

Damian Bariexca

COUN 550

Charted Session (from Session #2, 17 Oct. 2006)

24 Oct. 2006

Client Response	Counselor Response	Client Feelings	Counselor Feelings	Psychological Interpretations	Alternate Responses
	1. What would you like to accomplish tonight?		Nervous		<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Hi, it's good to see you again. What would you like to work on this evening?2. What are your goals for this evening?3. Last week, we set some goals for reducing your stress levels. How has that been working out for you this past week?
1. Hmm.. I dunno... I guess... maybe we could talk about what I [???] went [???] last week... I'm trying to remember what that is.		Guarded, Apprehensive			
	2. You spoke a little about the conflicts you're having with your roommate-slash-landlord. And you'd mentioned there was going to be a meeting between you two... I guess it was Wed.? Did you want to talk about how that went?		Interested, Curious		<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Your main concern seemed to be the meeting with your roommate. How did that go?2. How did meeting with your roommate impact your stress levels?3. Did you and your roommate resolve anything this week after your talk?

<p>2. Sure, I'll talk about my roommate. Um, we met. We did meet, which was good. And I followed through on meeting with her. And it was not easy, and we decided that we were going to move out (laughs).</p>		<p>Reluctant, Tentative</p>		<p>Using Gestalt theory, the client's behavior is inconsistent with what she says – she laughs while describing a scene that was clearly difficult for her. This could be a defense mechanism, used to help alleviate embarrassment at discussing this event.</p>	
	<p>3. Really?</p>				<p>1. That must have been difficult for both of you to do. 2. It sounds like it took a lot of courage for you to sit down with her, given what you've said about your relationship recently. 3. Moving out sounds like a big step. How did you both come to that conclusion?</p>

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<p>3. Yes, so, um, my roommate...it was a good conversation because my roommate, she came and she, she um, she admitted that she has not been an easy person to live with, and she said to me that, "I don't like the person I am when I've been living with you," and, um, so, she said, "I think you should move out now because, not [because I don't like you?] but because I need my own space to figure out why I do this stuff," so... it was good that we talked, because she kinda basically admitted that, you know, she knows, you know, she, she can't handle living with someone right now.</p>		<p>Uneasy, Relieved, Embarrassed?</p>		<p>The client here (and throughout) seems to need to assign fault to one party in this conflict. According to reality/control theories, this may be an effort to gain control over a situation in which she feels she has none. This may be triggered or aggravated by the long-term situation she has been in, in which her roommate/landlord has dictated fairly strict "ground rules" in their shared house. Long-term feelings of resentment may also be causing her to focus on her roommate, rather than herself.</p>	
	<p>4. Well, how did that make you feel when she said, um, "I don't like the person I am when I'm with you"?</p>		<p>Connected, Curious, Pursuing a hunch</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you agree with her that you moving out is the right choice to make? 2. That must be difficult to hear from a close friend. 3. It sounds like your friend is going through a very tough time right now.

<p>4. I, I felt really good, because I been feeling that way for months, I've been feeling like I was nuts, like... what do I do? I feel like I can't really do anything, and I, uh, it, it felt good that she admitted it, at least, that we have a plan, but at the same time, I don't wanna have to move out, you know? But, I kinda figured it was coming, at some point; I just didn't want to have to do it right now, but...</p>		<p>Relieved, Empowered, Conflicted</p>		<p>According to control/reality theory, the client may say things like, "I can't really do anything" when, in reality, there are viable options within her control. This may occur as a result of the client's perception that she has no control over a situation.</p>	
	<p>5. So what do you... in light of that conversation, or in the aftermath of the conversation, what are you feeling now? What are some of the feelings you're experiencing now?</p>				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When do you think might be a better time to move? 2. Sounds like this conversation was a relief to you, in a way. Did you notice any change in how you feel physically after it was over? 3. So how will both of you work to carry out this plan?

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<p>5. I think in the short term, I feel happy because... I guess... [long pauses]... our friendship is intact in all of this, because she said that the main thing she wanted is that we wouldn't hate each other, because we were good friends before we moved in. She's like, "I don't want to treat you poorly," but, I think it's more comfortable in the house, but, I think once I start moving out I'll feel stressed out, because I don't have time to move right now, and so, I think that's the thing that's going to be hard for me.</p>		<p>Introspective, Thoughtful, Relieved, Nervous</p>			
	<p>6. (silence)...Looking long term, you said it's going to be stressful when you start to move out. What time frame did you guys give yourselves, or did you give yourself, or did she give you, or...what time frame do you have to move out?</p>		<p>Struggling & confused during silence, then calm (as I considered therapeutic value)...then struggling again as I tried to voice a question</p>		<p>1. What do you think would be most helpful in preparing for the stressful time you know is coming? 2. Last week, you talked about how important your friends are to you as a support system. It sounds like you've got one more person you know you'll be able to count on now. 3. It must have been tough to have this conversation, but how did it feel when she told you she didn't want to lose you as a friend?</p>
<p>6. [low voice - She said she wanted me out?] by the end of November.</p>		<p>Very sad</p>		<p>According to Gestalt theory, the client's physical and verbal behavior (quiet</p>	

