

The Core Conditions in Emotions-Focused Therapy

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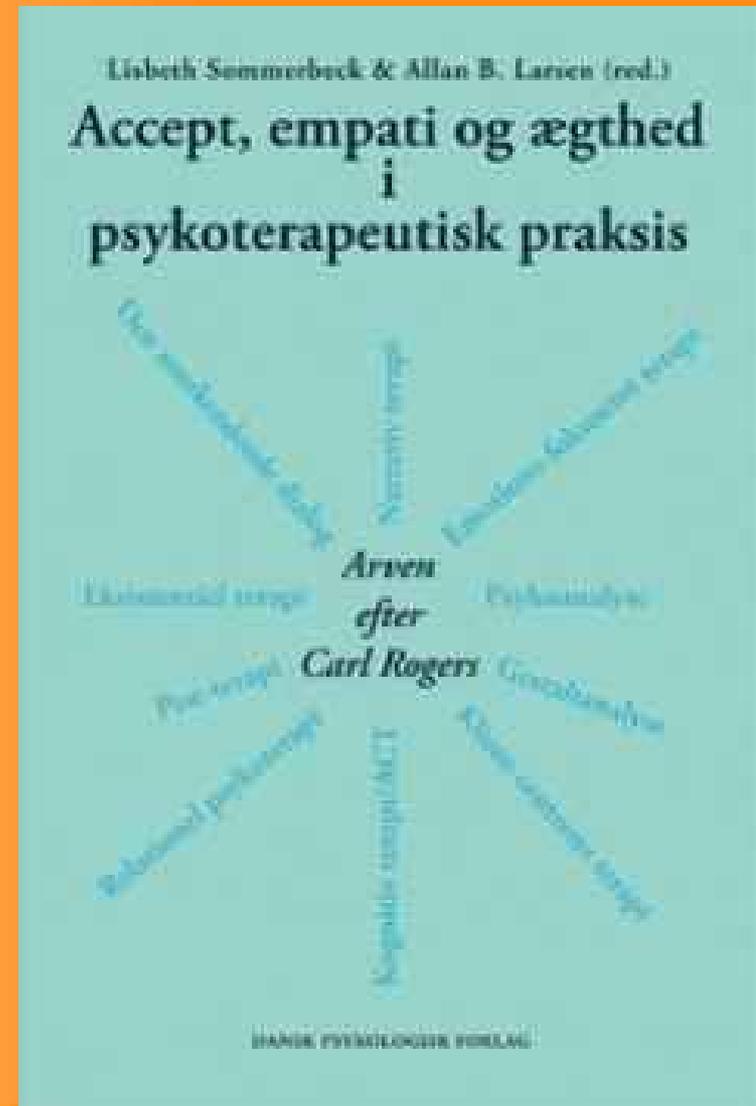
NIELS BAGGE

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- ⌘ EFT therapist and supervisor trained by Leslie Greenberg
- ⌘ Private practice & IPCOPT



Accept, empathy and congruence in psychotherapeutic practice

- Investigating the legacy of Carl Rogers
- Research has repeatedly shown the effect of relationship factors
- 9 schools of therapy describe their use of the empathy, accept and congruence
- EFT and core conditions



The necessary and sufficient conditions of constructive personality change

1. Two persons are in psychological contact.
2. The first, whom we shall term the client, is in a state of incongruence, being vulnerable or anxious.
3. The second person, whom we shall term the therapist, is congruent or integrated in the relationship.
4. The therapist experiences unconditional positive regard for the client.
5. The therapist experiences an empathic understanding of the client's internal frame of reference and endeavours to communicate this experience to the client.
6. The communication to the client of the therapist's empathic understanding and unconditional positive regard is to a minimal degree achieved.

