



Clear Thinking Issue 125

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How to deal with the expert therapy client

*What to do when your therapy client has heard it all before – by **Mark Tyrrell***

Have you ever met someone who you felt perhaps had been ‘over-therapied’? Maybe they talked like a self help book, spewing psychobabble like cocoa from a chocolate fountain. Maybe *everything* had to be analysed in minute detail and/or excessively dwelt upon in order to elicit the maximum sympathy, rather than just spontaneously dealt with. Perhaps they “know what you are trying to do” or constantly refer back to what other therapists said or did.

Therapy, ideally, should work ‘behind the scenes’. It should not be an intrusive ‘reference point’ that must always be trotted out and referred to in every situation in life. It should help us live more *fluidly*, so we don’t *need* to be stopping to analyse every thought and every feeling and potentially losing all perspective.

Some people have had many different therapists and hundreds of therapy sessions because they genuinely need help for severe psychological suffering. But ‘more’ isn’t necessarily ‘better’, and the ‘over-therapied’ may have become confused by all the theory they have been fed.

If we suspect that psychotherapy has become the *raison d'être* for someone, we may have to deal with this part of the pattern of 'who they are' before we can hope to make much progress on the issue that originally – perhaps long ago now – impelled them to seek therapy.

Sometimes the original complaint that led them to therapy may have been something quite simple, but the notion that one's problems always have 'deep roots' is pervasive and many people are easily persuaded that treatment *needs* to be complex and long drawn out. Not to mention expensive.

Here's how we can help someone with suspected therapeutic 'indigestion':

1 Differentiate

Make it clear that you are not like other therapists. Tell your client that you (and they) have no need to talk psychobabble or theory.

2 Set clear therapy goals

Clear, achievable and time limited goals are essential for good therapy. It's amazing how many 'professional clients' seem to have forgotten what therapy is supposed to be *for*.

3 Get needs met outside of therapy

People who have been 'in therapy' for a long time are particularly at risk of unconsciously using their therapy sessions as a substitute for meeting their basic emotional needs – especially for attention, company, and a sense of purpose and meaning.

Clients may sometimes need help to switch to getting these needs met outside the consulting room, so that the therapy doesn't itself become an (expensive) addiction for them. We don't want therapy to be part of their problem!

I'm not for a moment suggesting that *everyone* who's had therapy before is like this, but the 'professional client' will be recognizable to any therapist who has been around a while. And they may be quite unaware of the trap they have fallen into.

Rewind Technique online course - LIVE for the last time

Every therapist is going to encounter clients with post-traumatic stress (PTSD). Many of them will have already had lots of therapy to help them deal with their anxiety, panic attacks, flashbacks, agoraphobia, irascibility, insomnia, nightmares and fear of the future.

But they may not yet have encountered the one simple, powerful, effective technique that can switch all that off.

And you may not have encountered it either. In which case, you won't be able to help them much more than any of their previous therapists.

To make sure that *you* can make a difference to PTSD sufferers, you need to know how to use the Rewind technique.

And you can learn this on our unique Rewind technique online training course.

Online LIVE for the very LAST time!

The **last live** Rewind technique online training course starts on Thursday 8 September. If you book your place by 18 August 2011 you can benefit from a 25% Early Bird discount.

Don't miss this opportunity to engage live with our tutors and the other participants. After this date, this course will only be available in a home study format.

[Read more about the Rewind technique online training course here.](#)

See you in a fortnight.

[Mark Tyrrell](#)

Co-Founder

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