

Appendices

Mediation Therapy

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Appendix A

Distribution of Structures in Mediation Therapy

Students of mediation therapy frequently ask where rational, emotional, sensory, and instructional structures are placed within the time-limited mediation therapy structure. Sensitive and creative mediation therapists will not rigidly adhere to a predesigned format. Clients have their own agendas, and flexibility on the part of the mediation therapist is necessary in order to meet their needs. I include, nonetheless, this chart, which outlines a basic structure that I follow in the twelve-session format. I encourage people to adapt or modify this format to meet the genuine needs of their clients.

Session One

- Explanation of the process
- Couples' individual goals for the intervention (rational structure number one)
- Couples' theories about the breakdown or impasse in the relationship (rational structure number two)
- Couples' family of origin's perception of their crisis (rational structure number three)

- Impertinent questions (rational structure number four)
- Each individual's main internal issue (rational structure number six)
- Explanations and forms given for essential lists (rational structure number five)

Session Two

- Thoughts and feelings prompted by and evoked after session one, that is, the couple's agenda from session one
- Essential lists alternately read and discussed, hypotheses made, interpersonal work outlined
- Synopsis of their answers to rational structures one through six given by therapist and discussed with couple

Session Three

- Their agenda from session two
- Comparison of first several years (or months) of relationship, with last several years (or months), and stages in between (rational structure number seven)
- The repetitive patterns in the couple's relationship; their "poulet-oeuf" questions (rational structure number ten)
- The positives in the relationship (rational structure number eight)

- Sensory instruction to keep eyes, ears, intuition open to the realities of their relationship, themselves, the other
- Instruction in and distribution of geneogram forms (rational structure number twelve)

Session Four

- Their agenda from session three
- Their *geneograms* talked about (rational structure number twelve)
- Mini-training in assertiveness
- Mini-training in communication
- What strong feelings do they have at the present time about anyone or anything?
- Homework assignments given in assertiveness and communication training

Session Five

- Their agenda from session four, including any examples of good, assertive communication
- Instruction in negotiation and in disagreement
- The aches, gripes, conflicts, anxieties between them (rational

structure number eleven)

- Are those aches a threat to the relationship?

Session Six

- Their agenda from session five
- Instruction in decision making
- Highlighting by mediation therapist that this is the midpoint of their process; they are gathering, gestating, considering much information
- Summary by clients of what they have learned
- Summary by mediation therapist of what they have discovered
- Assessment by therapist of whether couple is beginning to implement what they have learned, whether their affects are depressed, energetic, labile

Session Seven

- Their agenda from session six
- Taking and arguing each other's initial position about the relationship
- How are their children doing? What do they need? Sharing

experience and research about children's needs during parental crisis (rational structure number nineteen)

- Ascertaining how well they are communicating, negotiating
- Teaching effective disagreement
- Listing of their objectives for mediation therapy, their alternative future directions and considerations for making a decision. Correlating options with objectives and considerations.

Session Eight

- Their agenda from session seven
- Beginning instruction in forgiveness
- What have the negatives been in the relationship, for the self or for the other? (rational structure number nine)
- Can they begin to forgive one another for the negatives and the hurts in the relationship?
- Their assessment of their own ability to change; how able are they to compromise versus how intractable are their difficulties, patterns, conflicts?

Session Nine

- Their agenda from session eight

- Clarification of all past misunderstandings and asking of forgiveness (rational structure number fourteen)
- Mediation therapist's talk about the power of decision making and about the data they are gathering to grow those decisions. The benefits to all concerned of mutually made or understood decisions, not unilateral decisions (rational structure number thirteen)

Session Ten

- Their agenda from session nine
- Emphasis made that two more sessions remain
- Mediation therapist asks that individuals be aware of all around them, using all their senses, and become aware that an integration of the rational, emotional, sensory selves has been underway for some time

Session Eleven

- Their agenda from session ten
- Sharing from the heart with one another (rational structure number sixteen)
- How will they feel when decision is made about future direction of their relationship?

- Some people will share their decisions (rational structure number seventeen)
- What have they learned from one another that they will carry forward into the future? (rational structure number fifteen)

Session Twelve

- Their agenda from session eleven and all previous sessions permeates the session
- Individual decisions shared and negotiated to mutually understood or declared oppositional decisions (rational structure number eighteen)
- Discussion of implementation of decisions, future therapy, legal/mediation planning, planning for children's, elders' needs (rational structures number nineteen and twenty)

Appendix B

The Twenty Rational Structures

1. What are each individual's separate goals for the intervention?
2. What are each individual's theories about the breakdown or impasse in the relationship?
3. How does each individual think their family of origin (FOO) or other significant parenting figures would view their relationship crisis if they knew everything that the individual knows about it?
4. The Impertinent questions:[\[1\]](#)
 - What attracted you to your partner (your mate, your spouse) in the first place?
 - What do you presently like the most about your partner?
 - What did your partner bring to your unit that you lacked at the time you got together? Which of these characteristics still contrast with your own characteristics?
 - What would you miss most about your partner if the two of you should ever decide to part?
 - What presently bothers you most about your partner?

