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COUPLES COUNSELING



Multicultural Psychotherapy

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COUPLES COUNSELING

When the multicultural model of psychotherapy is used in couples counseling, the focus of therapy is on individual differences in cultural and cognitive styles—the root source of many conflicts and misunderstandings occurring between partners. Therapy is directed at helping the clients to understand mismatch in communication; interpersonal relationships; motivation; and learning/problem-solving, teaching, parenting, supervisory, and counseling styles. Each partner then learns to match the other's preferred styles and to help one another develop the flexibility in values and cognitive styles that can improve their level of satisfaction within the relationship.

The multicultural model is also sensitive to the fact that environmental forces and demands play a major role in the degree of satisfaction experienced by the partners in a relationship. Demands of jobs or careers, people, and institutions can produce strains in a relationship that are often manifested as rigidity in cultural and cognitive styles, and/or as the triggering of developmental trends in

cognitive and cultural styles, which can lead to mismatch between partners who were previously well matched.

The cultural component of the multicultural model focuses on values match and mismatch. As such, it is useful for working with ethnically or racially mixed couples, or with partners who may be of the same culture and race but whose backgrounds are different in terms of socioeconomic, religious, regional, or family variables. Specifically there are four major goals:

1. To make partners aware of match and mismatch domains in their relationship.
2. To teach partners how to use the flex theory of personality and the multicultural model of psychotherapy and counseling to analyze conflicts associated with mismatch.
3. To teach both partners to match each other's preferred styles and to develop the flexibility they will need to negotiate effectively with each other.
4. To teach the partners to change environmental demands that are affecting the relationship and causing disharmony.

CASE HISTORY

This chapter describes how the multicultural model of personality change was used in conducting couples counseling with a couple whose members were from different ethnic groups. Wanda, whose case is one of those highlighted in this book, participated in counseling with her husband, Javier.

Wanda and Javier: A History of the Relationship

Wanda and Javier had been married for eight years when they sought counseling. They met after graduation from college when they were working for the same state agency. Although Wanda had grown up in a more modernistic sociocultural environment, she was attracted to the emotional closeness in Javier's extended family and by Javier's strong familial orientation.

For Javier, who had grown up in an urban-traditional Hispanic cultural environment, Wanda represented independence and assertiveness with a strong familial orientation, characteristics he had always wanted in a partner. The couple remembered that the initial years of their marriage were characterized by harmony and

happiness: Wanda had left her full-time job and assumed the role of the traditional mother, taking primary responsibility for the home and the couple's two children, born in the third and fourth years of the marriage. In those early years of their marriage, Wanda had accepted small consulting contracts, working from an office at home.

Things changed drastically for the family in the sixth year of marriage when Wanda began working full-time as a mid-level manager in a large company. The couple's conflicts centered on the fact that Wanda did not feel supported in her career by Javier. Both Javier and the children felt that Wanda was devoting too much time to her work.

Wanda initially approached the therapist requesting individual counseling. In the first session with Wanda, it became obvious to the therapist and to Wanda that the problems in her marriage and family were critical to her psychological adjustment. When Wanda and the therapist began to identify her therapy goals during the second session of individual counseling, they decided that she would approach Javier about the possibility of his participating in couples counseling with her. The following sections describe the process used

for the couples-counseling sessions with Javier and Wanda.

Session 1. The therapist greeted Javier and Wanda in the waiting room. Wanda introduced her husband to the therapist. Javier addressed the therapist by his title and surname, and the therapist responded by addressing Javier formally, using his surname. After Javier and Wanda were seated, the therapist explained that during Wanda's individual therapy sessions it became clear that couples counseling might be appropriate. The therapist asked Javier for his feelings or thoughts on the idea.

JAVIER (response to therapist): I thought it was a good idea myself, because I've felt for a long time that our relationship has been getting worse. I didn't know what to do about it.

THERAPIST (to Javier): Do you have any concerns about the fact that Wanda will be in individual therapy with me while your couples counseling is in progress?

JAVIER (to therapist): No, not as long as our marriage problems are discussed in our sessions so that I can take part in them.

WANDA (to therapist and Javier): I think that's the major reason why we are doing the couples counseling—to discuss our problems together and to work them out.

THERAPIST (to Javier): I would like you to know that if at any time you feel that you would like to be in individual counseling I would be very happy to discuss this with you.

JAVIER (to therapist): I'm fine with that.

The brief introduction and explanation were followed by the administration of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale. This scale was developed by Spanier (1976) to assess the quality of marital and other dyads by having both members rate their degree of agreement and disagreement in several areas such as handling family finances, household tasks, and demonstrations of affection. It also asks for ratings of frequency of those times the couple have stimulating exchanges of ideas and laugh together, as well as for the degree of happiness about their relationship, from perfect to extremely unhappy.

