these psychodynamic skills, the next step is to practice them in a role-play. You may want to choose some of the skills that you identified as areas for growth and practice them with a classmate or colleague.

Treatment Planning

You may want to think about a specific client who would benefit from a psychodynamic approach and identify the skills that you would like to use. A Treatment Planning Worksheet is provided for this purpose.

Reflecting on a Single Session

You may want to identify a session in which you used a psychodynamic approach and identify the specific skills from the catalog that you used. A worksheet for Reflecting on a Single Session is provided for this purpose.

SECTION SEVEN

Multicultural Psychotherapy Skills

Jeff E. Brooks-Harris & Michael F. Gavetti

This section describes thirteen multicultural psychotherapy skills that focus on the role of cultural influences and identity development. These skills embrace a broad definition of culture that includes race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, class, and physical abilities. These skills are drawn from a wide variety of approaches to multicultural counseling (Ponterotto, Casas, Suzuki, & Alexander, 1995) as well as feminist therapy (Brown & Root, 1990).

A. Rating Your Multicultural Skills

Please rate your abilities for each of these multicultural microskills in order to identify current strengths and areas that need more practice and refinement. Please use the following scale to evaluate your skills:

A: I ALREADY use this skill with comfort and success.

B: I'm okay at this skill; I would like to be **BETTER**.

C: I CAN'T implement this skill very well.

D: I DON'T want to include this skill in my repertoire.

MS1. _____ Clarifying the impact of cultural context and family background on thoughts, feelings, actions, and interpersonal relationships.

People cannot be fully understood by examining only internal processes and identity. A client's current worldview is shaped by past familial and cultural experiences. Both one's own internalized culture and the cultural expectations of the people in one's life affect the interaction with the world. In order to develop the most accurate picture possible of a client's issues and experiences, it is necessary for the psychotherapist to help expand their understanding of the situation to include familial, cultural, and social factors. Cultural context includes race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, ability, and age.

MS2. _____ Celebrating diversity in order to help clients accept and express their uniqueness.

There is a great deal of pressure on people to conform to societal standards. A significant number of clients will present for psychotherapy complaining that they're "not normal" or "weird." Celebrating diversity means reframing a client's unique characteristics as differences to be valued and appreciated rather than as pathological deviations from a societal ideal. By emphasizing that there may be many different but equally adaptive and valid worldviews coexisting within society, the client can free himself or herself of internalized oppression, stigma, and self-criticism.

MS3. _____ Facilitating the awareness and development of cultural identity in order to promote self-acceptance and empowerment.

Some clients will present for psychotherapy having little awareness of how their cultural identity affects their lives. Other clients will present specifically because of culture shock, dissonance between familial culture and mainstream society, or recent personal exposure to discrimination. In any case, the psychotherapist needs to help clients obtain full and accurate awareness of their cultural identity. For those clients who are already aware of their cultural identity, it may be necessary to help reframe and redefine this perception into a positive, accepted, empowered self-image.

MS4. _____ Recognizing how identity development impacts attributions of personal success and failure. These attributions can be either internal (e.g., internalized oppression) or external (e.g., perceptions of pervasive discrimination).

A client's cultural identity can have a strong effect on what he or she believes to be the cause of problems. For example, clients in the earliest stages of racial identity development may see little connection between their race and events in their lives, and may choose internal attributions that ignore societal factors. (e.g., “bad things are happening only because of my personal faults”). In contrast, clients in the immersion-emersion stage of identity development may subscribe to blanket external attributions (e.g., “bad things happen to me because my life is full of racists who are actively out to get me”). Clients at all stages of identity development may need help understanding how some of society's negative stereotypes about different groups may have been internalized or incorporated into self-image.

MS5. _____ Appreciating the interaction between multiple identities including race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, class, ability, and age.

A client's cultural identity never depends solely on a single characteristic. Instead, cultural identity consists of multiple interacting characteristics, the salience of each shifting dramatically in the face of current context and situation. Appreciating the complexity of cultural identity and its interaction with society can help a client understand their life experiences more fully. Clients who are members of more than one oppressed group may face greater barriers than those struggling with only one source of discrimination.

MS6. _____ Highlighting the impact of societal oppression, privilege, status, and power on thoughts, feelings, and actions.

Because culture impacts clients' lives in such constant and pervasive ways, they may not be aware of its direct presence. Clients who come from the majority culture may be unaware that they benefit from many unspoken cultural privileges and may assume that these privileges are available to people of all racial and cultural backgrounds. Clients from minority or marginalized cultural backgrounds are more likely to recognize the inherent differences in privileges and power between different groups but may need help in finding adaptive coping strategies. The psychotherapist needs to make the connection between societal factors and client reactions or responses.

MS7. _____ Creating an egalitarian collaboration within the therapeutic relationship that highlights and subverts societal power dynamics.

Power dynamics are an inevitable part of human interaction, although the visibility of these dynamics can vary widely across cultures and situations. Many psychotherapy clients will have experienced a “one-down” power

position by many of the laws, institutions, and expectations of mainstream society. The psychotherapy process can serve as a corrective experience in which the psychotherapist overtly acknowledges the inherent power dynamics of the situation and works collaboratively with the client to minimize these effects. In addition to facilitating rapport and trust in the therapeutic relationship, this subversion of societal power dynamics can help the client translate empowerment into their personal life.

