

Becoming a Therapist

A Path of Growth and
Development

Why Am I a Therapist?

- I am drawn to the work
- I want a good career
- I want to help people
- I want to understand people better
- I want to know myself better
- The work feels right for me

Phases of Development

- 1. Phase of Uncertainty: We know we don't know**
 - Self-doubt and perplexity
- 2. Phase of False Confidence: We think we do know**
 - Unrealistic self-belief and faking it
- 3. Phase of Competence: We know that we know**
 - Confidence in our skills and expertise
- 4. Phase of Maturity: We don't know we know (and we know we don't know)**
 - Embodiment, naturalness and humility

Phase of Uncertainty

- **Feelings:**
 - Anxious, uncertain, confused, deskilled, overwhelmed
- **Process:**
 - Struggle to be present, passive or overactive
- **Relationship:**
 - More unreal, controlling, overly sympathetic
- **Techniques:**
 - Overly structured or unfocused and unclear

Phase of False Confidence

- **Feelings:**
 - Overly confident and certain, unemotional
- **Process:**
 - Not present, over-thinking, controlling
- **Relationship:**
 - Teacher/student, therapist controlled,
- **Techniques:**
 - Structured, manipulative, overly rigid

Phase of Competence

- **Feelings:**
 - Confident, thoughtful, interested, relaxed
- **Process:**
 - Present, engaged, attentive, empathic
- **Relationship:**
 - More real, balanced, collaborative
- **Technique:**
 - Adapted to the client, creative and timely

Phase of Maturity

- **Feelings:**
 - Calm, absorbed, intent, contained
- **Process:**
 - Intuitive, expansive, complementary,
- **Relationship:**
 - Real, dynamic, warm, interconnected
- **Technique:**
 - Unexpected, innovative, naturalistic

How We Learn as Therapists

- Seeing clients
- Being in personal therapy
- Having a spiritual/mindfulness practice
- Reading and studying
- Good trainings and presentations
- Supervision and mentors

Useful Principles

- Accept uncertainty and not knowing
- When in doubt be quiet inside
- Trust the process and be attentive
- Love your clients but forget them between sessions
- Be human!

Self-care Practices

- Take care of your wellbeing
- Don't try to heal your clients
- Enjoy yourself and laugh in session
- Learn to shift *sticky* energy
- Treat yourself with compassion