

Module 6: Resistance

Trainees are encouraged to activate their ability to self-observe when they detect a block in the progress of therapy. They are taught 3 general sources of resistance; 1) patient-originated (e.g. fear of change), 2) therapist-originated (e.g., unrealistic expectations of patient change potential) and social network-originated (e.g. change is disruptive to social system equilibrium).

They are shown standard expectations for patients, forms of resistance and sources of resistance in each of the stages of psychotherapy. Then they are introduced to five general therapist responses to resistance including: 1) empathic encouragement to do what is needed, 2) explanation of the problems the resistance causes and how to get past it, 3) interpretation of the cause, reason or pattern suggested by the resistance, 4) ignoring or accepting the resistance without comment, 5) paradoxical cooperation with the resistance.

The goals of module five include: understanding the forms, sources and management of resistance. After discussing these issues, they are given case 15 vignettes after each of which they are asked to identify the source and potential management of resistance.