MS8. _____ Exploring societal expectations and supporting informed decisions about which roles to embrace and which to discard.

Although some societal and cultural effects can be obvious and overt (such as blatant racism), many other factors are so faint as to be outside clients' consciousness. Subtle but powerful societal messages about stereotypes, stigma, self-worth, status, expectation, potential, and power pervade mainstream culture. Because of this, many clients internalize societal messages without being aware of it. The psychotherapist needs to help make these internalized messages overt, to highlight their origin in society, and work collaboratively with the client to decide how they want to embrace or reject different societal expectations.

MS9. _____ Integrating a client's spiritual awareness or faith development into holistic growth.

Understanding and developing cultural identity means exploring all the salient parts of a client, including their spirituality. Integrating spirituality or faith development into holistic growth requires both a non-judgmental investigation of the client's current beliefs and an understanding of how the client wants their spirituality to play a part in their lives. Clients should be encouraged to be proud of whatever spiritual beliefs or faith they hold and to recognize them as a vital part of their cultural identity.

MS10. _____ Understanding your own worldview and how it impacts your role as a psychotherapist.

All people, including psychotherapists, have a unique worldview based on family, culture, and community experiences. As a result, all psychotherapists will have expectations, assumptions, and blind spots. It will be necessary for the psychotherapist to be on constant watch for how their cultural blind spots may be playing out in psychotherapy. It will also be necessary to investigate how the "culture" of mental health professionals may be playing out in the relationship with the client.

MS11. _____ Presenting options with as little bias as possible.

Because psychotherapists are human beings, they all have culturally-focused assumptions and expectations. However, working in an egalitarian style means that the psychotherapist must empower the client as much as possible, within an appropriate and ethical therapeutic relationship. Clients may need help recapturing personal power and responsibility for choice in their lives. Psychotherapists will need to present possible decisions in such a way that clients are able to choose a course of action without being pressured by the psychotherapist's own expectations and agenda. When a psychotherapist does have a strong preference or bias, they have a responsibility to own the reaction and share it with the client. This warns the client about possible bias in the presentation of the problem and separates the psychotherapist's professional power from his or her personal reactions.

MS12. _____ Illuminating differences between psychotherapist and client identity and how they impact the therapeutic relationship.

Because all people are unique, there will be inevitable differences between psychotherapist and client cultural identities. In some cases, especially when the gap in identities is small or the client's crisis is intense, these differences may have little salience in the therapeutic relationship. At other times, such as when presenting concerns revolve around cultural factors or when the focus of treatment is the client's interpersonal relationships, differences between client and psychotherapist cultural identities may have a strong impact on the psychotherapy experience. Under these circumstances, it will be necessary for the psychotherapist to explore how cultural differences might be affecting the relationship.

MS13. _____ Observing and understanding a client's nonverbal and verbal behavior from a cultural point of view.

Cultural background has a large impact on normative nonverbal and verbal behaviors. Eye contact and physical proximity have different meanings in different cultures. Formality of speech and other verbal behaviors also should be appreciated in light of a client's background. In addition to being aware of the cultural source of different behaviors, it may be helpful to adapt your own nonverbal and verbal behavior to a client's culture-based expectations. For example, if a client comes from a culture in which direct eye contact is seen as a sign of disrespect, it may be important to adjust your own eye contact accordingly.

B. Practicing Multicultural Skills

Identifying Strengths and Areas for Growth

Now that you have had a chance to read descriptions of these thirteen multicultural skills, please complete the Identifying Strengths and Areas for Growth worksheet focusing on multicultural skills.

Written Practice

Next, please write a specific example for each of the multicultural skills described in this section. Here is an example of what a written example might look like for Multicultural Skill 1: Clarifying the impact of cultural context and family background on thoughts, feelings, actions, and interpersonal relationships:

CL: “I just can't get myself to apologize for the way I acted last week. Part of me wants to clear the air but I keep avoiding the situation.”

PS: “When we talked before about the cultural values you learned from your family, you emphasized the role of shame. Do you think you might not want to apologize because it might bring up feelings of shame?”

Role Play Practice

After writing examples of each of these multicultural skills, the next step is to practice them in a role-play. You may want to choose some of the skills that you identified as areas for growth and practice them with a classmate or colleague.

Treatment Planning

You may want to think about a specific client who would benefit from a multicultural approach and identify the skills that you would like to use. A Treatment Planning Worksheet is provided for this purpose.

Reflecting on a Single Session

You may want to identify a session in which you used a multicultural approach and identify the specific skills from the catalog that you used. A worksheet for Reflecting on a Single Session is provided for this purpose.

SECTION EIGHT

Integrating Psychotherapy Skills in Clinical Practice

Jeff E. Brooks-Harris & Michael F. Gavetti

The final section of this practicum handbook describes the second phase in the Skill-Based Psychotherapy Integration training method. The first phase of training focused on the acquisition of a repertoire of diverse psychotherapy skills. Now that you have learned about over sixty different skills from five distinct approaches, we are ready to address integration. Therefore, the second phase of SBPI focuses on integrating diverse psychotherapy skills in clinical practice. Before we describe specific strategies for integration, we will provide some context by reviewing the psychotherapy integration movement and highlighting some of the unique emphases of SBPI.

