

# Interpersonal Conceptualization and Intervention in Psychotherapy

Jeff E. Harris, Ph.D. & Kenneth Critchfield, Ph.D.

Training in Unified Psychotherapy

TUP Level Two / Part One

July 2024



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Disclosure



No individuals who have the ability to control or influence the content of this webinar have a relevant financial relationship to disclose with ineligible companies, including but not limited to members of the Planning Committee, speakers, presenters, authors, and/or content reviewers.



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# TUP Level One Webinars

## Working Interactively with Cognition, Emotion, & Behavior

- ▶ TUP 1-1. **Unified Framework**
- ▶ TUP 1-2. **Cognitive Focus**
- ▶ TUP 1-3. **Experiential & Emotional Focus**
- ▶ TUP 1-4. **Behavioral Focus**
- ▶ TUP 1-5. **Developmental Focus**
- ▶ TUP 1-6. **Unified Treatment Planning**

Recordings of all six TUP Level One webinars are available  
through TZK for home study:

<https://www.tzkseminars.com/jeff-harris-phd/>



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.



# TUP Level Two Webinars

## Working Contextually with External & Internal Influences

- ▶ **TUP 2-1. Interpersonal Focus – July 27, 2024**
- ▶ TUP 2-2. Systemic Focus – Sept. 14, 2024
- ▶ TUP 2-3. Cultural Focus – October 5, 2024
- ▶ TUP 2-4. Psychodynamic Focus – 2025
- ▶ TUP 2-5. Biological Focus – 2025
- ▶ TUP 2-6. Case Formulation & Advanced Treatment Planning  
- 2025



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Training in Unified Psychotherapy

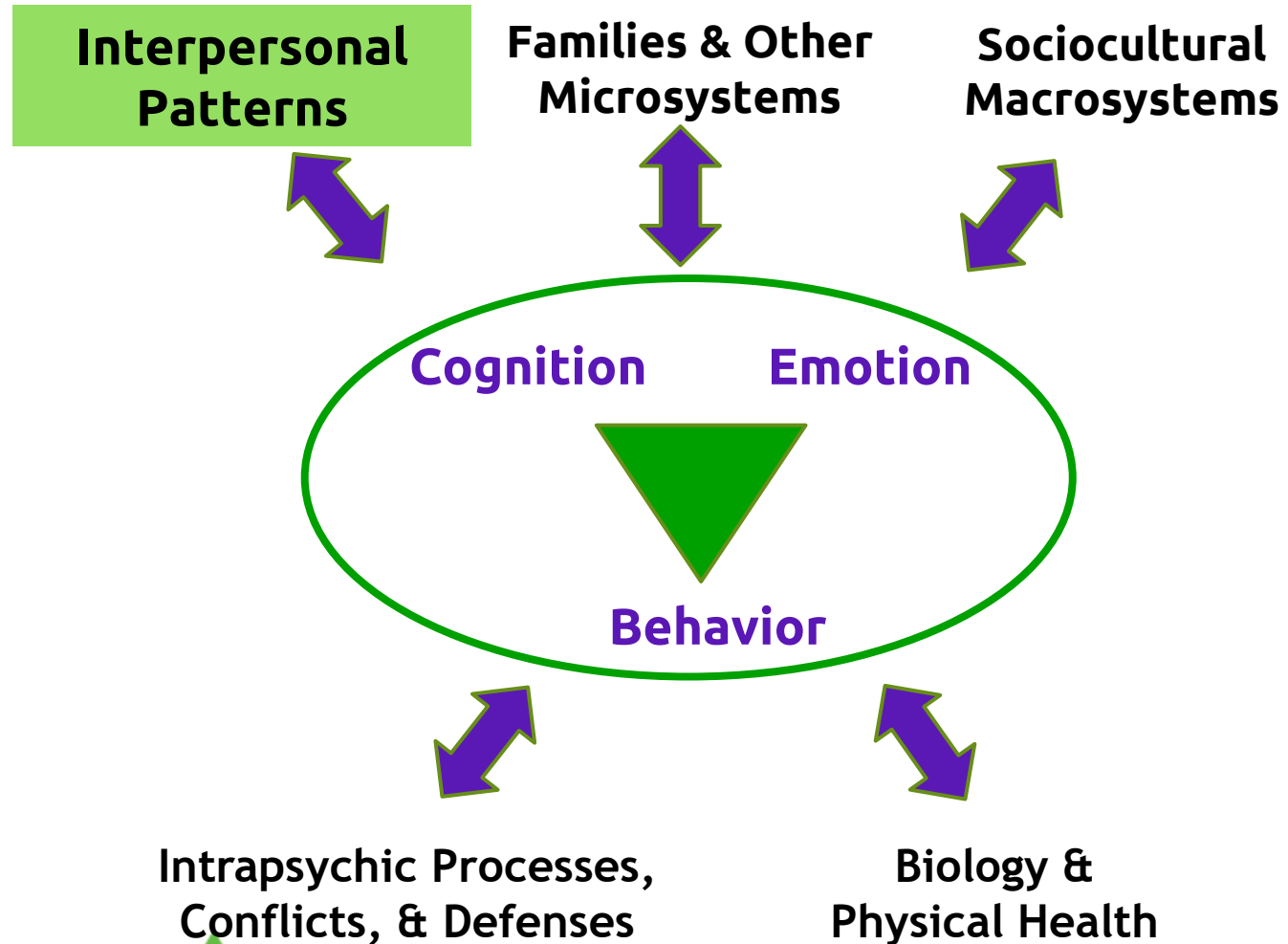
TUP is organized around...

- ▶ **A Holistic Model of Psychological Functioning**
- ▶ **A Unified Framework for Individual Psychotherapy**



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

## Development across Life Experiences



# A Unified Framework for Individual Psychotherapy

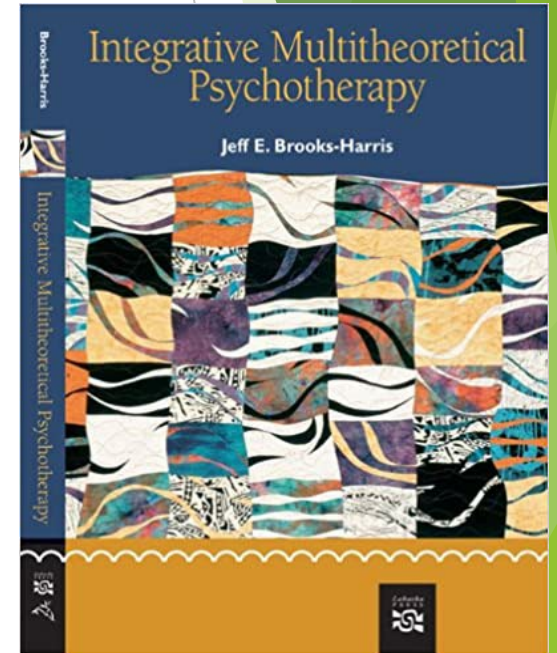
	Practice Domains	Focal Dimensions
A. Immediate Psychological Experience	1. Cognitive	Thoughts & the Cognitive System
	2. Experiential	Emotions & the Experiential-Affective System
	3. Behavioral	Actions & the Behavioral System
B. External Influences	4. Developmental	Development across Life Experiences
	5. Interpersonal	<b>Interpersonal Patterns</b>
	6. Systemic	Families & Other Microsystems
	7. Cultural	Sociocultural Macrosystems
C. Internal Influences	8. Psychodynamic	Intrapsychic Processes, Conflicts, & Defenses
	9. Biological	Biology, Physical Health,& Mind-Body Connection



# Unified Treatment Planning

1. Conducting a Multidimensional Survey
2. Establishing an Interactive Focus on 2 or 3 Dimensions based on Collaborative Dialogue
3. Formulating a Multitheoretical Conceptualization
4. Choosing Intervention Strategies

(Brooks-Harris, 2008, p. 95)



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.



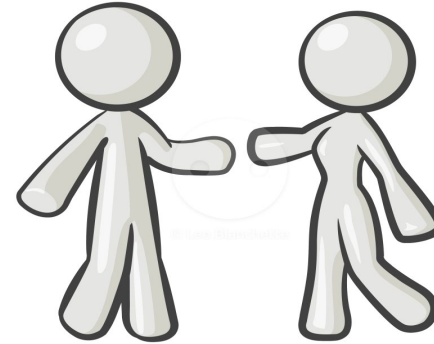
# A. Introduction to Interpersonal Psychotherapy



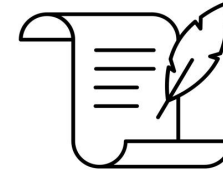
Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Interpersonal Themes in Psychotherapy

- **Relationship Patterns**
- **Attachment Styles**
- **Therapeutic Alliance**
- **Transference**
- **Countertransference**
- **Interpersonal Theory of Personality**
- **Impact Messages**
- **Interpersonal Problem Areas**



# Historical Context: The Legacy of Psychoanalysis



**Sigmund Freud's** theory has contributed two distinct themes to contemporary psychotherapy:

Interpersonal	Intrapsychic
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Childhood Experiences</li><li>• Therapeutic Relationship</li><li>• Transference</li><li>• Countertransference</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Unconscious</li><li>• Structural Theory: Id, Ego, &amp; Superego</li><li>• Instinctual Drives: Sexuality &amp; Aggression</li><li>• Psychic Conflicts</li><li>• Defense Mechanisms</li><li>• Dreams</li></ul>

# Historical Context: The Interpersonal Turn

Freud's theory was followed by increasingly interpersonal and relational perspectives that built on (and argued with) his original framework:

## The Interpersonalists

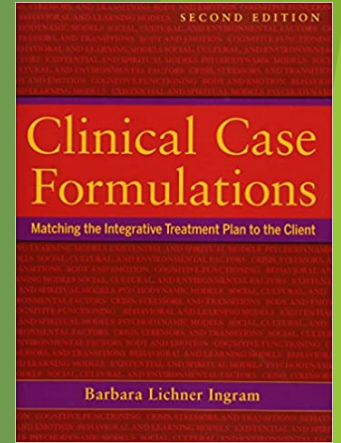
- **US:** H. S. Sullivan's Interpersonal Psychiatry
- **UK:** Karen Horney, Object-Relations Theorists (Winnicott, Fairbairn), Bowlby's Attachment Theory
- **Modern** approaches use the Interpersonal Circumplex (Leary, Wiggins, Pincus, Horowitz) or Structural Analysis of Social Behavior (Benjamin) models.



# Interpersonal Case Formulation

**Barbara Ingram** (2012) described two clinical hypotheses related to interpersonal patterns:

- **Recurrent Pattern** – a recurrent pattern, possibly from early childhood, is causing pain and preventing satisfaction of adult needs. (p. 300)
- **Deficits in Self & Relational Capacities** – the client demonstrates deficits in self and relational capacities and seems to be functioning at the maturity level of very young child. (p. 312)



# Impact of Interpersonal Patterns on Current Functioning

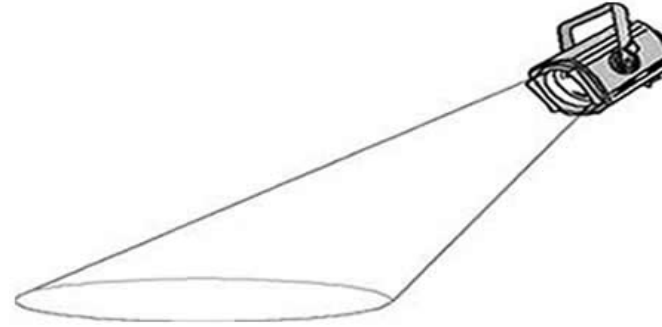
- ❖ Where do *maladaptive* cognitions, emotions, and behaviors come from?
- ❖ Many maladaptive patterns are learned within *interpersonal relationships* and these dysfunctions often become patterns that are repeated.
- ❖ An integrative psychotherapist can *work interactively* between the interpersonal context and current functioning, encouraging more adaptive thoughts, feelings, and actions.



# Focusing on Interpersonal Patterns

Interpersonal Patterns may become a ***focal dimension*** in psychotherapy when...

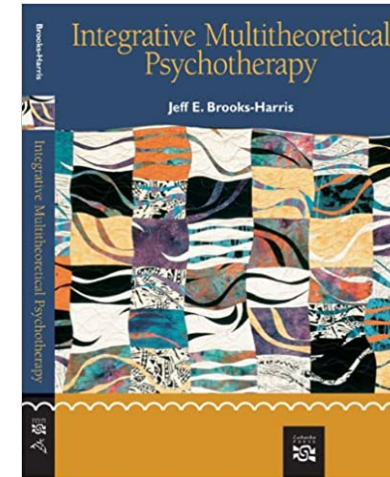
- Clients are repeating patterns they learned in early, formative relationships.
- Relational patterns are influencing current thoughts, feelings, and actions in a way that contributes to distress.



# Focusing on Interpersonal Patterns

## Markers for an Interpersonal Focus include:

- Repetitive interpersonal patterns
- Unresolved childhood experiences
- Insecure attachments
- Ineffective interpersonal relationships
- Interpersonal losses or disputes



(Brooks-Harris, 2008, p. 96)



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.



