

Surmounting Shame, Penetrating Defenses

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International Webinars, Training, and Special Events

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Topic:

DEFTly Penetrating Defenses and Surmounting Shame:
an Accelerated, Relational Psychodynamic model
emphasizing Depth Emotion Processing and Healing

Objectives:

1. Identify steps in a process leading to depth emotion uncovering and integration.
2. Explain verbal and non-verbal elements of shame sensitive interventions and the conveyance of compassion.
3. Describe interventions employed to diminish dysregulated forms of shame, anxiety, guilt and defense.

Curative Process

1. **Identify internal goals** for therapy.
2. **Recommend a partnership** to focus on feelings, bodily sensations, pertinent thoughts & state of relationship.
3. **Reduce toxic forms of anxiety, shame, guilt and defense** by **raising awareness** of their manifestations and their cost.
4. **Transmit compassion for suffering caused by defensive process. This mobilizes the will to uncover feelings.**
5. **Provide a clear path to Invite feelings** related to a specific person & experience.
6. **Explore affects thoroughly, including bodily sensations and impulses. Guide the process and utilize visual imagery.**
7. **Seek integration by mutual reflection on the process.**

HEALING TRIAD

1. **AWARENESS** of STRANGULATING DEFENSIVE SYSTEM that is SEPARATE from OBSERVING SELF:
 - a. Shame related to unworthiness
 - b. Fear of exposing emotions
 - c. Punitive guilt (over rage or actions)
 - d. Defenses that create distance from self and others
2. **TRANSMISSION** of **COMPASSION** for **COST** of defensive system
3. **MOBILIZATION** of the **WILL** to **FREE FEELINGS**



Approach Defensive Processes in Non-Shaming Manner

- Embody compassion for the pain that necessitated the formation of defenses.
- Instill hope in overcoming defensive process by highlighting strengths.
("You've successfully overcome other obstacles in your life.")
- Consider exposing therapist's vulnerabilities briefly and only for normalizing purposes.

NORMALIZING DEFENSIVE RESPONSES

- Provide a developmental context (cause)
"This is a natural, learned survival response to avoid dangerous exposure."
- Empathize with the client's conflicts about self-exposure.
- Respect choice regarding relinquishment of defenses.

**Approach Defensive Processes
in Non-Shaming Manner**

- Explore defensive responses collaboratively.
“Does this make sense for you?” “What are your reactions to what I’ve said?” “How do you see it?”
- Present therapist observations about defenses as a perspective, not a proclamation.
“Eschew the role of expert.” Dearing & Tangney

Diminish dysregulated anxiety by:

- Noticing it and talking about it *together*
- Stopping all exploration of feelings.
- Normalizing it by explaining its cause; possibly self-disclosing
- Suggesting client reflect on all bodily sensations
- Reframing any harmful beliefs or projections
- Tracking progress with efforts at regulation