Psychotherapy Integration

The idea of integrating ideas, techniques, or skills from different psychotherapy theories has a long and controversial history. For over sixty years, psychotherapists have been debating whether integrated forms of psychotherapy offer advantages over pure forms of psychotherapy based on a single theory (Goldfried & Newman, 1992). The chief argument supporting integration has been the opportunity to choose interventions from a wide array of psychotherapeutic strategies depending upon the unique needs of an individual client. In the past, the chief argument against integration was the concern that different theories of psychotherapy are based on contradictory assumptions. A more recent barrier is that it is more difficult to empirically validate integrated psychotherapy than manualized treatments based on a single theory. Unfortunately, a balanced portrayal of this argument is beyond the scope of this manual. If you would like to learn more about psychotherapy integration, you may want to read the Handbook of Psychotherapy Integration (Norcross & Goldfried, 1992) or the Comprehensive Handbook of Psychotherapy Integration (Stricker & Gold, 1993). For a critique of the integration movement that emphasizes the need for a single underlying theory, you might want to read The Integrative Power of Cognitive Therapy (Alford & Beck, 1997). Traditionally, most attempts at psychotherapy integration have followed one of three routes: technical eclecticism, theoretical integration, or common factors (Norcross & Newman, 1992). Technical eclecticism is the first route and involves using techniques from diverse sources without addressing differences in underlying theories. Methods of technical eclecticism, including Lazarus's (1989) Multimodal Therapy and Beutler and Harwood's (2000) Prescriptive Psychotherapy, suggest ways of deciding which techniques to use with particular clients based on an assessment of relevant variables. Second, theoretical integration represents an attempt to combine two or more psychotherapies into a more complex and synthesized treatment. One example is Wachtel's (1997) model of Cyclical Psychodynamics that integrates psychodynamic and behavioral approaches. The most ambitious attempt at theoretical integration, Prochaska and DiClemente's (1984, 1992) Transtheoretical Approach, proposes an integration of over a dozen major therapy systems based on stages and levels of the change process. Third, common

factors integration emphasizes the characteristics that all forms of psychotherapy share including the development of a therapeutic relationship, emotional release, explanation or interpretation, reinforcement, desensitization, facing a problem, and skills training (Garfield, 1992).

Within this tripartite view, SBPI can be considered a model of technical eclecticism. Like other methods of technical eclecticism, SBPI seeks “to improve our ability to select the best treatment for the person and the problem” and uses skills “drawn from different sources without necessarily subscribing to the theories that spawned them” (Norcross & Newman, 1992, p. 11). This section of the practicum handbook will identify several ways that you can think about clients and talk with them in order to make informed choices about which skills to emphasize.

Emphases of SBPI

We see Skill-Based Psychotherapy Integration falling firmly within the mainstream of the psychotherapy integration movement. However, SBPI also offers a new approach to integration that emphasizes different features. Compared to other methods of psychotherapy integration, SBPI places greater emphasis on:

- **Skills** rather than techniques or theories
- **Combinations** rather than choices
- **Conceptualization** rather than formal assessment
- **Collaboration** rather than prescription

Each of these emphases will be described separately. Because SBPI focuses on different features than some of the other models of integration, this allows room for complementarity. It is our belief that SBPI is compatible with most other forms of psychotherapy integration.

First, SBPI focuses on skills more than techniques or theories. Some methods of integration, particularly models of technical eclecticism, focus on identifying techniques that can be usefully applied to a client's situation. Similarly, models of theoretical integration, like the transtheoretical approach, provide guidelines for choosing which theory to apply. By focusing on discrete skills, psychotherapy can be described in smaller units that can be identified, practiced, and mastered over time. The catalog of intermediate psychotherapy microskills makes it easier to translate theory into practice. This makes SBPI an effective training method for intermediate-level psychotherapists.

Second, SBPI focuses on combinations rather than choices. One limitation of some models of integration is that they focus on choices between techniques or theories. In contrast, SBPI's focus on integration at the level of discrete skills allows psychotherapists to draw upon the rich tradition of diverse orientations without having to make “either-or” choices. Instead, SBPI encourages “this-*and*-that” combinations of skills from different theories. These unique combinations of skills will be described later as “clusters of integrated skills.” A culinary metaphor may be helpful at this point. A model of theoretical integration, that suggests which approach would be most helpful given a particular client's situation, may be compared to selecting a restaurant where you wish to dine. “Would you like to eat Italian or Chinese food tonight?” Technical eclecticism may be compared to ordering an entree at a restaurant

that offers a diverse menu. “Would you like the ‘Pasta Primavera’ or the ‘Peking Duck Egg Rolls?’” In contrast, integrating at the level of skills may be more like fusion cooking that allows a chef to take the best ingredients from different culinary traditions and create new dishes with unique and unexpected flavor combinations. “Would you like to try our new ‘Egg Rolls Primavera?’”