# Interpersonal Adaptation

Interpersonal psychotherapy strategies are designed to encourage adaptive interpersonal *perceptions* (internal) and interpersonal *skills* (external)

Interpersonal Perceptions	Interpersonal Skills
Adaptive interpersonal perceptions are accurate and not distorted by past relationships and painful experiences.	Adaptive interpersonal skills support relationships and help resolve conflicts and role transitions.
Maladaptive interpersonal perceptions are distorted by past experiences and interfere with current relationships.	Maladaptive interpersonal skills do not support relationships or the resolution of conflicts and role transitions.

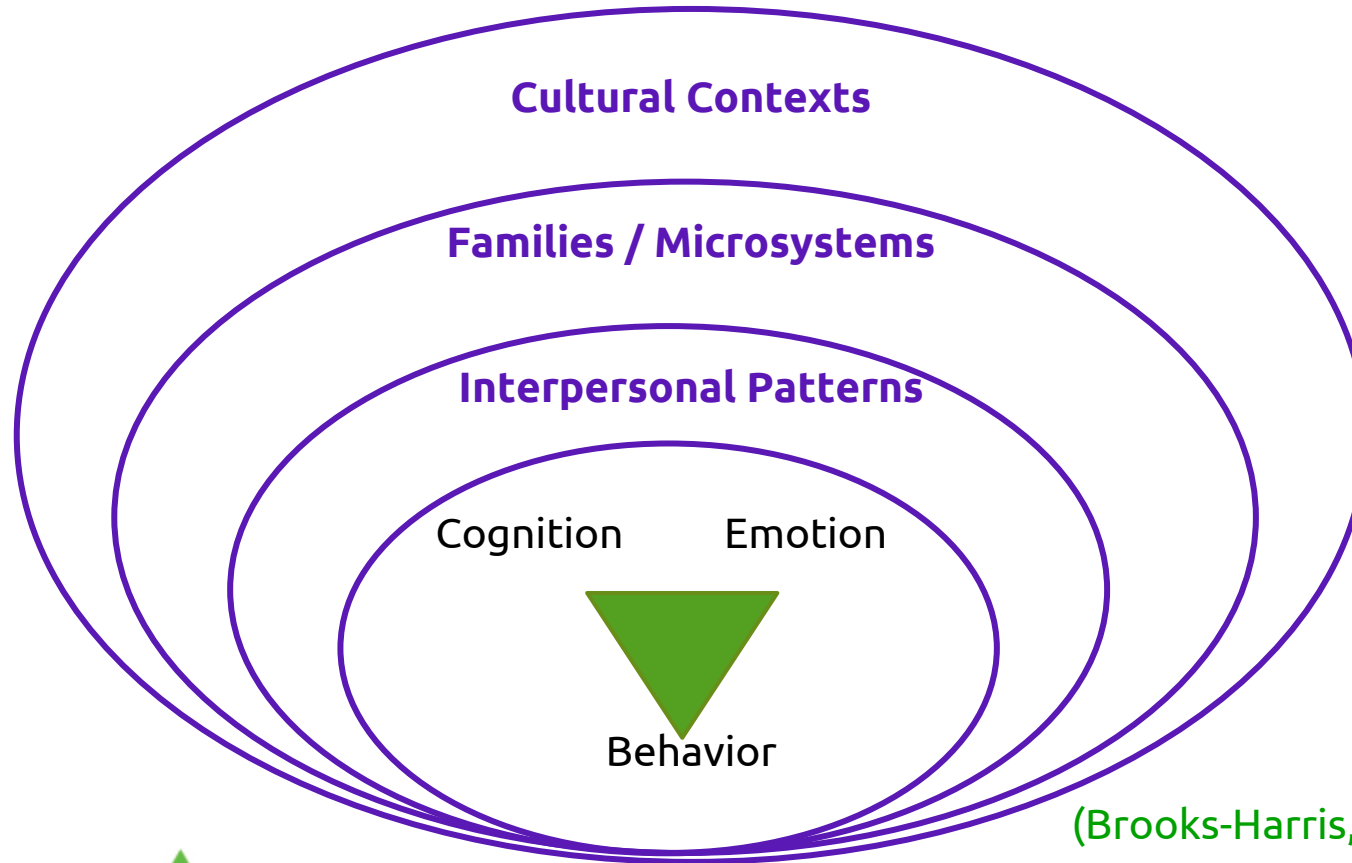
(Brooks-Harris, 2008, p. 82)



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

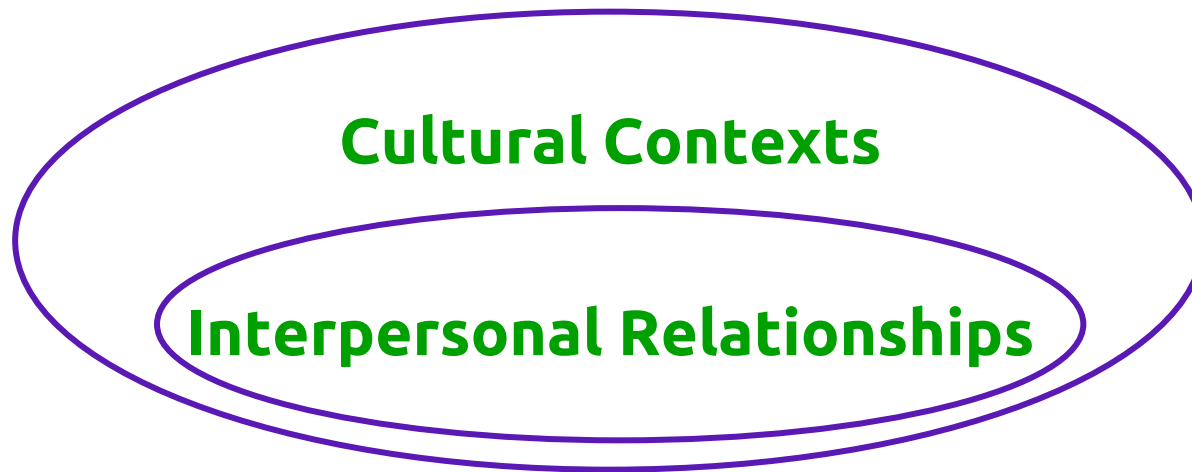
# External Contexts are Embedded within One Another

These overlapping sociocultural contexts all influence the way humans think, feel, and act.



(Brooks-Harris, 2008, p. 74)

# Culture Shapes Interpersonal Relationships



- ❖ Interpersonal relationships will look different in the context of unique cultural contexts.
- ❖ If you do not understand your clients' culture, you are likely to misunderstand their interpersonal experience.



## B. Interpersonal Conceptualization

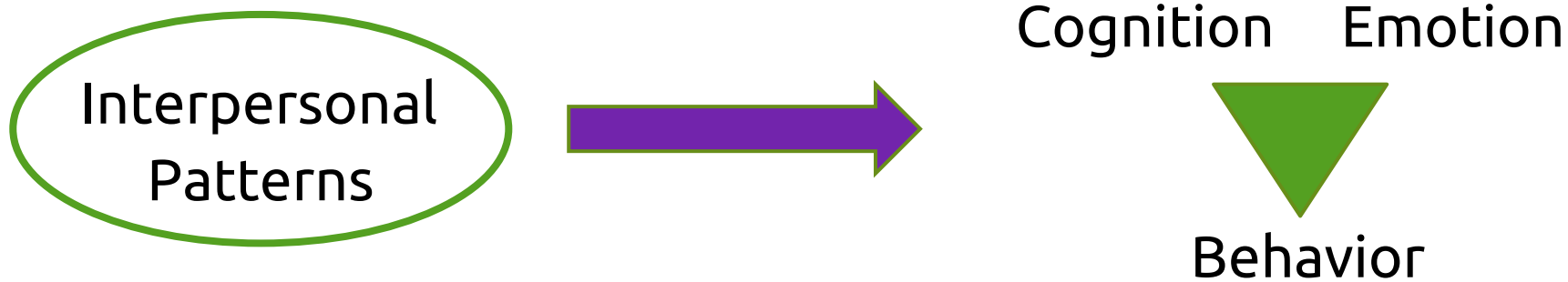


Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

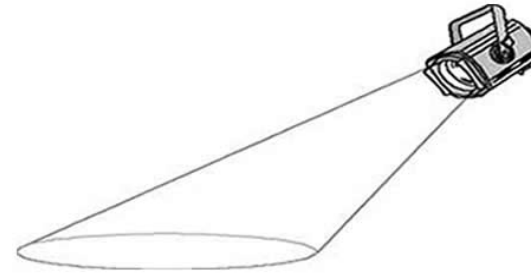
# Interpersonal Patterns Impact Current Functioning

## Interpersonal Patterns as Background

Sometimes psychotherapy focuses on the way relationships have shaped presenting concerns—like depression or anxiety—and the way they impact current functioning:



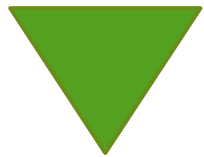
# Focusing on Current Relationships



## Current Relationships in the Spotlight

Sometimes psychotherapy focuses on current relationships and encourages new ways of thinking, feeling, and acting that shape interpersonal interactions.

Cognition    Emotion



Behavior

Current  
Relationships



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Focusing on Interpersonal Patterns

- ***Individual psychotherapy*** may not have a direct impact on dyadic relationships but by helping clients change their patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting, this will help them modify how they relate to other people.
- In contrast, ***couples therapy*** focuses on current relationships and is designed to have a direct impact on current interpersonal interactions.



# Interpersonal Process

An interpersonal process approach helps therapists understand the therapeutic relationship and “use the interpersonal process or **current interaction** with their clients to intervene and help clients change.” (p. 7).

“The emphasis is on providing clients **reparative experiences** with the therapist that will allow them to create self-narratives that are more coherent, affirming, and flexible.” (p. 8)

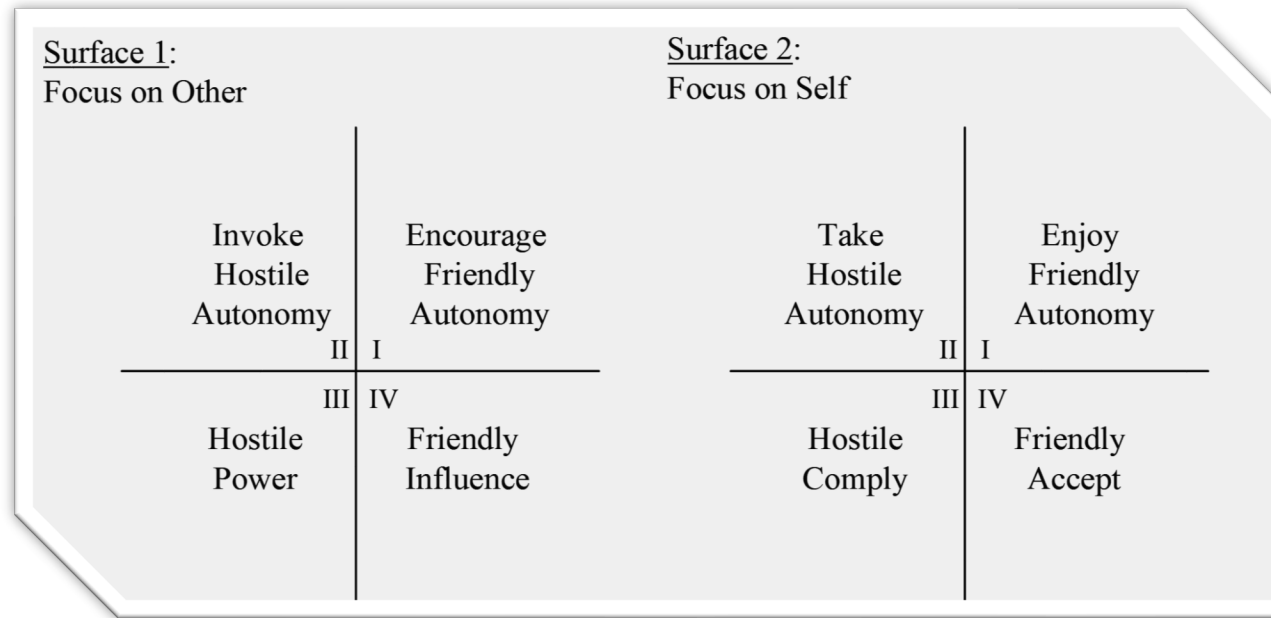
(Teyber & Teyber, 2017)





# Interpersonal Behavior in Three Dimensions: Benjamin's Structural Analysis of Social Behavior

1.	Focus (attention on other or self)
2.	Affiliation (horizontal)
3.	Interdependence (vertical)



# Transference

“Freud began to observe that it was not uncommon for his clients to view him and relate to him in ways that were reminiscent of the way they viewed and related to significant figures in their childhoods—especially their parents. He thus began to speculate that they were *‘transferring’ a template from the past onto the present situation.*”

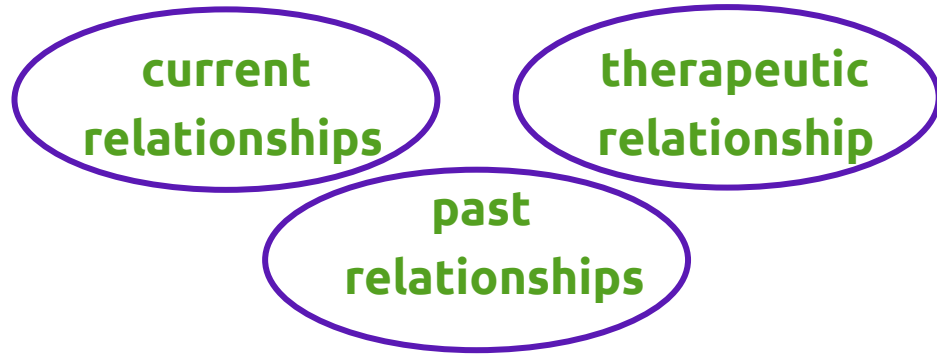
“At first, Freud believed transference was an *impediment* to treatment.”

