Chapter 7 – The Intake Interview

What is an Intake Interview?

- An initial assessment interview
- In contemporary settings, often the intake simply blends right into the treatment process

Chapter 7 – The Intake Interview

Settings and Professional Groups

- The nature of the "intake" varies based on setting
- But always is viewed as the entry-point for counseling or psychotherapy
Chapter 7 – The Intake Interview

- Objectives of Intake Interviewing
  - To identify, evaluate, and explore the client’s presenting complaint
  - To obtain data related to the client’s interpersonal style, interpersonal skills, and personal history
  - To evaluate the client’s current life situation and functioning

Chapter 7 – The Intake Interview

- Identifying, evaluating, and exploring the client’s presenting complaint
  - Prioritizing and selecting client problems and goals
  - Analyzing symptoms
  - Using problem conceptualization systems

Chapter 7 – The Intake Interview

- Lazarus’s BASIC ID
  - Behavior
  - Affect
  - Sensation
  - Imagery
  - Cognition
  - Interpersonal relationships
  - Drugs
Chapter 7 – The Intake Interview

- Obtaining Background and Historical Information
  - Shifting to the “psychosocial” history
  - Nondirective historical leads
  - Directive historical leads

- Evaluating Interpersonal Style
  - Interpersonal styles
  - It is impossible to obtain a clear sense of a complex client’s interpersonal style in a single session—but if you pay attention, you’re likely to glimpse it

- Assessment of Current Functioning
  - Shift to the present with a role induction and specific question
  - Moving from the past to the present may be challenging
  - There are many strategies and techniques for helping clients regain emotional control
Chapter 7 – The Intake Interview

- Regaining Emotional Control
  - Focus on the present and/or immediate future
  - Ask the client what s/he does for emotional soothing
  - Change the subject to a more positive issue
  - Give a compliment and a suggestion
  - Acknowledge the negative while reviewing positives
  - Review goals and monitor change

Chapter 7 – The Intake Interview

- Factors Affecting Intake Interview Procedures
  - Client registration forms
  - Institutional setting
  - Theoretical orientation
  - Professional background and affiliation

Chapter 7 – The Intake Interview

- Brief Intake Interviewing
  - Obtaining historical and interpersonal style information
  - Used a brief intake checklist
  - Help clients stick to essential information about themselves
Writing Reports

- Need for structure
- Do not write report by “winging it”
  - Know the end before you begin
- Not all reports will be the same
- Consider your audience
- The referral question
- Include strengths
  - But don’t forget psychopathology

Chapter 7 – The Intake Interview

- Determining your audience
  - Many different individuals may read your report
  - Use person-first and constructive language whenever feasible
  - Write as if your attorney, your supervisor, and your client are all reading the report at the same time

Basic Guidelines

- Don’t use jargon, codes or shorthand
- Length and style of report
- Timeliness
Before You Write

Writing specifications
- Use 10 or 12 point font
  - These are acceptable fonts:
    - Arial, Times New Roman (the old reliable), Verdana, Lucida Bright (my new favorite), Book Antigua
  - These are unacceptable fonts:
    - Broadway, Brush Script, Chiller, Courier, Freestyle Script, English Text, Playbill, etc.
- Use laser printers to print your reports
  - Ink jet printers at a minimum
- Your reports should be in pristine condition when they are turned in
  - No frayed edges or coffee stains (front OR back)

Before You Write

- Single space the body of the report; add a return between headers
  - Bold important headers; italicize the rest
- Use 1" margins
- Try to keep your reports under 8 pages
  - For class, under 5 pages

Organization of the Report

- In general:
  - Title and Demographics
  - Reason for Referral
  - Background information
  - Behavioral Observations/Mental Status Exam
  - Psychological Evaluation
    - Instruments/evaluative procedures
    - Visual-spatial functioning
    - Intellectual functioning
    - Achievement functioning
    - Personality functioning
  - Summary
  - Diagnostic Impressions
  - Recommendations
  - Signature
Organization of the Report

For this class:
- Background Information
  - Psychological/emotional History
  - Alcohol and drug use
  - Family history
  - Social history
  - Physical health
  - Education history
  - Employment history