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Using a Mindfulness Based Art Technique to Promote Emotion Regulation and Self Compassion

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Using a Mindfulness Based Art Technique That Promotes Emotion Regulation and Self Compassion

Lisa S. Sosin, PhD, LPC, LLP, BACS

PRESENTATION LEARNING OUTCOMES

- (1). Learn about a simple approach to teaching clients of all ages and backgrounds about emotion regulation and dysregulation and how they relate to their presenting concerns**
- (2). Learn the theoretical underpinnings of Creative Exposure**
- (3). Learn the steps to Creative Exposure**
- (4). Practice Creative Exposure**

Rationale for Using The Creative Exposure Technique

- **Creativity supports adaptability and problem solving skills (Lawrence, Foster, & Tieso, 2015)**
- **The importance of creativity has been demonstrated in both counseling and counselor education (Duffey, Haberstroh, & Trepal, 2009; Whitelock, Faulkner, & Miell, 2008).**
- **Creative, mindfulness approaches are effective in supporting integration of disassociated, un-integrated aspects of the self and intolerable affect states (Siegel, 2010).**
- **Exposure treatment is effective for trauma symptoms (Barlowe, D., Ellard, K., Fairhome, C. Farchione, T. & Boisseau, C., 2011)**
- **Creative Exposure is a gentle, creative, and powerful method of compassionately exposing counselees to avoided affect (Sosin, 2015; 2016; Rappaport, 2009).**
- **These methods have been profoundly effective in my practice with children, adults, couples, and families (Sosin, 1985-2016)**

KEY TERMS USED IN THIS PRESENTATION

- Emotional Development**: The process by which we learn to know, experience, and represent in words the full spectrum of emotions with awareness and compassion toward the self and others (Greenspan, 1997).
- Emotion Regulation**: Our ability to experience and label our emotional experiences and respond to them in keeping with our values and authentic personhood, even when we feel significant distress (i.e., intense fear, guilt, and/or shame); the developmental capacity of monitoring and modifying the flow of energy and attention of the mind. Rigid or chaotic mind states reflect strong neural networks that are tenacious and require a tremendous amount of energy to learn how to regulate (Siegel, 2010).
- Attunement**: The ability for the counselor to be empathically present and sensitive to the affective and cognitive state of the counselee. This state of shared being promotes internal integration and the ability for blocked states of consciousness to emerge so that self-regulatory capacities can develop (Gottman, Gottman, & Siegel, 2014).
- Exposure Treatment**: An evidence based cognitive-behavioral therapy treatment that promotes habituation to avoided/distressing/intolerable/dissociated affective and cognitive content (Barlow et al., 2011; Gabbard, 2014).
- Mindfulness Practice**: Purposeful attention to the present moment while non-judgmentally and objectively observing cognitive and affective content (Siegel, 2007).
- Self Compassion**: The ability to respond to ourselves with gentleness, tenderness, patience, and kindness; knowing and accepting ourselves as we are in the moment (Neff, 2015).
- Art Focusing**: an evidence-based counseling skill based on Eugene Gendlin's Focusing Technique (1996) and developed by Laurie Rappaport (2009).



THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The Creative Exposure Tool draws from several empirically based models.



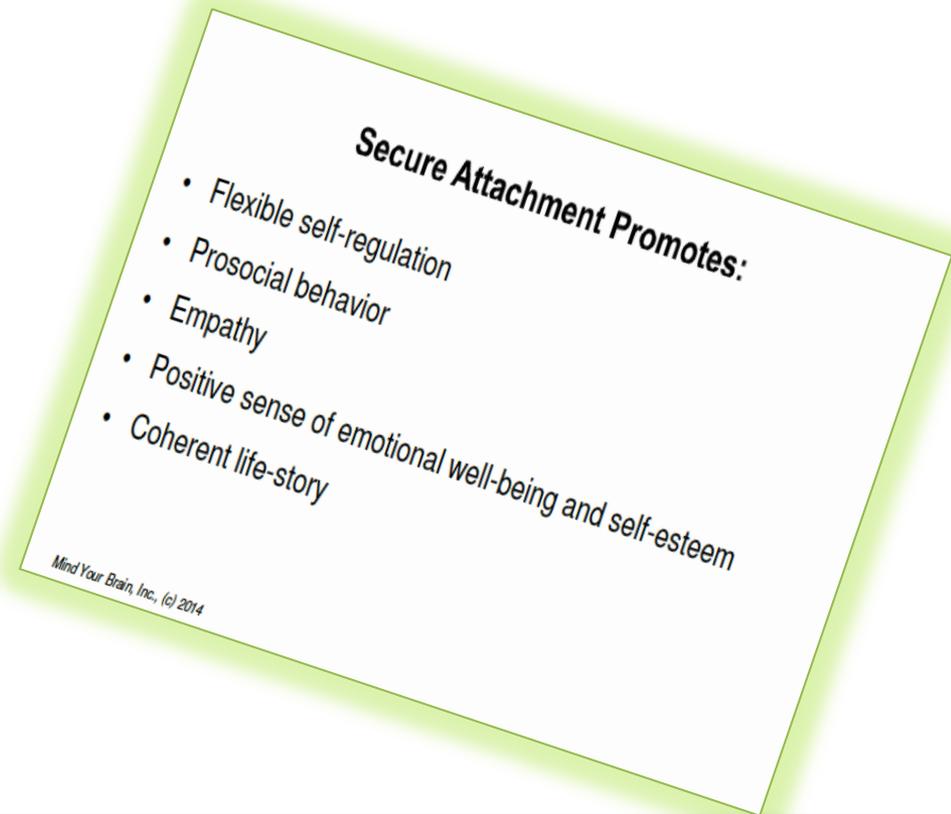
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It is Grounded on an Emotion Development Model: Six Core Developmental Capacities

