Using body-centered psychotherapy in the treatment of substance abuse & co-occurring developmental needs, deficits or trauma

Kedar Brown, LPC, NCC, CHT
“Lost”

Stand still. Stand still.
The trees ahead and bushes beside you are not lost.
Where ever you are is called here
and you must treat it as a powerful stranger, must ask
permission to know it and be known.

Listen, the forest breaths.
It whispers, I have made this place around you.
If you leave it, you may come back again saying, “Here”.

No two trees are the same to raven.
No two branches are the same to wren. If what a tree or
branch does is lost on you, then you are truly lost.

Stand still. Stand still.
The forest knows where you are. You must let it find you.

--David Wagner
Our Biography Becomes Our Biology!
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“\(\text{The truth about our childhood is stored up in our body, and although we can repress it, we can never alter it. Our intellect can be deceived, our feelings manipulated, our perceptions confused, and our body tricked with medication. But someday the body will present its bill, for it is as incorruptible as a child who, still whole inspirit, will accept no compromises or excuses, and it will not stop tormenting us until we stop evading the truth.}\)”

~ Alice Miller
Core Organizing Beliefs

- Inform our experience.
- Determine Perceptual Meaning
- Create habitual thought, emotion and reactive patterns of perception & behavior.
Habitual Patterns of Experience and Expression

- Habits = Lack of Present Moment awareness.
- Create life patterns of repetition and ineffectiveness in relationship.
- Chronic boredom is the illusion that there is nothing going on and reflective of someone living a life that is not entirely their own.
Habits of Thought
Habits of Behavior
Habits of Emotion
The Apple Doesn’t Fall Far From the Tree
Role of the Body in Therapy

Accessing core beliefs through focused mindful awareness & attention to the subtle, non-verbal expressions of emotional need deficits and or trauma.
Charming Manipulative: “I can’t be direct with intentions”
Tough Generous: “I don’t need anybody”
Self Reliant: “I depend only on myself”
Sensitive Withdrawn: “I don’t belong. It’s not safe”
Burdened Enduring: “I am a rotten person”
Dependent Endearing: “There’s never enough”
Present Moment Awareness

- Attention to the Story Teller more than the story.
- By passing content of story to access core beliefs through thresholds of physical expression.
- Therapy session brings awareness alive in the moment.
Triangle of Awareness

- Story
- Body
- Emotional
Therapeutic Mindfulness

- Mindful attention and the deepening of conscious awareness.
- Slowing down
- Intentional awareness
Directed Mindfulness

- A way to explore the implicit, somatic material in such a way where automatic patterned behavior is explored with the conscious, non-judgmental mind.
- Therapist Directs the attention of the client while in a state of mindfulness.
Directed Mindfulness: Bringing awareness to need deficits and core beliefs

Paying attention to the present moment in a curious, non-judgmental way as to allow:

- Emotions
- Beliefs
- Sensations
- Sense Perceptions
- Impulses
- The client’s here and now experience...

...to unfold in a direction that could lead to state specific memories.
Teaching Your Client Mindfulness: Looking for the baseline of awareness

- Present Moment General Awareness
  a) External
  b) Internal

- Present Moment Directed Awareness
  a) External
  b) Internal
Emotional Developmental Needs Deficits

- Place/Belonging
- Nurturance
- Support
- Protection
- Structuring
- Emotional Containment
- Respect
- Parental Bonding
Contact & Tracking: Let's try an Experiment...

- Use of Exploratory Statements during a state of directed mindful awareness
- Working around the “Triangle of Awareness” to access core beliefs
- Notice what happens all by itself when...
Tuning into a Particular Frequency on the Radio Dial

- Thoughts
- Emotions
- Physical Sensations
- Images
Looking For: Energy Expansion / Contraction

- Welcoming or Resisting

- Organicity of Expression: Trust the process remain curious.

- Following and supporting the subtle bodily impulses toward expansion or contraction.
Wanting both to expand (new belief) and contact (old belief)

Supportive Taking over of one side of the verbal and or physical expression.

Present it as an experiment in mindful awareness.
Core Beliefs Reexamined

- What did you decide at that time about...
- Honoring the old belief and the purpose it served. Old ways of loving and staying connected.
- Wrapping conscious awareness around it.
- Updating the system with a new beliefs and ways of loving and staying connected.
Questions...