

Spitting in the Soup Technique Worksheet

This worksheet is designed for therapists and professionals to help clients gain insight into maladaptive behaviours by uncovering their hidden motives and reducing their appeal. By completing the steps below, you can facilitate greater self-awareness and encourage positive behaviour change.

Step 1: Identify the Behaviour

Recognize and describe the unhelpful or maladaptive behaviour the client engages in.

Behaviour: Example: "Procrastinating before important tasks."

Answer:

Step 2: Explore the Hidden Payoff

Help the client uncover the subconscious benefit or goal they may derive from this behaviour.

What possible hidden motive or benefit could this behaviour provide? Example:

"Procrastination might protect against the fear of failure by avoiding judgment."

Answer:

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Step 3: Highlight the Consequences

Discuss how the behaviour, while seemingly beneficial, may be counterproductive or prevent the client from reaching their goals.

How does this behaviour negatively impact the client's life? Example: "Procrastination causes stress and results in lower-quality work, which reinforces self-doubt."

Answer:

Step 4: Reduce the Behaviour's Appeal

Through discussion, make the client aware of how the behaviour's hidden motives are unproductive or unhealthy.

Why might the hidden motive no longer be helpful or necessary? Example: "Avoiding failure by procrastinating doesn't eliminate failure; it may even make it more likely."

Answer:

Step 5: Encourage Alternative Behaviours

Collaboratively brainstorm healthier, more constructive behaviours that can replace the maladaptive pattern.

What new behaviour can the client adapt to meet their needs more effectively? Example: "Instead of procrastinating, break tasks into smaller steps and focus on completing one step at a time."

Answer:

Practice Example

Behaviour:

"Constantly seeking reassurance from friends about decisions."

Hidden Payoff:

"It reduces anxiety by making them feel validated and supported."

Consequences:

"It creates dependency on others and prevents the client from developing self-confidence."

Reducing the Appeal:

"Reassurance might temporarily reduce anxiety, but it reinforces the belief that they cannot trust their judgment."

Alternative Behaviour: "Practice making small decisions independently and reflecting on their outcomes to build self-trust."

Reflection Questions

1. **What did the client learn about their behaviour from this exercise?**

2. **How motivated do they feel to adopt new behaviours?**

3. **What support or resources might they need to make this change?**

This worksheet can be adapted for different behaviours and is a helpful tool for therapy sessions or self-reflection exercises.



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