

MICROSKILLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR CENTRING RELATIONSHIPS IN COUNSELLING

RESPONSIVE MICROSKILLS

All communication draws on four basic **structures of communication**: questions (i.e., how, what, where, when, why?), (b) statements, (c) minimal encouragers (ah, hmm), and (d) nonverbal behaviours. **Counselling microskills** are particular forms of questions or statements that serve a specific function within the counsellor–client dialogue. They are typically single sentences with a particular structure and purpose. For example, *What is the most meaningful learning for you in this chapter?* demonstrates the microskill of questioning.

Note. The links in Column 1 to the ebook *A Practical Guide for Counsellors: Co-Creating Safe and Culturally Responsive Relational Spaces* will work if you open the pdf in Adobe Acrobat; other software may disrupt the connections.

Building Care-Filled Connection (Chapter 2)				
Microskill	Structure	Description	Purpose	Examples
Engaging through body language	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Exhibit engaging, relaxed posture and invitational nonverbal cues. Respond to client nonverbal communication style. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indicate active presence in conversation. Communicate interest, concern, and care. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Choices related to body language should be <ul style="list-style-type: none"> congruent with who you are as a person and professional and responsive to client preferences, cultural identities, and social location.
Listening & attending actively	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attend fully to what the client is saying. Contextualize the message to keep it client-centred. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicate curiosity and openness. Slow down the process to create space for client stories. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Active listening on the part of the counsellor is evidenced by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> client body language, client engagement in the conversation, and client responses to counsellor verbalizations.
Embracing silence	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listen, wait, and be present while both counsellor and client actively reflect. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create space for client reflection and processing. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> shhh
Offering minimal encouragers	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide short verbal and nonverbal communication. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm you are attending and listening. Encourage clients to talk about their thoughts, feelings, experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Yes, hmm, uh-huh Nodding Various facial expressions

Paraphrasing	Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rephrase or restate what the client said. • Use the clients' own words or slight variations on wording without adding inferences about thoughts or feelings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate listening. • Acknowledge client experiences. • Highlight important points. 	<p>Client: <i>It's been a long time since I felt confident enough to put myself out there.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No confidence. • You haven't felt confident for quite a while. • Time has passed, and your confidence is still low.
Providing transparency	Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate openly and proactively about counselling processes, practices, theory, and procedures. • Provide information upon which clients can make informed choices. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster open conversation. • Enhance sharing of power. • Dispel mystery. • Ensure ongoing informed consent. • Encourage active client participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are certain limits to confidentiality that you should be aware of . . . • I wonder if this counselling idea might be useful in helping us make sense of . . . • The reason I am suggesting this approach is . . . • I wonder if we could shift our focus a bit to consider . . .

Creating Safer Healing Spaces (Chapter 3)

Microskill	Structure	Description	Purpose	Examples
Questioning	Question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite clients to share their feelings, perspectives, worldviews, experiences, and so on. • Begin typically with an interrogative (i.e., what, where, when, how, why). • Choose more open questions that do not lead naturally to yes/no responses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create space for clients to share their stories. • Invite clients to process thoughts, feelings, and experiences. • Encourage reflection on unexamined elements of current challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What was going on for you at that time? • Where were you when you started to feel uneasy? • When did this thinking pattern first begin to be a challenge for you in your work environment? • How did you respond to that situation? • Why is this particular belief important enough that you are willing to risk relationships to hold onto it?
Probing	Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer an open invitation to clients to contribute their feelings, thoughts, experiences, etc. (same intent as questioning). • Begins typically with a verb (e.g., tell, explain, describe, critique, give, generate). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prompt clients to share their stories. • Invite clients to process thoughts, feelings, and experiences. • Encourage reflection on unexamined elements of current challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me a bit more about your feelings. • Explain what that was like for you. • Describe a situation in which you might be likely to encounter this type of reaction. • Critique these three options to see which one might be the best fit for you. • Give me an example of what you mean by . . . • Generate a couple of reasons why it might be the right move and a couple of reasons why it might not.

