

# **SINGLE-SESSION THERAPY: WHEN THE FIRST SESSION MAY BE THE LAST**

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June 5, 2019

## **Syllabus:**

10:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. Introduction. Key characteristics of brief therapy. Tasks and skills by phase of treatment. SST. Findings and guidelines. Case example and discussion. Additional examples and case discussion.

1:15-2:15 p.m. lunch

2:15-5:30 Additional examples. Ericksonian Therapy: Milton Erickson video and discussion. Redecision Therapy: Bob & Mary Goulding video and discussion. Solution-Focused Brief Therapy: Insoo Kim Berg video and discussion. Practicing skills. Wrap-up. Adjourn.

## **Learning objectives:**

(1) Understand basic features of brief therapy, (2) Recognize tasks and skills, including useful questions and specific techniques, associated with different phases of treatment, (3) Learn guidelines for single-session therapies, (4) Study numerous single-session interventions, (5) Consider application to participants' own clinical cases.

## **About the Presenter:**

Michael F. Hoyt, Ph.D. (Yale '76) is one of the originators (with Moshe Talmon and Bob Rosenbaum) of the Single-Session Therapy approach. He is based in Mill Valley, CA. He was a staff psychologist at Kaiser Permanente in Hayward and San Rafael, California, for more than 30 years. Since retiring from Kaiser in 2013, he continues to be active as a writer, editor, trainer, and consultant. He is a recipient of the APF Cummings Psyche Prize for lifetime contributions to the role of psychologists in organized healthcare, has been honored as a Continuing Education Distinguished Speaker by both the American Psychological Association and the International Association of Marriage and Family Counselors, and is recognized as a Contributor of Note by the Milton H. Erickson Foundation. He has authored, edited, and coedited numerous books, including *The First Session in Brief Therapy*; *Brief Therapy and Managed Care*; *Some Stories are Better than Others*; *The Handbook of Constructive Therapies*; *Brief Psychotherapies: Principles and Practices*; *Therapist Stories of Inspiration, Passion, and Renewal*; *Capturing the Moment*; *Brief Therapy and Beyond*; *Single-Session Therapy by Walk-In or Appointment*; and *Creative Therapy in Challenging Situations: Unusual Interventions to Help Clients*.

**The 3rd International Symposium on SST and Walk-In Services will be held in Melbourne, Australia on October 24-25, 2019. For more information, please visit <http://www.bouverie.org.au/events/sst2019>**

### **DEFINITIONS OF BRIEF THERAPY (Hoyt, 2009)**

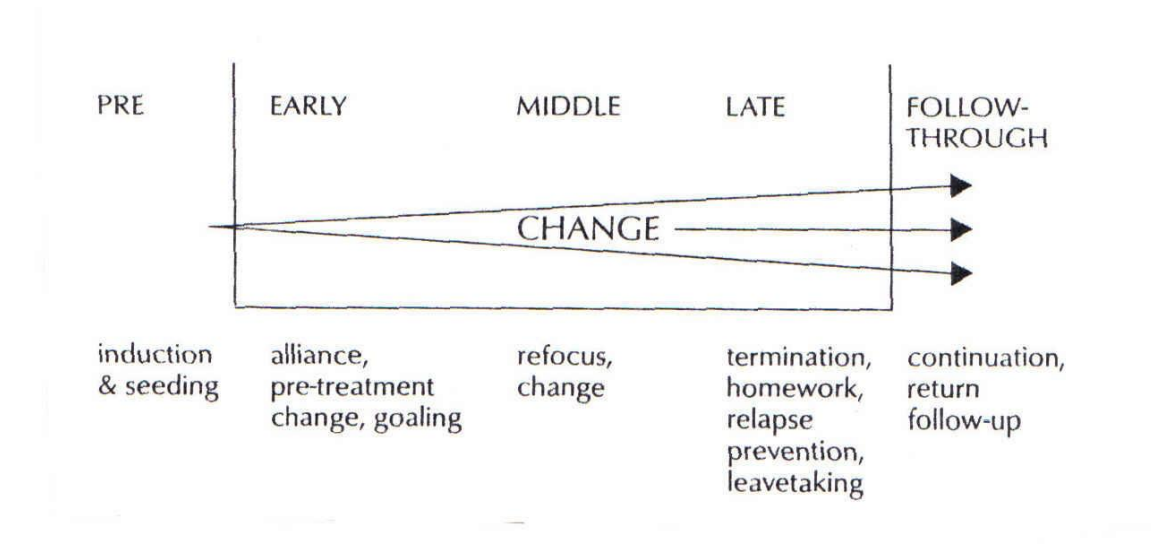
1. "Time-sensitive treatment to relieve psychological distress and/or promote growth"
2. "The development of a collaborative alliance and an emphasis on patient/client strengths in the service of a efficient attainment of co-created goals"