Third, SBPI focuses on conceptualization rather than formal assessment. This section of the handbook will describe the importance of identifying clinical markers that will guide your selection of appropriate skills. The recognition of clinical markers, along with collaborative dialogue with clients, will help you to create a multitheoretical conceptualization that involves thinking about clients from the perspective of each of the five approaches from which SBPI skills are drawn.

Fourth, SBPI focuses on collaboration rather than prescription. Some models of psychotherapy integration emphasize the importance of making prescriptive decisions about treatment (e.g., Beutler & Harwood, 2000; Norcross, 1994). In contrast, SBPI emphasizes the importance of engaging in collaborative dialogue with clients in order to come to a common understanding of a client's concerns and to make cooperative decisions about treatment. Although this type of dialogue and decision-making may not be appropriate for all clients, it can increase the likelihood of appropriate treatment choices for many. To return to our culinary metaphor, collaborative dialogue in psychotherapy might be compared to having a personal chef who is willing to create unique combinations of flavors and ingredients based on an ongoing dialogue about your personal tastes and nutritional needs. The opportunity to “look inside the kitchen” and understand the available options may be a helpful way to build trust and rapport as well as to increase motivation and treatment compliance.

We believe these four emphases of SBPI describe the kind of integration that many experienced clinicians practice. It is interesting to note that although a large portion of practicing psychotherapists consider themselves eclectics or integrationists, most do not adhere to one of the formal models of technical eclecticism or theoretical integration (Garfield & Kurtz, 1977; Norcross & Prochaska, 1988). We suspect that these experienced psychotherapists gradually expand their repertoire of skills based on clinical experience, professional reading, and continuing education. We think that most experienced clinicians probably make treatment choices based on a recognition of clinical markers, a multitheoretical conceptualization, and collaborative dialogue with clients. SBPI represents an attempt to describe this process of skill acquisition and integration and to make it more accessible to psychotherapists-in-training. We hope this practicum handbook will help guide graduate students through the process of learning to practice integrated psychotherapy.

Identifying Clinical Markers

As you talk to your clients about their concerns and observe their behavior, you will begin to notice markers that may suggest the usefulness of different types of psychotherapy skills. These clinical markers are things that a psychotherapy client may say or do that indicate the existence of a particular type of problem or experience and the

“client's readiness for a particular kind of therapeutic exploration” (Greenberg, Rice, & Elliot, 1993, p. 9). In the context of this practicum handbook, two levels of clinical markers are important to consider. First, there are broad markers that suggest compatibility with a particular approach to psychotherapy. Second, there are more specific clinical markers that may help you select between skills from the same psychotherapy tradition.

Broad Clinical Markers. Broad clinical markers can be used to help you and your client decide which themes to explore and which skills to emphasize. For example, a client may enter psychotherapy with a desire to understand why they keep making the same choices in interpersonal relationships that continue to result in the same negative consequences. This desire to understand interpersonal patterns may be seen as a marker that suggests the usefulness of a psychodynamic approach. Another client may present with sufficient insight but a strong desire to make specific changes in their behavior. This type of marker may indicate that psychotherapy should initially emphasize behavioral skills.

Clinical markers do not focus on specific symptoms but on some of the underlying causes related to psychological symptoms. For example, depressed mood is not listed as a cognitive marker although we know that cognitive psychotherapy is often very helpful in treating depression. Instead some of the underlying cognitive feature of depression are listed: inaccurate thoughts, unrealistic expectations, and distorted perceptions. Some broad clinical markers associated with an emphasis on a cognitive, behavioral, experiential, psychodynamic, or multicultural approach are listed in Box 8.1. Of course, these markers do not exist in isolation and that's where integration enters the picture. Because most clients will exhibit clinical markers associated with more than one approach, the recognition of diverse markers will indicate the range of skills you may want to integrate in clinical practice. To help you start recognizing these types of markers in your work with clients, a worksheet for Identifying Clinical Markers is provided.

Box 8.1. Broad Clinical Markers

Cognitive Markers

- Inaccurate thoughts
- Pervasive worries
- Unrealistic expectations
- Distorted perceptions
- Distress related to misinformation

Behavioral Markers

- Ineffective behaviors
- Conditioned responses
- Compulsive behaviors
- Unproductive patterns
- Environmental barriers

Experiential Markers

- Unexpressed emotions
- Unrealized goals or dreams
- Lack of personal awareness
- Conflicted sense of self
- Existential issues

Psychodynamic Markers

- Repetitive interpersonal patterns
- Unconscious defense mechanisms
- Unresolved childhood experiences
- Inability to create secure attachments
- Distorted interpersonal relationships

Multicultural Markers

- Confusion about cultural identity
- Experiences of discrimination

- Internalized oppression
- Hindered by stereotypes
- Relationships distorted by cultural factors

Multitheoretical Conceptualization

As you identify clinical markers that are salient for a particular client, it will be helpful for you to think about the interaction between five broad themes of human functioning: thoughts, actions, feelings, interpersonal patterns, and culture. These five themes roughly correspond to the five groups of skills in the SBPI catalog: cognitive skills focus on thoughts, behavioral skills target actions, experiential skill emphasize feelings, psychodynamic skills examine interpersonal patterns, and multicultural skills focus on culture. Multitheoretical conceptualization encourages you to think about a client's thoughts, actions, feelings, interpersonal patterns, and culture to create an integrated conceptualization based on cognitive, behavioral, experiential, psychodynamic, and multicultural perspectives. As you are thinking about a multitheoretical conceptualization, here are some questions that you might want to answer for yourself. In the section on collaborative dialogue, we will present similar questions that you can use in discussing these themes directly with a client.