Clarifying	Question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicit more detailed information or clarification of clients' stories. • Begins typically with a verb (e.g., do, is, tell) or interrogative (e.g., which, who). • Choose more closed questions that may lead naturally to yes/no responses. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicit specific information. • Confirm facts. • Narrow down client responses. • Elucidate a particular detail. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do you have another shift at work this week? • Is your partner planning on joining you for this event? • Choose from among these three emotions the one that is strongest in this moment. • Who was with you at the time? • Were you anticipating a response? • Tell me how old you were when your father . . .
Self-disclosing	Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share, intentionally and in a client-centred way, either (a) counsellor personal history or lived experiences, or (b) immediate, in-the-moment reactions (emotions or thoughts). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Validate client experiences. • Promote connection. • Enhance sharing of power. • Foster mutual empathy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am reminded of an example from my own experience that helped me to think differently about . . . • I hear you questioning the validity of your reaction; yet I'm experiencing a chill myself as you describe this situation . . . • The thing that popped into my mind as you shared that story was . . .
Validating	Statement or question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position client thoughts, feelings, and experiences within the broader context of other people experiencing, such as <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ similar presenting concerns, ○ similar development processes, or ○ similar cultural identities and social locations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce client sense of isolation. • Counter feelings of shame, stigmatization, or self-doubt. • Create safety and foster risk-taking in the conversation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I run a group for women who have left abusive relationships, and I have heard other women ask themselves that same question. • At this point in your process of grieving the loss of leaving your homeland, it is quite common for people to feel like they simply can't move on without the loved ones left behind. • I wonder what other kids your age would say if they were brave enough to tell someone what they are really thinking?

Applying a Trauma-Informed and Strengths-Focused Lens (Chapter 4)

Microskill	Structure	Description	Purpose	Examples
Offering affirmations	Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide specific, positive, genuine, and tangible feedback to the client. • Highlight motivation, successes, and strengths. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreground and reinforce client strengths and competencies. • Build self-efficacy. • Foster self-compassion. • Communicate empathy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have shown how strong you can be in very challenging circumstances. • Even on days when you are really struggling, you put on a brave face to create a safe and stable environment for your kids. • I notice that before you met with your boss, you took the time to breathe and ground yourself.

Enhancing Connection and Exploring Affect and Embodiment (Chapter 5)				
Microskill	Structure	Description	Purpose	Examples
Reflecting feeling	Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw on your own words to draw out potential underlying feelings or body sensations. • Add a new twist or expansion that remains connected to client intended affective expression. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate deeper understanding of client feeling. • Offer slightly different lens or perspective on affect or body sensations. • Actively contribute to shared understanding. 	<p>Client: <i>It's been a long time since I felt confident enough to put myself out there.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I sense discouragement when you reflect on the length of time. • You are left feeling unsettled or unsure of yourself. • Feeling timid or tentative is uncomfortable.
Checking Perceptions	Statement or question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check in explicitly with the client about the goodness of fit of what the counsellor just said. • Invite input on change of direction or topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respect and foreground client perspectives. • Communicate cultural humility. • Invite continued feedback from the client. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does that fit for you? • Give me a sense of whether that language resonates for you. • Have I captured this well?
Inviting Embodiment	Statement or question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite the client to attend to physical sensations, body positioning, or other embodied experiences as an avenue for exploring emotion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shift attention from thoughts and behaviour to feelings and sensations. • Actively contribute to deeper, shared understanding of embodied emotion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is happening in your body as you describe this experience? • Describe what your shoulders would say if they were given a voice. • What feelings do you associate with the sensation of your stomach being full of butterflies?
Offering immediacy	Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite client to attend to nonverbal communication. • Noting some change or shift in the client's posture, tone of voice, or general presence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw nonverbal experience to the client's attention. • Invite reflection on feelings or meaning based on nonverbal cues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I notice that you tensed up when I mentioned his name. • You say that you are not angry, but I notice that you are making fists with your hands. • We've headed in a different direction now. I wonder if this is a topic you don't want to talk about.
Collaborating in Meaning-Making (Chapter 6)				
Microskill	Structure	Description	Purpose	Examples
Reflecting meaning	Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draw on your own words to point out potential underlying meaning or inference in what the client said. • Add a new twist or expansion that remains connected to client intended meaning. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate deeper understanding of client meaning. • Offer slightly different lens or perspective on meaning. • Actively contribute to shared meaning-making. 	<p>Client: <i>It's been a long time since I felt confident enough to put myself out there.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You have lost touch with your more confident self. • You wonder if you can regain your sense of confidence. • Confidence is something you value in yourself.

