

Developing Therapeutic Relationships

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Purpose



Purpose

- ✓ Evaluate our own behavior as clinicians
- ✓ Define and assess the quality of therapeutic relationships
- ✓ Maximize positive impact of interactions
- ✓ Develop strategies to improve rapport

Goals

Improved therapeutic rapport:

- ✓ Increases cooperation with treatment
- ✓ Decreases challenging behavior
- ✓ Improves quality of life



Agenda

1. Define and assess therapeutic relationships
2. Review basic interaction skills
3. Maximize therapeutic value of interactions
4. Cultivate rapport building strategies

1. Define and Assess Rapport

Therapeutic Rapport

- “...perceived by patients to encompass caring, and supportive nonjudgmental behavior, embedded in a safe environment during an often stressful period.” (Kornhaber et al., 2016)
- “...genuine, mutually influential, interpersonal relationship between two people.” (Bedics et al., 2012)

1. Define and Assess Rapport

Therapeutic Rapport



1. Define and Assess Rapport

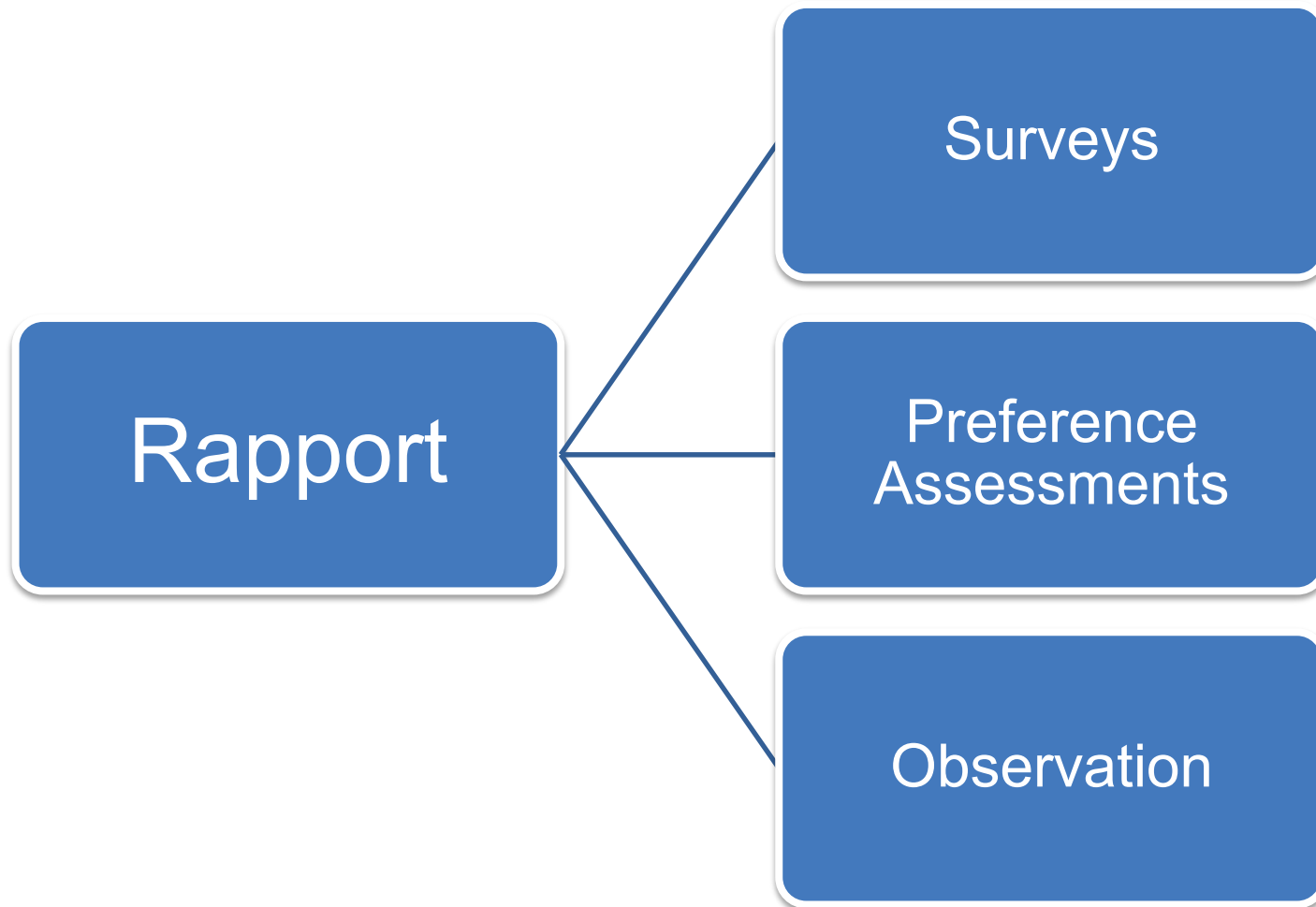
Therapeutic Rapport

Critical skills

Lack of training for
practitioners

(LeBlanc et al., 2020)