Over time, Freud came to see transference as “an opportunity to help him develop *an understanding of how past relationships were influencing the experience of the present* in an emotionally immediate way.”

Safran, Kriss, & Folley (2019, p. 24)



# Three Relationship Spheres

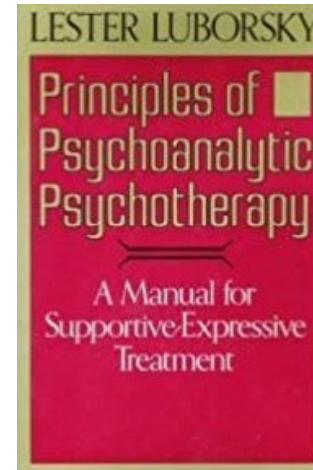


Interpersonal patterns appear in three relationship spheres:

- ❖ Interpersonal patterns are learned in *past relationships*.
- ❖ They are repeated in *current relationships...*
- ❖ including within the *therapeutic relationship* in the form of *transference*.

Luborsky (1984) & Book (1998)

# Conceptualization: Lester Luborsky's CCRT



## Core Conflictual Relationship Theme

**Relationship Episodes** can be examined to identify three components:

**W – WISH** – what did the client want from this interaction? What was their intent or desire? The wish should be understood interpersonally.

**RO – RESPONSE OF OTHER** – How did the client perceive or experience the other as responding in the context of the client's wish? The RO is always from the client's perspective.

**RS – RESPONSE OF SELF** – How did the client respond *cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally*?

Luborsky (1984) & Book (1998)



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Example of a Core Conflictual Relationship Theme

**W** - WISH:

Affirmation

**RO** - RESPONSE OF OTHER:

Dismissal, Rejection

**RS** - RESPONSE OF SELF:

Cognition:

I'm not loveable

Emotion:

Shame

Behavior:

Try Harder

After exploring several ***relationship episodes***, including both current and past relationships, you can identify a ***core theme***. This may be shared with the client in the form of an interpersonal interpretation.



# Example of a Core Conflictual Relationship Theme

## Interpretation Example:

“It seems like you want the affirmation of important people in your life...” [wish]

“but it often feels like people reject your need for affirmation.”  
[response of other]

“You end up trying harder to win their approval...”  
[response of self – behavior]

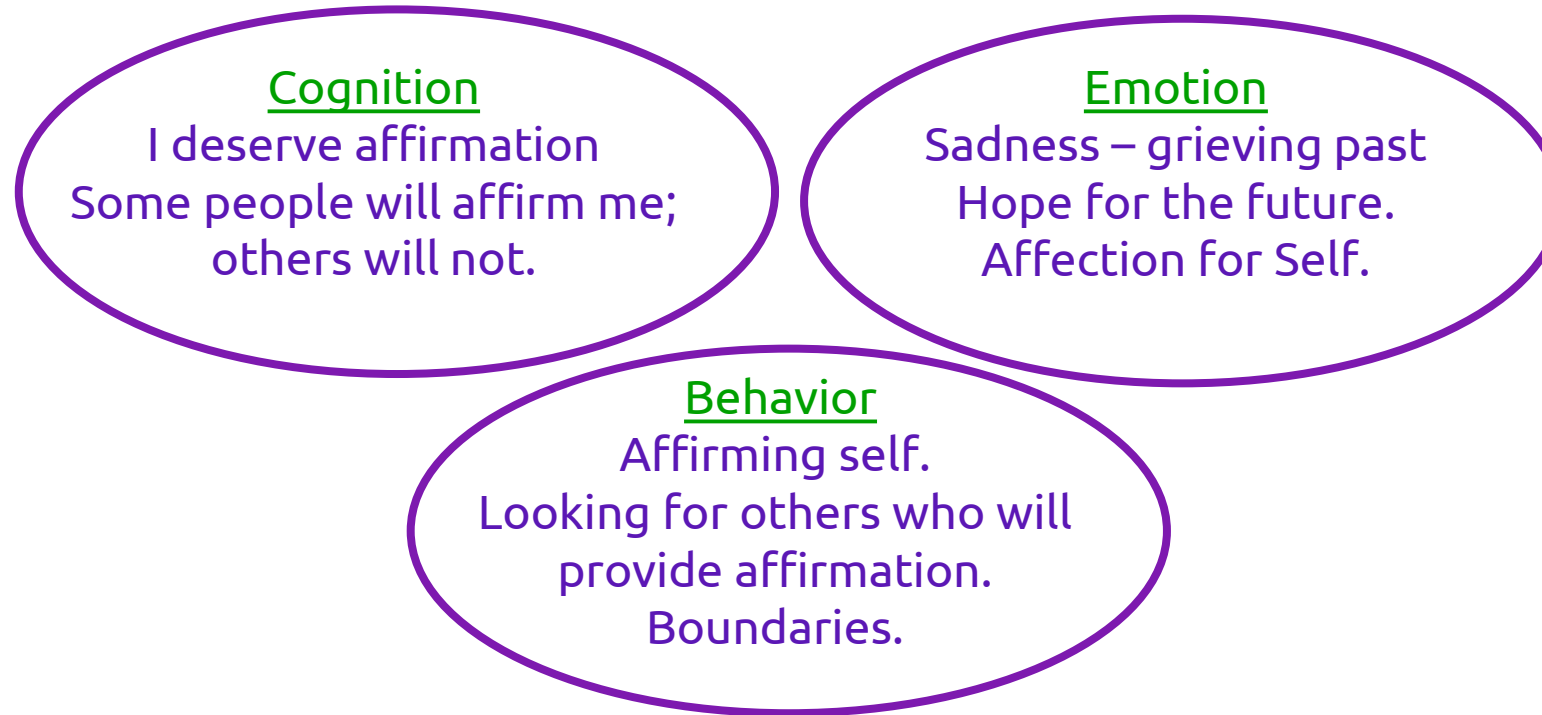
“but you feel ashamed when you don’t get the affirmation you deserve.” [response of self – emotion]

“I wonder if that’s part of why you feel like you don’t deserve to be loved.” [response of self – cognition]



# Adaptive Interpersonal Responses

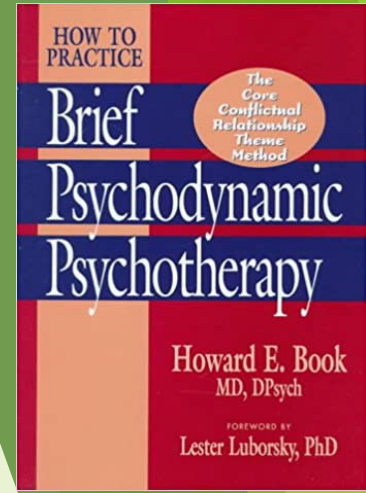
After working on interpersonal patterns in psychotherapy, a more **adaptive** pattern may be identified and enacted:



# Using the CCRT Method in Psychotherapy

- The goal of treatment is to help the client ***fulfill the wish*** (W) by ***working through*** the ***response of other*** (RO). Wishes and responses are often linked to unresolved childhood feelings toward parents.
- The **RO** may be a ***transference distortion*** or a ***repetition compulsion***.
- ***Transference Distortions*** occurs when someone is viewing a current relationship through the lens of an old pattern and misperceiving the current relationship.
- ***Repetition Compulsion*** occurs when someone continues to repeat the same pattern in new relationships. Repetition compulsion occurs because of familiarity or in an attempt to symbolically change an old pattern in a new relationship.

Book (1998)



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.



# Reflecting on Professional Experience

Please take a few minutes to reflect on a client's interpersonal pattern:

**W** - WISH:

**RO** - RESPONSE OF OTHER:

**RS** - RESPONSE OF SELF: Cognition:  
Emotion:  
Behavior:



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Reflecting on Professional Experience

## *Transference Distortions*

- When have you observed clients viewing a current relationship through the lens of an old pattern and misperceiving the current relationship?

## *Repetition Compulsion*

- When have you seen a client repeat the same interpersonal pattern in new relationships?
- Did this repetition compulsion occur because of familiarity?
- Was this a symbolic attempt to change an old pattern?



# Watching for Transference

- You should watch for the recurrence of interpersonal patterns in the therapeutic relationship.
- Does the client relate with you in a way that repeats a past formative relationship?
  - Trying to please or impress you
  - Fearful of criticism
  - Acting clingy or needy
- You can use the **CCRT** method to examine a relationship episode that occurs within psychotherapy and to see how this may be a repetition of a core theme.



# Transference

“A good therapeutic relationship provides an ideal medium for experiencing one’s maladaptive interpersonal predispositions, while at the same time facilitating their correction.”

(Strupp & Binder, 1984, p. 143)

**Process comments** can be used to examine transference:

“I think that something important might be going on right now. Can we talk about what just happened between us?”

(Teyber, 2000, p. 51)

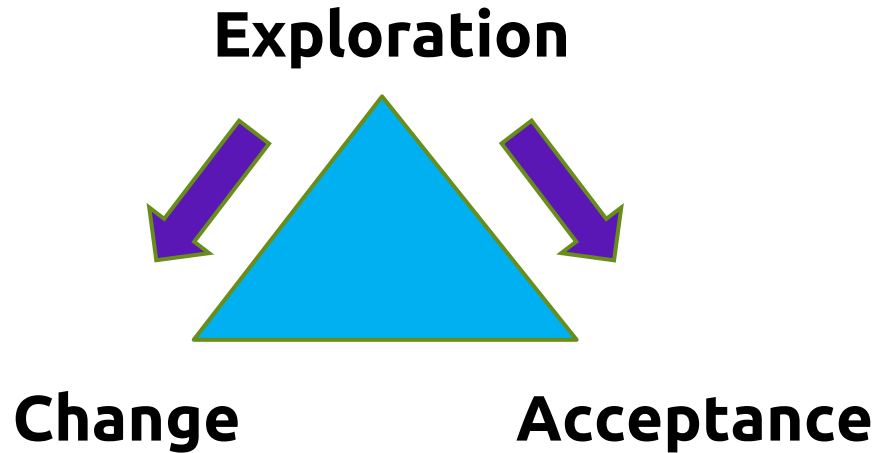
See Strategy PSY-9: *Observing the Therapeutic Relationship in the Multitheoretical Psychotherapy* book

(Brooks-Harris, 2008, p. 303)



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Interpersonal Exploration, Change, & Acceptance



## Exploring Interpersonal Patterns

- Help clients explore interpersonal patterns and identify ***relationships*** that need to be modified.
- Are these relationships healthy or hurtful?
- Are old patterns being repeated?

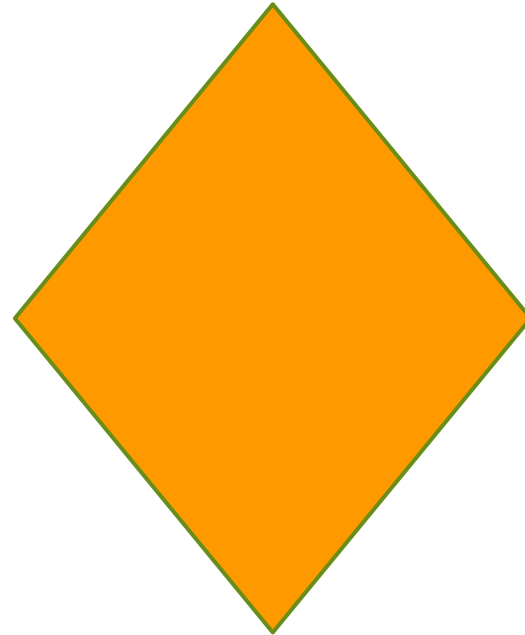
# Functional Analysis & Guided Discovery

- ▶ **Functional Analysis** was developed by Behavior Therapists to discern the value and function of specific actions.
- ▶ TUP expands the applicability of functional analysis in a **multidimensional** manner.
- ▶ Integrative psychotherapy explores the functional value of emotions, cognitions, & behaviors.
- ▶ Functional analysis can be applied to developmental, interpersonal, systemic, cultural, and biological processes.
- ▶ For example, is the way you **learned to relate to others** in the past still serving an adaptive purpose?



# Functional Analysis – General Description

Explore Current  
Functioning



## Support Adaptation

(highlight strengths, solutions,  
accurate perceptions,  
adaptive emotions, etc.)

**Accept Reality** and  
things that can't be changed

(difficult truths,  
uncomfortable feelings,  
environmental limitations, etc.)