The therapist attempted to establish an atmosphere of acceptance in which the clients could feel free to report the problems they perceived in their relationship. As soon as Wanda and Javier completed the questionnaires, the therapist proceeded to develop an atmosphere of nonjudgmental acceptance and rapport with them. He gave each of them the opportunity to talk about the problems in the

marriage from their individual perspectives. He also laid some ground rules, making it clear that he would not permit interruptions or arguments during the course of each person's presentation.

The next step of the first session was a short discussion of the partners' perspectives on the relationship and of the feedback on the results of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale based on preliminary observations made by comparing the ratings made by each of the partners.

While the discussion between the partners was in progress, the therapist observed, made notes, and rated the behaviors each member used when interacting with the other, using the Preferred Cultural and Cognitive Styles Observation Checklists. He remained cognizant of the fact that, in disordered relationships involving mismatch, the individual partners tend to adopt a false self in their interactions with each other. Thus, during the first two sessions, the partners are likely to use their false selves as they interact with each other. However, as the clients respond to the nonjudgmental, safe atmosphere of multicultural couples counseling, they usually adopt their preferred cultural and cognitive styles when they relate to each other.

Following the discussion about the individual perceptions of problems in the relationship, the therapist asked Javier to complete the BOLS and FAS. (Wanda had already completed these at her initial session—see Appendices C and G) to assess his preferred cultural and cognitive styles. The therapist used the time in which Javier completed these pencil-and-paper instruments to do a more thorough comparison of responses given by the partners on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, noting both areas of agreement and of disagreement in their relationship.

After Javier completed his questionnaires, the therapist introduced the couple to the principal concepts of the flex theory of personality and of the multicultural model of psychotherapy. In making the presentation, he used the same approach employed with individual clients discussed in Chapter 7.

The therapist used some of the results of his preliminary observations and those from the Dyadic Adjustment Scale to personalize some of the concepts for Javier, whose preferred cognitive style in the learning/problem-solving domain—based on initial observations of his interactions with Wanda and the therapist—

appeared to be field sensitive. The therapist also discussed some of the background research on the concepts to best match Wanda's more field independent style in the learning/problem-solving domain.

For example, to match Javier, the therapist said, "What the two of you have described with respect to the different ways in which you relate to your children indicates that you have different parenting values. You, Mr. M____, tend to be more traditional, wanting your children to respect you and to see you as an authority figure. On the other hand, Wanda is more modernistic, allowing the children to make their own decisions and to learn from experience rather than from direct teaching."

The therapist concluded the session by telling the clients that he would give them feedback during the second session about the findings of the behavioral ratings he had made and on the findings of the instruments they had completed. He asked each of them to think of one domain in the relationship in which they would like their partner to match them during the coming week. Javier chose the recreation domain; he asked Wanda to play a board game with him and the children after dinner on two nights. Javier agreed to allow Wanda one

hour after coming home from work each evening to unwind and to shift from her work mode to her family mode.

The therapist asked each partner to keep records of the dates, times, and situations in which they experienced match and mismatch. Each was given several copies of a record form on which to describe the matches and mismatches they experienced. They were asked to complete these without consulting each other to see if there would be differences in perception of the experiences (a sample record form appears in [Appendix N](#)). In summary, the first session included the following seven techniques and procedures:

1. Initial match and introduction to the goals of couples counseling.
2. Administration of the Dyadic Adjustment Scale.
3. Establishment of an atmosphere of acceptance in which the clients could feel free to report the problems they perceive in their relationship and in which they would feel free to express their preferred cultural and cognitive styles.
4. Short discussion of each partner's perception of the relationship and of preliminary findings of the Dyadic

Adjustment Scale, and observation of cognitive and cultural styles used when interacting with the partner and therapist.

5. Administration of the BOLS and FAS.
6. Introduction of the flex theory of personality and of the multicultural model of psychotherapy.
7. Closure of the session and assignment of homework for the coming week.

Session 2. During the second session, the therapist continued to build an atmosphere in which each partner could feel free to express concerns about the relationship as well as one in which each could assume the cultural and cognitive styles most reflective of their unique selves.

The therapist asked each of the clients to give him the forms on which they had recorded the experiences of match and mismatch for the week. He read these aloud, asking the clients to comment or to supply details. During the examination of the match and mismatch experiences each had perceived as being most important, the therapist included an explanation using the concepts of the flex theory of

personality and of the multicultural model of psychotherapy.