- Thoughts. How is this client's concern impacted by the way he or she thinks? Are there inaccurate thoughts or beliefs? (Cognitive Conceptualization)
- Actions. How is this concern related to the client's actions? Are there specific behaviors that should be increased or decreased? (Behavioral Conceptualization)
- Feelings. How is this client's concern impacted by emotions? Does the client experience relevant feelings of sadness, fear, anger, shame, or happiness? (Experiential Conceptualization)
- Interpersonal Patterns. How is this concern related to interpersonal relationships? Are there relevant interpersonal patterns? (Psychodynamic Conceptualization)
- Culture. Are there cultural factors that influence this concern? Is it related to ethnic identity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, class, or physical ability? (Multicultural Conceptualization)

We have developed a Multitheoretical Conceptualization worksheet for you to use on page 66. This worksheet is designed to help you think about your clients from cognitive, behavioral, experiential, psychodynamic, and multicultural perspectives. We encourage you to complete a copy of this worksheet for clients with whom you are providing integrated psychotherapy. It will provide a way for you to begin to think in diverse ways about a single client and will prepare you for deciding which skills to emphasize in treatment.

Collaborative Dialogue

Rather than viewing the psychotherapist as an expert who diagnoses a client and prescribes a particular treatment, SBPI suggests that psychotherapists engage in an ongoing process of collaborative dialogue with their clients.

Although we already have described multitheoretical conceptualization, it is our assumption that in many cases the process of conceptualizing a client's concerns should be an interactive process based on a cooperative discussion. Therapeutic goals can be set based on a common understanding of the situation and an informed consideration of various treatment options. Although it may not be appropriate to engage in collaborative dialogue with all of your clients, this type of exploration will be helpful for many high functioning clients. Throughout the psychotherapy process, it may be helpful to return to this dialogue to determine whether the original understanding and direction continue to be helpful to the client. There are five steps that describe the process of integrated psychotherapy based on collaborative dialogue. Steps 2 and 3 represent key phases of collaborative dialogue that will be explained in more detail.

1. Defining the problem. Discuss your client's concerns and come to a collaborative understanding upon which you can agree.
2. Assessment. Explore with you client the interactive role of thoughts, actions, feelings, interpersonal patterns, and culture.
3. Treatment Planning. Talk about alternative approaches that emphasize these five themes (thoughts, actions, feelings, interpersonal patterns, and culture) and identify the best place(s) to start.
4. Implementation. Begin treatment by emphasizing skills from the approach(es) that you and your client selected together.
5. Fine Tuning. Attend to clinical markers that may indicate the usefulness of other skills.

Collaborative Assessment. During the assessment phase of collaborative dialogue, you will explore the interactive role of thoughts, actions, feelings, interpersonal patterns, and culture with your client. Here are some examples of specific questions you can ask to collaboratively assess a client's situation and concerns:

Thoughts

- “Are there specific thoughts or ideas that trouble you?”
- “What role do you think your thoughts play related to your current concerns?”
- “Do you think that your symptoms might be related to the way you view the situation?”

Actions

- “Are there specific behaviors that you would like to increase or decrease?”
- “What have you been doing to cope with this situation?”
- “What sorts of barriers have made it difficult for you to accomplish your goals?”

Feelings

- “How have these concerns impacted you emotionally?”
- “Do your feelings seem to be an appropriate reaction to the situation?”
- “Do you allow yourself to feel your emotions or do you tend to cut them off?”

Interpersonal Patterns

- “Is this situation similar to other things you have experienced in the past?”
- “How do you think this concern is impacted by your family background?”
- “Do you think your reactions to this relationship are impacted by past experiences?”

Culture

- “How do you think this concern is impacted by your cultural background?”
- “Do you think the way you view yourself culturally might be influencing how you are experiencing this situation?”
- “Do you think the people around you might be treating you differently because of your culture?” (or “gender?” or “sexual orientation?”, etc.)

Collaborative Treatment Planning. After you have made a collaborative assessment of these five areas, it may be appropriate to engage in collaborative treatment planning. To do so, you can talk to your client about alternative approaches to psychotherapy that emphasize each of the five themes (thoughts, actions, feelings, interpersonal patterns, culture) and identify the best place to start. This type of conversation is often helpful at the end of the first session or the beginning of the second session. It also may be useful later in psychotherapy at a transition point or if

your initial focus did not prove fruitful. As you present different options, it will be important to identify the themes that you have heard the client discuss that may be relevant to a particular approach. Although collaborative treatment planning will be helpful for many clients, it may not be appropriate for everyone. For example, clients with serious mental illness or certain personality disorders may not be good candidates for collaborative treatment planning. Here's an example of how a psychotherapist might present options to a client at the end of the first session:

“Now that you've had a chance to describe your concerns, I'd like to talk about some different ways that we might work together. Basically, I'd like to describe five areas where psychotherapy often focuses and let you tell me which of these 'menu options' sound like they might work best...”