(Rogers, 1957)

Emotion Focused Therapy

- Neo-humanistic perspective
- 35 years research program
- Emotion theory
- Person-Centered and experiential emotional process-guiding relational stance
- Marker-guided task strategy

Elliott, Watson, Goldman & Greenberg (2004)

Basic Principles of Emotion-Focused Therapy

A. Relationship Principles: Facilitate safe, productive relationship:

1. *Empathic Attunement*: Enter, track clients' immediate and evolving experiencing
2. *Therapeutic Bond*: Actively offer accepting, congruent, empathic presence to clients
3. *Task Collaboration*: Facilitate mutual involvement in goals and tasks of therapy

B. Task Principles: Facilitate work on specific therapeutic tasks:

4. *Process Differentiation*: Offer clients opportunities to work in different ways at different times, according to the current task they are engaged in
5. *Task Completion/Emotional Change*: Help clients resolve key therapeutic tasks in order to facilitate reorganisation of core maladaptive (no longer useful) emotion schemes
6. *Self-development*: Help clients differentiate and access new experiencing, inner strength or resources, agency or self-empowerment

Elliott, Watson,
Goldman &
Greenberg (2004)

Same root
(Rogers)
diverse
branches
(EFT)



Aspects of EFT in relation to CC

1. Therapist internal processes
2. Therapist experiential response modes
3. Client processes
4. Empathy tasks

Therapist

1

Therapist internal processes

Empathy process

2

Therapist experiential response mode

4

Empathy tasks

3

Experience of events

Client micro process

Client

Immediate & evolving Experience

Deconstruction
Reconstruction

Affect regulation

Interpersonal process

1. Therapist internal processes

- Presence and genuineness
- Empathic attunement
- Accepting, prizing and trust
- Collaboration
- Procedural knowledge of the model
- Process awareness and guiding stance

Presence and genuineness

- **Presence**
- **Genuineness**
 - **Wholeness** - not divided, contact with self
 - **Authenticity** - being who you are, real
 - **Transparent** - showing who you are

Acceptance, praising, trust

⌘ **Accepting**

- ⌘ Letting go of values, standards preferences
- ⌘ Not approval or endorsement
- ⌘ Validation of experience as actual (vs. illusory), interesting, unique, meaningful, understandable, tolerable, valid

⌘ **Praising**

- ⌘ Active sense of caring, valuing
- ⌘ Varm, emotionally touched

⌘ **Trust**

- ⌘ "unconditional confidence"

(Elliot, Watson.
Goldman &
Greenberg, 2004)

Empathic Attunement

- **Present maintained understanding of clients internal experience as it evolves moment to moment**
- **Follow client on several tracks**
 - What client is talking about, immediate experience, emerging experiences and what it is like to be the client
- **Imaginative, bodily experience**
 - not conceptual
 - T Feeling same or complementary feeling
 - T Grasp C experience in lively, poignant and emotionally near way, then the way of communicating is less critical
- **Subprocesses of empathy**
 - Entering, letting go, ...

The client is expert on his or her
own experience

Empathy – sub process

- ⌘ Letting go
- ⌘ Entering
- ⌘ Resonating
- ⌘ Searching and selecting
- ⌘ Grasping and expressing

(Elliot, Watson. Goldman & Greenberg, 2004)

Empathy tracks

Client	Empathy track
The main thing the client is saying	Content
The cl's feelings, poignancy	Emotion
What is at the edge of awareness	Emerging
What it is like to be the cl generally	Person
The process or way cl communicate	Process
What is implicit or between the lines	Implicit
What the cl is avoiding or minimizing	Avoiding

2. Therapist Experiential Response Modes

A. Simple Empathy	Responses intended primarily to communicate understanding of immediate client experiencing.
B. Empathic Exploration	Responses intended to encourage client exploration while maintaining empathic attunement.
C. Process Guiding Responses	Responses intended to directly facilitate useful client experiencing.
D. Experiential Presence	Responses intended to reveal therapist's emotional presence to client.
E. Content Directives (“nonexperiential”)	Responses intended to provide expert external perspectives on the client's problems.