In those situations in which conflict had occurred, the therapist pointed out how attempts at match by either or both partners might have prevented conflict. For example, both Javier and Wanda agreed that the major mismatch experience of the week had occurred when they disagreed about whether one of the children should be allowed to visit a neighborhood friend before completing his homework. Wanda is preferred modern cultural orientation; her preferred field independent orientation in parenting style was reflected in her position that children should be allowed to develop their own sense of responsibility. Javier's traditional and field sensitive orientation, however, stressed the need to be firm and directive with the children. They argued over their different orientations, with Wanda accusing Javier of being too controlling and Javier accusing her of not caring enough about the children. Application of concepts from the flex theory and the multicultural model led to negotiation between Wanda and Javier and to a better understanding of how conflict could have been avoided.

Each member of the couple reported on how well matched they

had felt with respect to the match assignments for the week. The therapist helped the clients to understand how cultural and cognitive match had contributed to harmony in their interactions.

The therapist reported on the findings from the different instruments the clients had completed during the earlier session. He also shared the following findings of his observations regarding preferred cultural and cognitive styles:

The ratings on your Dyadic Adjustment Scale indicate that you have good agreement on many domains of your relationship: religion, family, finances, philosophy of life, decision making, and household tasks. There are a number of areas in which you seem to have disagreement: demonstration of affection; ways of dealing with parents, in-laws, and friends; amount of time spent together; and career decisions.

On the Bicognitive Orientation to Life Scale, Wanda scored as a preferred field independent with partial development of the field sensitive style in interpersonal relationships and communication style domains. Javier's scores indicated a strong preference for field sensitivity in all domains, although he did show some development of field independence in the learning/problem-solving styles domain.

With respect to preferred cultural styles, you are well matched on religion and time orientation but mismatched on definition of gender roles. Javier tends to be more traditional in this area, whereas Wanda tends to be more modernistic. The same is true for childrearing orientation.

After a short discussion relating to these findings, the therapist asked the clients to focus on the identification of their goals for couples counseling. Wanda and Javier agreed on three:

1. Understanding how value and cognitive style differences are related to the areas of greatest disagreement between them.
2. Attempting to achieve a better cognitive styles match in learning/problem-solving and in parenting styles.
3. Attempting to match cultural styles in gender roles and in childrearing orientations.

The therapist focused on parenting styles and on values related to parenting. He concentrated on the major mismatch conflict situations reported by the clients during the initial stages of the session as he role-played with each of the clients, showing them how match and negotiation could have been accomplished. He followed these five steps:

1. *Values conflict analysis for understanding cultural styles mismatch.* First the therapist interpreted the differences in values reflected by the incident previously mentioned: "Wanda values independence; she feels that children should make their own decisions and be responsible for the consequences of those decisions. Javier, on the other hand, values discipline and feels that parents should be models for their children."

2. *Arriving at values negotiation.* The therapist led a discussion of these differences in values, asking the clients to attempt to negotiate. They both agreed that the other's values had some merit, concluding that their children needed to be independent and that they needed to learn that their decisions had consequences. They also agreed that discipline and guidance were important as a stage preceding the development of independence. Wanda and Javier decided that conflict between them could have been avoided had they been able to respect each other's values. They decided, for example, that their family rule is that the children can either complete their homework before dinner and then watch an hour of television after dinner or play for an hour before dinner and then do their homework during the time they would have watched television.

3. *Cognitive styles conflict analysis for understanding mismatch.*

The therapist asked the clients to focus on cognitive styles in communication, showing them how they could have matched each other more closely in this domain to avoid conflict.

4. *Cognitive styles negotiation.* As an example, the therapist pointed out that Javier could have been more to-the-point in his explanation to Wanda as to why he objected to her decision to allow the children to play before they completed their homework. Wanda, by the same token, could have been more expressive in her explanation for making the decision she had made.

5. *Empathy projection.* Finally the therapist asked the clients to practice empathy projection (see Chapter 6) so that they could experience what it was like to be in their partner's shoes.

Under the direction of the therapist, the couple discussed another major mismatch situation that had occurred during the week. They used the same procedure as they had used with the discussion of the first incidence of mismatch. Taking into consideration the areas of cultural and cognitive styles in which the clients need to effect a better

match, the therapist led the clients in an examination of their social environments (see Chapter 8) so that they could identify diversity challenges in which they could engage for the coming week.

Javier recalled that one of their son's Little League coaches seemed to be modernistic and field independent in his orientation as he worked with the children. Javier decided to watch him while he worked with the members of the team during practice. Wanda remembered that one of Javier's older sisters was traditional and field sensitive in her childrearing, and she decided to visit with her and closely observe her while she interacted with her children. During the coming week, Wanda agreed to use a field sensitive style while communicating with Javier. Javier agreed to try to use a field independent style. The therapist suggested that they should both read Beck's *Love Is Never Enough* for ideas about communication match.