### **BASIC FEATURES OF BRIEF THERAPY (Budman, Hoyt & Friedman, 1992; Hoyt, 1995, 2009, 2017)**

1. Rapid and positive alliance
2. Goal focus
3. Clear definition of patient/therapist responsibilities/activities
4. Emphasis on strengths/competencies, with an expectation of change producing hope
5. Novelty (change viewing and doing)
6. Here-and-now (and next) orientation
7. Time sensitivity/intermittency



**THE STRUCTURE OF BRIEF THERAPY:  
TASKS AND SKILLS ASSOCIATED WITH DIFFERENT PHASES  
OF SESSIONS AND TREATMENTS**



**Pretreatment**

Change begins even before we have contact with the client. He or she or they have decided there is a problem and would like assistance to resolve the difficulty.

Some questions to ask while making an initial appointment:

- What's the problem -- why now have you called?
- How do you see or understand the situation?
- What do you think will help?
- How have you tried to solve the problem so far -- how did it work?
- When the problem isn't present (or isn't bad), what is going on differently?
- Please notice between now and when we meet, so that you can describe to me, when the problem isn't so bad, what are you doing differently then? This may give us some clues regarding what you need to do more of -- identifying exceptions to the problem that led you to call will focus on solutions that may be useful to you. OK?

**Early in Treatment and Early in Each Session**

As we begin a session and a therapy, we attend carefully to forming a good alliance, inquiring about the possible changes since our last contact, and establishing goals for the session and the therapy. Some useful questions might include:

- Since we last spoke, what have you noticed that may be a bit better or different? How did that happen? What did you do?
- When is the problem not a problem?
- What do you call the problem? What name do you have for it?
- When (and how) does [the problem] influence you; and when (and how) do you influence it?
- What's your idea or theory about what will help?
- How can I be most useful to you?
- If we were only going to meet once or a few times, what problem would you want to focus on solving first?
- What needs to happen here today so that when you leave you can feel this visit was worthwhile?
- What are you willing to change today?
- Given all that you have been through, how have you managed to cope as well as you have?
- If we work together, what will be the first small indications that we're going in the right direction?
- On a scale of 1 to 10, where is the problem now? Where would it need to be for you to decide that you didn't need to continue coming here?
- Suppose tonight, while you're sleeping, a miracle happens, and the problem that led you here is dissolved. When you awaken tomorrow, how will you first notice the miracle has happened? What will be the first sign that things are better? And next? And then?

### **In the Middle of Treatment and the Middle of Each Session**

We keep track of the clients' goals and whether we have a good working alliance and are going in the right direction or if some course 'corrections' need to be made. Possible refocusing is directed by the client's response to question such as these:

- How did that work?
- Is this being helpful to you?
- Do you have any questions you'd like to ask me?
- Are we working on what you want to work on?
- I seem to have missed something you said- what can I do to be more helpful to you now?

### **Late in Treatment and Late in Each Session**

Termination -- extracting the therapist from the successful equation -- becomes central. There are a number of issues to be addressed, as the following guideline questions suggest:

### *Goal Attainment/ Homework/ Post-Session Tasks*

- Has this been helpful to you? How so?
- Which of the helpful things you've been doing do you think you should continue to do? How can you do this?
- Between now and the next time we meet [or, to keep things going in the right direction], would you be willing to do\_\_\_\_\_?
- Before we stop in a couple of minutes, when I'll walk you back to the waiting room, let's discuss what's next...
- Who can be helpful to you in doing\_\_\_\_? What might interfere, and how can you prepare to deal with those challenges?

