

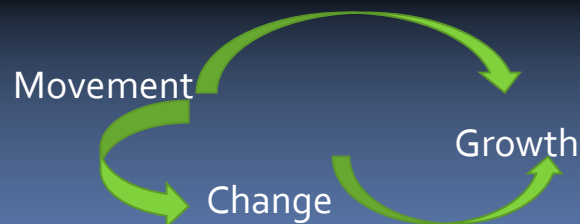
ENGAGING FAMILIES THROUGH CULTURALLY RELEVANT STRENGTH BASED APPROACHES

Ruth A Gammon, PhD, MSW
Wellington Psychology Clinic
Massey University

EVOLUTION...



- Who are we as family therapists?
- What makes us family therapists?
- How do our experiences shape our work?



POST MODERN APPROACHES

<i>Modern</i>	→	→	→	<i>Post Modern</i>
➤ Absolutes Exist			→	Truths are socially created
➤ Single Model(s)			→	Multiple lenses and embrace, diversity
➤ Objective, empirical, science - (quantitative, logical, linear)			→	Subjective, interpretive, non-linear, multi-directional
➤ Universals Sought			→	Unique solutions valued
➤ Individualism, hierarchy, boundaries			→	The collective, cooperation & interdependence valued
➤ Theories ahistorical, acontextual			→	Contextual view inc historical, socio-political & cultural context
➤ Problem located in the family			→	Location of problem incl. socio- environmental context
➤ Professional knowledge is privileged			→	Collaborative process
➤ Therapist is the expert			→	Client is the expert

HOW DO WE VIEW/CONCEPTUALIZE THE FAMILIES WE WORK WITH

- Engagement begins before the family enters the room
 - Attitude
 - Values & Beliefs
 - Approach to the problem
 - Theoretical Orientation / Beliefs
- Not learnt but experienced



FAMILY STRENGTHS!!!



- How do you view the family?
- How do you identify strengths?
- How do you conceptualize the problem?
- How would you cope with the challenges the family faces?

CULTURE AND PRIVILEGE



- How does race differ from culture?
- What is privilege?
- How does privilege and race interact?
- How do these concepts impact our families?



JUST THERAPY & THE FAMILY CENTRE

- A Framework to conceptualize
- Pathologize poverty
- Empowerment
- Advocacy – giving a voice
- Reframing the families narrative
- See the strengths
- Use of cultural metaphors

ENGAGEMENT



- Build a collaborative partnership
- Empathy
- Understood
- Reinforce family for coming to therapy
- Value the youths' perception

.....Instill Hope

TOOLS FOR ENGAGEMENT



- Why now?
- Previous attempts made to resolve the problem?
- How do various members of the family define the issues or why do they think they are there
- How is the family impacted
- Ensure you explain the process of therapy to the youth in the family

THERAPUETIC FRAME

- Flexibility
- Meet with various family members individually as indicated.
- Case management
- Holistic approach