1. Define and Assess Rapport



1. Define and Assess Rapport

APPENDIX. Scale To Assess Therapeutic Relationships in Community Mental Health Care (STAR)

| STAR-C: Clinician Version ^a | STAR-P: Patient Version ^a |
|---|---|
| 1. I get along well with my patient. | 1. My clinician speaks with me about my personal goals and thoughts about treatment. |
| 2. My patient and I share a good rapport. | 2. My clinician and I are open with one another. |
| 3. I listen to my patient. | 3. My clinician and I share a trusting relationship. |
| 4. I feel that my patient rejects me as a clinician. | 4. I believe my clinician withholds the truth from me. |
| 5. I believe my patient and I share a good relationship. | 5. My clinician and I share an honest relationship. |
| 6. I feel inferior to my patient. | 6. My clinician and I work towards mutually agreed upon goals. |
| 7. My patient and I share similar expectations regarding his/her progress in treatment. | 7. My clinician is stern with me when I speak about things that are important to me and my situation. |
| 8. I feel that I am supportive of my patient. | 8. My clinician and I have established an understanding of the kind of changes that would be good for me. |
| 9. It is difficult for me to empathize with or relate to my patient's problems. | 9. My clinician is impatient with me. |
| 10. My patient and I are open with one another. | 10. My clinician seems to like me regardless of what I do or say. |
| 11. I am able to take my patient's perspective when working with him/her. | 11. We agree on what is important for me to work on. |
| 12. My patient and I share a trusting relationship. | 12. I believe my clinician has an understanding of what my experiences have meant to me. |

^a Rate each item on the following scale:

| Never | Rarely | Sometimes | Often | Always |
|-------|--------|-----------|-------|--------|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

(McGuire-Snieckus et al., 2007)

1. Define and Assess Rapport

Observation

| Good Rapport | Not So Good Rapport |
|--|---|
| Chooses to be with you. | Chooses to be with others or alone. |
| Will do non-preferred tasks if requested. | Refuses to comply with tasks when requested. |
| Less likely challenging behavior. | More likely challenging behavior. |
| Indicates happiness (smiles, moves closer, makes jokes, etc.) | Indicates unhappiness (frowns, moves away, stops talking, etc.) |
| Positive statements (e.g. "I like you" or "you are my friend") | Negative statements (e.g. "I don't like you" or "leave me alone") |
| More likely to cooperate with de-escalation | Less likely to cooperate with de-escalation |

1. Define and Assess Rapport



Uses for Rapport Assessments

- Target overall increase in therapeutic rapport
- Identify poor relationships and systematically target improvement
- Use information about rapport to be thoughtful in assigning client-staff dyads

2. Basic Interaction Skills



2. Basic Interaction Skills

Voice

- Respectful language
- Polite
- Age-appropriate
- Don't nag
- Concise, clear
- Friendly tone
- Moderate volume
- Listen, validate
- Be careful with humor



(Lennox et al., 2022)

2. Basic Interaction Skills

Facial Expression

| Desirable Behavior | Challenging Behavior | |
|--|--|--|
|  A LEGO minifigure of a firefighter wearing a red helmet and a dark blue uniform with a badge. The minifigure has a wide, happy smile. |  A LEGO minifigure of a woman with short brown hair, wearing a white lab coat over a blue shirt. She has a serious, slightly stern facial expression. |  A LEGO minifigure wearing a yellow hazmat suit with a black radiation symbol on the chest. The minifigure has a worried or distressed facial expression. A large red prohibition sign (a circle with a diagonal line) is overlaid on the image. |

2. Basic Interaction Skills

Physical Behavior

- Non-confrontational
- Respect personal space
- Aware of touch
- Move moderate pace

(Lennox et al., 2022)



3. Maximize Therapeutic Value

Positive Interactions

- Pleasant greetings
- Preferred conversations
- Praise
- Polite
- Provide desired items

3. Maximize Therapeutic Value

Positive Interactions

- Make interactions with you fun and easy
- Be a reinforcer
- Adapt for each person
- Interactions must be frequent enough to be noticeable

3. Maximize Therapeutic Value



Positive Interactions

Don't fake it.

