
Creative Interventions and Activities Clearinghouse

Walking: How Movement Impacts Thoughts and Feelings

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Purpose:

The purpose of this creative intervention is to raise client awareness of how their movement impacts thoughts and emotions.

Materials Needed:

None

Procedures:

Clients walk in a circle at their normal pace and cadence. After they have a feel for how they walk, they will walk faster than usual and then walk in slow motion. Walking is then linked to feelings so that the clients walk as if they were tired, happy, or sad. After this experience, clients act as if they were walking on or through different terrain including a desert, a mountain, mud, ice, water, and even silly substances such as peanut butter, whipped cream, yogurt, or cornflakes. Complete the walk, typically, with terrain such as a field or grassy meadow.

Process Questions and Follow-Up:

Clients and their counselor talk about what the experiences were like. Inquire how movement impacts emotions and thoughts. How may movement in life modify how clients feel about themselves and others?

Practice Setting:

Mental Health Agency/Private Practice

Additional Comments:

Clients with mobility problems may have the activity done as a visualization process. However, clients with mobility limitations (e.g. client who recently lost mobility or never had it) may have difficulty or an emotional reaction to a visualization exercise such as this. Counselor should be aware of these considerations before proceeding.