

Therapeutic Relationship Self-Evaluation

Name: _____

Date: _____

Client Initials: _____

Acknowledgement: A version of this tool was developed by the first author and collaborators as part of the Clinical Standards Initiative at Trumpet Behavioral Health and is published for use with permission of the organization.

Instructions: Use the first portion of the checklist to reflect back on your efforts to establish the therapeutic relationship with your client and/or their family. Rate each section according to your therapeutic relationship by circling from the 1-to-5 rating scale to indicate your agreement or disagreement with the statement above (past tense in verbs as you should be past the establishment when you complete this). Use the second portion of the checklist to reflect on your recent and ongoing efforts to strengthen and maintain or repair the therapeutic relationship (present tense verbs as you should be actively engaged in these efforts). There is no scoring rubric, but lower scores are generally better and you could track your own progress on scores throughout a relationship with a family or compare your scores with all of the families you serve at one time.

Initial Relationship Establishment

Built initial overall rapport with the client and their family/guardians. (Used active listening, validated emotions, defined common goals, non-judgmental, supportive and sensitive)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Listened actively and carefully. (Ensured body language was attentive and positive, paraphrased to ensure understanding and convey interest, used reflective language)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Validated emotions. (“I can understand why you’d feel ...”)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Therapeutic Relationship Self-Evaluation

Defined common goals. (Sought input about values and priorities, integrated this information into goals and targets for services, ensured understanding and agreement with the purpose and model of services)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Flexibly allowed the client to discuss issues which are important to them. (Asked open-ended questions about what is important to the family, responded to those issues in a respectful way, took time to allow the family to express hopes, fears, concerns, and tell the stories that they find important)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Considered any cultural differences and asked family about culturally important variables. (Asked open-ended questions, ascertained how family is most comfortable communicating, asked about the conditions for respect and inclusion, and the meaning assigned to important events described in other portions of this assessment)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Helped to establish or re-establish hope for a family's future and their loved one's opportunities for a meaningful life. (Emphasized the strengths of child and family life, helped family learn tools in aiding the client to learn and be as independent as possible, kept long-term goals in mind but put focus, thought, energy, and effort into small-scale and achievable goals)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Ensured that families understood the rationale for services and that everyone's goals for therapy and outcomes are well-aligned. (Developed goals with family for the child, provided reasons for services that are easily understandable and with non-technical language, provided as much information as possible to clients, and discussed research showing effectiveness of treatment)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Therapeutic Relationship Self-Evaluation

Ensured that families are completely ready for services at the recommended intensity. (Planned sessions with families, spoke openly and honestly about logistics and recommended intensity, discussed possible barriers or challenges)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Relationship Strengthening, Maintenance, and Repair

Communication is frequent, open, direct and comfortable. (Email, phone and in person communications are readily understood by all parties, there are no unexpected emotionally-laden communications, each party is comfortable and eager to communicate with the other)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

I follow through on the tasks and changes that I have discussed with the family. (I do what I say I will do in a timely fashion; I communicate to the family that I have done it and how it has worked out)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

I emphasize client progress, and provide positive feedback and encouragement for the family. (Describe areas of recent progress and tie that progress to family efforts, welcome bringing forth new ideas and concerns, recognize appropriate aspects of implementation even if there are other areas that need improvement)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

I ask for client input and feedback and I respond graciously and sincerely to that input and feedback. (Every session ask for suggestions, opinions, and ideas for programming, listen intently to the suggestions, acknowledge the value of the suggestions, offer suggestions and minor amendments to the suggestions if needed, follow up on the input and feedback)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Therapeutic Relationship Self-Evaluation

I am professional and engaged for interactions with the family. (On time and prepared to use time wisely, professionally dressed, composed, fully engaged with no distractions, emotionally present, and ready for interactions)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

I continually work to establish, re-establish, or reinforce hope for the family's future and their loved one's opportunities for a meaningful life. (Emphasize the strengths of child and family life, help family learn tools in aiding the client to learn and be as independent as possible, keeping long-term goals in mind but putting focus, thought, energy, and effort into small-scale and achievable goals)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

I ensure the family understands the rationale for services and that everyone's goals for therapy and outcomes are well-aligned. (Develop goals with family for the child, provide reasons for services that are easily understandable and with non-technical language, provide as much information as possible to clients and discuss research showing effectiveness of treatment, include family as part of treatment, help families learn the tools to help their child)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

I ensure that families are completely ready for services at the recommended intensity. (Planning sessions with families, speak openly and honestly about recommended logistics and intensity, discuss possible barriers or challenges)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

I assess the family's wellness and stressors and adjust therapeutic services accordingly. (Frequent check ins, parent stress assessment, assess family's informal social support, information, and community services, involve all members of the family in the intervention, change goals as the family's participation levels change)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

Therapeutic Relationship Self-Evaluation

I identify emerging problems in the therapeutic relationship if they occur. (Notice changes in communication style and modify supports to the family, re-evaluate my own opinions or viewpoints on family, take notice of changes of behavior, take notice of parents' concerns or dissatisfaction with team or team stress over family interactions, notice sudden changes in services or commitment in family support)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

I identify and address various factors (e.g. cultural and religious, SES, ethnicity, race, sexuality, and gender roles) that might impact my relationship with client. (Language barriers, being culturally sensitive and aware, re-evaluate goals to match family's priorities, gender roles, and assumptions)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree

I consistently work to re-establish or repair the therapeutic relationships with the family if we become disconnected or disengaged. (Recognize, respect, and accommodate family's individuality, create a context for family-centered participation, set up expectations and commitment, check-in on the family's commitment to goals and how to achieve them in their current circumstances)

Strongly Agree Agree Neither Disagree Strongly Disagree