


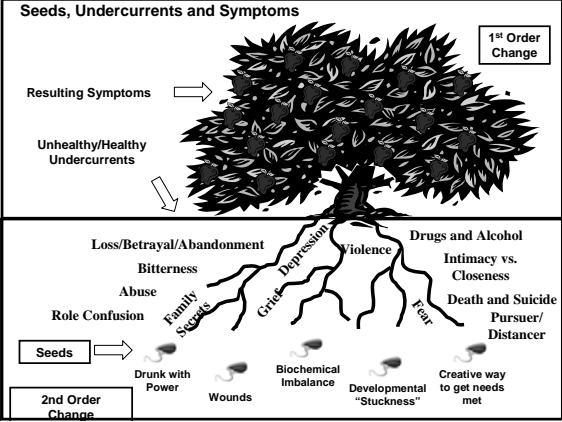
Savannah
Family
Institute

www.difficult.net Presents

Undercurrents: Treating the Secret Wounds of Kids and Adults

With Scott P. Sells, Ph.D.





7 Key Steps Undercurrent Therapy

- Step #1- Discovering the Undercurrents Origin
- Step #2- Eyes and Ears to Locate Undercurrents
- Step #3- Start Where the Client Is!
- Step #4- Reveal and Fill in Missing Undercurrents
- Step #5- Process Therapy Change Undercurrents
- Step #6- Predicting the Fallout of Change
- Step #7- Undercurrents and Spirituality



Step 1: How Symptoms Are Created (Birthed) and Maintained

#1 Power and Control

Who is Helping the Child Misbehave?

#2 Wounds

Wound (lie) + Vow = False Self

#3 Biological

#4 Creative Way to Solve a Problem

Step 2: How to Spot Undercurrents

- A theme that underlies the dynamics of the family and like a linchpin, when addressed, everything falls into place. If not addressed, it is an under-tow that pulls a family apart.

- Loss/Betrayal/Abandonment
- Violence
- Fear
- Intimacy vs. Closeness
- Pursuer/ Distancer
- Death and Suicide
- Drugs or Alcohol
- Family Secrets
- Sexual Abuse
- Depression
- Role Confusion



- Organizing tenant of family behavior. Concepts that the family is most often worried about addressing.
- Major themes that people wrap dysfunctional interactions around. Right below the surface. Everyone knows about but no one talks about. It drives family interactions.

Step 3: Reveal and Fill In the Missing Healthy Undercurrents

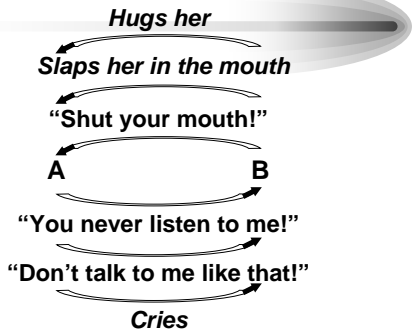
Unhealthy Undercurrents	Healthy Undercurrents
• Unresolved Grief	> Education/Resolution
• Unforgiveness	> Forgiveness-Let Go
• Violence	> Nurturance-Attachment
• Role Confusion	> Hierarchy-Role Clarity
• Family Secrets	> Reveal Secrets
• Sexual Abuse	> No Secrets –Boundaries
• Depression	> Not Lonely –Support
• Patient- Mental	> Normality
• No Nurturance	> Hugs- Special Outings
• Drugs/Alcohol	> Sober-New Lifestyle



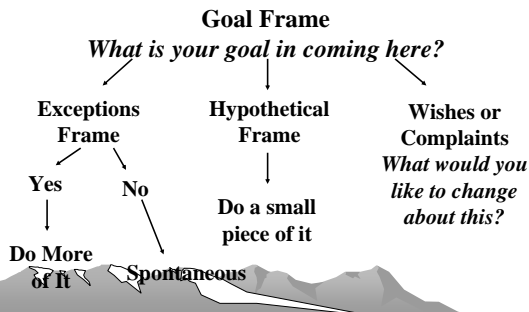
Content Therapy vs. Process Therapy

Content Therapy	Process Therapy
• Freudian	> System Theory
• Change=Insight	> Change = New Dance
• Focus = Past	> Focus = Here and Now
• Style= Non-directive	> Style = Directive
• Symptom Change	> Symptom Change-
Individual Insight	Interaction Change
Biological	Environment
• Models->	Structural Change
Biomedical,	> Models→ Solution-
Cognitive, Object	Focused, Strategic,
Relations	Structural

Process: Interactional Problems



Pathways of Constructing Clear/Concrete Goals



Step 3: Start Where the Client Is!