## Change Maladaptive Patterns

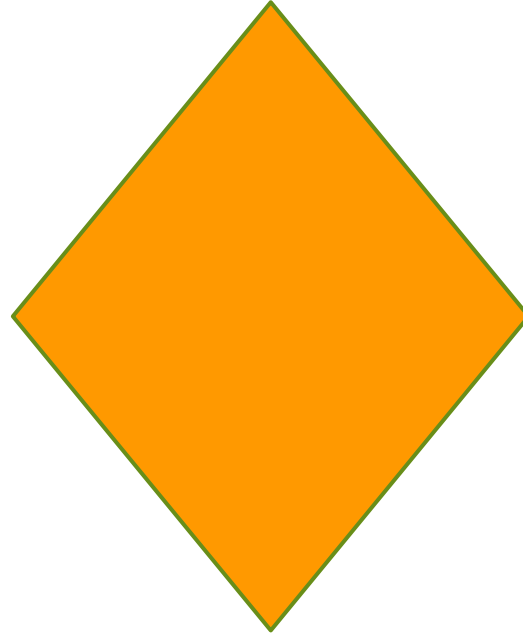
(dysfunctional thoughts, maladaptive  
emotions, ineffective actions,  
unhealthy relationships, etc.)



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Functional Analysis – Interpersonal Application

Explore Current  
Functioning



**Support Adaptation**

\* positive relationships that encourage personal growth \*

**Accept Reality** and  
things that can't be changed

\* relationships with people who do not want to change \*

**Change Maladaptive  
Patterns**

\* unhealthy relationships based on maladaptive patterns \*



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.



# Discussion

**Do you have any questions  
or comments so far?**



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

## 1-Minute Stretch



## **C. Foundational Skills for an Interpersonal Focus**



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Foundational Skills for Interpersonal Psychotherapy

- A. Exploration and Functional Analysis of Developmental Patterns**
- B. Guided Discovery to Uncover More Adaptive Functioning**
- C. Enacting Adaptation Outside of Psychotherapy**



# Foundational Skills for Interpersonal Psychotherapy

## A. Exploration and Functional Analysis of Interpersonal Patterns

**INT-1.** Focusing on interpersonal patterns

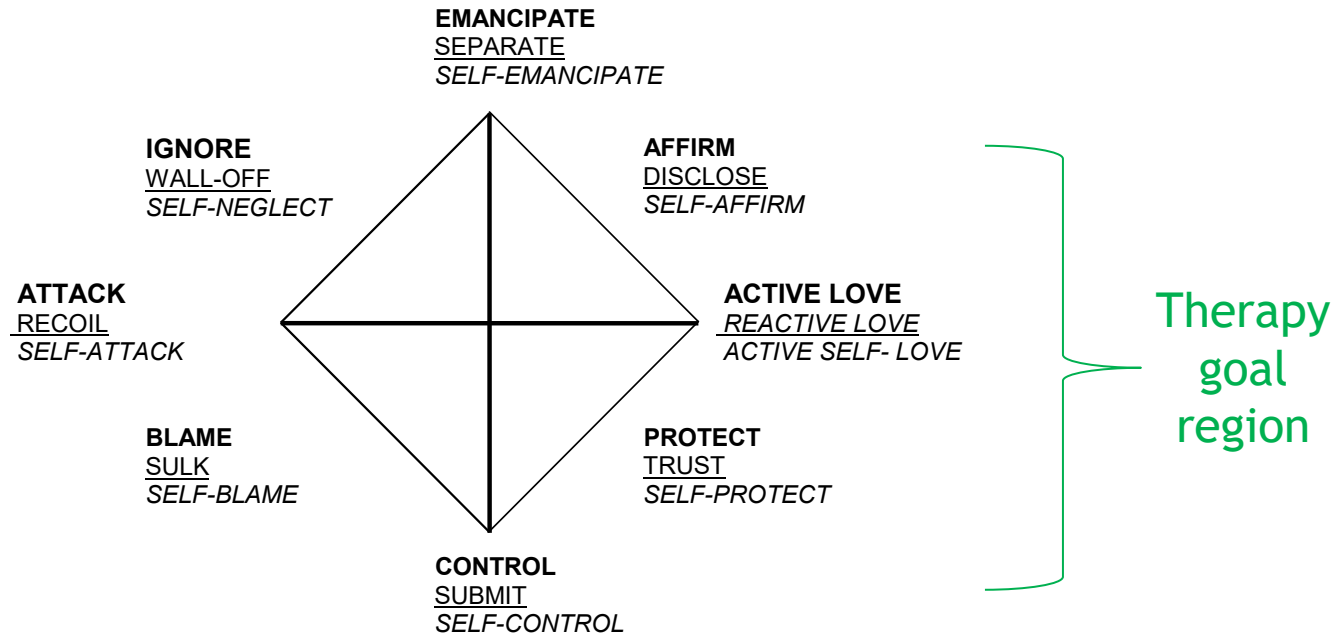
**INT-2.** Understanding the context of relational patterns

**INT-3.** Analyzing how interpersonal patterns reflect attempts to adapt to present circumstances

**INT-4.** Exploring how current patterns have been learned



# INT-1. Focusing on interpersonal patterns with self and others, and becoming aware of their dynamics in the present.



Structural Analysis of Social Behavior (SASB) cluster model. Focus on Other, Self, or Introject are respectively indicated by Bold, Underline, and *Italic* fonts. From: Benjamin, L.S. (1996). *Interpersonal diagnosis and treatment of personality disorders*, Second edition. N.Y.: Guilford. Copyright the Guilford Press.

## INT-1. Focusing on interpersonal patterns with self and others, and becoming aware of their dynamics in the present.

### Example of Therapeutic Dialogue: Seeking Clarity

**Client:** *[rapidly, upset]: Maybe I should be alone. I just don't think. I'm not a thinker, I'm a doer. I don't learn because I tune things out. My boyfriend always needs to explain things to me. I need to have control, change needs to be slow. We argue too much. My friend says we need communication skills. Can I bring him in with me for a session?*

**Therapist:** ***This sounds important. Can you tell me more about what's been going on?***



## INT-1. Focusing on interpersonal patterns with self and others, and becoming aware of their dynamics in the present.

### Example: Seeking Clarity (continued)

**Client:** *He's very critical. He's an emotional person. He really loves me, but he likes things the way he likes them. He's bipolar. He says, 'why is it always about you?' He's tired of dealing with me crying all the time. I want to be with someone who treats me well, not so critical.*

**Therapist:** ***Ok. Well, I think I need to get to where I can see things the way you do. Could we take an example of a recent argument and walk it through from the beginning? Like 'he said, she said.' Let's take your last argument, when was it?***





## INT-2. Understanding the context of relational patterns and associated impacts on responses of others, self-concept, and psychiatric symptoms.

*Heuristic for Gathering Narrative Interpersonal Detail*

	Input	Response	Impact on self
Affect			
Behavior			
Cognition			

From: Critchfield & Benjamin, 2024



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

## INT-2. Understanding the context of relational patterns and associated impacts on responses of others, self-concept, and psychiatric symptoms.

### Example: Understanding Affective and Cognitive Context

**Client:** *It was last night. He wanted his things upstairs. I didn't know that. He didn't tell me. I wasn't ready for that. He said he was leaving, that he couldn't take me anymore.*

**Therapist:** ***Why did he say that? What was going on?***

**Client:** *I was crying. He was just going out for a little while because he was upset. He said "why is it always about you?"*

**Therapist:** ***About you?***

**Client:** *I was worried because he was leaving. I said "I need to know when you're coming back. How long are you going to be gone? Is this minutes, or hours, or days?! I need to know!"*



## INT-2. Understanding the context of relational patterns and associated impacts on responses of others, self-concept, and psychiatric symptoms.

### Example: Reflective Summary to Consolidate & Frame Interactions

**Therapist:** *So he was leaving to get some space because of whatever was going on between you two.*

**Client:** *Yes*

**Therapist:** *And you were worried because you didn't know when he'd be coming back.*

**Client:** *Exactly.*

**Therapist:** *So, if I understand this right, he wanted to get some distance, but you were panicking about this and wanted some reassurance from him about when he would come back.*



## INT-2. Understanding the context of relational patterns and associated impacts on responses of others, self-concept, and psychiatric symptoms.

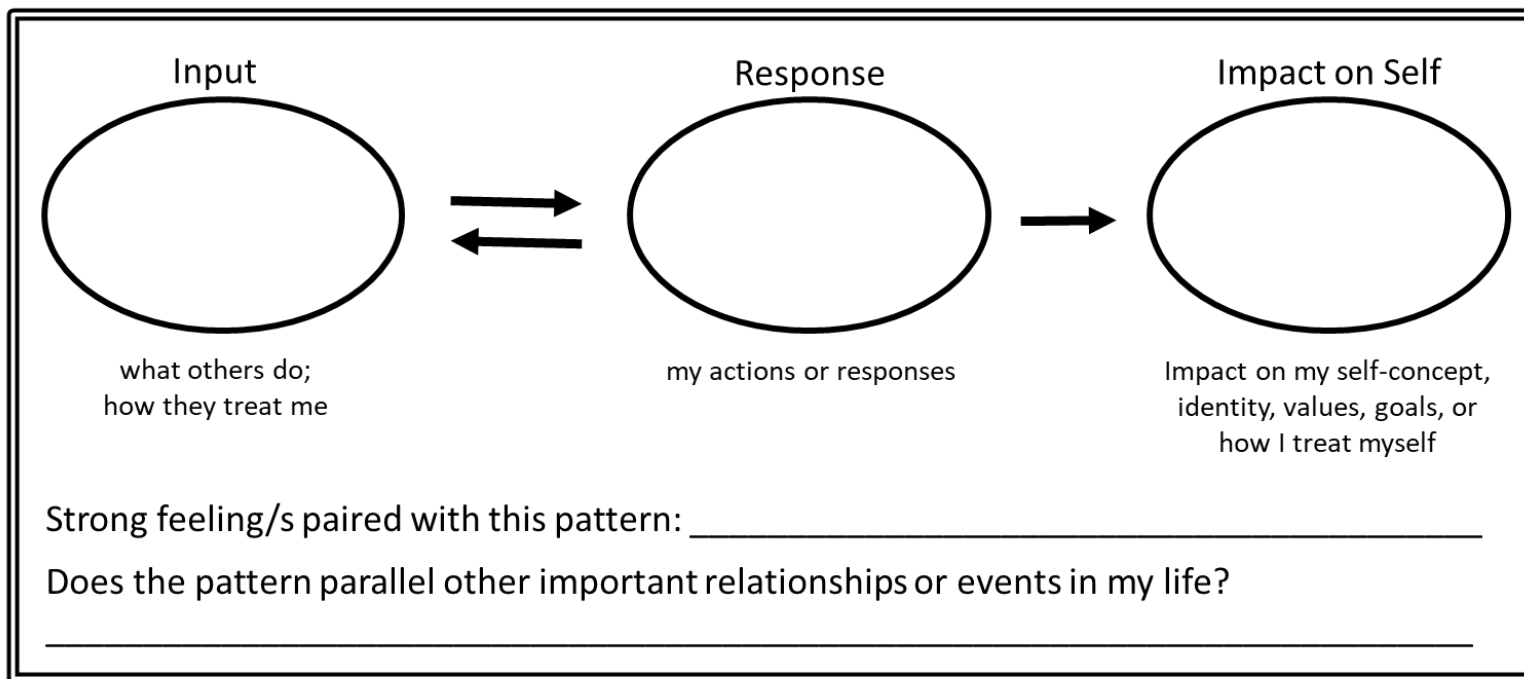
### Example: Reflective Summary (continued)

**Therapist:** *It sounds like you wanted to make him take care of your feelings, even while he was trying to get some distance to cool down after this big argument about where he could put his stuff. Is that about right?*

**Client:** *(with a sense of recognition) I hadn't thought of it that way. It's true. I'm afraid he's not coming back, even though I know he is ... He just needs some space sometimes.*



## IRT event analysis



Awareness of 'how it works' can sometimes open up the possibility of change through identifying and practicing new responses with self or others (e.g., compassion, kindness, assertion, distance, self-care).

