

An Integrative Framework for Cross-Cultural Psychotherapy

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The Changing Social Context

Psychotherapy as a cultural practice is shaped by its socio-cultural context

- Before 1970's: Ethnocentrism, cross-cultural issues largely neglected
- 1970s: Human rights, progressive humanistic thinking, equality, universality, color-blind approaches
- 1980s: Demographic changes – significant non-European immigration
- 1990s: Emerging focus, dominated by the cultural literacy approach
- 2000s: Globalization, intersecting diversities

Critical Issues in Cross-cultural Clinical Practice

- Clinical practice as social action: Dominant discourse, personality ideals, and conformity
- Ethnicity as client/patient characteristic: Negative positioning of ethnicity
- Individual uniqueness and White privilege (of naturalized identity)
- Intersecting diversity and identity politics
- Technical aspects: Building on individualized practice model and personal style

Integration Step One

Two Approaches to Cross Cultural Clinical Practice

Cultural Literacy Model

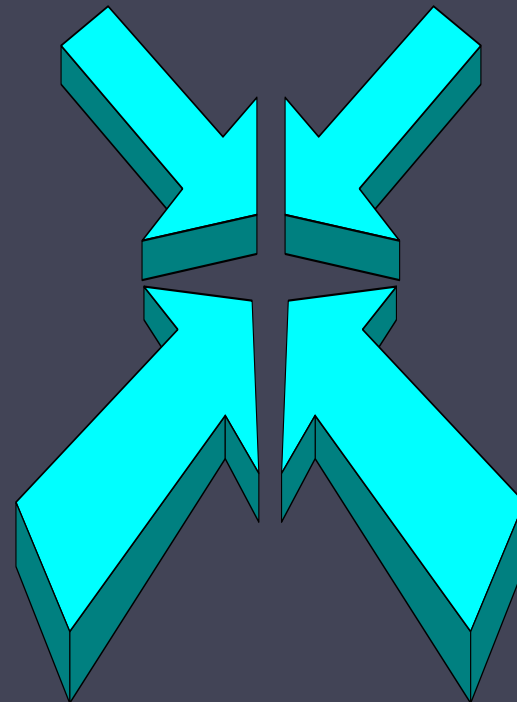
- Practitioner as expert
- Assumes superior knowledge
- Culture as homogenous
- Client as member of cultural group
- Culture-specific techniques
- Practically impossible

Phenomenological

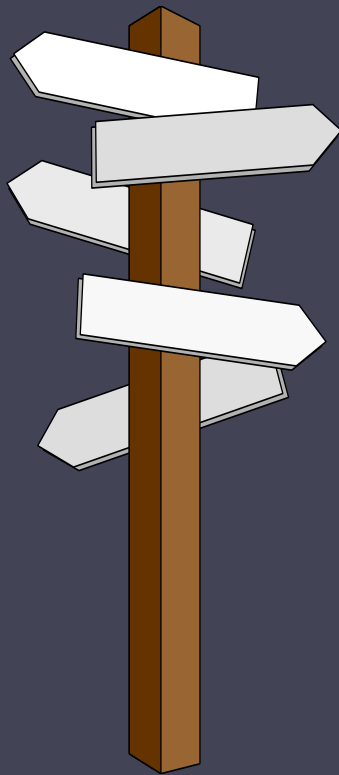
- Practitioner as learner
- Epoché or suspension
- Plurality of internalized culture
- Client as unique individual
- Process-oriented technique
- Critical self-reflection

