Foundations and Preparations

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Defining Clinical Interviewing: There are many ways to define clinical interviewing.

What are some of the definitions you recall from the text?

The definition of clinical interviewing includes:

- A positive and respectful professional relationship
- A collaborative approach to identifying mutual therapy goals
- The professional relationship includes the application of listening skills and psychological techniques
- A variable set of interactions occur, depending on many other factors (e.g., theory, therapist-client diversity)
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5 Minute Reflection

- Get with a partner or small group and discuss your opinions and generate examples of appropriate and inappropriate professional relationship boundaries
- Report your perspective back to the class

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The Nature of a Professional Relationship

- An explicit agreement to provide services
- Payment or compensation is also provided
  - Exchange Theory
- The professional has some acknowledged expertise, but may be more or less emotionally distant depending on theoretical orientation
- The relationship is not a friendship

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Client Motivation

- Clients may come to treatment because of personal distress, at the insistence of others, or for personal growth
- Solution-focused therapists refer to clients as (a) visitors, (b) complainants, or (c) customers for change
- Dr. Grieve refers to clients as clients
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- Establishing Common Goals
  - This should be done collaboratively
  - There may be disagreements
  - Depending on your theoretical orientation, you may view either the interviewer or the client as the final expert

- Applying Listening Skills and Psychological Techniques
  - It is important to listen first, before working too directly on change
  - Questions are helpful, but too many questions can interfere with client free expression

- Unique Interactions between Interviewer and Client
  - Every client and every interviewer is unique
  - Consequently, there is no perfectly rigid or set formula for approaching an interview
Interview vs. Conversation

- Interview is designed to obtain certain goals
- Interview may require discussion of unpleasant thoughts, feelings, or events
- Interviewer is in control
- One-sided

Types of Interviews

- Structured Interview
  - Ask the same questions in the same order, regardless of responses
  - Benefits
  - Drawbacks
- Unstructured Interview
  - Follow where the client leads
  - Benefits
  - Drawbacks

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- Self Awareness and Objective Self-Awareness
  - To be aware of yourself and how you affect others is a positive quality
  - When we get uncomfortable and feel awkward listening to or watching ourselves, this is referred to as objective self-awareness
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- Forms of Self-Awareness
  - Physical self-awareness
  - Psychosocial self-awareness
  - Developmental self-awareness
  - Cultural self-awareness
  - Awareness of interviewing expectations and misconceptions

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- The Physical Setting
  - The room
  - Seating arrangements
  - Office clutter and décor
  - Note taking
  - Video and audio recording

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- The Room
  - Keep it private
  - Manage or control the atmosphere
  - Minimize interruptions
  - Don’t lock the door
  - Manage interruptions when they occur
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- Seating arrangements
  - A 90-120 degree angle is probably most comfortable for most people
  - We should probably not insist on particular seating—but instead consider the client's individual needs and comfort

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- Office Clutter and Décor
  - Manage your clutter
  - Consider letting your personality come out a little bit

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- Note Taking
  - It's good to try conducting interviews taking notes and not taking notes—to get a sense of the difference
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- Note Taking Rules
  - Don’t let it interfere with flow or rapport
  - Explain why you’re taking notes
  - Never hide or cover your notes
  - Never write anything you don’t want to show your client
  - Let clients read your notes if they request to

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- Video and Audio Recording
  - Get permission first
  - Keep it unobtrusive
  - Double check your set up and watch out for Murphy’s Law

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- Professional and Ethical Issues
  - Self-presentation
  - Time
  - Informed consent
  - Confidentiality
  - Documentation
  - Stress management
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**Self-Presentation**
- Grooming and attire: Dress in a way that is likely to take advantage of first impressions
- Presenting your credentials: Be honest and straightforward

**Time**
- Be clear about your time boundaries because time is, in many ways, the commodity you are offering
- Start the session on time: Work your hardest to be punctual
- Ending on time: Do your best to stick to the ending time—even though there are many reasons to keep on talking

**Confidentiality**
- Although almost everything is private, there are exceptions to confidentiality—mostly involving safety issues
  - Harm to self or others
  - Abuse
  - Court Order
  - Authorization for Release of Information
- Inform clients of the limits of confidentiality at the outset of the interview
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- What to do when your client is a minor.

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- 5 Minute Reflection
  - Get with a partner or small group and discuss situations where, based on your professional ethical guidelines, confidentiality does not seem black and white. Generate a list of these situations.
  - Share them with the class

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- Informed Consent
  - You should have a clear and relatively comprehensive written informed consent document for new clients
    - Informed consent is a process not a procedure
    - Throughout an interview or longer-term therapy, it’s your job to continue with verbally informing clients about therapy and gaining their consent
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- Documentation Procedures
  - Unfortunately, attorneys are not big fans of the oral history and so “If it isn’t written down, it didn’t happen”
    - Grieve’s corollary
- S-O-A-P Notes
  - S = Subjective description
  - O = Objective observation
  - A = Assessment
  - P = The Plan

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- Stress Management for Clinical Interviewers
  - We all make mistakes
  - Read about and practice good stress management or self-care