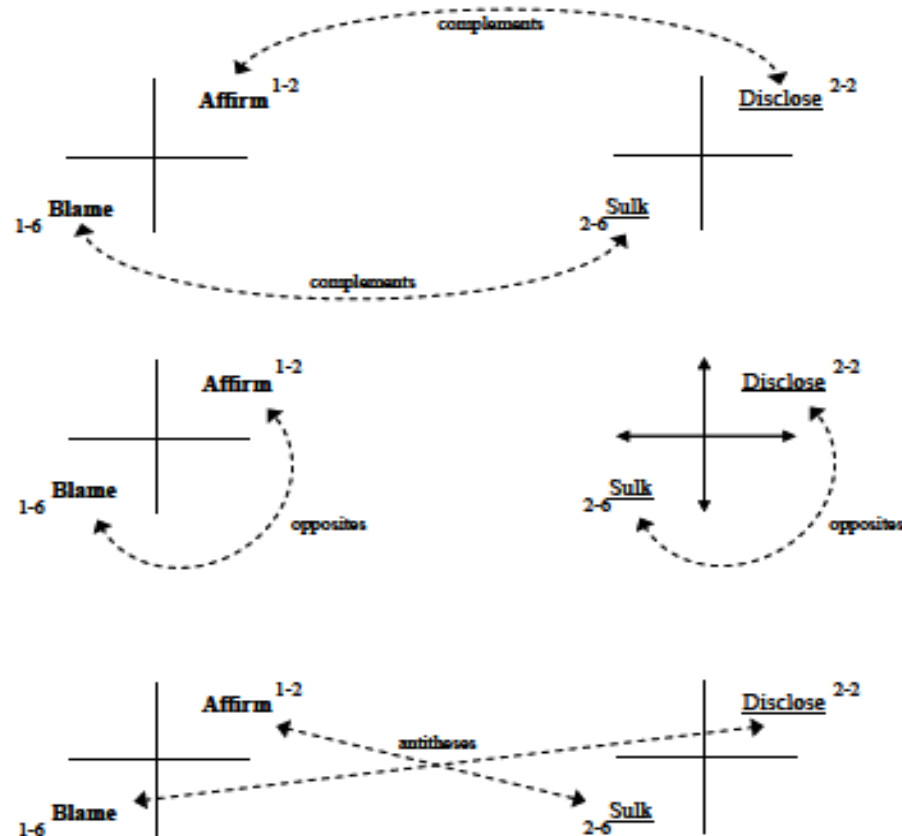
Desired, healthy choice/s going forward: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



From: Critchfield & Benjamin, 2024

Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

### INT-3. Analyzing how interpersonal patterns reflect attempts to adapt to present circumstances and are often maintained interactively with others.



From: Critchfield & Benjamin, 2024

### INT-3. Analyzing how interpersonal patterns reflect attempts to adapt to present circumstances and are often maintained interactively with others.

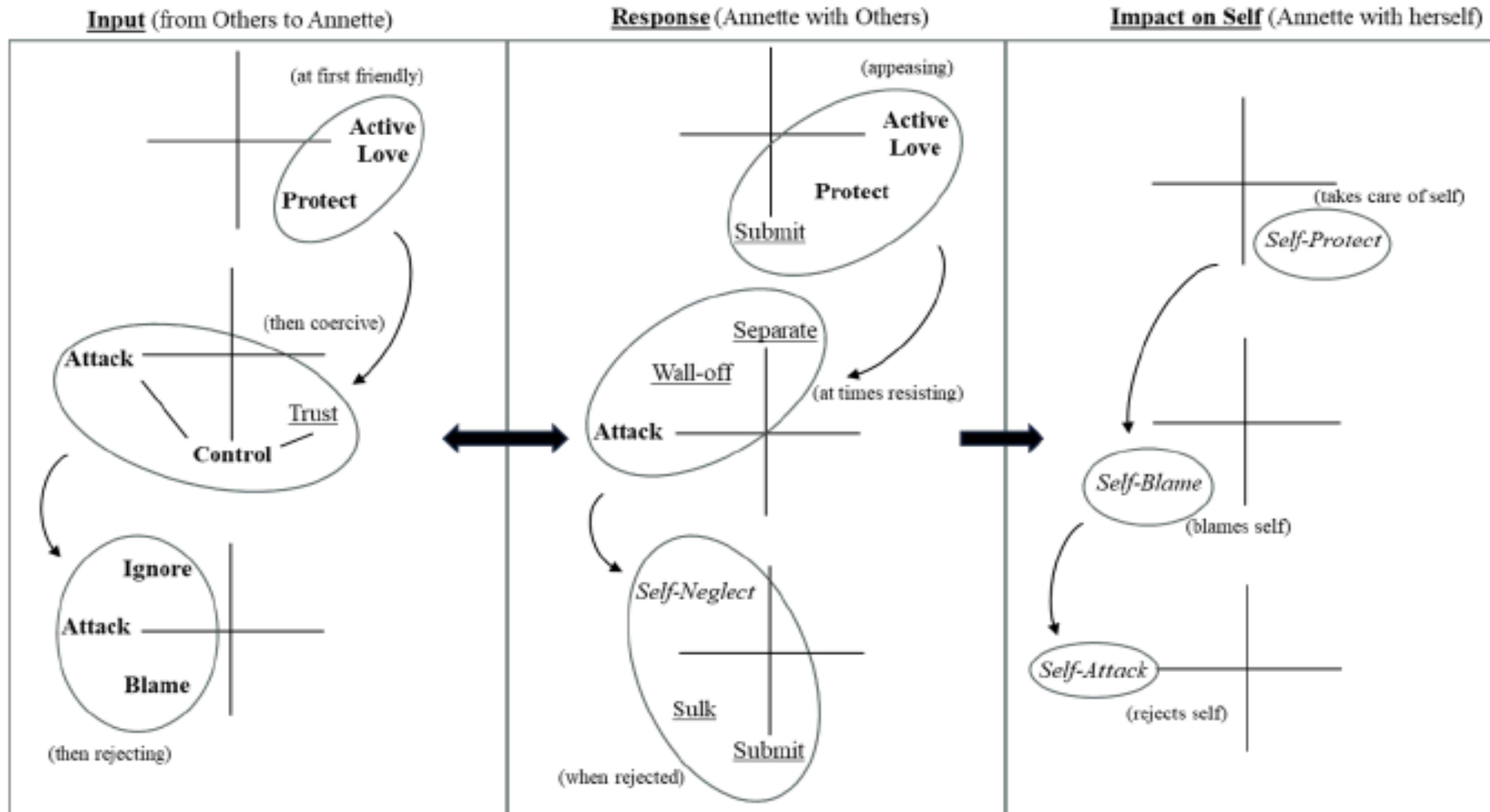
#### Example of Therapeutic Dialogue

**Therapist:** *Many of our behaviors “**pull for**” a parallel behavior from another person. It’s no guarantee, but friendliness tends to pull for friendliness, hostility for hostility, closeness for closeness, and distance for distance. This general phenomenon is called “**complementarity**”. In the example with your boyfriend, it sounds like you’re pulling hard for closeness, while he’s doing the same for distance – at least in that argument last night. It sounds like part of you senses that if you can tolerate him getting some space, then he’ll eventually come back, but another part was really alarmed by his distance. Is this pattern a familiar one for you?*



## INT-4. Exploring how current patterns have been learned, and attachment-related functions they play, to keep important early figures close in the present.

Figure 7.1 Prototype Sequences of Input, Response, and Impact on Self for Annette





## INT-4. Exploring how current patterns have been learned, and attachment-related functions they play to keep important early figures close in the present.

### Copy Processes:

- ❖ Identification: be like the early attachment figure
- ❖ Recapitulation: act like the figure is still present & in charge
- ❖ Introjection: treat myself as I was treated



## INT-4. Exploring how current patterns have been learned, and attachment-related functions they play to keep important early figures close in the present

### Example of Therapeutic Dialogue

**Therapist:** “I believe that everything makes sense. Usually, problem patterns we have in adulthood reflect things we learned as children. The connections often are quite direct. What we do as adults often copies early patterns that we learned from mother or father or other important people in our lives. There are three ways to do it: ‘Be like him or her,’ ‘Act as if he or she is still there,’ ‘Treat yourself as he or she treated you.’ For example, I notice that you say you are [a perfectionist] and you have been talking about how your [father] also [was a perfectionist]. ... Do you see other connections?... Here are some that I see, although they will need further checking.”

(Benjamin, 2003/2006, Table 2.3, p. 47)



# VIDEO DEMONSTRATION A

## A. Exploration and Functional Analysis of Developmental Patterns

**INT-1.** Focusing on interpersonal patterns

**INT-2.** Understanding the context of relational patterns

**INT-3.** Analyzing how interpersonal patterns reflect attempts to adapt to present circumstances

**INT-4.** Exploring how current patterns have been learned



# VIDEO DEMONSTRATION A

**Which skills did you see Ken using?**

- INT-1. Focusing on interpersonal patterns**
- INT-2. Understanding the context of relational patterns**
- INT-3. Analyzing how interpersonal patterns reflect attempts to adapt to present circumstances**
- INT-4. Exploring how current patterns have been learned**

**Do you have any questions about exploring interpersonal patterns?**



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

## 3-Minute Stretch Break



# Foundational Skills for Interpersonal Psychotherapy

## **B. Guided Discovery to Uncover More Adaptive Interpersonal Functioning**

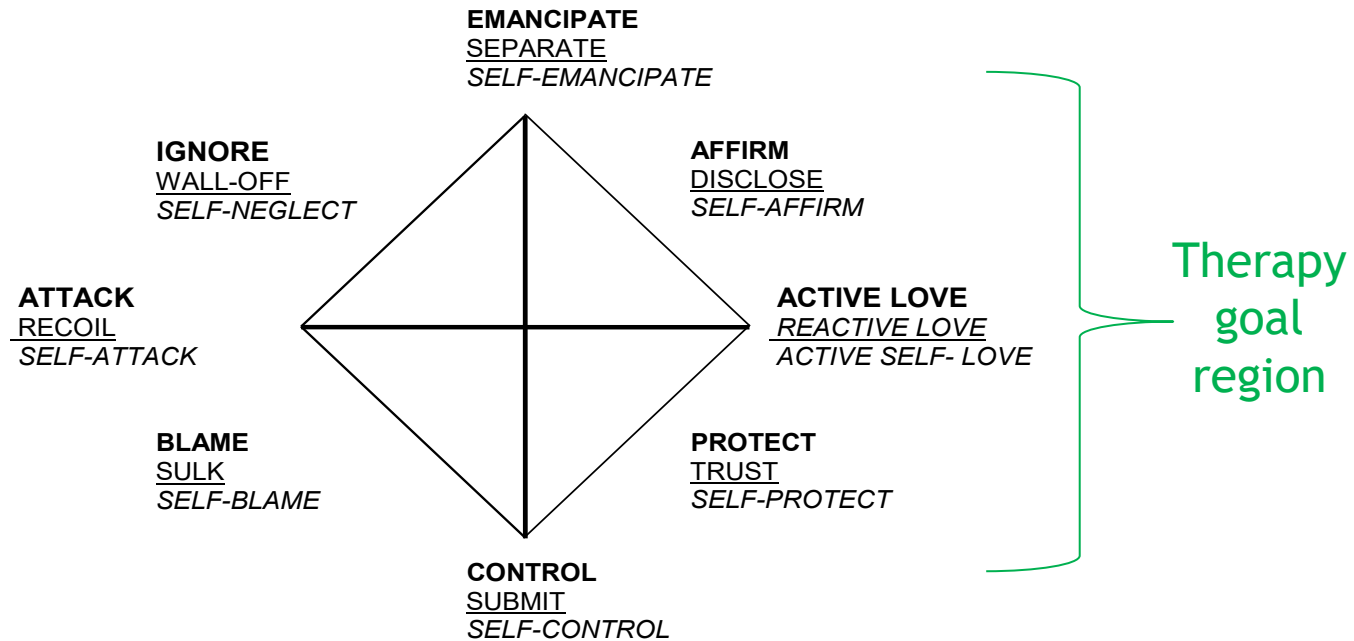
**INT-5. Recognizing and supporting adaptive relationship patterns**

**INT-6. Recognizing maladaptive patterns and choosing more adaptive alternatives.**

**INT-7. Understanding and accepting realistic limits over relationship processes**



## INT-5. Recognizing and supporting adaptive relationship patterns



Structural Analysis of Social Behavior (SASB) cluster model. Focus on Other, Self, or Introject are respectively indicated by Bold, Underline, and *Italic* fonts. From: Benjamin, L.S. (1996). *Interpersonal diagnosis and treatment of personality disorders, Second edition*. N.Y.: Guilford. Copyright the Guilford Press.