- What do you presently need, want, or count on from your mate that you could or would like to do for yourself?
- Do you see yourselves as being similar, as true opposites to one another, or just on opposite ends of the same continuum (that is, both having trouble with control, but one partner being overly neat and the other partner overly messy)?
- Are the difficulties between you recent and acute or are they longstanding? Are they a threat to the relationship?
- What fears, if any, do you have about being alone or not in the relationship should you part?
- Trace your major fights. What were the overt and underlying causes?
- What skills do you still desire to learn from your partner?
- What are the factors that tie you together?

5. The essential lists:

- What do you know you want and need in any good long-term relationship?
- What do you know you cannot tolerate in any good long-term relationship?
- What do you bring as problems/difficulties to any good long-term relationship?

- What do you bring as strengths to any good long-term relationship?
6. What main internal issue is each person dealing with right now?
 7. How do the first several years, or months, of the relationship compare with the last several years, or months? Were there identifiable stages in between?
 8. What positives have there been in the relationship? Which remain today?
 9. What negatives have there been in the relationship? Which remain today?
 10. What are the repetitive patterns in the relationship? The poulet-oëuf (chicken-or-the-egg) questions?
 11. What are the collective issues in the relationship? Which aches, gripes, conflicts, and anxieties would need to be resolved for the couple to have a rewarding relationship?
 12. The geneogram depicting how the individuals' extended families have handled conflict.
 13. Instruction in the importance of mutually understood, if not mutually agreed-upon, decisions.
 14. Clarification of past misunderstandings and asking of forgiveness.
 15. What will individuals carry forward into the future, whether living

together or not?

16. An emotional sharing from the heart and a rational listing of alternative future directions.
17. Individual decisions reported; negotiation to mutual or mutually understood decisions.
18. A negotiated settlement between the two individual decisions.
19. Information about children's needs during crisis.
20. Planning the next steps after the negotiated settlement.

[\[1\]](#) The impertinent questions (item 4) were devised primarily by Priscilla Bonney Smith.

Appendix C

Bias Sorters

Marriage and Divorce

1. Do you believe in marriage? What is it? What is commitment? Are they the same?
2. Do you believe in marital separation? Under certain circumstances? And not under other circumstances?
3. Do you believe in divorce? Under certain circumstances and not under others?
4. What religious, cultural, general background views, past and present, do you hold about divorce or marriage?
5. When couples have children, does that at all influence your opinion about whether couples should stay together?
6. Do children fare better in intact families with unhappily married couples, than in divorced families with happily divorced parents?
7. How do you feel about gay and lesbian relationships? Are you at all uncomfortable in the presence of these couples?
8. How do you feel about interracial or intercultural relationships (for

example a black man and a white woman; a Russian man and an American woman)? Are you uncomfortable in the presence of these couples?

9. How do you feel about relationships in which there is a large difference in age?
10. How do you feel about relationships in which one person has a physical handicap, a mental disability, or AIDS?
11. What is your own current image of a healthy relationship?
12. Do you believe in living together on a long-term or short-term basis without marriage?

Conflict

1. Do you like or enjoy conflict?
2. Do you hate or avoid conflict?
3. Is it easier to help others manage their conflicts than for you to deal directly with your own conflicts?
4. How did your family of origin handle conflict?
5. How much more effectively do you want to handle conflict between yourself and others, personally and professionally?

Gender

1. Are either men or women better able to make decisions?
2. Are women (or men) more able to express themselves in therapy?
3. Are men more rational than women?
4. Are women more emotional than men?
5. Do you believe you can empathize better with a member of the same sex?
6. Do you believe you can stay neutral, not siding with or against someone of the same (or opposite) sex?
7. Can you put aside your own beliefs about how the gender roles in a relationship should work?

Hospitals/Hospices

Most of these questions were created by Sue Oberbeck-Friedlich, LICSW, medical social worker at the Deaconness Hospital in Boston, and social worker in private practice in Boston.

1. Do you believe in organ donation?
2. Should sick people go directly from the hospital to adult children's homes to live, especially if there will be probable dislocation and disruption of family members?
3. Do you believe in nursing homes for people who could be cared for by others at home?

4. Should everyone hear his or her diagnosis? When should diagnoses be withheld?
5. Does a spouse have the responsibility to care for the ill person at his or her own vocational, or physical or mental health expense?
6. Should a couple stay married if all financial resources will be drained from one to care for the other, who is a sick person institutionalized for many years and for the most part is incommunicative ?
7. Should resuscitation always be attempted?
8. Are there cases in which you believe in withdrawal of life-supports?
9. Do you tell someone they are off (or on) the waiting list for the donation of an organ?

