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Client Case Vignette Format for Individual Consultation

The format has been assembled from consultation experiences, the study of many models of therapy and through the years of working with clients who experience a Dissociative Response, Developmental Trauma and/or Attachment Wounding. Additionally, my personal lived experience of dissociation informs this format. The primary lens is through the EMDR AIP Model and the model of Structural Dissociation, with many adaptations for the natural and normalized human experience of dissociation.

My hope is that in our work together, you will use this format to plan for effective and efficient consultation and treatment through the lens of a heart centered therapist with an emphasis on the client lived experience rather than a focus on pathologizing. While I stand firmly in the foundation of solid clinical information and guidance, I do believe that the biggest indicator of therapy success in trauma work comes from the heart centered relationship the client and therapist share, coming from a place of curiosity and acceptance rather than the potential shame of pathologizing and attempting to apply a “one size fits all” perspective. Please allow the question, “what happened to you” to be your guide rather than, “what’s wrong with you” when guiding clients towards healing.

1. Client history that you are aware of and areas of discovery to be explored:
 - a. Age, Gender, Sexual Orientation
 - b. Cultural Identities
 - c. Racial Identities
 - d. Spiritual Belief System
 - e. What symptoms brought client to therapy and what are their goals for treatment
 - f. Previous therapist history
 - i. Number of therapists and length of therapy, quality of relationship/summary session (s)
 - ii. Inpatient or outpatient treatment
 - g. Current/Past medication and providers
 - h. Clients Basic Needs – according to Maslow’s hierarchy
 - i. What are areas of strength
 - ii. What are areas that need a plan for improvement
 - i. Have you completed the DES with the Client and the results
 - j. Potential co-morbidity
 - i. Medical issues
 - ii. Process and/or Substance Use Addictions
 - iii. Mental Health challenges
 - iv. Learning challenges
 - v. Potential Neurological challenges
 - k. What is the Clients relational support system (past and present)
 - i. Who are the significant people in Clients life
 - ii. Primary care givers – past and present
 - iii. What communities is the Client participating in
 - iv. Client Genogram
 - v. If your client is a child/adolescent:

1. Are caregivers involved in therapy
 2. What understanding of trauma and dissociation do they need to have
 - I. What is your Clients Attachment History
 - i. Secure, Anxious/Ambivalent, Avoidant, Disorganized
 - ii. Have you completed an Attachment Interview with Client
 - m. Somatic Challenges
 - n. How does client experience a Dissociative Response
 - i. Time
 - ii. Thought
 - iii. Body
 - iv. Emotions
 - v. Amnesia
 - vi. Depersonalization
 - o. Level of Dissociation – Primary, Secondary, Tertiary
2. Developmental Gaps – could be best guess for where you are in healing journey with client
 - a. Higher Order Mental Functions
 - b. Mentalization
 - c. Metacognition
 - d. Differentiation
 - e. Realization
 - f. Personification
 - g. Presentification
 - h. Most Adult Self/Co-consciousness
 3. Affect Tolerance
 - a. Autonomic Nervous System/Polyvagal System
 - b. Window of Tolerance
 4. Defenses
 - a. Deflecting the pain that is inside
 - b. Denial
 - c. Idealization
 - d. Addictive Behaviors
 - e. Magical Thinking and Story Creating
 5. Phobias and reducing phobias
 - a. Phobia of therapist, attachment to therapist
 - b. Phobia of abandonment
 - c. Phobia of trauma memories
 - d. Phobia of inner system
 6. Understanding Inner World
 - a. Map of System
 - b. Back and forth journal
 - c. Inner/Outer Communication
 - d. Gathering area
 7. Resource Development
 - a. Mindfulness
 - b. Felt sense of safety
 - c. Calm Place
 - d. Grounding
 - e. Resource Tool Kit
 - f. Self Soothing Tool kit – Yoga, movement, breathing exercises, neurofeedback, Five Senses, Sensory Items
 8. Interest in well being and self care

- a. Nutrition
 - b. Sleep
 - c. Loving attitude towards self
 - d. Absence of self-harm
 - e. Recognize, validate and fulfill own needs
 - f. Ask for help with needs or wants
 - g. Navigates healthy boundaries
 - h. Balance needs of self and others
 - i. Strong supportive relationships
9. Processing Traumatic Memories
- a. Readiness checklist with client
 - b. Trauma Theming
 - c. Trauma related actions – triggers and glimmers
 - d. Develop list of targets with NC's
 - e. Conflicts between parts
 - f. Distorted perceptions from the past and predictions for future
10. Integrated Autonomy
- a. Heart centered conversation with client about what integration means to them
 - b. Evolution of inner system through co-consciousness and inner communication
 - c. Review all new skills
 - d. Navigating current relationships and relational development skills (people picking, boundaries, conflict resolution, stable sense of self)
11. Stuck points that keep coming up
12. Therapist response to working with this client

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