Session 2, in summary, included the following six techniques and procedures:

1. Continued development of an atmosphere permitting expression of the true self.
2. Clients' reports of match and mismatch experiences for the

past week.

3. Clients' reports of the degree of success with match assignments for the week.
4. The therapist's feedback on the results of assessment.
5. An analysis of cultural and cognitive match and role-playing to achieve match goals.
6. Homework match assignments for the coming week.

Session 3. The therapist began the third session by asking the couple to report on the degree of success they had achieved in their match assignments for the previous week. This was followed by reports on each partner's perceptions of the most significant mismatch incident of the week.

The therapist noted that both Wanda and Javier followed the steps for analysis and match he had introduced during the previous session. He congratulated them on their efforts. The therapist also observed that both were interacting in a way that showed growth in cultural and cognitive match.

The major techniques introduced during Session 3 were

scriptwriting and role-playing for both match and negotiation. The match script was developed with the therapist selecting one of the areas of conflict identified by each of the clients in their discussions—Javier's belief that since Wanda had returned to work outside the home, she had become cold and distant, and Wanda's belief that Javier had become too emotionally demanding and was not supportive of her career goals.

The therapist presented a scenario and asked each member of the couple to predict how the other would react in the following hypothetical situation:

THERAPIST: After Wanda has had her hour to unwind, Javier approaches her to tell her he would like to discuss a conflict he has experienced with one of his coworkers.

The therapist gave Wanda and Javier each a pad and asked them to predict what the other would say and do in this situation. When each had completed the task, the therapist asked them to take turns in reading their predictions out loud.

JAVIER: I wouldn't get much emotional support from Wanda. Instead of focusing on my hurt feelings, she would be objective and want me to give a lot of detail about what

happened. Then she would interpret the incident as a misunderstanding between my colleague and me.

WANDA: Javier would get very emotional and would wind up confusing me with his description of the incident. Whenever he is angry or upset, he is not clear in what he communicates. He has a hard time getting to the point. Basically, I wouldn't know what he expected from me, and we would end up arguing.

THERAPIST: From a traditional cultural styles perspective, the one major thing Javier seems to want is for Wanda to focus on his feelings. At least for the moment, he wants her to ignore the details of the incident. From a cognitive styles point of view, the communication, human relations, and problem-solving style domains seem to be involved. When he is upset, Javier becomes field sensitive in his communication style and this mismatches your (looking at Wanda) preferred field independent style. From the perspective of human relations style, Javier would like you to focus on his nonverbal communications and from the learning/problem-solving styles perspective, he would like for you to show sympathy and caring, to let him know that you support him, and that you want to help him to find a solution. This is a field sensitive approach. A field independent approach would be to analyze the situation in order to help him to understand why the conflict occurred.

The therapist then role-played the script (taking the role of the opposite partner) with each client. When the role-playing was in

progress, the partner whose role the therapist had taken observed and rated the behavior with the Preferred Cognitive and Cultural Styles Observation Checklists.

The next step involved discussing the observations made by the clients, making changes, and repeating the role-playing with the changes incorporated. Both clients role-played the final script while the therapist observed and rated. Following this exercise, the therapist reintroduced the same incident and asked the clients to write a negotiation script—a script in which each one of them was partially but not completely matched in their preferred styles. Each partner read the negotiation scripts out loud.

WANDA: Culturally, I would be more traditional in listening and observing Javier's expression of feeling. I should tell him right away that I support him and stand behind him. Once he has settled down, I can use my field independent problem-solving style to help him analyze what happened.

JAVIER: I need to calm down before telling my troubles to Wanda. I could develop a little exercise for myself based on what I've learned from writing scripts. I could write down what happened and organize what I want to say so that I can use a field independent communication style when I actually communicate with her. However, I would still make

it clear that I need and want her support.

The therapist and the couple discussed the negotiation scripts. Wanda and Javier then role-played them while the therapist observed and evaluated them using the observation instruments. Finally the three discussed the role-playing and made changes in the scripts and behaviors as necessary.

The session ended with homework assignments of match and diversity challenges for the coming week.

In summary, Session 3 included the following four techniques and procedures:

1. Reports of client's match and mismatch experiences for the past week.
2. Introduction of scriptwriting and role-playing activities for match and negotiation.
3. Writing a match script for one of the major conflicts and role-playing that script.
4. Writing a negotiation script and role-playing it.

Sessions 4 and 5. During these sessions, the therapist and clients

continued with the development and role-playing of match and negotiation scripts.