Therapist Experiential Response Modes

A. Simple Empathy

Empathic Reflection

Empathic Following

Empathic Affirmation

B. Empathic Exploration

Exploratory Reflection

Evocative Reflection

Exploratory Question

Fit Question

Process Observation

Empathic Conjecture

Empathic Refocusing

C. Process Guiding

D. Experiential Presence

General

Process Disclosure

Personal Disclosure

E. Content Directives

Rogers therapy responses

- ⌘ Informs about the therapy
- ⌘ Confirms attention (Hm, hm)
- ⌘ Checks understanding
- ⌘ Reflects empathically
- ⌘ Validates clients unspoken emotions
- ⌘ Reassures, answers
- ⌘ Interpretations
- ⌘ Confrontations
- ⌘ Direct questions
- Turns questions back to client
- ⌘ Keeps or breaks silence
- ⌘ Self disclosure
- ⌘ Accepts corrections from client

Brink & Faber, 1996

Main expression of core conditions in therapist experiential response modes

1. Empathy

- Reflection, affirmation, following, exploratory reflection, evocative reflection, exploratory question, fit question, process-observation, empathic conjecture, empathic refocusing

2. Accept

- Empathic affirmation, nonverbal and extra verbal behaviour

3. Genuineness

- nonverbal and extra verbal behaviour, process disclosure, personal disclosure

Empathy tracks - tp response mode

Client	Track	Therapist response mode
The main thing the client is saying	Content	Empathic understanding
The cl's feelings, poignancy	Emotion	Evocative reflection
What is at the edge of awareness	Emerging	Empatic exploration
What it is like to be the cl generally	Person	Experiential formulation
The process or way cl communicate	Process	Process observation
What is implicit or between the lines	Implicit	Empathic conjecture
What the cl is avoiding or minimizing	Avoiding	Empathic refocusing

(Elliot, Watson. Goldman & Greenberg, 2004)

3. Client processes

1. Experience of events (content)

2. Micro-processes (ways of processing experience)

- Micromarkers
 - Verbal, non-verbal, level of arousal and experience
- Markers of characteristic style How clients treat them self and others
- Mode of engagement markers
 - Non-experiential, experiential
- Task markers
- Treatment foci indicators

(Elliott, Watson.
Goldman &
Greenberg, 2004)

Following and leading

Empathy - Active process of change

⌘ Interpersonal function - therapeutic relationship

- ⌘ Safe, understood, supported
- ⌘ Build alliance and prevent alliance rupture
- ⌘ Part of negotiation of goals

⌘ Explorative and deconstructive function

- ⌘ Hermeneutic process (interpretation of text)
- ⌘ Deconstruction → reconstruction of understanding

⌘ Affect regulation

- ⌘ Relief and satisfaction in being understood
- ⌘ Containing emotions
- ⌘ Greater self-soothing and self worth

(Elliot, Watson.
Goldman &
Greenberg, 2004;
Watson, 2001)