“First, we could focus on thoughts. For example, you talked about how the idea that you 'can't get survive on your own' keeps you 'stuck' in this relationship. We might want to look at thoughts like that to see how they impact your mood and whether they are accurate...”

“Second, we can focus on actions. We might set specific behavioral goals and see how these different strategies can impact the situation. For example, you mentioned the idea of learning to be more assertive and setting better limits. We might want to look at those sorts of skills...”

“Third, we could focus on feelings. You talked about how you swing back and forth between feeling angry at your boyfriend and feeling afraid that he might leave you. It might be helpful for us to look at how these emotions interact and explore which feelings might be the most adaptive...”

“Fourth, we might look at interpersonal patterns. For example, you talked about how your boyfriend reminds you of your father in some ways. We could take a look at the ways this situation might be part of a pattern you learned from your family...”

“Fifth, we could look at the way your concern is related to cultural messages. For example, you mentioned that you were always taught that 'a woman should support the men in her life no matter what.' I'm curious how your relationship might be impacted by cultural messages about gender...”

“As we've talked about these five different emphases, do you have any ideas about which might be the most helpful for you? Do you have some initial thoughts about where we should start?”

After you have discussed these sorts of options with a client, it may be appropriate to start by emphasizing skills from the approaches that a client has identified as most attractive. However, this sort of collaborative dialogue is an ongoing process and you should be attentive to clinical markers that may indicate the need for a change in focus. It is important to remember that although careful treatment planning based on dialogue is important, psychotherapy also consists of spontaneous and intuitive decisions based on experience and clinical judgment.

Clusters of Integrated Skills

One advantage of integrating psychotherapy at the level of discrete skills is that it allows you to create unique combinations of skills drawing upon different theoretical traditions. Earlier in this section, a culinary metaphor was introduced that compared this process to fusion cooking. As you develop as a psychotherapist, you will begin to notice times that you draw upon a certain set of skills with particular success. This might be like a chef experimenting with different ingredients and discovering a new recipe. SBPI refers to these “new recipes” as “clusters of integrated skills.” One of these clusters is identified in Box 8.2 and will be illustrated with a case example. After reading about this cluster of skills, you will have an opportunity to identify your own unique combinations of skills.

Box 8.2. One Cluster of Integrated Skills

“Looking at the interaction between feelings and thoughts”

ES3. Encouraging awareness and expression of feelings

CS2. Illuminating automatic thoughts

PS6. Revealing the impact of childhood and family dynamics

MS1. Clarifying the impact of cultural context

BS5. Encouraging active choices based on realistic assessment

When a psychotherapist looks at the interaction between feelings and thoughts, it is often helpful to draw upon skills from several different perspectives. Employing this cluster of integrated skills, you might start by encouraging awareness and expression of feelings (ES3). For example, a client might talk about the anger that he feels when his hard work is not recognized or rewarded at his job. You might encourage him to express these private feelings to

you in a way that might not be appropriate to share with coworkers. After exploring these emotions, you might try to illuminate some of the automatic thoughts that are associated with the anger (CS2). Using the same example, your client might reveal two contradictory cognitions: “They're trying to take advantage of me” and “I must never show that I'm mad.” After revealing this type of self-talk, you might proceed to explore where these messages were learned. This type of exploration might allow the client to reveal the impact of childhood and family dynamics (PS6). Your client might tell you how he watched his father express his work frustrations at home in destructive ways and how his mother always told his father not to let his coworkers know how he felt. This type of exploration might lead you and your client to clarify the impact of the cultural context (MS1). Your client might share his experiences as an African-American growing up in a predominantly Euro-American community where he experienced racism but was encouraged not to identify or complain about discrimination in order to get along. Eventually, this type of exploration might return to the present and allow you to encourage active choices based on a realistic assessment of the situation (BS5). You might be able to help your client decide when it is appropriate to express anger and when it is best not to. As a result of a thorough understanding of the client's feelings, thoughts, interpersonal patterns, and culture, the actions that are chosen will be more likely to be adaptive and effective. This cluster of integrated skills and the case example were described in order to encourage you to think about the way that you use and integrate skills from diverse orientations. The example was obviously designed to draw upon skills from all five approaches. Other clusters of integrated skills may draw upon skills from only two or three approaches. You are encouraged to think about the clusters of integrated skills that you use. Are there combinations that you frequently use with a positive outcome? Please use the Clusters of Integrated Skills worksheet to identify a cluster of skills that you may have discovered in your own clinical work.

Treatment Planning

For each of the sections in the acquisition phase of SBPI training, you were asked to complete a treatment planning worksheet for a client who would benefit from a particular psychotherapy approach. Treatment planning is an equally important task during the integration phase of training. Therefore, we would like for you now to think about a specific client who would benefit from an integrated approach using skills from at least two distinct psychotherapy traditions. In order to practice integrated treatment planning, a Treatment Planning Worksheet is provided.