Integrated Model

- Attitude
- Knowledge
- Skills
- Research



Attitude



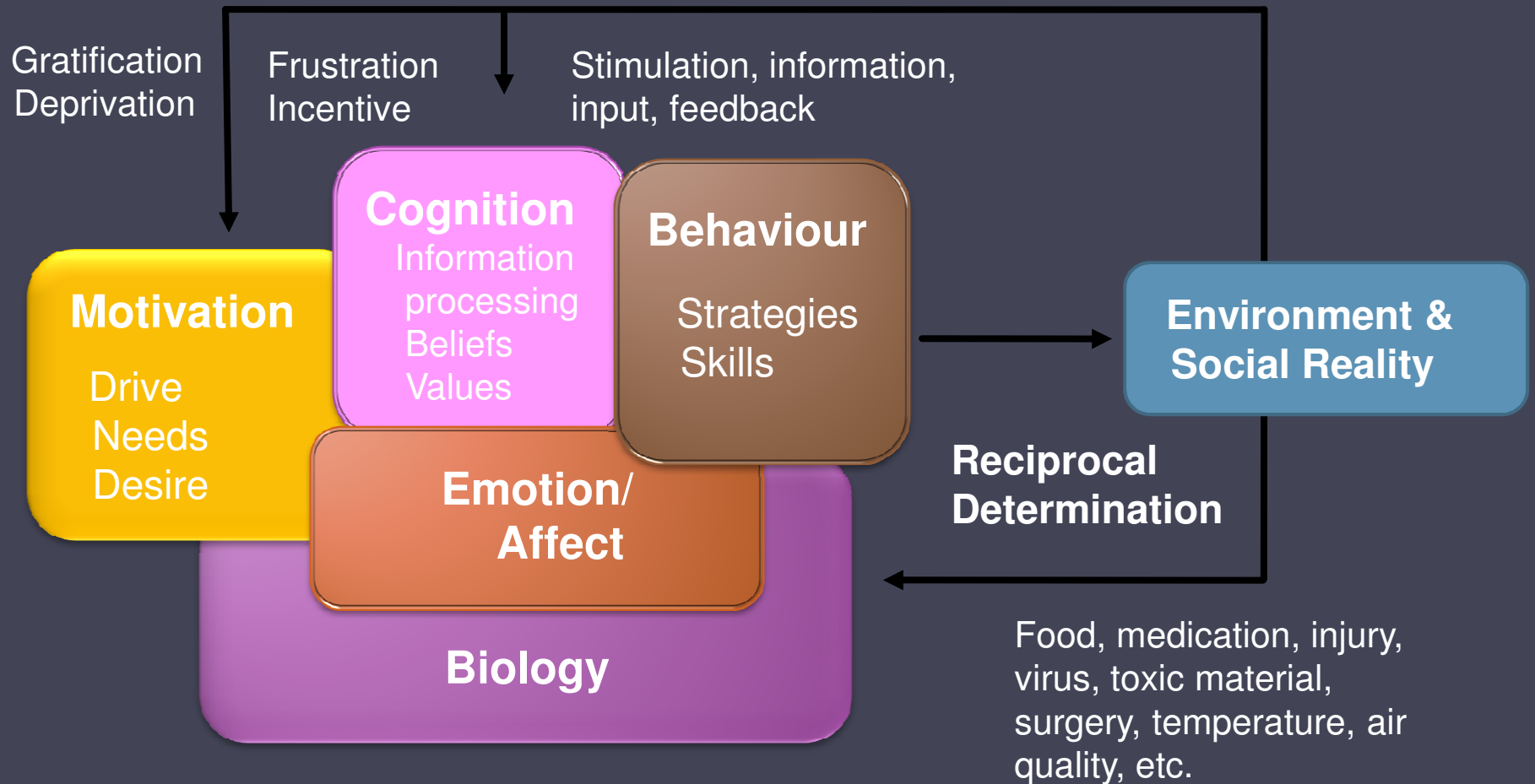
- Commitment to justice and equity
- Valuing difference
- Openness to cultural difference
- Readiness to learn from the client/patient, and change
- Critical self-reflection and experiential learning

Knowledge

- Culture-specific knowledge
- Systemic context of culture
- Power and discourse
- Acculturation process and internalized culture
- Dynamics of cross-cultural communication and understanding
- Clinical change process
- Building on chosen practice theory and personal style
- The Multiple Contingency Management (MCM) approach



Human Behaviour and the Environment MCM Framework

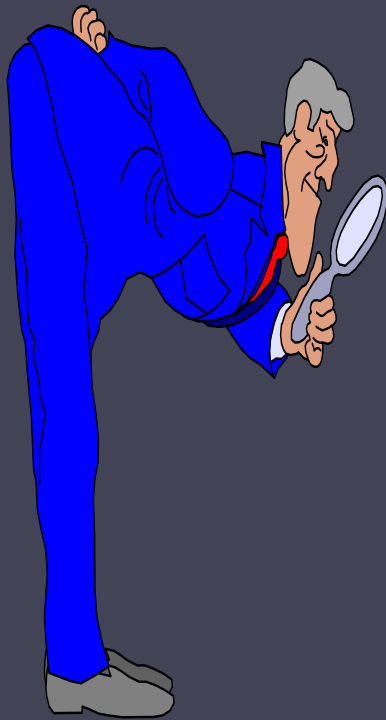


Skills



- Communication, engagement, and relationship skills
- Clinical formulation and goal setting connected to client/patient reality
- Specific change strategies (in different domains of the MCM framework)
- Management of own emotional responses
- Professional intervention within institutional context

Practitioner-Oriented Research and Knowledge Development



- Current models based on personal opinion, little empirical support
- Reliance on correlational design
- Lack of direct investigation of change process
- Categorical definition of ethnicity
- Explication of practice wisdom
- Systematic process-outcome research to support model development

Personal, Professional, and Structural

- Professional self-care
- Personal development and comfort
- Space for open and honest sharing - beyond political correctness and tokenism
- Diversity positive policy
- Commitment and resource
- On-going learning and professional development – learning, training programs, consultation and supervision

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