<u>Exploring inconsistencies</u>	Statement or question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite awareness of, and reflection on, inconsistencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ among thoughts, feelings, and actions or ○ across time, contexts, and relationships. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gently foreground incongruent messages. • Encourage reflection on the discrepancies. • Invite further clarification. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I notice that you express a desire to continue down this path, but that you have a strong feeling of dread about it. • You have been telling me about your call to Anika, yet you seem to believe you never take social initiative. • In our last session you seemed convinced that you had no option but to leave the organization, and today you are talking about applying for a promotion.
<u>Summarizing</u>	Statement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pull together themes from a portion of conversation (e.g., a series of exchanges, a portion of the session, the entire session). • Add, when appropriate, language to support shared meaning-making with the client. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encapsulate the meanings, values, or beliefs, or the affect the client has expressed. • Capture and confirm the bottom-line meanings or affect that the client has expressed. • Wrap up a portion of the conversation and sometimes introduce another. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There seems to be a common theme emerging . . . • Let's take a moment to reflect on these experiences. I have heard you say . . . and we seem to be thinking that . . . • Looking back over today's session, several themes have emerged . . . • To summarize our discussion so far, I see . . . as particularly important. How about you?

MICROSKILLS AND TECHNIQUES FOR CENTRING RELATIONSHIPS IN COUNSELLING

RESPONSIVE TECHNIQUES

Counselling techniques are intentional linguistic practices that draw on one or more counselling microskills. These techniques often involve a short sequence of exchanges between counsellor and client for a particular purpose. For example, the counsellor might ask a question, provide some specific information, ask another question, and reflect back to the client what they understood from the conversational exchange. The counselling techniques below are reflective of a collaborative and co-constructive relational stance, rather than a particular theoretical model. Their appropriateness with each client is determined moment-by-moment on the basis of client needs, preferences, cultural identities, and contexts, as well as the focus of the counselling process in-the-moment. The examples below are brief. Some techniques can require a series of exchanges between counsellor and client; Others follow a sequence of steps, each of which can draw on a variety of microskills.

Applying a Trauma-Informed and Strengths-Focused Lens (Chapter 4)			
Technique	Description	Purpose	Steps/Processes
Analyzing power	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deconstruct the ways in power plays out in clients' lived experiences. Deconstruct and share power within the client–counsellor relationship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make visible power dynamics to inform client choices. Name and disrupt power dynamics. Enhance client self-efficacy and autonomy. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Engage the client in critical analysis of the nature and basis of power. Examine together differential access to various types of power, including the influences of cultural identities or relationalities and social location. Encourage deconstruction of the ways in which sociocultural narratives, social norms, experiences of cultural oppression, and intersections of various *isms have influenced the client's access to, and internalization of, messages related to the use of power. Engage in a cost-benefit analysis to empower client agency in self-selecting the personal power strategies they want either to foster or to eliminate.
Enhancing Connection and Exploring Affect and Embodiment (Chapter 5)			
Technique	Description	Purpose	Steps/Processes
Practising grounding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate awareness, without judgment, of emotions and embodiment in the here-and-now. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support a light or tentative hold on emotions. Reduce emotional distress. Foster a sense of presence and safety in-the-moment. 	<p>There are many techniques to support grounding that share some, or all, of the following characteristics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage the client in breathwork. Invoke client-centred visualization or guided imagery. Invite attention to various senses (i.e., sight, smell, hearing, touch). Encourage suspension of judgement, analysis, and other cognitive processes in favour of being present to emotion and embodiment.