Reflecting on a Single Session

Likewise, you were asked to reflect on single sessions during the acquisition phase of training. This is also a helpful method during the integration phase of SBTI training. You may want to reflect on a session in which you integrated skills from more than one approach and identify the specific skills from the SBPI catalog that you used. A worksheet for Reflecting on a Single Session is provided for this purpose.

Case Presentations

Psychotherapists-in-training are often asked to do case presentations in seminars or classes. This is a great opportunity to reflect in depth on your work with a single client and to share your experience with classmates or

colleagues. Case presentations frequently ask you to describe features like client demographics, presenting concern, relevant history, diagnosis and conceptualization, treatment plan, and the course of psychotherapy. Within the context of SBPI training, case presentations are also an opportunity to reflect on the types of skills you have used and the approaches you have integrated. A Case Presentation Worksheet is provided that will encourage you to think about case presentations in the context of the SBPI.

Tracking Progress

Throughout your growth as a psychotherapist-in-training, it may be helpful to look back on your development and to observe the progress you've made. A Tracking Your Progress worksheet is provided for this purpose. This worksheet will help you identify the skills you have acquired and the approaches you are learning to integrate. Because the acquisition and integration of psychotherapy skills is a life-long process, you may want to reflect on your progress in this way at periodic intervals. This will give you an opportunity to view and appreciate your growth over time.

Conclusion

We hope this practicum handbook has provided a helpful way for you to think about the acquisition and integration of psychotherapy skills. You probably can tell that we view professional development as a life-long process. The ability to acquire and integrate diverse skills will take years of practice. Mastering these skills may take decades. At first, this ongoing task may seem daunting. Another way to look at this is to embrace the challenge and excitement of life-long learning. For better or for worse, you have chosen to enter a professional field that will remain challenging for as long as you want to practice and engage in ongoing development. Good luck!

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Skill-Based Psychotherapy Integration: A Practicum Handbook of Intermediate Microskills

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HANDOUTS

Identifying Your Preferences

What skills do you use the most?

After reviewing the Catalog of Psychotherapy Microskills, please identify which skills you use the most. Please rank all five approaches from the most frequently used (indicate with a “1”) to the least frequently used (indicate with a “5”).

_____ **Cognitive**

_____ **Behavioral**

_____ **Experiential**

_____ **Psychodynamic**

_____ **Multicultural**

Where do your preferences come from?

World View / Personality – Which approaches most closely match the way you experience and organize the world around you?

Training – Which approaches and skills have been emphasized the most in your training?

Setting / Client Population – Which approaches and skills seem to work best with the clients you have worked with the most?

What skills do you want to learn next?

What types of skills would you like to use more? Please indicate the approaches you would like to learn more about at this point in your development as a psychotherapist.

_____ **Cognitive**

_____ **Behavioral**

_____ **Experiential**

_____ **Psychodynamic**

_____ **Multicultural**

Identifying Strengths and Areas for Growth

Jeff E. Brooks-Harris & Michael F. Gavetti

1. Strengths. After reviewing the description of microskills, please identify two or three skills that you have used successfully and that you consider strengths.

- a.
- b.
- c.

2. Areas for Growth. Please identify two or three microskills that you would like to refine and improve, use more frequently, or add to your repertoire.

- a.
- b.
- c.

3. Client Targets. Are there any current clients with whom you would like to use the microskills that you have identified as areas for growth? If so, please indicate their initials and why they would benefit from your use of these skills.

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Treatment Planning Worksheet

Jeff E. Brooks-Harris & Michael F. Gavetti

Please use this worksheet to identify the approaches and skills you plan to utilize when working with a particular client.

Psychotherapist: _____ Client's initials: _____ Date: _____

Client's Primary Goals. What have you agreed to work on with this client?

Psychotherapy Approaches. Which approach(es) to psychotherapy do you think will be most useful in working with this client? Please mark your primary approach with the number "1" and any other approaches you hope to integrate with a "2" or "3".

_____ **Cognitive**

_____ **Behavioral**

_____ **Experiential**

_____ **Psychodynamic**

_____ **Multicultural**

Rationale. Why have you chosen these approaches? How do they fit the client's primary goals?

Specific Microskills. Please review the catalog of intermediate psychotherapy microskills and identify specific skills that you would like to implement with this client which correspond to the approaches that you have chosen to use.

| | <u>Skills</u> | <u>SBPI code</u> |
|-------|---------------------|------------------|
| 1. | _____ | (_____) |
| 2. | _____ | (_____) |
| 3. | _____ | (_____) |
| 4. | _____ | (_____) |
| 5. | _____ | (_____) |

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Reflecting on a Single Session

Jeff E. Brooks-Harris & Michael F. Gavetti

Please use this worksheet to identify the approaches and skills you used with a particular client during a specific session.

Psychotherapist: _____ Client's initials: _____ Date: _____

Primary Focus of the Session. What content did you and your client discuss during this session?

Psychotherapy Approaches. Which approach(es) to psychotherapy did you draw upon the most during this session?

Please mark your primary approach with the number "1" and any other approaches you used with a "2" or "3".

_____ **Cognitive**

_____ **Behavioral**

_____ **Experiential**

_____ **Psychodynamic**

_____ **Multicultural**

Rationale. Why did you use this / these approach(es)? How did they fit the client's goals or the session content?