Session 6. This session focused on environmental demands and forces that cause strain on the relationship. The first step was to identify these demands. The therapist began the discussion by reminding this couple about three areas that appeared to be most affected by environmental forces as indicated by their responses on the Dyadic Adjustment Scale: friends; aims, goals, and things believed to be important; and relating to parents and in-laws.

The therapist led Wanda and Javier in a discussion directed at identifying the exact nature of the demands and forces causing conflict. In the area of work and career, both partners expressed dissatisfaction: Javier was unhappy when Wanda's unit managers called her at home to discuss problems in their unit, while Wanda resented Javier's supervisor's attempts to pressure him into playing golf on weekends.

Another environmental force identified as affecting the couple was exerted by their friends: Javier's friends wanted him to meet them

after work on Fridays for happy hour. Wanda was angered by this because she felt that it cut into the time she and Javier could spend together. Javier did not like to socialize with Wanda's friends because, at times, they made ethnic or racial jokes, which made him uneasy.

Parents and in-laws were also identified as a source of pressures for Wanda and Javier: Javier's parents pressured them to teach their children Spanish, and Wanda felt that they were too demanding on this subject. Wanda's parents accused Javier of encouraging the children to be too dependent on him.

Their children's demands also affected the couple's relationship. They complained to Javier that Wanda wasn't spending enough time with them anymore while they complained to Wanda that Javier was too strict with them.

After identifying these environmental forces, the therapist asked the couple to negotiate on their solutions. They agreed on compromises for a number of the problems. The negotiations included Wanda's asking her coworkers not to call her on weekends or after 9 P.M. on weekdays; Javier agreed to tell his supervisor that he needed

to spend more time with his family, so he would only be available for golf every other weekend. Wanda agreed to confront her friends about their racial jokes, while Javier agreed to limit happy hour with his friends to every other Friday.

The next step during the sixth session of couples counseling involved an analysis of cultural and cognitive styles mismatch related to environmental pressures and demands. The therapist asked each partner to write the answers to three questions:

1. In your opinion how are the demands and pressures of work and career changing the cultural styles of your partner?
2. How are these pressures changing his or her cognitive styles?
3. How are you reacting to these changes?

After completion, each partner read their answers aloud and discussed them.

WANDA: Ever since Javier took the job with the Hispanic firm he works for now, I feel he has become more traditional in his values and more rigid in his definition of gender roles. He has also become more field sensitive in his cognitive style in the parenting area. He wants the children

to do things exactly the way he wants; he has become more autocratic in his manner as a father and as a husband.

JAVIER: Since Wanda got her job as manager, I feel she has lost interest in us as a family. She has become more self-centered. Her cognitive style has become very field independent—she lets the children make too many decisions on their own; they are too young and not ready for that.

Hearing the opinions of their partner regarding the changes resulting from their jobs and careers was enlightening for both Javier and Wanda. The discussion facilitated negotiation. They agreed that they would each make an attempt to be more flexible culturally and cognitively. They agreed that their relationship was more important than their careers; they decided to be more conscious of how job and career demands were causing mismatch.

The sixth session ended after match and diversity challenge assignments were made for the coming week. Session 6, in summary, included the following five techniques and procedures:

1. Identification of environmental demands and forces.
2. Discussion to discover the exact nature and impact of environmental forces and demands on the relationship.

3. Negotiation, discussion, and decisions.

4. Identification of specific cultural and cognitive developmental trends triggered by environmental forces and demands.

5. Negotiation decisions.

Sessions 7, 8, and 9. During these three sessions, the couple continued to practice techniques and procedures introduced in earlier sessions: analysis of mismatch experiences of the previous week, development of match and negotiation scripts, role-playing the scripts, development of strategies for controlling environmental pressures, and negotiating to keep those pressures and demands from leading to extreme cultural and cognitive styles mismatch. During Session 9, they retook the Dyadic Adjustment Scale, and the therapist completed observational ratings throughout the course of the session.

Session 10. During Session 10, the therapist gave the couple feedback on the findings obtained from the readministered Dyadic Adjustment Scale, comparing these to the findings from the first administration. He reported the following to Wanda and Javier:

I am happy to report that your recent ratings on the Dyadic

Adjustment Scale show that there has been a substantial reduction in areas of disagreement in your relationship. Most impressive is the fact that you now show good agreement in several areas: demonstration of affection, philosophy of life, major decision making, and career decisions. The ratings indicate that you are now communicating more effectively.

Certain areas of disagreement remain—for example, the amount of time you spend together. You still need to identify more things you can do together and you need to make more time to be together. You both reported that you occasionally disagree about this.

The ratings I made of your behaviors during the last session indicate that you are matching each other better on cultural styles: You are both flexing well in terms of traditional and modern values. Javier, however, is still showing a preference for traditional values, while Wanda seems to have a preference for modern values. Nevertheless, you are now much more sensitive to these differences, and I noticed several attempts to negotiate.

