

A Structured Process for Exploring and Transforming a Client's Metaphor

Adapted from: Richard R. Kopp's Interview Protocol

Step 1 - Notice metaphors in your client's language as they talk about a problem/issue. Choose one to work with.

Help the client identify where they are most stuck in the problem/issue. Choose one of the metaphors they use to describe the issue to work with.

Step 2 - Invite the client to step into the image associated with the metaphor.

"When you say [the metaphor] what image/picture comes to mind?" or, "What image/ picture do you see in your mind's eye?" or, "What does the [metaphor] look like?"

Make sure the client is in the image.

Step 3 - Guide the client in exploring the metaphor as a sensory image.

Setting [e.g. *"What else do you see?" or, "Describe the scene or an aspect of the scene (associated with the metaphoric image)";*

Action/interaction [e.g. *"What else is going on in (the metaphoric image)?" or, "What are the other people (in the metaphoric image) saying/ thinking/doing?";*

Time [e.g. *"What led up to this?", "What was happening (just) before (the situation in the metaphor)"; "What happens next?";*

Step 4 - Guide the client in exploring their experience/feelings as they are in the image.

"What's it like to be [the metaphoric image]?" or, "What's your experience of [the metaphoric image]?" or, "What are you feeling as you [the metaphoric image]?"

Step 5 - Invite the client to change the image.

"If you could change the image in any way, how would you change it?"

Step 6 - Guide the client in exploring the changed image as a sensory image.

Repeat the exploration outlined in Step 3 above for the changed image.

A Structured Process for Exploring and Transforming a Client's Metaphor, continued

Step 7 -- Guide the client in exploring their experience/feelings as they are in the changed image.

Repeat the exploration outlined in Step 4 above for the changed image.

Step 8 -- Guide the client in exploring connections between the images and their situation.

"What connections (parallels) do you see between your image of [the metaphoric image] and [the original situation]?"

"How might the way you changed the image apply to your current situation?"

"What new possibilities do you see for improving the situation?"