				voice, stooped shoulders, looking down) indicate that the client is upset or saddened by the prospect of moving out by the end of November. This may be connected to the client's need to establish control because she has been given this deadline by her roommate, and is not in control of the situation.	
	7. So about a month and a half or so, or two months?		Sympathetic		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Your voice got very quiet there. Why? 2. You seem very sad about that. Can you tell me about it? 3. Is that enough time for you?
7. I think she'll be flexible; she said she'd be flexible. But at the same time, I saw her yesterday, and she's like, "Oh, so what're you doing with your day today?", I said, "Oh, just running around with school and everything," and she said, "Oh, so were you looking for your apartments yet?", and I was like, "oh no!" (laughs) Was that a hidden message? (laughs) But it was good...		Overwhelmed, uncomfortable		According to cognitive theory, the client could be unwilling to acknowledge the straightforward nature of her roommate's confrontation. This could be due to an unwillingness to relinquish control in the situation. According to reality theory, she may actually be unaware of the nature of the confrontation, and again, is a result of the feelings of loss of control in her life.	

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	8. It didn't sound very hidden!		Connected, perhaps inappropriately so? She's laughing about a situation that is clearly uncomfortable for her, and I connected to that.		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It sounds pretty uncomfortable to me - what was good about it? 2. What did you tell her? 3. Did that make you feel pressured, like you should have a place already?
8. That's true, that's true! (laughs) But you know, I think also, she was not expecting...that I had already started looking on my own, so I think she was really stressed out, because she had decided on her own that she was going to ask me to move out, and I had decided that if we couldn't come to an agreement that I was going to move out, so she was anticipating that I was gonna freak out when she asked me to move out, then I told her, "Well, I've kinda been looking on my own." She said, "Really?! When have you been doing that?"		Satisfied, relieved		In responses 8 and 9, according to control theory, the client seems to be deflecting or directing the conversation more toward her roommate, instead of looking introspectively. This could be a way of avoiding dealing with her own negative feelings about the confrontation or the relationship, which seems to have been soured by going from an egalitarian friendship to one of landlord and tenant, one in which the client feels her friend abused her position of authority.	

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	<p>9. So it sounds like you guys kinda came to the same conclusion, at different points, (her: mm-hmm), a while ago, I suppose, or sometime anyway before you had the meeting.</p>		<p>Connected (?); identifying her guilt and wanting to explore it</p>		<p>1. If you had already decided to move out, why were you nervous about this meeting? 2. How did you feel when you found out she was going to ask you to leave? 3. Sounds like this stressful situation seemed to work out OK, at least for now?</p>
<p>9. Yeah...She said she wasn't going to raise the rent til I moved out, and she realized...she said, "I realized that was ridiculous, and that I was just being difficult", and it wasn't about the rent, for her, it was just, umm... other things, y'know, so...</p>		<p>Vindicated</p>			

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10. Well, now that you've expressed, last week, some uncertainty over what was going to happen, I don't know if ...you identified that as a source of stress...do you think that now that you, that uh, ...how do you feel...uh... I mean, you've mentioned, obviously that it's going to be stressful to have to move out, but do you feel any relief now that things have been decided and that you both came to this mutual agreement, even though it was on your own... do you feel any relief there, or how do you feel about that?

Really struggling. I know what I want to say, but my brain can't parse the thoughts. Frustrated with myself.

1. Were you aware of these "other things" when you were having those conflicts with her?
2. Did you think that it was something you were doing to cause the conflict?
3. How do you feel about the fact that you both came to the same conclusion, albeit independently?