## INT-5. Recognizing and supporting adaptive relationship patterns

### Example of Therapeutic Dialogue

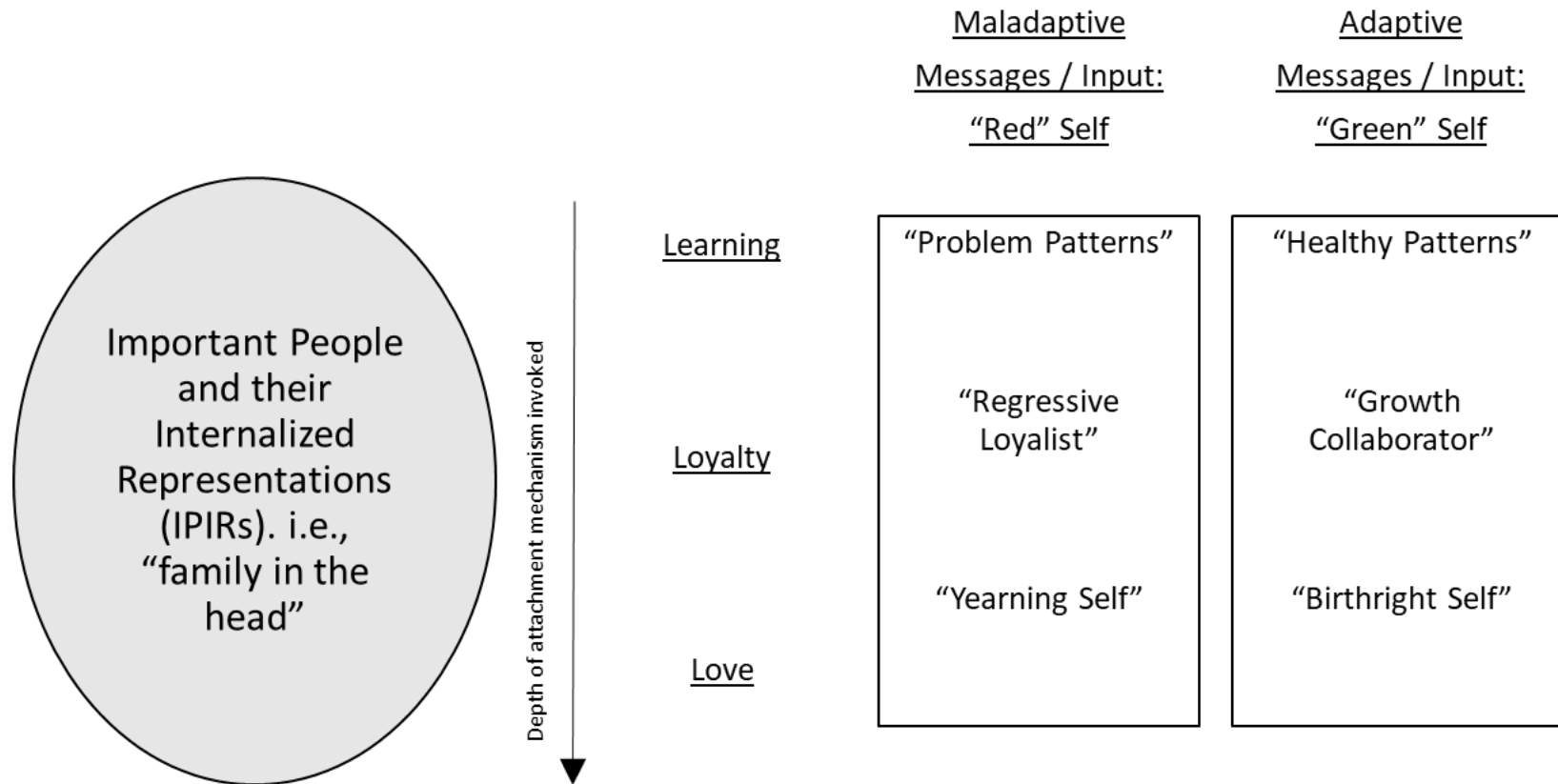
**Therapist:** “The goal of this therapy is to help you learn to relate to yourself and others in friendly and balanced ways that are neither too controlling nor too compliant nor too disconnected. Examples of goal behaviors are: Affirm others and yourself. Disclose honestly to yourself and loved ones. Love others and accept love from them. Love yourself too. Protect loved ones and yourself. Trust. The goal ways of relating tend to be associated with feeling that you can: accept, love and nurture. You can be: centered delighted and hopeful.”

(Benjamin, 2003/2006, Table 5.1, p. 162)





## INT-6. Recognizing maladaptive patterns and choosing more adaptive alternatives.



From: Critchfield & Benjamin, 2024

Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# INT-6. Recognizing maladaptive patterns and choosing more adaptive alternatives.

## Example of Therapeutic Dialogue

**Therapist:** It's like there are two different selves we all have. One part that repeats old ways that were probably once adaptive for us – we learned our lessons well! – but now they are causing us trouble. I refer to this as the *“Red” self*. Another part is trying to work with the present reality of more adaptive ways. I call this the *“Green” self*. I wonder if you can recognize those two parts in what we've been talking about here today?

(in prior example, *Red* might be found in the part that feared her boyfriend's exit, while *Green* might be found in recognition that space might be needed by him sometimes)



## INT-7. Understanding and accepting the realistic limits over relationship processes

**Use of Complementarity:** Enhances *odds* of a reciprocal response, but no guarantee that others will change.

**Differentiation:** Forms of psychological and behavioral distance are sometimes needed when others enact problem patterns (top regions of SASB model).

**Acceptance, Grief Work:** Helpful in facing the limits and scope of one's one scope of influence in a relationship



## INT-7. Understanding and accepting the realistic limits over relationship processes

### Example of Therapeutic Dialogue

**Client:** What if I let him go and he thinks I just don't care and so eventually he never comes back?

**Therapist:** Well, I suppose that's always a possibility. Can we have a conversation about what it's like to be able to dance your own part of the dance, realizing there's only so much you can do about his part of it?



# VIDEO DEMONSTRATION B

## B. Guided Discovery to Uncover More Adaptive Functioning

INT-5. Recognizing and supporting adaptive relationship patterns

INT-6. Recognizing maladaptive patterns and choosing more adaptive alternatives.

INT-7. Understanding and accepting the realistic limits



# VIDEO DEMONSTRATION B

**Which skills did you see Ken using?**

**INT-5. Recognizing and supporting adaptive relationship patterns**

**INT-6. Recognizing maladaptive patterns and choosing more adaptive alternatives.**

**INT-7. Understanding and accepting realistic limits**

**Do you have any questions about uncovering more adaptive patterns?**



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Foundational Skills for Interpersonal Psychotherapy

## C. Enacting Interpersonal Adaptation Outside of Psychotherapy

**INT-8. Practicing more adaptive ways of being**

**INT-9. Generalizing the practice of more adaptive ways of being**

**INT-10. Supporting enhanced ability to discern and choose relational partners**



## INT-8. Practicing more adaptive ways of relating to others

- ❖ How do you get to Carnegie Hall?
  - ❖ Practice, practice, practice
- ❖ Identify and reinforce **relational themes** showing a behavioral baseline of warmth, reciprocity, and ability to be both independent and interdependent in moderate, context-appropriate ways.
- ❖ Repeat 10,000 times (or so)
  - ❖ in relation to others (including the therapist)
  - ❖ and the self





# INT-8. Practicing more adaptive ways of relating to others

## Example of Therapeutic Dialogue

**Client:** This is hard, it just doesn't feel natural trusting that he'll be open if I don't monitor him and know how he feels about me.

**Therapist:** Yes, it IS hard. *Red patterns* are usually there for good reasons based on your learning history with close people in your life. Part of the approach here is to help you “reprogram” this part of your safety and threat system about relationships. You've had success now with expressing your concerns in friendly ways and seeing that he responds with more openness. With practice and time this will seem more like second nature. Until then, using your awareness of *Red* and *Green*, you can identify when the old fears jump up, and shift to the more helpful response. Do you have some examples of how this has gone for you recently?



## INT-9. Generalizing the practice of more adaptive ways of relating

- ❖ Similar to other learning processes (e.g., music, language), practice of new ways should extend to multiple relational settings and domains.
- ❖ Part of the practice is recognizing when “Red” patterns are present and deliberately shifting to “Green” ways.
- ❖ Ideally, over time, this includes while facing a range of stressor, resisting the “*call of the Red*” to regress back to well-rehearsed, overlearned, problematic ways of being.



# INT-9. Generalizing the practice of more adaptive ways of relating

## Example of Therapeutic Dialogue

**Therapist:** I think it's marvelous how you've been approaching things differently with your boyfriend! I wonder what that feels like for you to be doing that?

**Client:** I've noticed I'm feeling better in relation to myself and my ability to get into a *"Green" state of mind* in other parts of my life. Like at work, I was able to [describes details...]

**Therapist:** Yes, that's how it works. This is wonderful news and I celebrate how you're finding ways to *"go Green"* in other parts of your life: your relationship, your self-concept, your work relationships [anticipating *Red backlash* ... I wonder what your "family in the head might say" in response to all this progress?]



# INT-10. Supporting enhanced ability to discern and choose relational partners

- ❖ Awareness and Choice
- ❖ Change in one's own behavior has implications for others who may or may not be open to the change.
  - ❖ SASB model can be helpful for therapist and client alike to discuss observed patterns and options in relation to other people



## INT-10. Supporting enhanced ability to discern and choose relational partners

### Example of Therapeutic Dialogue

**Therapist:** What do you think about this new friend of yours in terms of *Red* and *Green* patterns? Do you find yourself pulled in one direction or another?

**Client:** I'm optimistic because we really connect. I don't find myself getting self-conscious, trying to impress them, or feeling any of the old feelings. So far, so good. It feels like new territory.

**Therapist:** Super! Can you tell me more about how it might have been in the past and how this is different now? [listening to the response for SASB positions consistent with therapy goals].



# VIDEO DEMONSTRATION

## C. Enacting Adaptation Outside of Psychotherapy

INT-8. Practicing more adaptive ways of being

INT-9. Generalizing the practice of more adaptive ways of being

INT-10. Supporting enhanced ability to discern and choose relational partners



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# VIDEO DEMONSTRATION

**Which skills did you see Ken using?**

**INT-8. Practicing more adaptive ways of being**

**INT-9. Generalizing the practice of more adaptive ways of being**

**INT-10. Supporting enhanced ability to discern and choose relational partners**

**Do you have any questions about enacting adaptation outside of psychotherapy?**



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# 10-Minute Break





## **D. Links between Past and Present Relationships**



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Links between past and present relationships

## Copy Processes:

Patterns that  
Repeat Across  
Relationships or  
Times

**Identification:** I behave  
like him/her

**Recapitulation:** I  
behave as I did with  
him/her

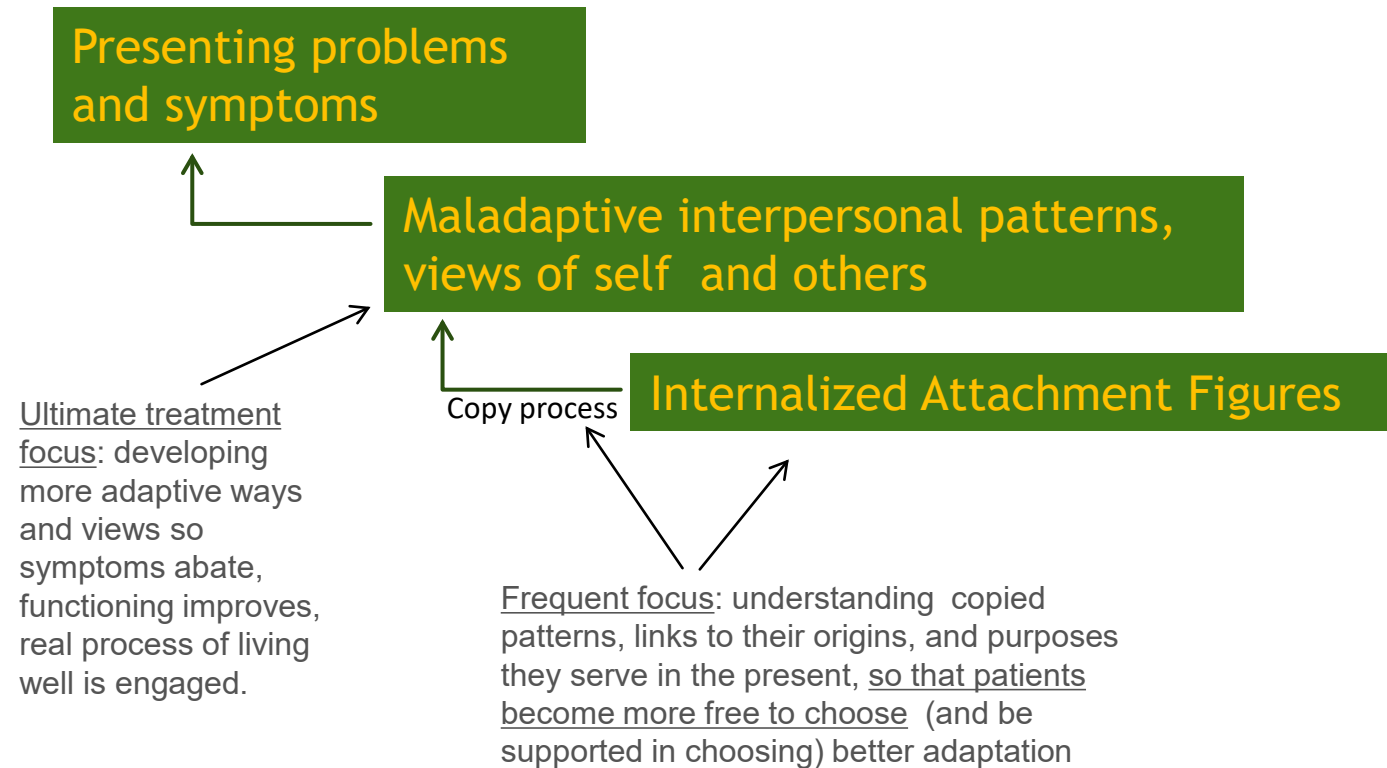
**Introjection:** I treat  
myself as I was  
treated

Benjamin, 2003, 2018 (Interpersonal Reconstructive Therapy)