I've also noticed that you are negotiating well on cognitive styles, even though Javier is still preferred field sensitive and Wanda is still preferred field independent. You have learned to match each other and to negotiate bicognitive orientations in the teaching and parenting, and learning/problem-solving domains.

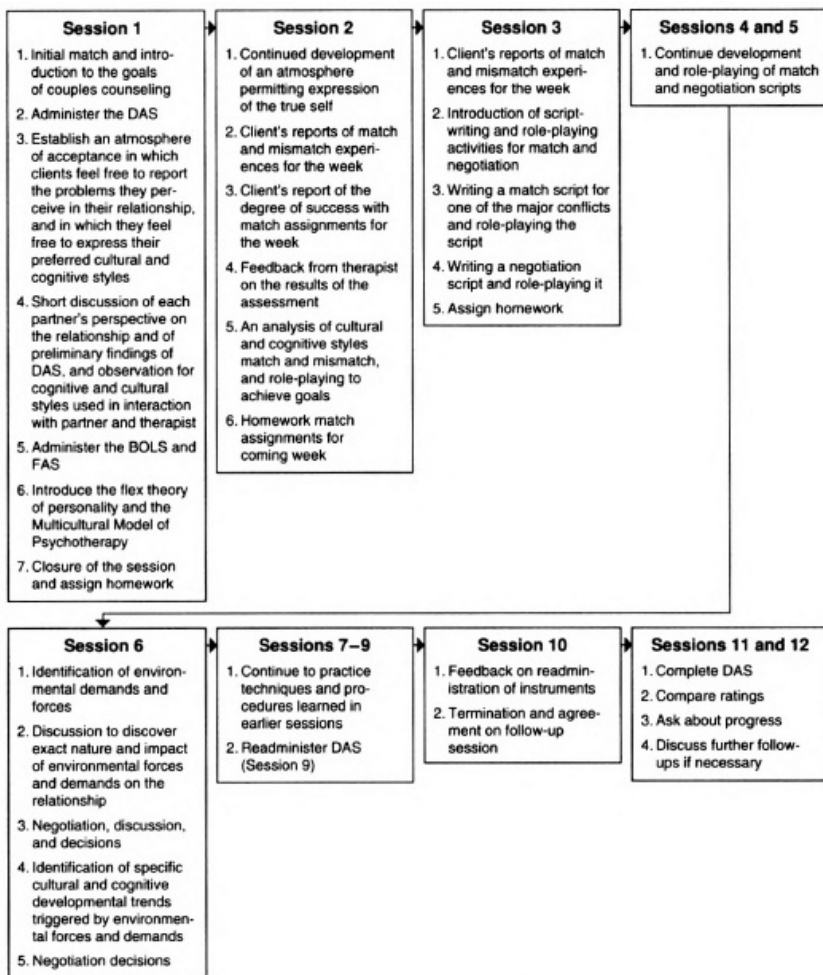
This was followed by a long discussion, but no major unresolved problems emerged. The therapist proceeded to wrap up counseling, making an appointment for one month hence for a follow-up session. He made it clear that he would be available for an earlier appointment should they feel it necessary.

Session 10, in summary, included the following two techniques and procedures:

1. Feedback on readministration instruments.
2. Termination and agreeing on follow-up sessions.

Session 11. During the first follow-up session, Wanda and Javier completed the Dyadic Adjustment Scale again. The therapist compared their ratings, noting that there were now no areas of major disagreement. The therapist asked each of them for their perceptions of the progress being made in their relationship. Although they did report some major mismatch situations since their last session, they agreed that they had been successful in negotiating them. The therapist scheduled another follow-up session in six months and ended the session.

FIGURE 11.1 Multicultural counseling and therapy with couples



Session 12. The second follow-up proceeded along the same lines as the first. When Javier and Wanda agreed that no problems had

surfaced since Session 11, the therapist indicated that he saw no need for continued sessions. Wanda and Javier concurred. The therapist assured them that he was available should they need additional counseling.

A graphic summary of the different sessions of multicultural counseling with couples is presented in Figure 11.1.

SUMMARY

When the multicultural model is applied during couples counseling, the primary focus is on mismatch in values and in cognitive styles—the root source of many conflicts in relationships. In addition to teaching techniques and procedures that can lead to match and negotiation, the therapist also helps the clients to identify external, or environmental, forces and demands. Environmental demands can cause dissatisfaction in the relationship and can trigger the development of trends in values and cognitive styles that are also related to mismatch. The partners learn to identify and negotiate with respect to the disrupting forces.

