

GESTALT PRACTICE & EXERCISES - REVIEW

Part 2

Locating emotion:

- I feel
- I notice ...
- I imagine ...

Exaggeration exercise.....

- A common exercise in gestalt therapy is the exaggeration exercise. During this exercise, the person in therapy is asked to repeat and exaggerate a particular movement or expression, such as frowning or bouncing a leg, in order to **make the person more aware of the emotions** attached to the behaviour.

Exaggeration

- The therapist is likely to **not only observe** and reflect body language, they specifically mention their observation of this action and ask what is happening for the person at that moment
- I'm noticing that you are tapping your foot as you say that, what is happening for you now?
- Giving body language a voice

Role play.....

Role play helps
individuals:

Experience different
feelings and emotions

Better understand
how they present and
organise themselves.

Role play

- Changing of one's behaviour to assume a role, either unconsciously to fill a social role, or consciously to act out an adopted role.

Role play

- Take a moment to think of a person who you find it difficult to deal with and why

Role play

- In Dyads, the 'counsellor' asks the client to think of a person they currently find it difficult to get on with
- The 'counsellor' asks the 'client' to adopt the role of a person they find it difficult to deal with and facilitates this process by using counselling skills

**Role
play ...**

... ..

Practising new
behaviours

Reverse role
play

Role play: Topdog — Underdog :

- A commonly utilised **Gestalt technique** is that of the topdog-underdog dialogue.
- This **technique** is used when the therapist notices **two opposing opinions/attitudes within the client**. The therapist encourages the client to distinguish between these two parts and play the role of each in a dialogue between them

USING NOW LANGUAGE...

- Use a here-and-now perspective.
- Task a client to talk directly to a person they are discussing in therapy.
- Bringing the past into the present.

**Research the
following
techniques
for future
discussion:**



The Empty Chair



The empty chair technique....

- The empty chair technique is a quintessential gestalt therapy exercise that places the person in therapy across from an empty chair.
- He or she is asked to imagine that someone (such as a boss, spouse, or relative), they, or a part of themselves is sitting in the chair. The therapist encourages dialogue between the empty chair and person in therapy in order to engage the person's thoughts, emotions, and behaviours.
- Sometimes the roles are reversed and the person in therapy assumes the metaphorical person or part of a person in the chair. The empty chair technique can be especially useful for helping people become mindful of the whole situation and forgotten or disengaged pieces of their own self

Unfinished business

- In Gestalt psychology when any aspect of a client's life is left hanging, it is related to unfinished business.
- This state can eat away at a client, really affecting the quality of relationships and how a client sees the world.
- Some common experiences that are attached to unfinished business are abuse suffered at the hands of primary caregivers, difficult endings of romantic relationships, and deaths of important people.

Unfinished business:

- Unexpressed feelings from the past that occur in the present and interfere with psychological functioning. They may include feelings, memories, or fantasies from earlier life (often childhood) that can be dealt with in the present.

ACTING ON BODY LANGUAGE

- Unfinished business can be understood by paying attention to what a client is doing with their body, and how it might contrast with their words.
- A therapist might ask their client to act out what a particular body part is saying

Unfinished business

- People with unfinished business often resent the past and because of this are unable to focus on the here and now.
- A major goal of Gestalt Therapy is to help people work through their unfinished business and bring about closure.



Expression of
feelings...

○ Stones
exercise

In summary.....

- These are just some parts of gestalt therapy used to help people in therapy increase their awareness of immediate experiences.
- Through exercises and spontaneous experiments, gestalt therapy also allows people to reconnect with parts of themselves they may minimize, ignore, or deny.