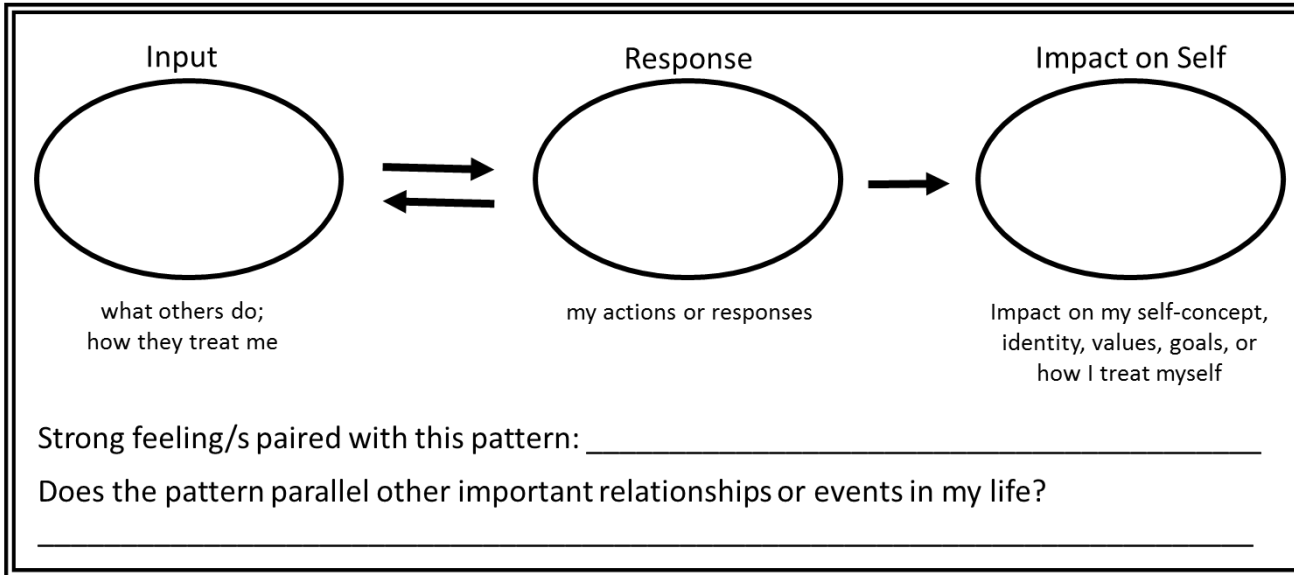
Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Attachment-Based Formulation in Interpersonal Reconstructive Therapy



# Linking Patterns to Key Attachment Figures

IRT event analysis



Awareness of 'how it works' can sometimes open up the possibility of change through identifying and practicing new responses with self or others (e.g., compassion, kindness, assertion, distance, self-care).

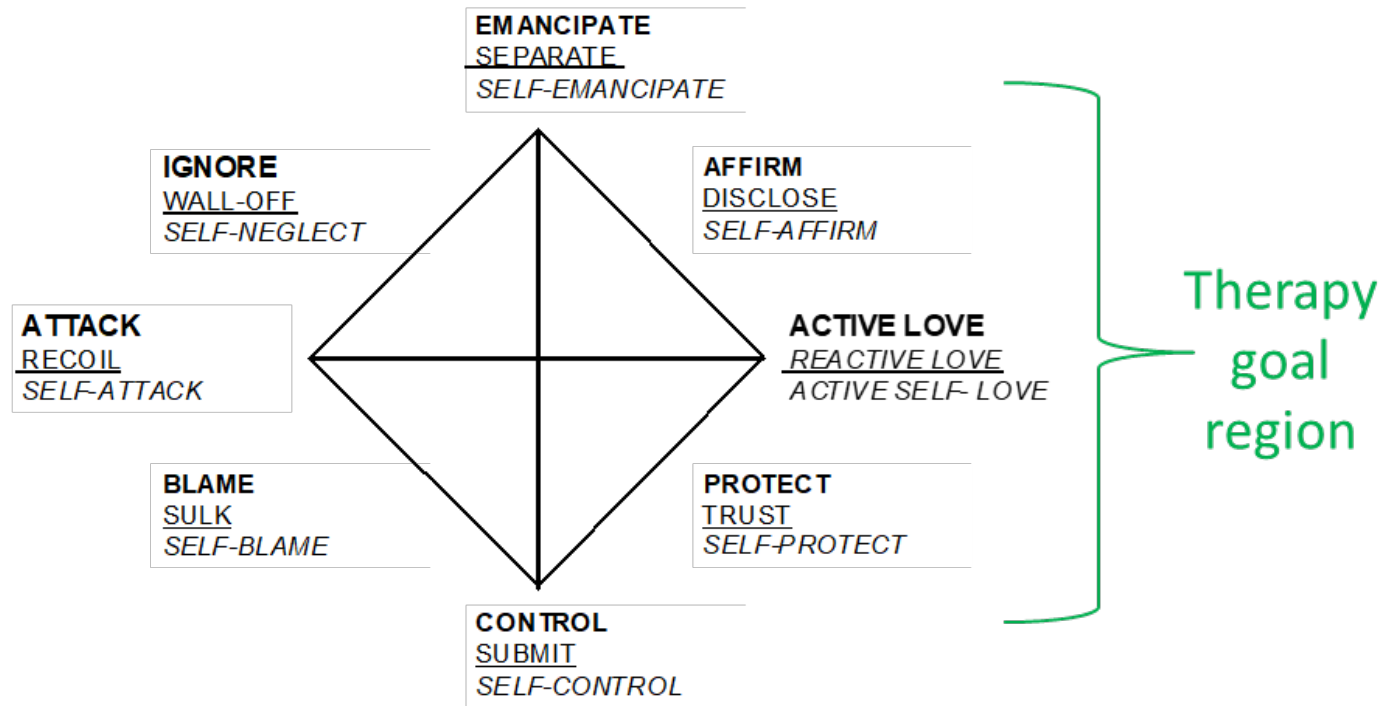
Desired, healthy choice/s going forward: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



Critchfield & Benjamin, 2024

Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Therapy Goal: Secure Attachment Relating



Simplified SASB cluster model. Focus on Other, Self, or Introject are respectively indicated by **Bold**, Underline, and *Italic* fonts. From: Benjamin, L.S. (1996). *Interpersonal diagnosis and treatment of personality disorders, Second edition*. N.Y.: Guilford. Copyright the Guilford Press.



Critchfield & Benjamin, 2024

Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Linking Patterns to Key Attachment Figures

## Example of Therapeutic Dialogue

**Therapist:** So you see that in many ways, you are being faithful to *the rules and values that you learned when you were little*. The question remains: Why do we do that? Why do we keep on following those old ideas, especially when they don't work so well any more? Well, often it is because without realizing it, we are trying to 'get it right' with [Dad, Mom, brother, etc.]. It is like we do it the way they seemed to want it, in hopes that they will approve and be pleased. It is as if we hope that maybe things could be better after all. Does that make any sense?

(Benjamin, 2003/2006, Table 2.4, p. 49)



# VIDEO DEMONSTRATION D

**Where do Interpersonal Patterns  
come from?**

**Video Demonstration of Exploring the Origin of  
Interpersonal Patterns**



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# VIDEO DEMONSTRATION

**What did Ken do to explore  
the origin of interpersonal patterns?**



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.



## E. Countertransference



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Countertransference according to Freud

“Freud conceptualized the therapist’s countertransference as *his or her feelings and reactions* to the client’s transference that are a function of his or her own unresolved conflicts.”

“From Freud’s perspective, these reactions were an *obstacle* to therapy.”

“Beginning in the 1950s, analysts...began to talk about transference as a potentially *valuable source of information* for the therapist.”

Safran, Kriss, & Folley (2019, p. 39)



# An Interpersonal View of Countertransference

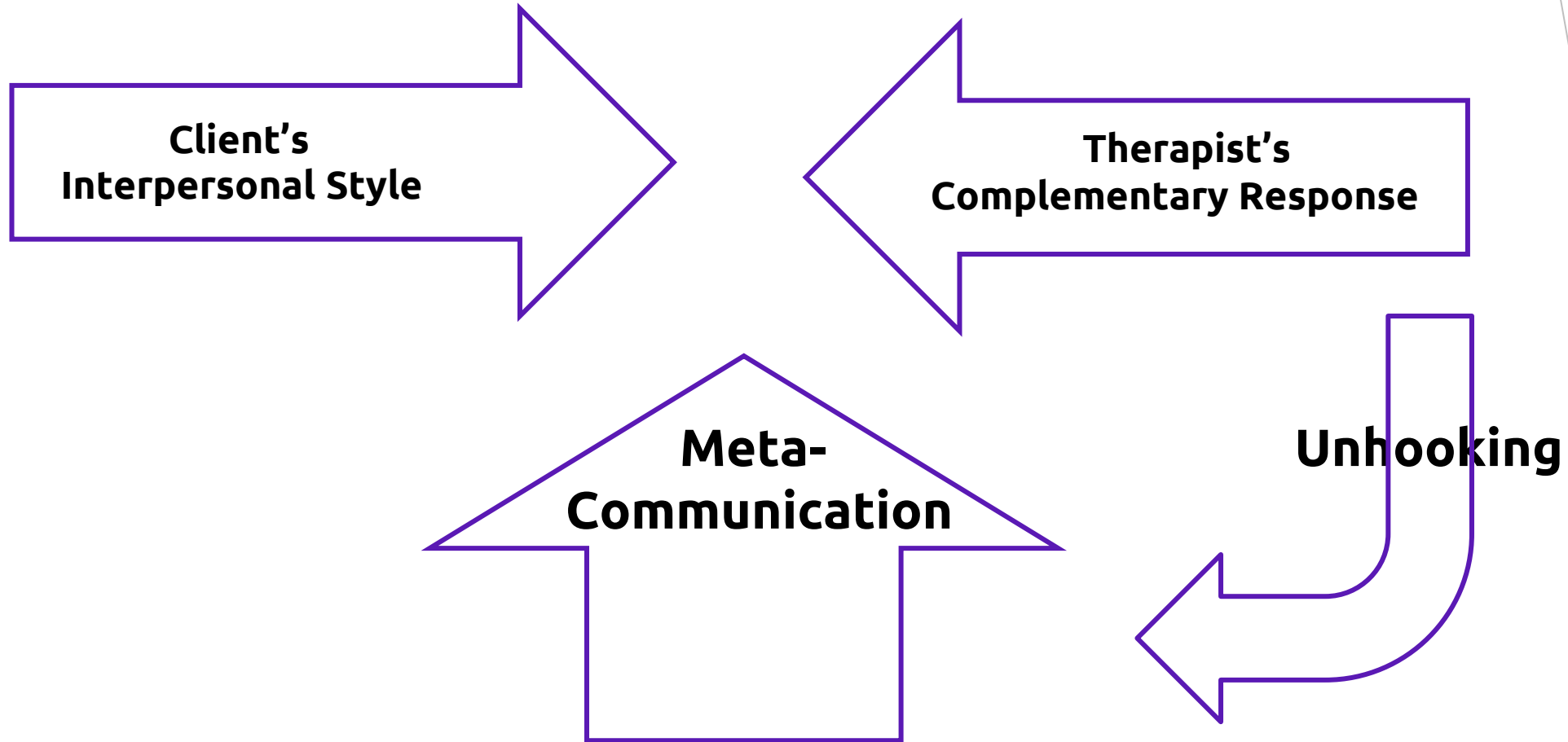
The therapist can disrupt rigid interpersonal patterns...

“by identifying the client’s *distinctive interpersonal style* through the therapist labeling of his own impact engagements, by *disengaging* from these pulls or constrictions, by terminating the *complementary response*, and by various other maneuvers designed to offer the ‘asocial’ response.” (Kiesler, 1982, p. 277)

See Strategy PSY-10: Attending to Subjective Responses in the Multitheoretical Psychotherapy book (Brooks-Harris, 2008) p. 306.



