

F.A.C.T.S.

As practitioners seeking to offer the best to our clients, we believe it's important to understand the correlation between personal development and professional development. In fact, we would go as far as to say that one's skills and abilities are directly proportionate to the work one has done on oneself. This doesn't mean that as a practitioner you have to have come face to face with all the things your clients have because that would not be possible, nor is it necessary. However, it does mean that you need to have faced your demons and fears to have a deep (beyond intellectual) and genuine empathy for clients when they are facing their inadequacies, dysfunctions and fears. When you, the practitioner, have addressed your own deficiencies (and continue to do so) the quality of your work is significantly enhanced.

The acronym F.A.C.T.S. offers our fellow professionals the opportunity to take the quality of their work to the next level of effectiveness. It is our belief that there is a transpersonal/spiritual dimension to our work. We are not using spiritual in a religious context, by spiritual we mean working beyond the normal parameters of human interaction and consciousness. There is a 'magic' that happens when the practitioner focuses his/her attention on the following facts...

F = Faith in the Self and Faith in the Process

No matter how good or experienced a practitioner you are, if you do not have faith in yourself and your abilities then the quality of the work you offer is drastically reduced. Equally, you need to have faith in the process i.e., your method and approach, for that too will significantly shape the outcomes of therapy. Rather like the laws of entropy, you cannot draw on the process if you are not putting something into it! Faith is that 'something'. If as a practitioner, you have not heavily invested in these two areas then the 'magic' that is possible beyond the normal realms of counselling and psychotherapy is not accessible to you or your client(s). This faith in yourself and your approach is the foundation on which your practice and skills depend. Knowledge alone is not enough. Identify where your deficiencies lie and take the necessary action. Hopefully you can see that to best help others find their solutions you need to have faith in yourself and the process.

A = Awe and Appreciation

As a practitioner walking through the corridors of people's minds, you should have a great sense of appreciation for the privileged position that you hold. At no time should your role be taken for granted because the moment you do this, your ego gets in the way. In other words, you lose the sense of awe that should be your constant companion and with that you lose your humility too. Counselling/psychotherapy is an honour that we should not accept lightly. At all times we should be aware of the enormity of our responsibility and the best way to ensure concentration, care and caution is to remove the ego. The more we are humble in our undertakings the more effective we become. We are then able to connect to the 'magic' of our work (the spiritual dimension) through this consciousness. Try sitting with a sense of awe and appreciation for some time every day, particularly when sitting with your clients. That energy (your feelings of awe and appreciation) will be transmitted to them and will enhance the process 'live' in the room.

C = Clarity

The practitioner who has faith in himself and in the process, together with awe and appreciation, has a wonderful opportunity to help others find their way. This individual develops such a beautiful sense of clarity and an ability to see what is really going on and how this might best help clients find their own solutions. So much of what obscures our vision is ego. It provides us with a false sense of importance. We are indeed priceless, but that pricelessness can only fully express itself where there is humility. A useful way of developing this is to think of yourself being connected to the 'source' of everything beneficial and helpful in our world but to always remember that you are not the source, merely the conduit. This perspective is extremely powerful. It enables you to step outside the limits of your perspective, taking a more panoramic view of the client's issue. This enables you to mirror back what's most useful for the client's journey.

T = Timing

Timing is everything. If one is to truly help unlock the consciousness of another, then getting the timing right is imperative. If you are presenting the client with the 'right' feedback (exactly what they need), but the timing is wrong the client will almost certainly not hear it. The more you are anchored in F, A and C the more your timing will be right. Timing's primary companion is presentation. Without the right presentation clients will struggle to hear what you are saying. So, remember the importance of timing and presentation as they are inextricably linked. Timing is an intuitive art form. It cannot be mechanically applied to a situation. One has to feel one's way to that point. This is why it depends so heavily on faith, appreciation and clarity; then your intuition will rise to the occasion.

S = Sincerity

Raising the importance of sincerity in our work may almost seem like an insult to the integrity and intelligence of experienced practitioners and yet there is no question that this is linked to one's personal growth. There is a danger for the practitioner who has completed his or her training, that the emphasis on personal growth diminishes and so the quality of sincerity and genuineness can, over time, be unintentionally eroded. You will be familiar with the term 'compassion fatigue' and given the emotionally intensive work of a therapist, it should come as no surprise that a deficiency or a reduction of sincerity (sincerity fatigue) is a very real possibility. One who has practiced all the other elements will find that sincerity is not depleted. To the contrary, it expands, filling every fibre of one's being. This means that whatever you say or do when working with clients has an impact at a much deeper level of consciousness. The insights and feedback that you offer throughout the course of your work pierces their hearts and minds, bringing greater clarity, understanding and the possibility of lasting change. Such is the power of sincerity.

These are the F.A.C.T.S., and we are confident that they will raise the quality and the calibre of your work. Before you put this down, please read it again to be sure it has registered beyond an intellectual level, as this handout is really about learning the art of working magically.