

Specific Humanistic Adaptations

Process Experiential/ Emotion Focused Therapy

This description of the competences used when applying Process Experiential/ Emotion Focused Therapy (PE/EFT) should be read as part of the humanistic competence framework. Effective delivery of PE/EFT therapy depends on its integration with the knowledge and skills set out in the other domains of the humanistic competence framework.

Knowledge of the rationale for Process Experiential/Emotion Focused Therapy

Knowledge of emotion theory

An ability to draw on knowledge of the fundamentally adaptive nature of human emotions, because they:

- constitute an evolutionary adaptation which enables the rapid and efficient processing of complex situational information, in order to:
 - evaluate what is important for personal well-being
 - help the person to take action in a manner congruent with meeting their personal needs

An ability to draw on knowledge that emotion theory differentiates between:

replacing a feeling that is experienced as unacceptable)
instrumental emotional responses: learned patterns of emotional behn-g a f

maladaptive primary emotion: long-established, core feelings (such as feeling abandoned or worthless) that (because they do not map to the current situation) do not help the person to grow and develop

An ability to draw on knowledge that emotion theory assumes that experience is organised through “emotion schemes”, which are networks of different affectively-linked elements, including:

- explicit and implicitly-experienced feelings
- perceptual-situational experiences (immediate perception and episodic memories)
- bodily-expressive experiences (physical sensations and non-verbal expression)
- conceptual-verbal elements (words and images)

An ability to draw on knowledge that emotion schemes help to form “self-organisations” which form the basis of identity or sense of self:
a constantly changing multiplicity that achieves a sense of coherence through the integration of different aspects of emotional experiencing
An ability to draw on knowledge that emotion theory assumes that a capacity to regulate emotions is essential for effective functioning:
to access and amplify emotions that are not in full awareness or are only partially perceived
to moderate emotions that are potentially overwhelming
An ability to draw on knowledge that emotional regulation is shaped by early attachment experiences
An ability to draw on knowledge that the guiding principle for working with emotion is to increase access to, and use of primary adaptive emotion and to reduce the influence of secondary, instrumental and maladaptive emotion

Knowledge of how the PE/EFT model conceptualises the origins of dysfunction

An ability to draw on knowledge that the PE/EFT model conceptualises the origins of dysfunction as arising from early attachment experiences and the development of self-organisations.

the client is able to attend to significant emotions, aspects of the self and inter/intra-personal processes, and hence to integrate their experience
the client is able to focus inwards and to access emotion schemes (hence making aspects of self available for synthesis into experience or action)
the client is able to develop new meanings by making a clear distinction between aspects of self and subsequently bringing these into contact with each other
An ability to draw on knowledge that new meaning also emerges through a process of meaningful dialogue between client and therapist

Ability to apply process experiential methods

Ability to develop a formulation of the client's characteristic modes of experiencing

An ability to work with clients to develop a formulation that identifies:
the client's habitual styles of "being" and "doing" (how clients treat themselves; how clients treat others; how they allow others to treat them)
the client's capacity for self-reflection, interpersonal relating and constructive contact with their feelings
the client's early attachment history
problematic ways in which clients engage with their feelings, e.g.: where the client:
focuses on other people or on external events as a means of avoiding contact with their own feelings
uses abstract terms instead of making reference to concrete experience
focuses on physical symptoms rather than feelings

An ability to develop a shared focus for the therapy

An ability to judge the client's readiness to engage in particular therapeutic tasks
An ability to identify "problem markers":
behavioural indicators that the client is ready to work on a particular problem
An ability to notice when a range of potential markers is present and to collabora

client and to heighten and access underlying emotions
An ability to help the client maintain a focus on the agreed therapeutic task
An ability to complete the process of task resolution :
helping the client to access deep emotions early in the work
helping the client to identify underlying adaptive emotions and processes during the middle phases of work
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