<p>10. I feel...I do feel a little more peaceful, in the fact that I don't have the stress of worrying over should I stay there or not, or... guilt about how she's going to feel if I move out, or what I'm going to do to her, or, feeling bad about whose fault it was, or anything like that. So that feels good. It feels...at least now I don't have to sneak around her back to look for apartments. 'Cause we have mutual friends, and I told some of them that I was looking, but I said, "well, we haven't really talked about it so don't say anything," but now I can just be open and not have to worry about it. So that's good, but I think that I'm [??] now, but when I'm really moving, I'm gonna be stressed, just moving, and trying to figure out where I'm gonna live and everything.</p>		<p>Relieved over achieving closure</p>		<p>According to Gestalt theory, people naturally attempt to maintain balance or equilibrium in their lives. Here, even though the client seems to have achieved some resolution over her most recent stressful situation, she continues to focus on stressful times yet to come – she avoids focusing on the “here & now” because she is too preoccupied with what’s to come. This may indicate that the client needs to develop appropriate coping strategies for stress, such as relaxation techniques.</p>	
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	11. That's a stressful process.		Empathic		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Knowing that you've achieved some closure, can you take just a second and think about how that feels right now? 2. Does the situation necessarily have to be anybody's fault? 3. That must feel good, to not feel like you have to hide anything or sneak around.
11. Yeah... and I haven't thought about it too much 'cause I don't have time - I have school things, and other things going on...I kinda put it on the back burner for now, but I know that it's gonna be in the next week or two, when I focus on it, it's gonna be stressful for me.		Overwhelmed		According to Gestalt theory, equilibrium can only be maintained when needs are gratified. Here, it seems as though the client has too many needs and not enough time or organization to gratify them. This may come from poor planning or prioritizing skills, which can be learned. Here & now orientation may also be helpful in managing stress.	
	12. Do you think that stress will only be 'til you find a new place, or will that be... cause you said you don't feel stress now as far as the relationship between you and your friend is concerned, would be it fair to say that that stress is a fairly short-term stress?				<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Of all the things you have going on, what is the most important to you? 2. The next week or two may be stressful, but how do you feel right now? 3. Apartment hunting can be a stressful experience - what do you think you can do to manage that stress?

<p>12. Um, for moving? Yeah, once I get settled I think it will be better. It's just the process of moving, you know...where? And go from there, But I'm hopeful - I was dreaming of what color couch I'm going to put in my apartment (laughs)!</p>		<p>Optimistic</p>		<p>Using Gestalt theory, the client's actions and expressions were consistent with the content (she smiled and laughed as she thought about her new apartment in responses 12 and 13). This may signify that she is, at heart, happy to be moving on from her current living situation, despite having voiced concerns of guilt over leaving her landlord without a tenant.</p>	
	<p>13. (laughs) That's nice! It can be fun to do that, to think about, well...</p>		<p>Connected, Empathic</p>		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Where do you see yourself wanting to live? 2. What would you like to do with your new apartment once you get it? 3. Sounds like you're really looking forward to living on your own.
<p>13. Decorating! And to see my kitchen again, by myself, without my roommate there! Not having a dog...So...</p>		<p>Optimistic, Excited</p>			

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14. It sounds like you've gone from one form of uncertainty that was very stressful, with your roommate situation, to a different kind of uncertainty, but you seem, to me, anyway, a lot more optimistic about the second - you acknowledge that it'll be a pain to move, but you're also talking about all the good things that are going to happen, "what color couch am I going to get, how am I gonna decorate, I can use my kitchen again," so, um, it seems that the uncertainty has gone from uncertainty to anticipation, even though there's that underlying feeling of uncertainty that is stressful to you.

Attempting to reframe client's uncertainty (This sounded a lot better in my head than it did on tape).

1. Sounds like you've got quite a lot to look forward to - you must be excited.
2. You went into this week very stressed out over the conversation with your roommate, but it sounds like you've ended up with quite a bit to be happy about.
3. Even though you don't know where you'll be living, it's kind of an exciting sort of uncertainty, instead of a negative one, isn't it?

14. I think it was good that we talked about it, because she ... it was a very good conversation, cause she talked to me, she basically blamed herself for everything and I didn't anticipate it going that way. Now I'm not saying that I'm perfect in this, but, this was the first time she acknowledged she had any ...she was doing anything wrong, and I just anticipated, to the end, just battling it out. It was good. At least she was strong enough to admit that she knows she's not going to be fun to live with, so she's like, "I shouldn't have any roommates now, until I get my stuff together" No, it was good, I think that was good, but um, I think it'll be...I think right now my focus should shift to school, because it's more a bigger issue this month, so I think next month, moving will be more stressful for me. I think right now my shifting focus is, "OK, now I've got a plan, but I've got to get back to the more immediate crisis, which is school, and changing jobs, and things like that", so I think that's more on my mind now.

Relieved,
Satisfied with
roommate
confrontation,
but already
worried about
the next
"immediate
crisis"

Again, the client talks in terms of guilt and who needs to assume blame for the situation. Control theory suggests that this may be yet another manifestation of the client's need to have control of the situation. She praises her roommate for being "strong enough" to accept specific blame, yet she does not do so herself, except to say that she's not "perfect." This also suggests an unwillingness or inability to explore her own role in the conflict.

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