GLOSSARY

Attitude of Acceptance a nonjudgmental, positive, accepting atmosphere devoid of conformity or assimilation pressures. In therapy this enables the client to express his unique, or true, self.

Bicognitive Orientation to Life Scale (BOLS) a personality inventory composed of items that reflect the degree of preference for field sensitive or field independent cognitive styles in different life domains. Assesses cognitive flex by determining the degree of agreement with items that reflect preference for either field independent or field sensitive cognitive styles. A balance or bicognitive score is also attained.

Bicognitive Style a cognitive style characterized by an ability to shuttle between the field sensitive and field independent styles. Choice of style at any given time is dependent on task demands or situational characteristics. For example, if a situation demands competition, the bicognitive person usually responds in a field independent manner. On the other hand, if the situation demands cooperation, the bicognitive individual behaves in a field sensitive manner. People with a bicognitive orientation also may use elements of both the field sensitive and field independent styles to develop new composite or combination styles.

Bicultural/Multicultural Style a cultural style characterized by an ability to shuttle between the traditional and modern cultural styles. Choice of style at any given time is dependent on task demands or

situational characteristics.

Change Agent a person who actively seeks to encourage changes in the social environment in order to ensure acceptance and sensitivity to all cultural and cognitive styles.

Cognitive and Cultural Flex Theory (or Theory of Multicultural Development) the theory that people who are exposed to socialization agents with positive attitudes toward diversity, participate in diversity challenges, interact with members of diverse cultures, maintain an openness and commitment to learning from others, and are more likely to develop multicultural patterns of behavior and a multicultural identity. People who have developed a multicultural identity have a strong, lifelong commitment to their groups of origin as well as to other cultures and groups.

Cognitive Style a style of personality defined by the ways in which people communicate and relate to others; the rewards that motivate them; their problem-solving approaches; and the manner in which they teach, socialize with, supervise, and counsel others. There are three types of cognitive styles: field sensitive, field independent, and bicognitive.

Cultural and Cognitive Flex (Personality Flex) the ability to shuttle between field sensitive and field independent cognitive styles and modern and traditional cultural styles.

Cultural Democracy (1) a philosophy that recognizes that the way a person communicates, relates to others, seeks support and recognition from his environment, and thinks and learns are products of the

value system of his home and community; (2) refers to the moral rights of an individual to be different while at the same time be a responsible member of a larger society.

Cultural Style an orientation to life related to or based on traditional and modern values or a combination of these values. Assessed by the Traditionalism- Modernism Inventory and the Family Attitude Scale.

Diversity Challenges a catalyst for multicultural development such as cultural and linguistic immersion experiences, new tasks, and activities that encourage the process of synthesis and amalgamation of personality building blocks learned from different cultures, institutions, and peoples.

Empathy Projection the process whereby a person tries to understand the point of view and feelings of others whose cognitive styles and values are different from his own.

False Self the identity developed as a result of attempts to conform to cultural and cognitive styles of authority figures, institutions, and majority cultures.

Family Attitude Scale a personality inventory to assess a person's degree of agreement with traditional and modern family values.

Field Independent a cognitive style characterized by independent, abstract, discovery-oriented learning preferences, an introverted lifestyle, a preference for verbal communication styles, and an emphasis on personal achievement and material gain. People with a preferred field independent orientation are likely to be analytical and

inductive and focus on detail. They also tend to be nondirective and discovery-oriented in childrearing, and in teaching, supervising, and counseling others.

Field Sensitive a cognitive style characterized by interactive personalized learning preferences, an extroverted lifestyle, a preference for nonverbal communication styles, a need to help others. People with a preferred field sensitive orientation tend to be more global, integrative, and deductive in their thinking and problem-solving styles, and they tend to be directive in childrearing, and in teaching, supervising, and counseling others.

Life History Interview focuses on the development and expressions of cultural flex during different periods of life: infancy and early childhood, early school and elementary school years, middle school years, high school years, and post- high school period. The life history interview also focuses on the extent of an individual's actual participation in both traditional and modern families, cultures, groups, and institutions. The life history identifies the type of cultural flex by examining the degree to which a person has been able to combine modern and traditional values and belief systems to arrive at multicultural values and worldviews.

Match and/or Mismatch refers to person-environment fit with respect to the degree of harmony or lack of harmony between cultural/cognitive styles and environmental demands. Two types are cognitive mismatch and cultural mismatch.

Mismatch Shock an extreme case of the mismatch syndrome.

Mismatch Syndrome a lack of harmony between a person's preferred

cultural and/or cognitive styles and environmental demands. This occurs when people feel at odds to the important people and institutions in their lives. They feel alone, hopeless, and misunderstood; they may exhibit a number of symptoms, including self-rejection, depression, negativity, rigidity, and attempts to escape reality.