Collaborating in Meaning-Making (Chapter 6)			
Technique	Description	Purpose	Examples [Microskills]
Co-creating language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlighting client words or phrases that seem important to understanding their lived experience. Adding possible language to describe client lived experience for client consideration. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm understanding. Foster collaboration Clarify challenges and preferences. Increase effectiveness of reflections and summaries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You mentioned <i>the self-critic</i> several times. [Paraphrasing]. It seems like the <i>self-critic</i> is usually hanging around when you are by yourself. [Summary] The word that popped into my mind is <i>overresponsibility</i>. [Reflecting meaning] I'm hearing a <i>cup half empty</i> theme. [Reflecting meaning] The emotion that seems to keep bubbling underneath the surface in this conversation is a feeling of vulnerability. [Reflecting feeling]
Relating in Client and Culture-Centre Ways (Chapter 7)			
Technique	Description	Purpose	Examples [Microskills]
Linking domains of experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Connect client lived experience meaningfully across various domains: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> biological; psychological (thoughts, feelings, actions); social; cultural; and systemic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-construct a holistic, multidimensional picture of client lived experiences. Thicken description of client challenges. Enhance shared understanding of the interconnections among domains. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As you describe your responses to this situation, you seem to be holding a lot of emotion in your body. I see your fists clench, for example. [Immediacy] Let's take a couple of moments to pause and explore the feelings that are coming up for you. [Transparency] Are you OK with this slight shift in direction? [Checking perceptions] When you were talking about your emotional reactions earlier in the conversation, you said you were feeling guilty about this interaction, but now it seems like your self-talk is focused on blaming him for what happened. [Exploring inconsistencies] What meaning do you make of what seems to be a disconnect between your feelings and thoughts about this interaction? [Questioning]
Making hypotheses transparent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer up succinct statements that reveal your current assumptions about client challenges (or preferred futures). Introduce or reinforce an illustrative metaphor (optional). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make your assumptions transparent. Invite client feedback to further refine shared understanding. Synthesize emergent conceptualization of client challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In this last part of our conversation I have a sense that we are narrowing in on the crux of the challenge. [Providing transparency] Now that you clearly see the ways in which this relationship is holding you back, you find yourself unable to invest further in making it work. [Summarizing] Does that synthesis fit for you? [Checking perceptions] The "branding iron" is a very powerful metaphor that seems to encapsulate the way you find yourself defined and confined by others in your small community. [Summary] I wonder if you feel held back, because you can't find a way to remove the branding marks, both externally and internally, so you are free to redefine yourself. [Summary]

Conceptualizing Client Lived Experiences: Client Worldviews (Chapter 8)

Technique	Description	Purpose	Examples [Microskills]
<u>Exploring cultural meanings</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inquire about client culture. • Co-construct understanding of client culture (i.e., identities, values, worldview, norms, practices). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demonstrate cultural humility. • Assess cultural identities and social location. • Foreground client values, beliefs, and worldview. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In which ways is the Canadian education system different from that of . . . ? [Questioning] How do these differences affect your day-to-day experiences at school? [Questioning] • Describe how . . . would be viewed by your friends and family. [Probing] • When I hear the word . . . , I think of . . . [Self-disclosure] My sense is that you are using that word to describe a different phenomenon. [Reflecting meaning] Tell me a bit more about your perspective. [Probing] • If you feel comfortable, tell me more about this ceremony. [Probing] What roles do these rituals play for you as you move toward a sense of wellness? [Questioning]
<u>Highlighting exceptions</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus attention on exceptions to the challenge. • Search for clues to preferred futures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreground client's existing knowledge, skills, competencies. • Clarify preferred outcomes. • Foster hope and motivation for change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I notice that you are quite calm as you describe this event, compared to last week. [Offering immediacy] What is different in this moment? [Questioning] • What happened on that day that resulted in a different outcome than before? [Questioning] What influence did you have on that outcome? [Questioning] Describe the specific skills you used to accomplish that? [Probing] • You seem to have stepped outside of your tendency to discount your successes when you interacted with George this time. [Reflecting meaning] What do you observe about yourself when you look back on this encounter? [Questioning] This is a significantly different experience for you. [Reflecting meaning]
<u>Envisioning client preferences</u>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore how clients would like things to be different. • Create a detailed picture of their preferred lived experiences (e.g., alternative present or future). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreground clients' views of time and change. • Set broad intentions for change. • Enhance client motivation for change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you could look into a crystal ball to a time in the future when you no longer face this challenge, what might you see? [Questioning] • If I handed you a magic wand, and you could reinvent yourself in this moment; describe what would be different. [Probing] • If you could reach out and touch experiences, interactions, or ways of being from your past, present, or future that tell us something about how you would like things to be different, what would you grab hold of? [Questioning] • Imagine that you are walking alongside an ancestor who has words of wisdom for you to help you move through this current moment-in-time. [Probing] What are they saying to you? What are they inviting you to attend to? Where are they leading you? [Questioning]