### *Goal Maintenance and Relapse Prevention*

- What would be a signal that the problems you were having when you first came in--what would you need to do to make this happen, if you wanted to sabotage yourself?
- How might [the problem] try to trick you into letting it take over again?
- What will you need to increase the odds that things will work out OK even if you were not to come in for a while?
- Who will be glad to hear about your progress? Who in your present or past [family, friends, colleagues] would support your efforts?

### *Leave-taking*

- Would you like to make our appointment for 3 weeks, 6 weeks, or wait a bit longer?
- What is the longest you can imagine handling things on your own?

## **STAGES OF CHANGE (Prochaska, 1999)**

"A journey of a thousand miles  
must begin with a single step."  
-Lao-tzu (c. 600 B.C.)

"The readiness is all"  
-Shakespeare (*Hamlet*, Act V, Scene II)

**Precontemplation** is the stage at which there is no intention to change behavior in the foreseeable future.

**Contemplation** is the stage in which people are aware that a problem exists and are seriously thinking about overcoming it but have not yet made a commitment to take action.

**Preparation** is a stage that combines intention and behavior criteria. Individuals in this stage are intending to take action immediately and report some small behavioral changes.

**Action** is the stage that combines intention and behavior, experiences, and/or environment in the order to overcome their problems.

**Maintenance** is the final stage in which people work to prevent relapse and consolidate the change. Stabilizing behavior change and avoiding relapse are the hallmarks.

**Termination** is the stage in which there is zero temptation to engage in the problem behavior, and there is a 100 percent confidence (self-efficacy) that one will not engage in the old behavior regardless of the situation.

Some solution-focused therapy strategies (Hoyt & Miller, 2000):

**Precontemplation:** Suggest that the client “think about it” and provide information and education.

**Contemplation:** Encourage thinking, recommend and observation task in which the client is asked to join with the client’s lack of commitment to action with a “Go slow” directive.

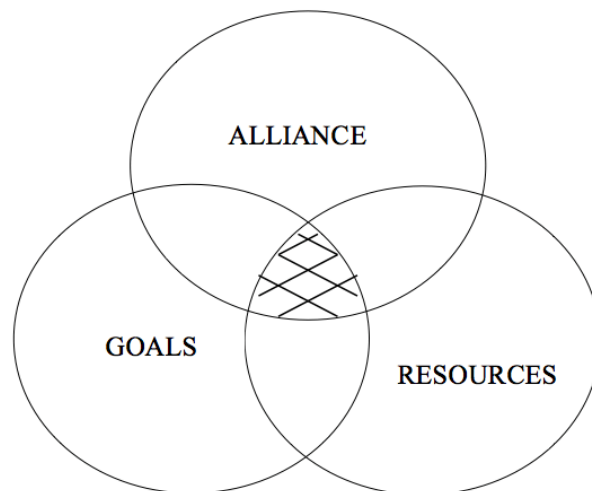
**Preparation:** Offer treatment options, invite the client to choose from viable alternatives.

**Action:** Amplify what works -- get details of success and reinforce

**Maintenance:** Support success, predict setbacks, make contingency plans.

**Termination:** Wish well, say goodbye, leave an open door for possible return if needed.

### “Context of Competence”



[from M.F. Hoyt, 2014. ©M.F. Hoyt 2014]



*"Basically, there's nothing wrong with you that  
what's right with you can't cure."*

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#### **SINGLE-SESSION THERAPY (SST) DEFINITION:**

*SST is therapy that the therapist and client expect, from the beginning, to potentially comprise a single visit. The therapist acts as if the first session will be the last. SST is therapy approached one-session-at-a-time.*

#### **Talmon (1990) – Kaiser Permanente SST study (N = 58). Basic quantitative findings:**

- Over half of the patients (58.6%) elected to complete their therapy in one session even when more sessions were available;
- more than 88% reported significant improvement in their original “presenting complaint” and more than 65% also reported “ripple” improvements in related areas of functioning; and
- and while not experimentally assigned to one-session or longer, on follow-up there was no difference in satisfaction and outcome scores between those who chose to stop after one visit (SST) versus those who continued for more sessions.