Model a person whom the client admires and who is dominant in the cultural/ cognitive styles the client wants to learn.

Modeling the process whereby people learn unfamiliar cognitive and cultural styles through imitation and observation of others, through reading and through travel.

Modern a value orientation that emphasizes and encourages separation from family and community early in life. It is typical of urban communities, liberal religions, and of North American and Western European cultures. People who are identified as having a modern value orientation tend to emphasize science when explaining the mysteries of life; they have a strong individualistic orientation; they tend to deemphasize differences in gender and age roles; and they emphasize egalitarianism in childrearing practices.

Multicultural Ambassador a multicultural person who promotes the development of multicultural environments which encourage understanding (multicultural education) and cooperation among different people and groups.

Multicultural Educator a multicultural person who educates others about the advantages of cultural and cognitive diversity and

multicultural orientations to life.

Multicultural Experience Inventory (MEI) an inventory that assesses historical and current experiences. It focuses on personal history and behavior in three areas: demographic and linguistic, socialization history, and degree of multicultural participation in the past as well as the present. The MEI consists of two types of items: historical (reflecting historical development pattern—HDP) and contemporary functioning (reflecting contemporary multicultural identity—CMI). Includes items that deal with degree of comfort and acceptance.

Multicultural Model of Psychotherapy a model of therapy that emphasizes multicultural development by maximizing the client's ability to flex between cultural and cognitive styles when faced with different environmental demands and development of a multicultural orientation to life characterized by serving as a multicultural educator, ambassador, and peer counselor.

Multicultural Peer Counselor a multicultural person who provides emotional support and facilitates change and development of empowerment in those of his or her peers who are suffering from mismatch.

Multicultural Person-Environment Fit Worldview a worldview that is based on the following assumptions: (1) There are no inferior people, cultures, or groups in terms of gender, ethnicity, race, economics, religion, physical disabilities, region, sexual orientation, or language; (2) problems of maladjustment are the result of mismatch between people, or between people and their

environments rather than of inferior people or groups; (3) every individual, group, or culture has positive contributions to make to personality development and to a healthy adjustment to life; (4) people who are willing to learn from others and from groups and cultures different from their own acquire multicultural building blocks (coping techniques and perspectives), which are the basis of multicultural personality development and multicultural identity; (5) synthesis and amalgamation of personality building blocks acquired from different people, groups, and cultures occur when the person with multicultural potential works toward the goals of understanding and cooperation among diverse groups and peoples in a pluralistic society; and (6) synthesis and amalgamation of personality building blocks from diverse origins contribute to the development of multicultural personality development and psychological adjustment in a pluralistic society.

Preferred Cultural and Cognitive Styles Observation Checklists

observational rating scales that list field sensitive and field independent behaviors in five domains: communications; interpersonal relationships; motivation; teaching, parenting, supervising, and counseling; learning and problem solving. The checklists can be used to assess modern and traditional cultural styles and values.

Preferred Styles the dominant cultural and cognitive styles of a person.

Scriptwriting a therapy strategy used, along with role-playing, to promote cultural and cognitive flex development by matching the cultural or cognitive styles of a person or institution.

Theory of Multicultural Development see Cognitive and Cultural Flex Theory.

Traditional a value orientation that emphasizes close ties to family and community throughout life. It is typical of rural communities, conservative religions, and of minority and developing cultures. People identified as having traditional value orientations tend to have a spiritual orientation toward life, are strongly identified with their families and communities of origin, usually believe in separation of gender and age roles; and typically endorse strict approaches to child-rearing.

Traditionalism-Modernism Inventory (TMI) a personality inventory that assesses the degree of identification with traditional and modern values and belief systems. The instrument yields scores indicating the degree of agreement with items reflecting traditionalism or modernism. The degree of flex can be determined by examining the differences between the total traditionalism and total modernism scores (balance score) as well as by looking at the degree of agreement with the traditional and modern items across the different domains of life: gender-role definition; family identity; sense of community; family identification; time orientation; age status; importance of tradition; subservience to convention and authority; spirituality and religion; attitudes toward issues such as sexual orientation, the death penalty, the role of federal government in education, benefits to single mothers and noncitizens, and abortion. Type of flex can be determined by examining the degree of flex within each domain.

Tyranny of the Shoulds an individual's perception of the self based on what

she believes others expect the person to be like. The pressure to conform could contribute to psychological maladjustment—the individual develops a false self based on the "shoulds" of parents, important others, and societal institutions.

Unique Self a person's preferred cultural and cognitive styles before he has been subjected to the pressures of conformity.

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