3. Maximize Therapeutic Value

Negative Interactions

- Corrective feedback
- Asking the person to do something
- Giving bad news, etc.

Negative interactions are necessary –
without them, there would be
no structure.

3. Maximize Therapeutic Value

Negative Interactions

- First, assess safety
- Be respectful
- Best done privately
- Keep it brief
- Be consistent
- Clear, concise expectations
- Reinforce again as soon as possible

3. Maximize Therapeutic Value

Interaction Ratio



4. Cultivate Rapport Building Strategies

1. Plan Ahead
2. Be Intentional
3. Reflect



4. Cultivate Rapport Building Strategies



Plan Ahead

Think about:

Any negative interactions that need to happen today?

Do I need to get reinforcers?

What things does the person like?

Any negative interactions I can avoid?

Any specific staff/client dyads we should arrange?

4. Cultivate Rapport Building Strategies



Plan Ahead

Notice:

How is the person's mood/behavior?

What can I provide praise for?

Will the individual need help with something?

What does the person enjoy today?

Do we need to modify the environment to make it safe?

4. Cultivate Rapport Building Strategies



Plan Ahead

Before we interact:

- Anticipate problems
- Consider how to adapt for the person's abilities and communication
- Break up large tasks
- Provide support
- Focus on the positive
- Reinforce desirable behavior

4. Cultivate Rapport Building Strategies



Intentional

4. Cultivate Rapport Building Strategies

Be Intentional

Social Opportunities

Seek out the person to say “hi” and “goodbye”

Praise the person

Talk about a topic the person is interested in

Smile



4. Cultivate Rapport Building Strategies

Be Intentional

Activity Opportunities

Offer to play a game the person likes

Ask the person to teach you how to do something

Get involved in the activities the person engages in

Go for a walk with the person

Identify reinforcers and provide them non-contingently

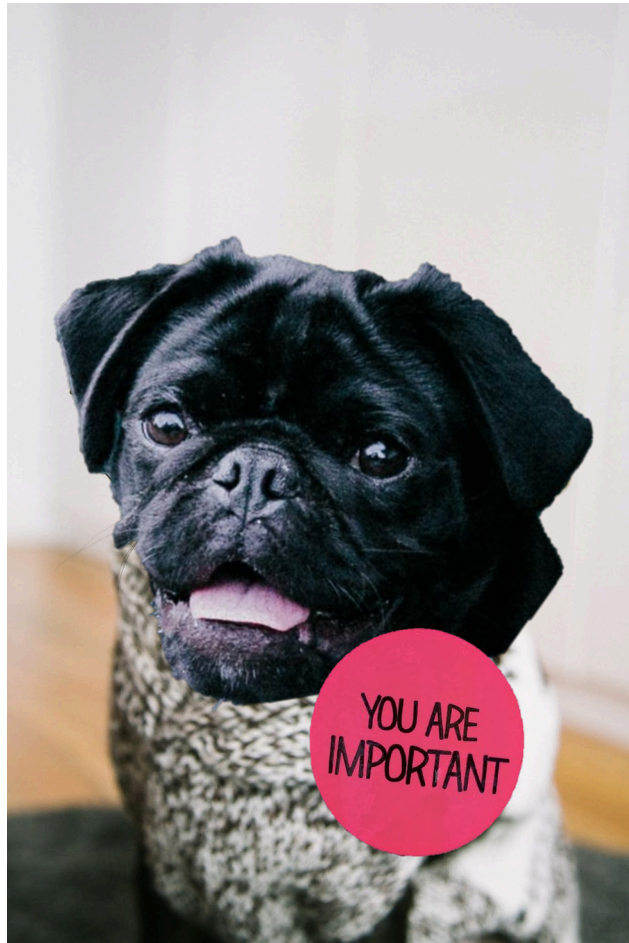
Anticipate situations the person may need assistance



4. Cultivate Rapport Building Strategies



Be Intentional



Seek out positive interaction opportunities

- Look for positives
- Don't wait for negatives

4. Cultivate Rapport Building Strategies



Reflect

- Support other staff
- Give and accept feedback
- Reflect on therapeutic relationship after an interaction
 - What went well?
 - Areas to improve?

4. Cultivate Rapport Building Strategies



Developing Therapeutic Relationships



Goals:

Improved therapeutic rapport:

- ✓ Increases cooperation with treatment
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- ✓ Improves quality of life

Developing Therapeutic Relationships



Think of 1-2 individuals you work with.

How can you improve the therapeutic relationship?

- Assess the relationship
- Basic interaction strategies to improve
- List positive interactions to increase
- How will you be intentional to

Developing Therapeutic Relationships



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