Conceptualizing Client Lived Experiences: Client Contexts (Chapter 9)

Technique	Description	Purpose	Examples [Microskills]
Exploring sociocultural contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore the multiple contexts of clients' lived experience, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> microlevel (i.e., individuals, couples, or families); mesolevel (i.e., schools, organizations, or communities); and macrolevel (i.e., broader social, economic, and political systems). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight contextual barriers and supports. Foster thick description of lived experiences. Assess the locus of control or responsibility for current challenges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Who do you tend to turn to for advice in your family or community? [Clarifying] Walk me through one of these encounters in your family, so I can get a clear picture of what that is like for you. [Probing] How is this experience similar or different at work? [Questioning] If there was a hidden camera at school, what would it capture as you moved through your day? [Questioning] You seem to have faced a few barriers to accessing services. [Reflecting meaning] Tell me more about those barriers. [Probing] What is it like for you to see people challenging these barriers through the Black Lives Matter movement? [Questioning]
Technique	Description	Purpose	Steps/Processes
Deconstructing sociocultural narratives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite examination of the contextual and systemic roots of beliefs and values. Analyze power, gender, class, and other sociocultural factors to foreground oppressive narratives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Position clients in relation to dominant and nondominant systems. Highlight systemic barriers. Foster consciousness raising about broader systemic influences on client challenges. Empower clients by locating health-limiting barriers outside of the individual. 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Elucidate messages received through socialization or acculturation processes. Trace those messages back to their origins in dominant or nondominant social discourses. Analyze critically the positive and negative consequences of these sociocultural narratives. Reflect on the degree to which these messages have been internalized. Support the client to select actively, from and between those discourses, the messages they want to maintain or discard.
Technique	Description	Purpose	Examples [Microskills]
Reframing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite consideration of alternate lenses, client-generated or counsellor-generated, on client lived experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Offer potential for more helpful or healing perspectives. Expand breath of possibilities for understanding lived experiences. Foreground alternative ways of perceiving client experiences. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> You described the stories your grandmother used to tell you as transformative. [Paraphrasing] It seems to me that part of what made them transformative was the connection to the values and cultural norms of her home country. [Reflecting meaning] What story might she tell you to help make sense out of this current situation? [Questioning] If you are willing, piece together what you remember of her stories to take a guess at what she would say to you right now. [Probing] When you adopt your grandmother's perspective, what shifts in how you understand or perceive your experience? [Questioning]

Externalizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shift understanding of the current challenge from intrapsychic to contextual. • Distance the challenge from the client’s sense of self. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separate the client from the challenge they are facing. • Create breathing room between the client and the externalized challenge. • Position the client to act upon the externalized challenge. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How has the self-critic interfered with your close friendships? [Questioning] • When did you first notice the self-critic in this context? [Questioning] • It seems like the self-critic gains more power in your life when you feel less secure in a relationship. [Reflecting meaning] • Tell me a bit about the people who come to mind when you think about the self-critic. [Probing] • When you see the self-critic coming towards you, what might you do to reduce its power or create a stumbling block in its approach toward you? [Questioning]
Setting the Stage for Change (Chapter 10)			
Technique	Description	Purpose	Examples [Microskills]
Exploring client readiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlight positive changes between and within counselling sessions. • Match counsellor responses to client stage of change. • Inquire about, and reinforce, client motivation, initiative, and supports for change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster expectancy of change. • Encourage client preparation for change. • Open pathways to preferred presents or futures. • Foreground client agency. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As you look at the week ahead, what might you do to support your need for more space to yourself? [Questioning] • I notice you seem quite relaxed today. [Offering immediacy] Tell me what you did this week that alleviated some of your stress. [Probing] • Exercise is a key ingredient. [Paraphrasing] What do you think you will be doing for exercise a month from now, six months from now? [Questioning] • That was an unusual step for you to take. [Reflecting meaning] Explain what it was like for you to take action in that away. [Probing] • Upon reflection, what motivated you to respond in that way? [Questioning] • You felt overwhelmed. [Paraphrasing]. Yet, you still made yourself keep going. [Reflecting meaning]. How did you do that? [Questioning]
Way-making: Envisioning change	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite examination of the client’s beliefs and values about change. • Deconstruct dominant discourses about change. • Identify and thicken metaphors, language, or images for way-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foreground client-centred, culturally responsive way-making. • Foster hope and motivation. • Facilitate movement toward preferred presents or futures. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me about a time when you effectively addressed a challenge. [Probing] • What language or image did you draw on to give you a sense of direction as you worked on that challenge? [Questioning] • Now that we have identified how you would like things to be different, how do you envision the path forward today, tomorrow, next week? [Questioning]. • Sometimes clients benefit from setting specific goals for us to work on together; other clients don’t connect at all to the idea of goal-setting because it doesn’t fit with their view of health and healing. [Providing transparency] I’m curious about what you think of the idea of setting goals. [Probing] Are you game to talk about this? [Perception checking] • The image of the “flock of geese” is very helpful. They all stick together for the journey but it is not always the same goose at the front of the V. [Reflecting meaning] Sometimes I see a few geese heading off in a different direction for a while then rejoining the group later. How does that image fit for you in this moment? [Questioning]

<p><u>Way-making: Narrowing the focus</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review the expression and impact of the challenge across areas or domains of lived experience. • Narrow the focus to one or two areas as a starting place for change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Co-construct a multidimensional picture of change. • Enhance client expectancy for change. • Optimize client success in implementing change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At the end of the last session we identified two areas in which you want to see change: (a) the way you respond to this interaction with George in-the-moment, and (b) what you say to yourself after that interaction. [Summary] Which of those seems the most pressing in terms of a starting place for our work together? [Questioning] • There is no right place to start to make changes. Most often making a change in one area will have ripple effects in other areas. [Transparency] Would it be helpful to spend a bit of time figuring out whether it is better to focus first on addressing the situation at work or reducing your sense of anxiety? [Clarifying]
<p><u>Way-making: Refining therapeutic directions</u></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invite clients to break down their broad preferences for change into manageable and meaningful elements. • In some cases, a set of detailed, concrete, and achievable goals is appropriate. • In other case, client-centred and culturally responsive adaptations are necessary to support meaningful and affirmative therapeutic directions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Foster hope and motivation. • Facilitate movement towards preferred presents or futures. • Encourage client agency and empowerment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What would building a stronger relationship with George look like in concrete terms? [Questioning] • You seem excited about the possibility of feeling better. [Paraphrase] How would you know that you had reaches the point of feeling well? [Questioning] • We noted one exception to that rule. [Recapping] Think of some other out-of-the-box possibilities we might want to consider. [Probing] • Which one of these goals do you gravitate towards emotionally? [Questioning] • Describe the risks and benefits of that particular approach. [Probing] • What clues do you normally look for to tell you that you are on the right track? [Questioning] • List some of the smaller building blocks for getting to a point where might you feel confident about leaving your job. [Probing]