

REVIEW OF TECHNIQUES
FOR CLIENT FOCUSING

1. AWARENESS, through the use of the body: helping the client to be aware of how parts of one's body provide us with significant signals. For eg, "Your hand is clenching, what does this mean to you?" "You are narrowing your eyes, are you holding something back right now?" Counselor can design an experiment at the moment to help client get in touch with feelings.
2. TRYING, NOT TALKING. The idea of experimenting first, then processing the experiment.
3. ENACTMENT: Putting thoughts/feelings/images into action. For eg, Saying NO to others, and repeating it, with EXAGGERATION (louder...louder...louder) for more awareness and intensity.
4. STAYING WITH an unpleasant, uncomfortable situation, feeling, image, etc. Our tendency is to avoid, so that the gestalt remains unfinished.
5. GAMES OF DIALOGUE: Counselor identifies splits or polarities in a client's personality (aggressive vs passive, impulsive vs compulsive) Sets up an "Empty Chair" dialogue between these two components of self. Goal is to experientially examine both sides of the polarity, to eventually accept and integrate the two poles in a more balanced way.
6. REVERSALS: If a client reports that s/he is excessively timid (shy), s/he will be asked to play an exhibitionist. In this manner, a person makes contact with a part of self long submerged.
7. UNFINISHED BUSINESS: When a gestalt remains unclosed, the result is usually "unfinished business." Whenever unresolved feelings are identified, the client is asked to complete the gestalt. F. Perls indicates that resentments are the most common and important kinds of unfinished business.
8. I TAKE RESPONSIBILITY: The counselor constructs an exercise which begins with "I am aware that".....and ends with..."and I take responsibility for this."
9. LOOSENING; INTEGRATING: An exercise for getting rid of rigidity, for eg., Imagining the opposite of what you believe to be true.
10. MAY I FEED YOU A SENTENCE?: When a counselor concludes that a particular attitude or message is implied, the counselor says, "May I feed you a sentence? Try this on for size..... Say it to your (father, mother, spouse, etc). Say it again. Does it "fit?"
11. I HAVE A SECRET: Client thinks of a well-guarded secret, then imagines (projects) how s/he feels others would react to it.
12. GUIDED FANTASY VISUALIZATION: Counselor constructs fantasy. For eg, "Close your eyes....imagine...(present short scenario..... counselor asks client to experience each moment verbally (stating feelings, thoughts, images, behaviors out loud):"