Alcohol

This bias sorter was designed by Lynne Yansen, LICSW, a social worker in private practice in Lexington, Massachusetts and at Harvard Health Plan in Peabody, Massachusetts; and by the Norcap Inpatient Detoxification Unit staff at Southwood Community Hospital, Norfolk, Massachusetts and Jan Schwartz, MSW, Ed.D., psychotherapist in private practice in Brookline, Massachusetts.

1. What is your definition of an alcoholic? Is alcohol abuse alcoholism?
How do you distinguish alcohol abuse from alcoholism?

From moderate social drinking?

2. What is your definition of social drinking?
3. Do you believe that alcoholism is inherited? Does it run in families?
4. Do you adhere to the disease concept of alcoholism? If not, how do you conceptualize alcoholism?
5. Can recovering alcoholics become social drinkers?
6. Does a person need to drink daily to be an alcoholic?
7. What is your view of an alcoholic? Describe the person.
8. Do you know of alcoholism in your own extended family?
9. Is it OK for people to drink to relax or reduce stress?
10. When should people drink?
11. How much do you drink?
12. Is there a difference in what one drinks as to his or her potential for alcoholism? What is the difference between drinking beer, wine, or whiskey?
13. If a person works or functions every day, would you consider him or her not to be alcoholic?
14. Can professionals such as doctors, judges, lawyers, corporate

executives, be alcoholic?

15. Should people who are actively drinking engage in couples therapy? Mediation therapy?
16. Are newly recovering alcoholics and their families prepared for a therapeutic intervention? How long after sobriety is achieved will couples be prepared to begin a therapeutic intervention?
17. What does alcoholism say about the morality of the alcoholic?

Appendix D

Stages of a Couple Relationship

Couple relationships may evolve in many ways. I describe here one possibility for the evolution of a couple relationship.

Blind Attraction. *Basic theme:* Falling in love, feeling terrific, idealizing the other as part of the self, ignoring or denying any weaknesses, negative traits, faults. Judgment may be impaired and self-esteem enhanced by feeling understood, and making a good “catch.” A feeling of oneness, merger, occurs when dependency needs are being fulfilled, without the threat of loss of self.

Temporarily Removing the Blindfold. *Basic theme:* Becoming aware of behaviors, character traits that challenge original perceptions of the other. A disregarding or minimizing of these latter perceptions may occur in order to keep the original infatuation intact.

Casting off the Blindfold. *Basic theme:* Disappointment, anger, feelings of letdown and loss occur when the original vision of the relationship doesn’t match the reality and it can no longer be ignored: the partner and the relationship simply are not as flawless and made in heaven as originally viewed. There may be the beginnings of desires to devalue the other when the

vision of the good, even ideal partnership is blown away, and when needs—legitimate or extraordinary—are not being fulfilled as expected through the relationship.

Lashing Out. *Basic theme:* The partner is seen as the cause of one's disappointment and feelings of being let-down, and is thought of as weak or human, or even as malicious, deplorable: the enemy. Interactions are tense, conflictual, even hostile. Partners struggle against each other and for power and control of one another, the relationship, their children, their work, and so forth.

Retreating. *Basic theme:* Fear of further loss and disruption causes partners to retreat from their hostilities into jobs, children, friends, perhaps even lovers, which may defuse the intensity between them. However, there remains a feeling of disappointment and anger overridden by the need for security and continuity.

The Retreat Solidified. *Basic theme:* The roles that developed to avert separation and loss now become a way of life. The individuals take on separate identities and live quite separate lives, still not acknowledging their internal and interpersonal loss. They find contentment in various degrees in their individual activities and begin to realize that their original vision of a partnership and expectation of the other will not be fulfilled.

Mourning the Vision. *Basic theme:* Individuals arrive at a recognition that their visions and expectations will not be met with the partner, nor with anyone. An understanding arises that needs must be fulfilled within the self. Initially, individuals experience sadness and loss. That loss gradually becomes transformed into a feeling of power that comes with the ability to be autonomous and with the giving up of the illusion of the need for dependence. People become more aware of the relationship as consisting of two separate individuals, and begin to enjoy the other as he or she is and are more able to appreciate differentness, rather than feeling threatened by it.

Re-Vision. *Basic theme:* Individuals are finally prepared to own one hundred percent responsibility for themselves, not depending on the other to intuit or fulfill their needs. They have learned to ask directly for help when they need it. Knowing they could choose to live alone or together, they choose to see and enjoy the strengths of the other. Individuals see and accept the partner, and place the partner's negative qualities in perspective. Paradoxically, partners alternate depending upon one another, with taking charge for the partnership. They make requests of the other and let go of the demand that these requests be honored. They are individuals who can be interdependent without being caught in overdependence.

These stages of a couple relationship were devised by Janet Miller Wiseman and Annette Kurtz, with reference to Simon and Glorianne Wittes'

Developmental Stages of a Couple Relationship, which referred to *Becoming a Couple* by Roslyn Schwartz and Leonard J. Schwartz, a book published in 1980 by Prentice Hall.

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