Specific Microskills. Please review the catalog of intermediate psychotherapy microskills and identify specific skills that you used during this session.

| | <u>Skill</u> | | <u>SBPI code</u> |
|-------|--------------|-------|------------------|
| 1. | _____ | (| _____) |
| 2. | _____ | (| _____) |
| 3. | _____ | (| _____) |
| 4. | _____ | (| _____) |
| 5. | _____ | (| _____) |

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Identifying Clinical Markers

Jeff E. Brooks-Harris & Michael F. Gavetti

Please use this worksheet to identify clinical markers that may indicate which approaches to emphasize in psychotherapy. Please put a mark next to a clinical marker if you think it is salient for the client with whom you are working.

Psychotherapist: _____ Client's initials: _____ Date: _____

Cognitive Markers

- _____ Inaccurate thoughts
- _____ Pervasive worries
- _____ Unrealistic expectations
- _____ Distorted perceptions
- _____ Distress related to misinformation

Behavioral Markers

- _____ Ineffective behaviors
- _____ Conditioned responses
- _____ Compulsive behaviors
- _____ Unproductive patterns
- _____ Environmental barriers

Experiential Markers

- _____ Unexpressed emotions
- _____ Unrealized goals or dreams
- _____ Lack of personal awareness
- _____ Conflicted sense of self

_____ Existential issues

Psychodynamic Markers

_____ Repetitive interpersonal patterns

_____ Unconscious defense mechanisms

_____ Unresolved childhood experiences

_____ Inability to create secure attachments

_____ Distorted interpersonal relationships

Multicultural Markers

_____ Confusion about cultural identity

_____ Experiences of discrimination

_____ Internalized oppression

_____ Hindered by stereotypes

_____ Relationships distorted by cultural factors

Conclusion. Based on this assessment of salient clinical markers, which approaches would be most appropriate for initial emphasis? Why?

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Multitheoretical Conceptualization

Jeff E. Brooks-Harris & Michael F. Gavetti

Psychotherapist: _____ Client's initials: _____ Date: _____

How would you describe your client's primary concern or principle goal?

Thoughts. How is this concern impacted by the way your client thinks? Are there inaccurate thoughts or beliefs?

How would you conceptualize this client from a cognitive perspective?

Actions. How is your client's concern related to his or her actions? Are there specific behaviors that should be increased or decreased? How would you conceptualize this client from a behavioral perspective?

Feelings. How is your client's concern impacted by emotions like sadness, fear, anger, shame, or happiness? How would you conceptualize this client from an experiential perspective?

Interpersonal Patterns. How is your client's concern related to interpersonal relationship patterns? How would you conceptualize this client from a psychodynamic perspective?

Culture. How is your client's concern impacted by cultural factors like ethnic identity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, class, or physical ability? How would you conceptualize this client from a multicultural perspective?

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Clusters of Integrated Skills

Jeff E. Brooks-Harris & Michael F. Gavetti

Please use this worksheet to identify a clusters of integrated skills that you use in psychotherapy. You should identify at least three skills from at least two different approaches that you have used together successfully on at least two occasions. Please include an example of each skill drawn from the same case.

Skill 1:

SBPI code: _____

Example:

Skill 2:

SBPI code: _____

Example:

Skill 3:

SBPI code: _____

Example:

Skill 4:

SBPI code: _____

Example:

Skill 5:

SBPI code: _____

Example:

Case Presentation Worksheet

Jeff E. Brooks-Harris & Michael F. Gavetti

Please use this worksheet to identify the approaches and skills you used with a particular client over the course of several sessions of psychotherapy.

Psychotherapist: _____ Client's initials: _____ Date: _____

Primary Focus of Psychotherapy. What content did you and your client focus on?

Psychotherapy Approaches. Which approach(es) to psychotherapy did you draw upon the most? Please mark your primary approach with the number "1" and any other approaches you used with a "2" or "3".

_____ **Cognitive**

_____ **Behavioral**

_____ **Experiential**

_____ **Psychodynamic**

_____ **Multicultural**

Rationale. Why did you use these approaches? How did they fit the client's goals or the session content?

Specific Microskills. Please review the catalog of intermediate psychotherapy microskills and identify specific skills that were particularly helpful with this client.

| | <u>Skill</u> | <u>SBPI code</u> |
|-------|--------------------|------------------|
| 1. | _____ | (_____) |
| 2. | _____ | (_____) |
| 3. | _____ | (_____) |
| 4. | _____ | (_____) |
| 5. | _____ | (_____) |

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Tracking Your Progress

Jeff E. Brooks-Harris & Michael F. Gavetti

Acquisition of Psychotherapy Skills

During the last (mark one): _____ month _____ semester _____ year,

I have increased my use of skills from the following approaches (rank order your top three areas of acquisition):

_____ **Cognitive**

_____ **Behavioral**

_____ **Experiential**

_____ **Psychodynamic**

_____ **Multicultural**

For example, I have gained experience using the following skills:

1.

Example:

2.

Example:

3.

Example:

Integration of Psychotherapy Skills

During the same time period, I have successfully integrated psychotherapy skills from _____ and _____ approaches.

Case example:

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