



DR LEONIE WHITE

Systemic Supervision Cheat Sheet for Reflective Practice

Ideas to Support Systemic Thinking in Individual Reflection, Individual Supervision, and Group Systemic Supervision

SYSTEMIC THINKING - What am I noticing?

Circle what you are noticing & considering

Systems Focus	Circular Causality	Identified Patient (IP)
Function of the Symptom	Family Structure	Subsystems
Hierarchy	Boundaries	Coalitions
Alliances	Triangulation	Multigenerational Influences
Family Life Cycle Stages	Family Life Cycle Transitions	Unscheduled Family Life Cycle Transitions
Family Rules	Family Secrets	Family Narratives
Open or Closed System	Meaning Making	Interaction/Behaviour Patterns
Coping Strategies	Strengths & Resources	Previous Solutions
Exceptions to the Problem	Homeostasis: Status Quo	Morphogenesis: Changes
First & Second Order Change	Double Description	Communication
Culture	Gender	Problem Solving
Spirituality	Community	Manoeuvrability: Bang for Buck



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SYSTEMIC HYPOTHESIZING - How am I making sense of this?

- **Trauma** - Are there any active trauma symptoms that require support?
- **Current context** - family/system, cultural, social, economic, developmental, extended family, ecosystem and climate emergency, structural oppression
- **The "dances"** - Behavioural sequences around the problem & exceptions
- **Meanings** attributed to the situation (i.e., dominant stories/narratives)
- **Emotions** - What's the emotion communicating? To whom? Information from the therapist's emotions?
- **Structure** - Hierarchy, boundaries, alliances, coalitions, roles, subsystems
- **Transgenerational influences** - Patterns, triangles, legacies, stories, strengths
- Family (and stakeholder group and community) **strengths, resources, and resilience**
- **Relationship patterns**
- **What function could the symptom serve in the system?** Is it supporting stability? Does it play a role in keeping the family together? How might the symptom be distracting or protecting family members?

*In systemic therapy, hypothesizing is an ongoing circular process
-develop, test, revise -
aimed at suggesting useful interventions
targeting the system and helping clients reach their goals.*



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DECISION MAKING - What might be a good fit?

These considerations will help you make decisions regarding a personalized and individualized treatment plan. One size does not fit all

The choice of technique & sequencing are affected by a range of considerations:

- Client(s) theory of change
- Context and unique situation of the client(s)
- Resources, strengths and capacities
- Constraints
 - e.g., service time limited
 - e.g., client's availability due to work or finances
- Timing and staging of interventions
- Decolonizing therapy
- Self of the Therapist
 - e.g., managing contagious system anxiety
 - e.g., therapist's preferred approach/model allegiance
- Who makes up the system
 - e.g., individual, dyad, couple, family, stakeholder group
- Client readiness
- Other contextual factors e.g., organizational requirements



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INTERVENTIONS - What might be helpful?

Circle your ideas for creating “news of difference”.

Family Therapy Interventions

Structural Interventions

- Supporting hierarchy, roles, healthy relationships (not enmeshed or cut off), subsystems, alliances and coalitions

Strategic & Milan Interventions:

- Tracking; directives/tasks; maneuverability e.g., go slow, one-down position
- Hypothesizing, dialogical hypothesizing & positive connotation
- Circularity and Circular questions; expanding the context

Narrative Interventions:

- Alternate preferred storylines; externalizing; unique outcomes; challenging power, racism, and oppression; deconstruction

Intergenerational Interventions:

- Genogram; family legacies; relationship patterns & themes; family life cycle

Solution Focused Ideas:

- Goals; Hopes; Desired Outcomes; Exceptions; Miracle Question; Scaling; Coping; Competencies, resources & strengths; Customer, complainant & visitor relationships

Experiential/Communication Interventions:

- Communication patterns; authenticity; self-worth; family processes; family rules

Other Interventions E.g.,

- Psychoeducation; ACT; CBT; DBT; Mindfulness
- Expressive Therapies e.g., play therapy, art therapy
- Somatic Interventions
- Creative Interventions
- Theraplay, Dyadic Developmental Psychotherapy, Mentalization Based Therapy

Other ideas:

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