1 Precontemplation

- Do not see that they are part of problem/solution
- Feel situation is hopeless
- No intention of changing
- Want others to change
- Others see problem they cannot
- Minimize or rationalize

2 Action

- Person or family tries to change or stop problem
- Person or family tries to change environment
- Overlooks possible relapses
- If relapse or change fails recycles back to one of three earlier stages

3 Contemplation

- Acknowledge problem and their part in it
- Not ready to change yet
- Stalling analysis paralysis
- Wait for magic sign
- Focus is only on problem

4 Maintenance

- Consolidate gains
- Relapse prevention-troubleshooting
- Potential to recycle is initially high
- Communicate that relapse is normal
- Goal: Spread moments of relapse further apart

5 Preparation

- Contracting and troubleshooting
- Ambivalence-need final reassurances
- Dry Run Role Plays
- Make final adjustments

6 Termination

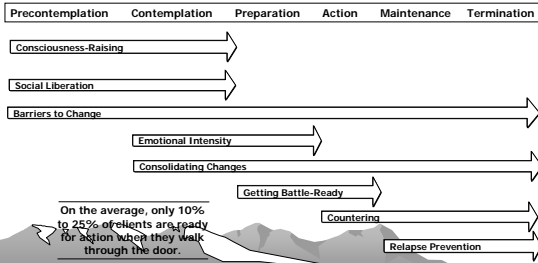
- Anticipatory guidance
- Letting go of "old self"
- Back-up plan
- When to use line-ups
- Line up support systems and secure co-therapist

For more information...

Prochaska, J.O., Norcross, J.C., & DiClemente, C.C. (1994). *Changing for Good*. New York: Avon Books.

LAYING A SOLID UNDERCURRENT FOUNDATION:

Meet The Client At Their Particular Stage And Move Them From One Stage To The Next



Man's Search for Meaning



Man and Woman's Search for Meaning is the Primary Motivation is his or her life and not a "secondary rationalization" of instinctual drives.

Viktor Frankl

Directive Not Non-Directive Therapy



Remember . . . this is not a therapy where relationships are changed by talking about them. Rather, relationships are changed by requiring action-oriented new behaviors to solve a problem. Once problems are lessened trust = deep healing

**Step Four
Revealing Your Clients
Undercurrents**

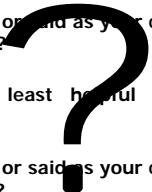
- ✓ **Surrendering the One Up Position Dismantle Barriers to Change**
- ✓ **Directly Bring Them Up When Trust Develops- Betrayal and Abandonment**

**Barriers to Change:
Surrender the One Up or Ask Direct
to Bring Undercurrents to Surface**

- **Columbo Style Interviews**
- **Ask Your Client to Grade the Process**
- **Track Your Client: What Has Been Most and Least Helpful**
- **Guess at Your Clients Undercurrents Using Velvet Around Your Therapeutic Hammer**

Questions to Ask Every Two Sessions

- What has been most helpful in our meetings together so far?
- What have I done or said as your counselor that has been most helpful?
- What has been least helpful in our meetings together so far?
- What have I done or said as your counselor that has been least helpful?
- What do we need to do in the future to make these meetings more helpful or productive?



**Step Five:
Process Therapy to Fever Make
and Change Undercurrents**

- ✓ Can You Go Directive?
- ✓ Can You Be Strategic?
- ✓ Can You Be a Risk Taker?



**Step Five:
Moving to the Role of
Process Coach**

- ✓ Asking the Family to Dance in Your Presence
- ✓ Being a Therapeutic Rule Breaker
- ✓ Becoming a Director



**Step Six:
Predicting the Fallout From
Change/Relapse Prevention**

- ✓ **Normalize Fallout and Relapse**
- ✓ **Consolidate Changes**
- ✓ **Initiate Relapse Prevention Plans– Get Battle Ready**



**Step Six:
Healthy Undercurrents and
Second Order Change**

- ✓ **Make the Covert Overt**
- ✓ **Consolidate Changes**
- ✓ **Maintenance and Tune-Ups**



**Step Seven:
Spirituality and Undercurrents
Will You Invite God
Into Your Sessions?**

- **Separation of Church and State**
- **Natural vs. Spiritual Law**
- **Being Culturally Sensitive**
- **The Power of Prayer/Forgiveness**
- **Training Your Heart to See Spiritual**