- 1. Regulation and Shared Attention (FELT SECURITY) (0-3 months)**
- 2. Engagement with warmth, trust, intimacy (ATTACHMENT) (3+ months)**
- 3. Two-way purposeful, GESTURAL communication (DIFFERENTIATION ENABLED VIA SECURE BASE) (3+ months). Interactive problem-solving/use of gestures in continuous flow.**
- 4. Functional use of ideas (REPRESENTATION WITH WORDS) (12 MONTHS+)**
- 5. Building bridges between ideas (GREATER AND GREATER REPRESENTATION ACROSS THE VARIETY OF AFFECTIVE-SELF THEMES)**
- 6. MATURITY= LOVE (including the ability to speak the truth in love) AND WORK (individuated yet interdependent, authentic expression of the self)**

(Greenspan, 1997)



It includes an interpersonal neurobiology perspective on emotion development.

Where is the counselee in terms of monitoring, experiencing, representing in words, and regulating primary feelings:

Sadness, Disappointment, Anger, Pleasure, Excitement, Delight, Happiness, Pride, Competition, Self-Esteem, Positive Self-Regard, Jealousy, Envy, Curiosity, Sad, Angry, Helpless, Excited, Humiliated...

(Bowlby, 1988)

(Bowlby, 1998; Siegel, 2014)



Date/Time	Situation	Automatic Thought/s Images with Belief Level (1-10)	Feeling/s with Significant Units of Disturbance (1-10)	Bio-Psycho-Social-Spiritual Tools	Results (1-10)

It draws on SF-CBT and Art Therapy methods to promote secure attachment and emotion development
(Bowlby, 1988)

Introduction to Creative Exposure

- Art as process/expression of authentic self vs. product
- Supplies: Paper, colors, and between session logging sheet

Steps of the Creative Exposure Method

The Full Creative Exposure Method

1. Full BPSS assessment
2. Psychoeducation (neuro-empathy)
3. Counselor consent to the case conceptualization and treatment plan
4. Anchor: Relaxation and establishment of safe place/safe person
5. Depiction of Anchor
6. Selection of Trigger
7. Imaginal Exposure
8. Depiction of thoughts, feelings and behaviors related to trigger with SUDS and BL
9. Compassionate, soothing process of engagement from Anchor until felt security is ascertained
10. Closure
11. Use of Logging Sheet between sessions

What We are Going to Do Together Today

1. Anchor/Safe Place-Person
2. Depiction at center of paper
3. Selection of Trigger
4. Depict the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors related to trigger using the downward arrow technique to get to schema level
5. Re-establish anchor and address thoughts, feelings and behaviors from peaceful, safe place with self-soothing and loving kindness toward self
6. Share experience with a partner

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CE QUESTIONS

1. The creative exposure intervention log can be used to track triggers, belief and SUDS levels, and the outcome of using the intervention. True or False
2. One fundamental aspect of the creative exposure intervention is to develop an internal safe person and safe place. True or False
3. People who use the creative exposure intervention must be “good” at art to use it effectively. True or False
4. The creative exposure intervention includes the following steps: psychoeducation about and client consent, pre-logging, establishing and creatively depicting the safe person and safe place, selecting an active trigger, imaginal exposure and creative depiction, engaging in a compassionate, soothing process and creative depiction, and post-logging. True or False