

Module 9 – Future-oriented Formulation

Psychotherapists of all forms help patients reconstruct their images of the future so that they will respond differently to situations which had become problematic. This module reviews the basics of future-oriented formulation emphasizing solutions based on a reformulation of the patient's expectations about their futures. The module reviews the fundamentals of the future orientation including the origins expectations and the fundamental premise that human distress is caused by mismatches between expectation and experience. "Expectation videos" are introduced as a way to aid psychotherapists in helping their patients to change their view of the future. A future orientation is embedded in each of the major schools of psychotherapy.

Human beings are purpose driven creatures and therapists are no different. The module reviews some of the variables that predict outcomes in psychotherapy including the strength of the patient's social network, symptom severity, and readiness to change. Variables influencing the creation of personal futures are reviewed. These include the precipitant, developmental challenges, the patient's formulation of the problem, and diagnosis.

The module concludes with a variety of methods by which to help patients alter their views of the future as well as the many constraints that prevent them from doing so.