

My Recipe Box

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Purpose:

The recipe box activity teaches the client better coping strategies at times of distress or worry. This activity helps the client identify emotions and teaches ways to better handle them, such as emotion regulation strategies. The client will come up with a “recipe”, which will consist of a coping plan. This activity encourages the client to come up with coping strategies based on his or her own strengths and learns how to apply them to his or her life stressors. This activity helps the client develop an emotional understanding of the self and teaches the client on how to turn a worry into a better outcome as well as coming up with ways to better handle them.

Materials Needed:

Box, notecards, pens/pencils, markers, crayons, stickers.

Procedures:

1. Introduce the exercise to the client as an activity that can be used for understanding of emotion.
2. Instruct the client to bring his/her attention themselves as well as the surrounding, such as family and friends.
3. Ask the client to take a few moments to identify potential stressors that they want to work on.
4. Identify why these would be considered stressors and discuss ways the client can cope or work through the stressor, using the notecards.
5. Instruct the client to create a box for all of the "recipes" with whatever media they intend to use. They may decorate the box and make it personal to them. After the box is complete, have the client put the "recipes" in the box.
6. After the client has completed the box, invite the client to reflect with the questions below.

Process Questions and Follow-Up:

1. What was this activity like for you?
2. What was it like for you to come up with your own strategy?
3. Why did you choose to decorate the box the way you did?
4. What did it feel like for you to see your strengths?
5. How can you use this box in times of distress?

Theoretical Rationale and/or Research Base:

This activity is based on Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT) as this theory helps clients identify emotional experiences while thinking about the thoughts and experiences that elicit those emotions.

Limitations:

Culture should be taken into consideration being that different cultures view emotional reactions differently and uses different forms of expression.

Practice Settings:

Counselor Education and Supervision
Mental Health Agency/Private Practice Counseling
School Counseling