**ATTITUDES CONDUCTIVE TO THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCCESSFUL SST:**

1. View each session as a whole, potentially complete in itself. Expect change.
2. The power is in the patient. Never underestimate your patient's strength.
3. This is it. All you have is now.
4. The therapeutic process starts before the first session, and will continue long after it.
5. The natural process of life is the main force of change.
6. You don't have to know everything in order to be effective.
7. You don't have to rush or reinvent the wheel.
8. More is not necessarily better. Better is better. A small step can make a big difference.
9. Helping people as quickly as possible is practical and ethical. It will encourage patients to return for help if they have other problems, and will also allow therapists to spend more time with patient who require longer treatments.

**THOSE MOST LIKELY TO BENEFIT FROM SST:**

1. Patients who come to solve a specific problem for which a solution is in their control.
2. Patients who essentially need reassurance that their reaction to a troubling situation is normal.
3. Patients seen with significant others or family members who can serve as natural supports and "co-therapists."
4. Patients who can identify (perhaps with the therapist's assistance) helpful solutions, past successes, and exceptions to the problem.
5. Patients who have a particularly "stuck" feeling (e.g., anger, guilt, grief) toward a past event.
6. Patients who come for evaluation and need referral to medical or other services (e.g., legal, vocational, financial, religious counseling).
7. Patient who are likely to be better off without any treatment, such as "spontaneous improvers," "non-responders," and those likely to have a "negative therapeutic reaction" (Francis & Clarkin, 1981).
8. Patient faced with a truly insoluble situation. It will help to recast goals in terms that can be productively addressed.

**THOSE FOR WHOM SST IS LESS LIKELY TO BE ADEQUATE AND BENEFICIAL:**

1. Patients who might require inpatient care (e.g., suicidal or psychotic).
2. Patients suffering from conditions that suggest strong biological or chemical component (e.g., schizophrenia, manic-depression, ETOH & drug addiction).
3. Patients who request long-term therapy up front, including those who are anticipating and have prepared for prolonged self-exploration.
4. Patients who need on-going support to work through (and escape) the effects of childhood and/or adult abuse.
5. Patients with longstanding eating disorders or severe OCD, as well as those with chronic pain syndromes and somatoform disorders.

[from Hoyt, M.F. "Single-Session Solutions." In M.F. Hoyt (Ed.), *Constructive Therapies* (pp. 140-159). New York: Guilford Press.]



## **SINGLE-SESSION SOLUTIONS**

*Creative application of the following clinical guidelines facilitates SST:*

1. “Seed” change through induction and preparation. Engage the patient via a **pre-session** phone call or letter encouraging a focus on goals and collection of useful information about competencies, past success, and exceptions to the problem (as with techniques such as de Shazer’s Skeleton Key Question, 1985: “Between now and when we meet, I would like you to observe, so you can describe to me, what happens that you want to continue to happen.”)
2. Develop an alliance and co-create obtainable treatment goals. When getting started, inquire about change since pretreatment contact and amplify accordingly (see Weiner-Davis, de Shazer, & Gingerich 1987). Introduce the possibility of one session being adequate, and recruit the patient’s cooperation.
3. Allow enough time. Most of us work in the 50-minute hour, which is usually adequate; but consider scheduling a longer session to allow for a complete process or intervention.
4. Focus on “pivot chords” ambiguities that may facilitate transitions into different directions. Look for ways of meeting the patient in his or her world view while, at the same time, offering a new perspective -- “reframing” introduces the possibility of seeing and/or acting differently.
5. Go slow and look for patient’s strengths.
6. Practice solutions experientially. Rehearsing desired outcomes provides a “glimpse of the future,” teaches and reinforces useful skills, and inspires enthusiasm and movement.
7. Consider taking a time-out. A break or pause during a session allows time to think, consult, focus, prepare, punctuate.
8. Allow time for last-minute issues. “Eleventh-hour” questions should be asked about six o’clock, to allow time for inclusions or prioritization. Unaddressed issues may impede a sense of the session being complete and satisfactory
9. Give feedback. Information should be provided that enhances patient’s understanding and sense of self-mastery. Tasks or “homework” may be developed that will continue therapeutic work.
10. Leave the door open. The decision to stop is usually best left to the patient.

