

Keeping It Real: Embracing Authenticity, Supporting Client Transformation

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“Almost anyone can learn to administer a standardized technique, but it takes an ‘artist of the soul’ to know exactly when and how to extend empathy, care, and support.” (David Elkins, 2016)

Relationship Matters

Questions & Reflection: Think about one of your most successful cases. What words would you use to describe the relationship you had with that client?

Research shows relationships are a critical component of therapy. Human factors such as client factors, therapists effects, and the therapeutic alliance are more powerful than techniques (Elkins, 2016).

While we spend a lot of training hours on tools and techniques, could we benefit from focusing more on relationship skills, and strengthen our own relationship with ourselves as therapists?

Dr Daniel Siegel 4S’s of secure attachment (Siegel, Payne, 2020)

Feel **Safe** Feel **Seen** Feel **Soothed** Feel **Secure**

Attachment Exploration: You may be providing your client with their first secure attachment experience. First, did YOU receive these as a child? Do you create these conditions for yourself now? How can you support yourself and/or your clients with this?

Embracing Vulnerability & Authenticity

Question & Reflection: What were you taught about feelings as a child? If shame was associated with feelings and sensitivity we struggle to show up authentically with our feelings as adults. Were you shamed in any way for being “too sensitive”? Many therapists have been shamed for their GIFTS.

Skill Practice: Brené Brown: Four Elements of Shame Resilience

- Recognizing shame and understanding triggers
- Practicing critical awareness
- Reaching out
- Speaking shame

One of the best things we can do as therapists is to be real with our own feelings. Think of a current challenging client or person in your personal life who has brought up some feelings for you.

Skill Practice: Dr. Jonice Webb IAAA Technique to Process Emotions (Webb, Musello, 2012)

Identify – What feeling(s) am I experiencing?

Accept – Practice accepting them without judgment. Notice.

Attribute – Is this familiar? When have I felt this before?

Act – What’s the message here? Is there some inspired action for me to take?

BOUNDARIES

The more you invest in your own emotional wellness and self awareness, the stronger your boundaries will become because you will intimately know yourself and all your needs and cues.

Support healthy boundaries by acknowledging and meeting any of your own unmet needs so you don’t seek this from others, including clients.

Question & Reflection: Is there a boundary issue you are currently struggling with? What is it that you really need?

Skill Practice: Body Scan & Boundary Visualization

Notice how you feel. Trust those signals.

Thank you for your PRESENCE! Please feel free to reach out: Julia@liscounseling.com

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