

Deciding on a starting point

Sociology



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

I am liberal, compassionate and open-minded, but also straight forward and to the point. I am willing to be confrontational when necessary, but I prefer to be medium to low key in my interaction with clients. I listen well but also would interject when I feel that a session is off course. I think all of this orchestrates well with my somewhat eclectic theoretical approach. If I had to choose, I would say that I prefer the Rational Emotive Behavior therapy developed by Albert Ellis for its emphasis on cognitive factors and humor in the approach to change. So much suffering can end immediately with a simple change in perspective.

When it comes to change, I believe that it can happen very quickly. Maybe not in all cases. Certainly some people may have deep-seated problems, stemming from childhood, that will take longer to work with and require a somewhat different approach; however, other changes can be accomplished without so much delving into the past. I believe that the client has an equal responsibility with the therapist in working toward a positive outcome for effective change. There is nothing wrong with a simple contract approach to that mutual commitment. Change takes place on multiple levels: feelings, thoughts and behavior. The most effective level at which to intervene will depend upon the client's personality, coping style, and current problems.

I plan to eventually open a clinic specializing in marriage and family counseling. I see my role as more often assisting normal people with adjustment problems, rather than those with severe personality disorders or major substance abuse problems. I think it's important to know ones strengths and limitations and to build a strong referral network to other specialists.

I am most "at home" with the Rational-Emotive-Behavior therapy approach

developed by Albert Ellis. It seems to offer a good blend of sensible techniques for intervening on multiple levels, and providing empathy, while still directing behavioral change. I believe that many emotional difficulties can be resolved swiftly with this approach.

One skill that I've always had is a sort of resiliency. Almost nothing ever gets me down. And I am able to laugh at my own problems and frame them in new and interesting ways. I believe that as I grow and season myself in the REBT approach, it will be a good fit for my own natural personality, and I will adapt the style to become an expression of my own personality, rather than acting in an artificial way in order to fit a preconceived notion of this particular therapeutic style.

Along the way, I would likely blend elements of the existential approach into my primary framework. I very much like the ideas of Victor Frankl and his Logo-therapy. I believe that clients sometimes suffer from lacking a larger sense of meaning or purpose in their lives. If I could help some clients to explore these more philosophical dimensions, it could have a real practical impact on their happiness and capacity for change.

I don't have a definite mentor selected for training within my preferred model of therapy. I do recognize the importance of learning from the experience of others, and not simply from books. I hope that along my path into an actual clinical setting, the appropriate mentor will appear. I know from my relationships with preferred professors that personal influence is important and the right connections have an almost mysterious way of forming.