

How Does Your Garden Grow?

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Purpose:

- (1) Development of awareness of client therapeutic goals and outcomes
- (2) Fosters insight into client needs
- (3) Serves as a visible reminder that change may take time
- (4) Serves as a visible reminder that life is possible after loss or change
- (5) Helps clients gain access to deeper meaning in loss and in life
- (6) Helps refocus clients on their goals

Materials Needed:

1 pre-primed terra-cotta flower pot, glue, paint pens, symbolic embellishments including (but not limited to) magazine pictures, photographs, plastic jewels, word tiles, charms, etc., scissors
enough dirt to fill the pot, marigold or other seed package, water

Procedures:

During the session prior to the intervention, the client is asked to bring in something that symbolizes their therapeutic goal which might be mounted within a collage in the next session.

During the session of the intervention, the client is asked to think of the pot as a representation of the change they would like to see in themselves or their lives as a result of the therapy. While relaxation music is played, the client uses the items provided to create a decorative flower pot with the mountable items provided for their use. Next the client uses the pot to convey personal and meaningful information to the counselor who serves as a witness. The counselor uses empathic responding and a non-judgmental stance to facilitate the client's process.

When the client has finished sharing their process with the counselor, the individual or couple fills the pot with the potting soil, plants the seeds, and waters the soil.

Process Questions and Follow-Up:

The potted plant serves as a reminder of the therapy in the home setting, and may be used as a living metaphor for the client's work.

Theoretical Rationale and/or Research Base:

Within Psychodynamic theory, this art therapy intervention is designed to help the client develop insight into making meaning from their own symbols.

Limitations:

This intervention may not be suited to some environments and will not work well with clients for whom insight-oriented therapies are contraindicated.

Practice Settings:

- ☒ College Counseling
- ☒ Counselor Education and Supervision
- ☒ Mental Health Agency/Private Practice Counseling
- ☒ Rehabilitation Counseling
- ☒ School Counseling