## **THREE THEMES (Hoyt & Talmon, 2014)**

1. Mindset/expectation
2. Time
3. Empowerment

## **SINGLE SESSION THERAPY: EXERCISES**

### Exercise 1: Pre-Session Contact (Phone Call)

Some questions to consider:

1. What's the problem? What is the situation now? (suicidal/homicidal/psychotic/medical)?
2. Who is the customer-- who's most concerned?
3. What hidden agenda may there be?
4. How and **how** soon do you anticipate the problem will be solved?
5. How do you think therapy will be helpful in dealing with the problem?
6. What made you decide that now was the right time for therapy?
7. Am I (therapist) the right person for this case?
8. What benign assignment might be useful—to gather information, to recruit the patient's cooperation, to help shift their perspective? The Skeleton Key Question (de Shazer, 1985, 1988): "Between now and when we meet, I would like you to notice the things that happen to you that you would like to keep happening in the future. This will help me find out more about your goals and what you are up to." Other benign questions: "Please give some thought to what you would like to accomplish in therapy, and how you will know if it's helping."

### Exercise 2: Beginning the Session (the Patient Has Arrived)

Some tasks to accomplish:

1. Joining, connecting.
2. Orienting to purpose of meeting: Help you solve a problem, help you determine the next steps you need to take, figure out what to do, identify how you can handle the situation, etc.
3. Mention availability of future sessions if needed and possibility of SST.
4. Recruit cooperation—work hard and figure out a solution; does that sound like something you want to do?
5. Assess current status—what has changed or been noticed since making appointment? Attempted solutions?
6. Co-create achievable goals: General characteristics of well-formed goals (from de Shazer, 1991): small rather than large; (2) salient to clients; (3) described in specific, concrete, behavioral terms; (4) achievable within the practical contexts of clients' lives; (5) perceived by clients as involving their hard work; (6) described as the "start of something" and not the "end of something"; and (7) treated as involving new behavior(s) rather than the absence or cessation of existing behavior(s).

### Exercise 3: Closing the Session (Finishing and Follow-Through)

Some items to address:

1. Giving feedback—emphasizing patient's strengths and capacities.
2. Asking task or homework if indicated (see below)
3. Ask: How will you use this meeting? Get specifics.
4. Determine if patient is satisfied and wants to stop, or schedule more sessions.  
Leave door open. Invite follow-up, positive or negative.



**Not SST!**

### **Tasks in Brief Therapy**

Why Don't Patients Comply?

1. The client does not remember or know how to complete the task.
2. The client does not believe complying will help.
3. Factors in the client's life make compliance difficult.

Steps to Enhance Compliance:

1. Be sure assignments contain specific details about desired behavior.
2. Give direct skill training when necessary (e.g., relaxation training).
3. Reward compliance—elicit positive responses of patient and others as well as therapist.
4. Begin with homework that is likely to be successfully accomplished—the "foot in the door" technique.
5. Use a system that will remind patients of the assignment (e.g., cues, others).
6. Have the patient make a public commitment to comply—will you do it?
7. The patient should believe in the value of the assignment for treating his or her problem—does that make sense? Have patient develop task.
8. Use cognitive rehearsal strategies—prepare for stressors, practice. confronting stressors, have patient reward self for completing homework.
9. Anticipate and reduce the negative effects of compliance.
10. Closely monitor compliance—heighten accountability.

## THE ENDING (TERMINATION) PHASE OF TREATMENT (AND SESSIONS): SUBTRACTING THE THERAPIST FROM THE SUCCESSFUL EQUATION

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Initiation of ending</li> <li>• Goal assessment</li> <li>• Tasks/ homework</li> <li>• Relapse prevention</li> <li>• Aftercare planning</li> <li>• Leavetaking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Continued progress</li> <li>• Monitoring</li> <li>• Return as needed</li> </ul>
<b>LATE</b>	<b>FOLLOW-THROUGH</b>

### "Fifty Ways Not to Leave Your Client" (Hoyt, 2000)

You just insist they come back, Jack  
 Make a new treatment, Stan  
 Avoid the topic of ending—be coy, Roy  
 Tell them they're not ready, Freddie  
 If they try to cancel, make a big fuss, Gus  
 They still need to discuss much  
 Before they can leave, Steve  
 ("How could you do this to me?")  
 And don't forget your fee, Lee

