

Managing Discord:

How to Address Issues in the Therapeutic Relationship



Strategies

- 1 Understand the client's motivation**
 - Begin with open-ended questions
 - Take time to explore
- 2 Establish boundaries and expectations**
 - Ask what boundaries they would like to set
 - Communicate boundaries that are required
- 3 Be aware of your role in discord**
 - Work on collaboration with the client
 - Don't work harder than the client
- 4 Identify correct stage of change**
 - Listen for admission of problem (ambivalence, DARN CATS language)
 - Point out disparities in what is said and done
- 5 Recognize that treatment is messy**
 - Some level of questioning is normal
 - Explore questioning when appropriate



- Embrace the client's autonomy.
 - Recognize how difficult it is for most to be in treatment.
- Use open-ended questions and reflections to avoid:
 - Jumping to conclusions
 - Dropping the disciplinary hammer
- Take responsibility for your role in the relationship.
 - Do not take responsibility for what is not your role in the relationship.
- Reconsider the stage of change if there is discord or lack of progress.
- Recognize whether you have compliance or treatment.

Red Flags

You find yourself irritated, frustrated or aggravated with a client.

- > Reevaluate how you approach the therapeutic relationship. What is the source of the discord?

You find yourself working harder than the client.

- > Evaluate what you are trying to convince them they need to do. Are you getting in the way of meaningful treatment?