

# Transference

## Counter-Transference

# Relationship as Key

- Holds therapeutic potential
- Opportunity to learn about client's psychosocial, geopolitical & cultural context
- Develop trust
- Avoid the risk of inadvertently doing harm to the client

# Summary of Transference & Counter-transference

- Transference: Client's unconscious redirection of feelings from a person of significance in their life towards the therapist.
- Counter-transference: A therapist redirects feelings from a person of significance in his/her life toward a client.
- Both are normal aspects of our life experiences and encounters.

# Abusive Multiple Transference

- Abusive cases, where the abuser transfers negative feelings directed towards their former abusers, but also to their own victims. They also transfer the power and dominance of their former abusers to themselves.
- Example: a serial killer of women who witnessed his mother being promiscuous with multiple partners, then directs his rage for his mother towards other promiscuous women.

# Sources of Countertransference

- **Realistic internalized responses to client's unfavorable behavior.**
- **Responses to transference from the client.**
- **Characteristic responses inappropriate of the therapist.**

# Useful Countertransference

- **Empathy begins with a countertransference response.**
- **Empathy becomes therapeutic when the therapist can maintain an optimal distance from the feeling, that is, not repress the feeling or be swamped by it.**
- **Responding to transference in ways that differ from the original responses the client received can aid the client's growth and be empowering.**
- **The goal is to increase your awareness of countertransference and shorten the time it takes to recognize and resolve, not eliminate it.**

# Obstructive Countertransference

- **Can blind us to important areas of exploration.**
- **Can cause us to use our clients for vicarious gratification.**
- **Can lead us to emit subtle cues that greatly influence the client.**
- **Can lead us to make interventions that are not in the client's interest.**
- **Can lead us to adopt the roles into which the client's transference casts us.**

# The Mental Status Examination

# *Mental Status Examination: Evaluation of current mental functioning*

- **GENERAL APPEARANCE & BEHAVIOR**- Physical characteristics, alertness, clothing, hygiene, motor activity, facial expression, speech, attitudes
- **EMOTIONS** -mood, -affective expression, appropriateness
- **PERCEPTUAL DISTURBANCES** -hallucinations,
  - -illusions, -depersonalization, -derealization
- **THOUGHT PROCESS** -stream of thought,
  - -abstract thinking, -education and intelligence,
  - -concentration
- **ORIENTATION**
- **MEMORY**
- **IMPLUSE CONTROL**
- **JUDGMENT**
- **INSIGHT**