### **Tips for Termination and Efficiency**

1. stop a bit early with 'victory' – finish on positive
2. signal when session getting near ending
3. ask: "Make another appointment now, or see how it goes and call as needed?"
4. make only one appointment at a time
5. ask when next appointment, framing question within a range
6. alternatively, suggest patients practice and only call after they do their "homework"
7. taper frequency of sessions
8. remember: everything 'counts' (including hallway conversations)
9. use groups

## ERICKSONIAN ESSENCES

1. Nonpathology-Based Model
2. Utilization
3. Indirection
4. Action
5. Strategic
6. Future Orientation
7. Enchantment

### The Basic Ericksonian Footprint (S. Lankton)

<b>Stage</b>	<b><i>Summary Statement about the General Goal for Each Stage</i></b>
<b>Matching</b>	Increasing rapport
<b>Blending</b>	Reducing resistance
<b>Utilizing</b>	Allowing client to use existing skills and resources
<b>Elaborating Ambiguity</b>	Unbalancing; creating a search for 'ground'
<b>Reframing</b>	Increasing perceptual options or engaging the meaning first discovered
<b>Co-Creating Outcomes</b>	Including unique clients' needs, resources, values

### Six Core Strategies (D. Short, et al., 2005 )

- \* **Distraction** – shift attention
- \* **Partitioning** – break don into smaller parts
- \* **Progression** –build on small gains
- \* **Suggestion** – guiding client's expectation and expenditure of energy
- \* **Reorientation** – new perspective (reframing)
- \* **Utilization** – using their energy, preferences, point of view, skills, etc.

## REDECISION THERAPY: THE POWER IS IN THE PATIENT

Robert Goulding & Mary Goulding Thinking Structure (Goulding & Goulding, 1979)

- 1) Contact
- 2) Contract
- 3) Con—First and Subsequent (vs. Autonomy)
- 4) Chronic Bad
  - a) Feeling
  - b) Thinking

- c) Behavior
- D) Body
- 5) Games/ Fantasies/ Belief Systems
- 6) Childhood Decisions
  - A) Resolution
    - 1) Injunction and Redecision
    - 2) Ego State Decontamination and Reconstruction
    - 3) Self-Reparenting
    - 4) Etc.
  - B) Anchor
  - C) Adult Plan
  - D) Change of Stroke Patterns

**What are you willing to change today?**

*What* (specificity, goal, target, focus)

*are* (active verb, present tense)

*you* (self as agent, personal function)

*willing* (choice, responsibility, initiative)

*to change* (alter or modify, not just “work on,” “try”, “explore” or “understand”)

*today* ( now, in the moment)

? (inquiry, open field, therapist inviting and respectfully receptive but not insistent)

**SOLUTION-FOCUSED THERAPY BASIC QUESTIONS (de Shazer, 1985, 1988,  
1991; Berg & Miller, 1992)**

**Miracle Question:** “Suppose that one night, while you were asleep, there was a miracle and this problem was solved. How would you do? What would be different?”

**Skeleton Key Question:** “Between now and next time we meet, I would you like you to observe, so that you can describe to me next time, what happens in your [*pick one*: family, life, marriage, relationship] that you want to continue to have happen.”

**Goal-Building Questions:** “What brings you here today? How can I be helpful you? What changes have you noticed since you first made the call to set up this appointment? What needs to happen here so that when you leave you will think, “It was good that we went to see the therapist? What will tell you that are on track?”

**Exceptions Questions:** “When in the past might the problem have happened, but didn’t?

What is different about those times when the problem does not happen?”

**Efficacy (Agency) Questions:** “How did you do that? How did you get that to happen? What was each of you doing differently when you were doing better?”

**Endurance (Coping) Questions:** “Given the terrible situation, how come things aren’t worse? How have you managed to cope as well as you have?”

**Scaling Questions:**

**Hope:** “On a scale from 1 to 10, 1 being absolutely no hope and 10 being complete confidence, what number would you give your current level of hope? What will tell you that your level has gone up one level? What number will be high enough to warrant your working hard to try and change things?”

**Motivation:** “...”

**Progress:** “On a scale from 1 to 10, where 1 is the problem at its worse and 10 is the day after the miracle. What number would you give your current level of progress? What number will tell you that you have made enough progress so that you can consider it solved?”