# Countertransference

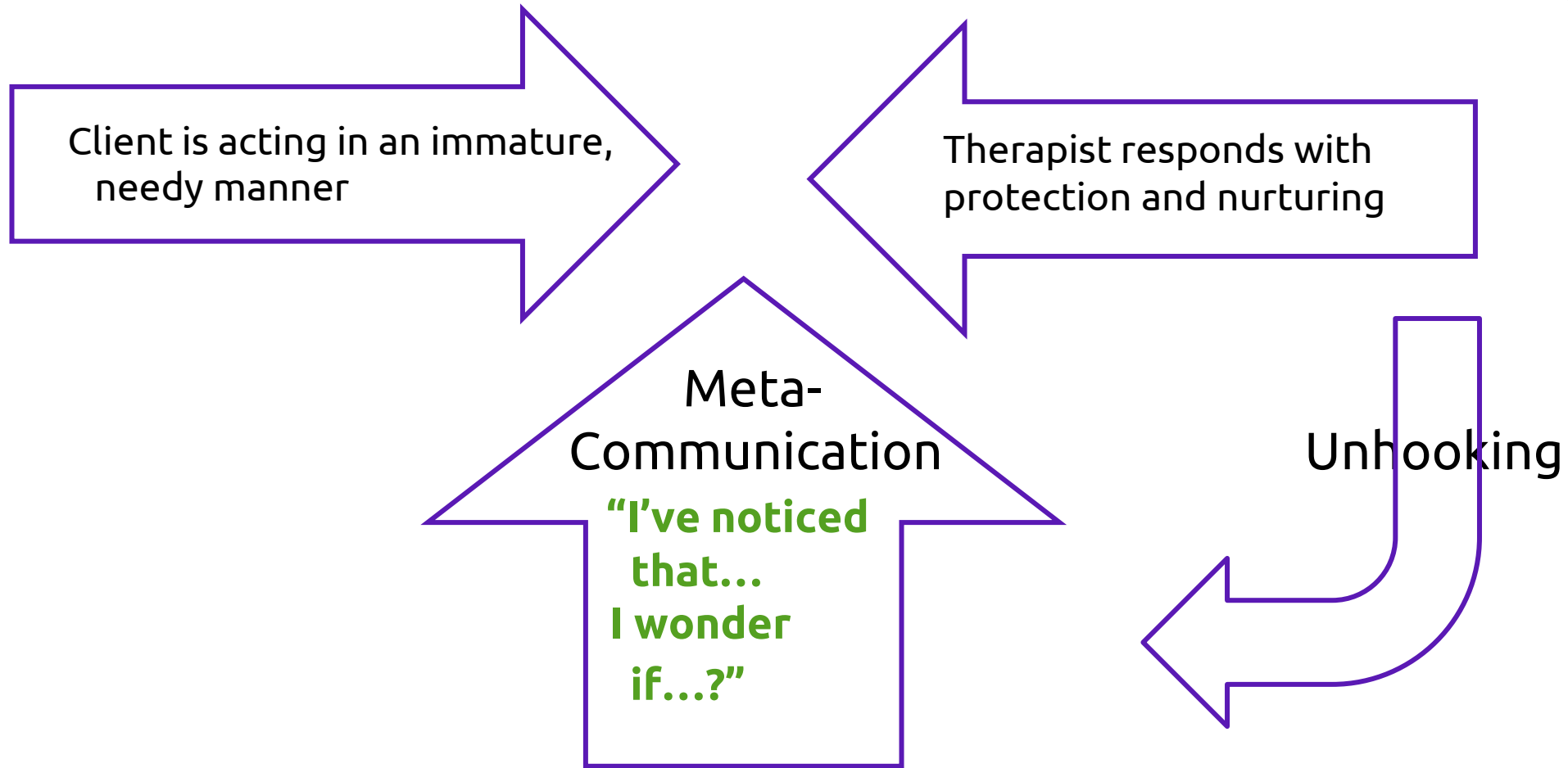


(based on Kiesler, 1982)



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Clinical Example of Countertransference



(based on Kiesler, 1982)

# Reflecting on Professional Experience

## Countertransference

- When have you noticed yourself getting hooked into a **complementary response** to a client's interpersonal style?

## Unhooking

- What do you do to **unhook** when you notice yourself enacting a countertransference reaction?



# Countertransference: Subjective & Objective

## Subjective Countertransference

- ❖ This happens when your reaction to a client is based on your own idiosyncratic reaction.
- ❖ For example, the client reminds you of your brother and you begin to respond to your client as you would relate to your brother.

## Objective Countertransference

- ❖ This happens when you react to a client in the same way that most people would.
- ❖ For example, if the client is critical of you, you may find yourself defending your actions.



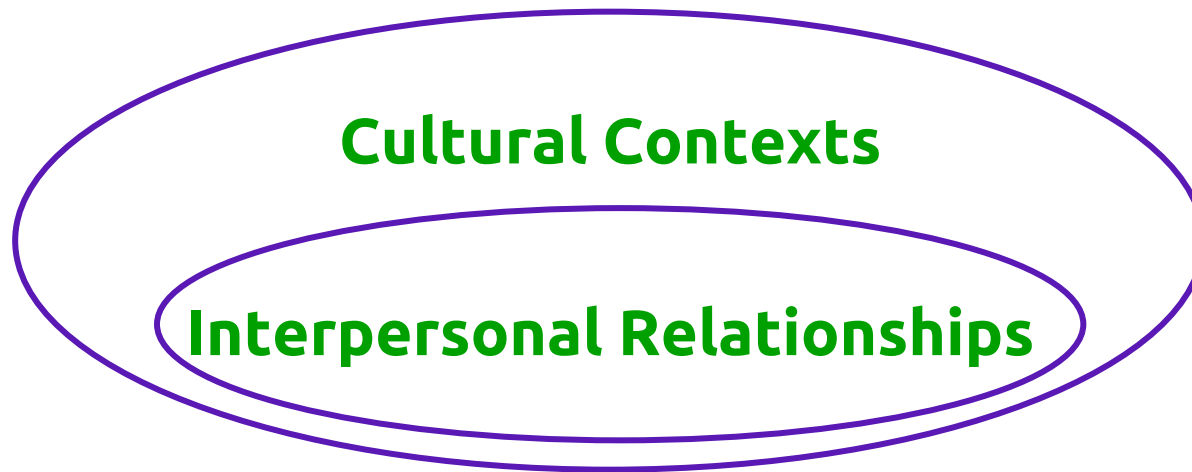
# F. Diversity



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

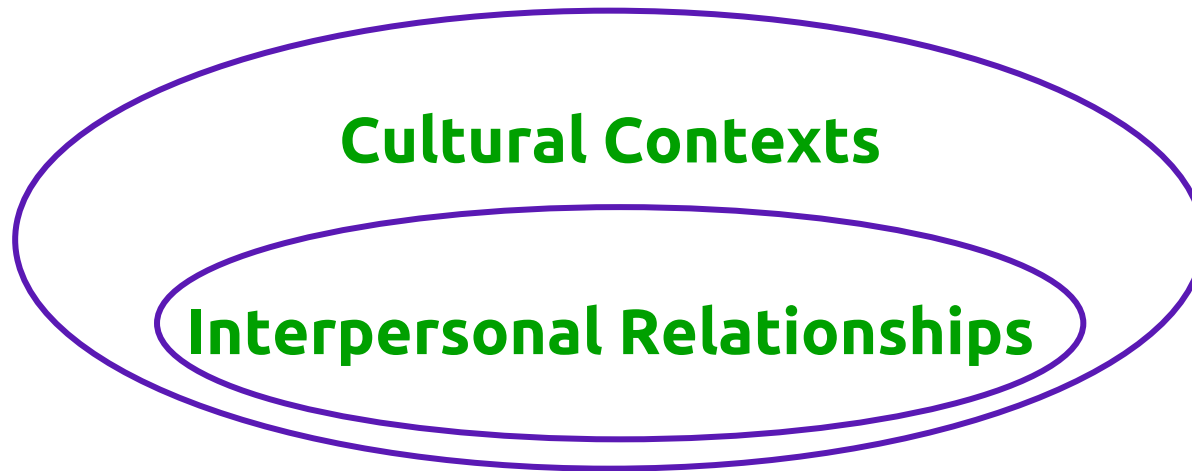


# Culture Shapes Interpersonal Relationships



- ❖ Interpersonal relationships will look different in context of unique cultural contexts.
- ❖ If you do not understand your clients' culture, you are likely to misunderstand their interpersonal experience.

# Reflecting on Professional Experience



- ❖ In your professional experience, how have you seen clients' cultural background impact their interpersonal relationships?
- ❖ How has culture impacted clients' expectations of the therapeutic relationship?

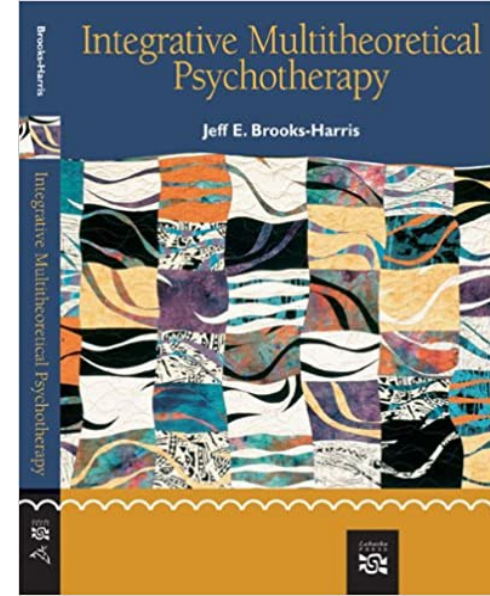
## G. Interpersonal Key Strategies



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Interpersonal Key Strategies

- Listening to Narratives
- Identifying Relationship Themes
- Making Interpersonal Interpretations
- Honoring Resistance
- Exploring Childhood Experiences
- Working Through Past Conflicts
- Identifying Attachment Styles



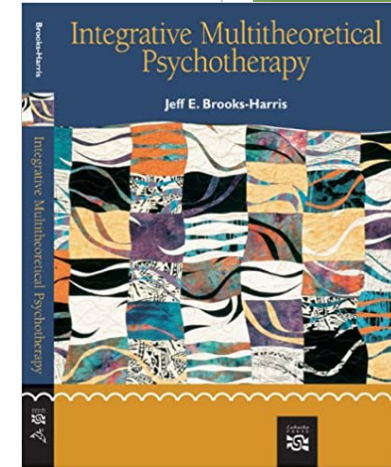
(Brooks-Harris, 2008, p. 283-303)

Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Interpersonal Key Strategies (continued)

- Observing the Therapeutic Relationship
- Attending to Subjective Responses
- Resolving Conflicts in the Therapeutic Relationship
- Modifying Relational Interactions
- Adapting to Interpersonal Losses or Disputes
- Encouraging New Relationships
- Learning from Termination

(Brooks-Harris, 2008, p. 303-323)



# Discussion

Do you have any questions  
or comments about  
*Focusing on Interpersonal Patterns*  
in psychotherapy?

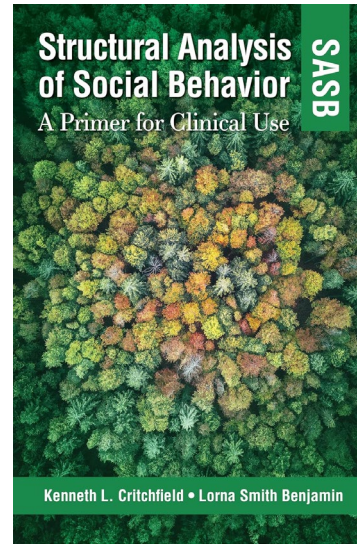
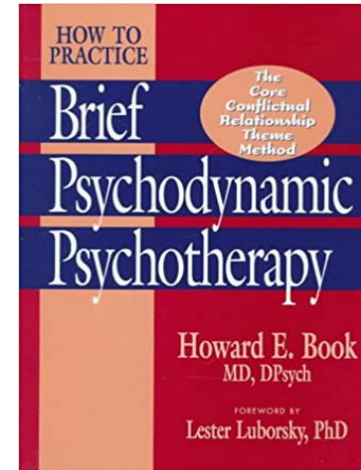
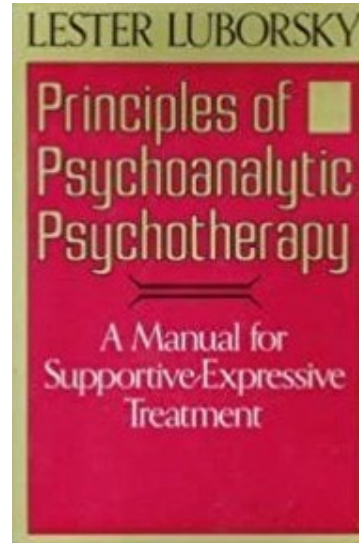


# Key References

Luborsky, L. (1984). *Principles of psychoanalytic psychotherapy: A manual for supportive-expressive treatment*. New York: Basic Books.

Book, H. E. (1998). *How to practice brief psychodynamic psychotherapy*. APA Press.

Critchfield, K. L., & Benjamin, L. S. (2024). *Structural Analysis of Social Behavior: A Primer for Clinical Use*. APA Press.



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Contact Information

**Jeff E. Harris, PhD**

Las Cruces, NM, USA

[dr.jeff.e.harris@gmail.com](mailto:dr.jeff.e.harris@gmail.com)

**Kenneth Critchfield, PhD**

Yeshiva University, NY, USA

[kenneth.critchfield@yu.edu](mailto:kenneth.critchfield@yu.edu)





# TZK Seminars

## Live Webinars

- ▶ Cheaper
- ▶ More comfortable
- ▶ No travel
- ▶ Increased access to national experts
- ▶ 30-40 live webinars each month



## Recorded Webinars

- ▶ Watch right away, no DVD's mailed to you.
- ▶ Our speakers do their webinars repeatedly. So, all of the webinars in our Live Webinar Schedule have already been recorded.
- ▶ Watch in your own time.



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.



## To Get Your CEU Certificate

- ▶ Go to our website: [tzkseminars.com](http://tzkseminars.com)
- ▶ Click “My Seminars”
- ▶ Sign in using your email address and password
- ▶ Click the “Completed Live Webinars” tab
- ▶ Complete the validation test and webinar evaluation
- ▶ Download your certificate



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.

# Training in Unified Psychotherapy

If you'd like to become a part of our *interactive learning community*, please send an email to:

[dr.jeff.e.harris@gmail.com](mailto:dr.jeff.e.harris@gmail.com)

and ask to be added to the **TUPdates** google group.

If you'd like to seek **TUP Certification**, please contact Jeff for more details.



Copyright © 2024 Jeff Harris & Ken Critchfield. Permission granted to copy for educational purposes provided this copyright notice remains intact.