**SFBT THREE BASIC RULES:**

1. If it ain’t broke, don’t fix it!
2. Once you know what works, do more of it!
3. If it doesn’t work, don’t do it again—do something else!

**CHARACTERISTICS OF “YOU SAID *WHAT?*” INTERVENTIONS (Hoyt & Bobele, 2019):**

1. Respect and Empathy
2. Surprising and Attention-Grabbing
3. Humor
4. Context
5. Acceptability
6. Memorable.

## **SURPRISED BY JOY, OR WERE YOU EXPECTING HER/HIM? WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM OUR INTERNALIZED CLIENTS?**

Introduction: The practice of *internalized other questioning* refers to the idea that the “self” is made up of a person’s internalized community of significant other. One can “step into” the experience of the other by being addressed by the name of the other person and being asked a series of questions. What can our internalized clients offer to nurture and sustain us?

Invitation: Break into small groups. Now, think of a specific person (client) you have worked with that had a significant impact on you and your work as a therapist. Imagine that person as best you can—the way they talked, what they said, their intonation, how they sat, how they looked, and so forth. Immerse yourself in the experience. Now, using the practice of internalized other questioning, have your partner interview you as your client. The interviewer should function like a reporter of journalist, simply trying to get “the story”. He or she should attempt to draw out specific details and particulars to increase verisimilitude, but should not attempt to “therapize” (change or modify) the client-therapist interviewee. The following are some questions that you may use as guideposts (feel free to devise and ask your own questions). Interview from the internalized other position for about 10-15 minutes.

- What impact did your therapist, \_\_\_\_\_, have on you? What did you value most about her or him, as a therapist and as a person?
- What would you want your therapist to know about your work together? Were there some things you wish you would have said to her/him? What else? What kept you from sharing this with your therapist?
- What did your therapist do that helped your sense of hope and optimism? What else?
- What submerged strengths and energy did your therapist touch? What “latent joy” did she or he miss?
- Was there a “critical moment” or situation that especially captures or symbolizes how your therapist worked with you in helpful ways? What was said? What happened?
- If you were to tell your therapist something she/he may not have known (or not fully appreciated) about her/his effect on you, what would that be? What would you say?
- Did your therapist share what positive effects your work had on her/him? If so, what was that like? If not, how would you have experienced that?

Now, step out of your client’s experience and return to begin interviewed as yourself (10-15 minutes). Have somebody ask these questions (or invent your own):

- When you get in touch with your client’s experience you, what counseling abilities do you most appreciate about yourself?



- What effect will it have on your work knowing how much you impacted your client's life?
- How does getting in touch with these abilities and effects fit with why you became a therapist?
- What colleague/ friends/ previous supervisors/ clients support these intentions? How? Who would be glad, even honored, to know of your work with the client? What would they say—what words might they use?
- What did your client stimulate in you that you want to nurture and expand? Where is your sense of humor in your clinical work? Your spirit of adventure?
- Do clients get inspired by your sense of hope and passion? How?
- What about your client's experience invigorates you? What gives you joy?
- How will you remember and recall what you have been learning here? When you feel tired or frustrated, what about this client's experience will help encourage you? When you need it, how will you remember?

Now switch roles: The interviewer becomes the interviewee, and vice versa. Again, work through the internalized other questions for 10-15 minutes; then interview as self for 10-15 minutes.

Before Closing: The exercise invites a greater awareness of one's influence and the need for accountability and clarity about personal ethics. It is not intended to be a solipsistic stroll through a hermetically sealed hall of mirrors, nor is it intended to indulge clinical incompetence of a self-congratulatory sense of grandiosity or arrogance. Discussing the experience of the exercise with colleagues is very important, lest one become isolated without recourse to extra-self input. Questions to consider might include:

- Why was this client chosen to reflect upon?
- How do we know the client's wishes and autonomy were honored?
- What ideas might the interviewer and/or other colleagues contribute to help further the therapeutic endeavor?

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From: M.F. Hoyt & D. Nylund, "The Joy of Narrative: An exercise for learning from our internalized clients." *Journal of Systemic Therapies*, 1997, 16(4), 361-366. Adapted and reprinted in M.F. Hoyt (2000), *Some Stories Are Better than Others*. Philadelphia: Brunner/Mazel.

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