EFT Tasks

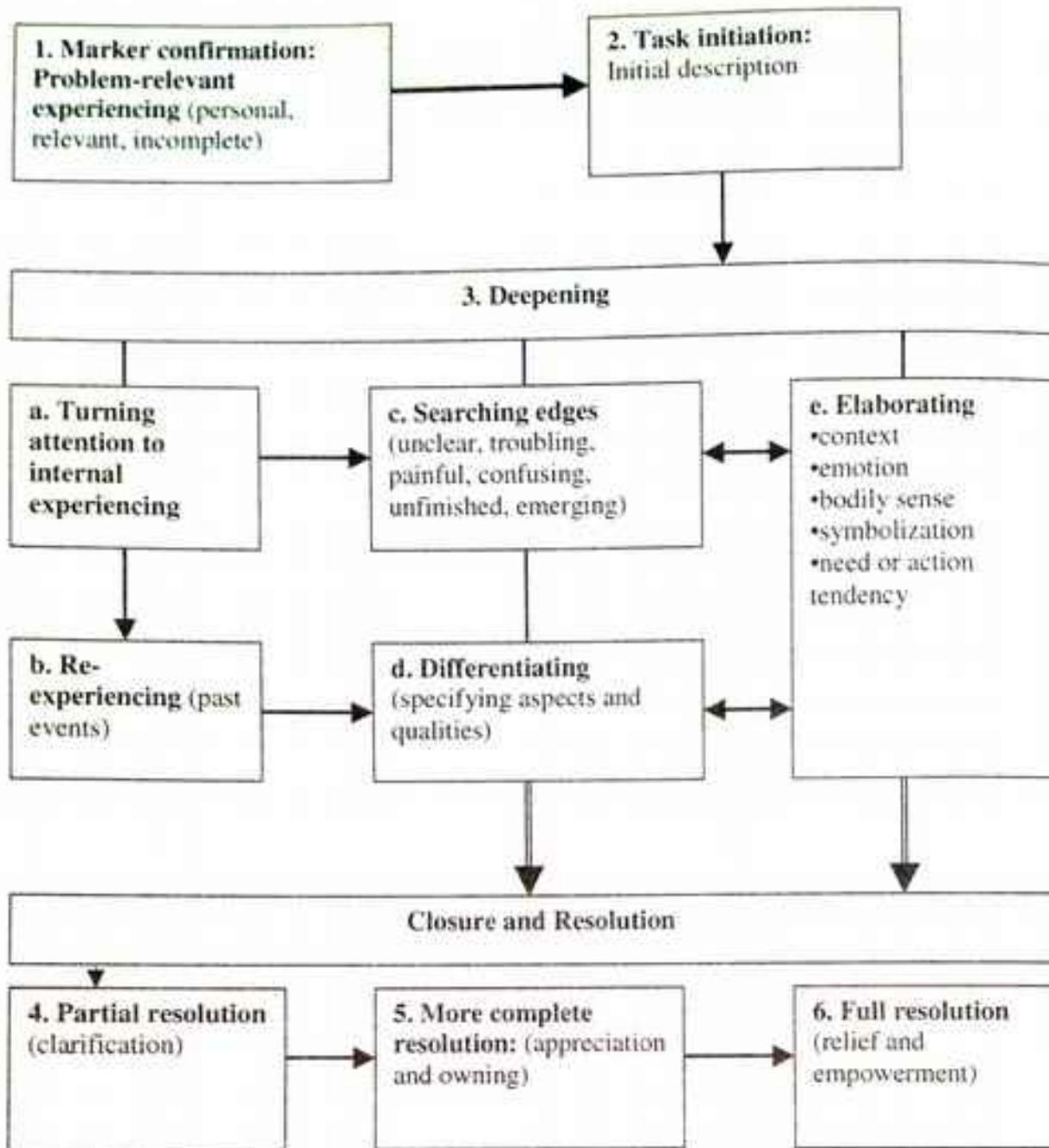
TASK RESOLUTION

1. Marker and initiation
2. Evoking and entering
3. Deepening
4. Partial resolution
5. Restructuring
6. Carrying forward

EMPATHY-BASED TASKS	Empatic exploration
	Empatic affirmation
RELATIONAL TASKS	Therapeutic alliance formation
	Alliance dialogue
EXPERIENCING TASKS	Clearing a space
	Experiential focusing
	Allowing and expressing emotion
REPROCESSING TASKS	Trauma retelling
	Meaning protest
	Systematic Evocative Unfolding
ENACTMENT TASKS	Two-chair dialogue
	Two-chair work
	Empty-chair work

4. Empathy Tasks

Task Marker	Intervention	End State
Problem-Relevant Experience (e.g., interesting, troubling, intense, puzzling)	Empatic Exploration	Clear marker, or new meaning explicated
Vulnerability (Painful emotion related to self)	Empathic Affirmation	Self-affirmation (feels understood, hopeful, stronger)



relation has primacy
over process

Therapist

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Empathy process

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Interpersonal process

Diversity

- ⌘ Same root (Rogers), diverse branches (EFT)
- ⌘ Following and leading (relation and process)
- ⌘ Necessary and sufficient conditions
- ⌘ Research (outcome)

Core conditions in relation to EFT

Case formulation

Emotional assessment (primary, secondary ..)

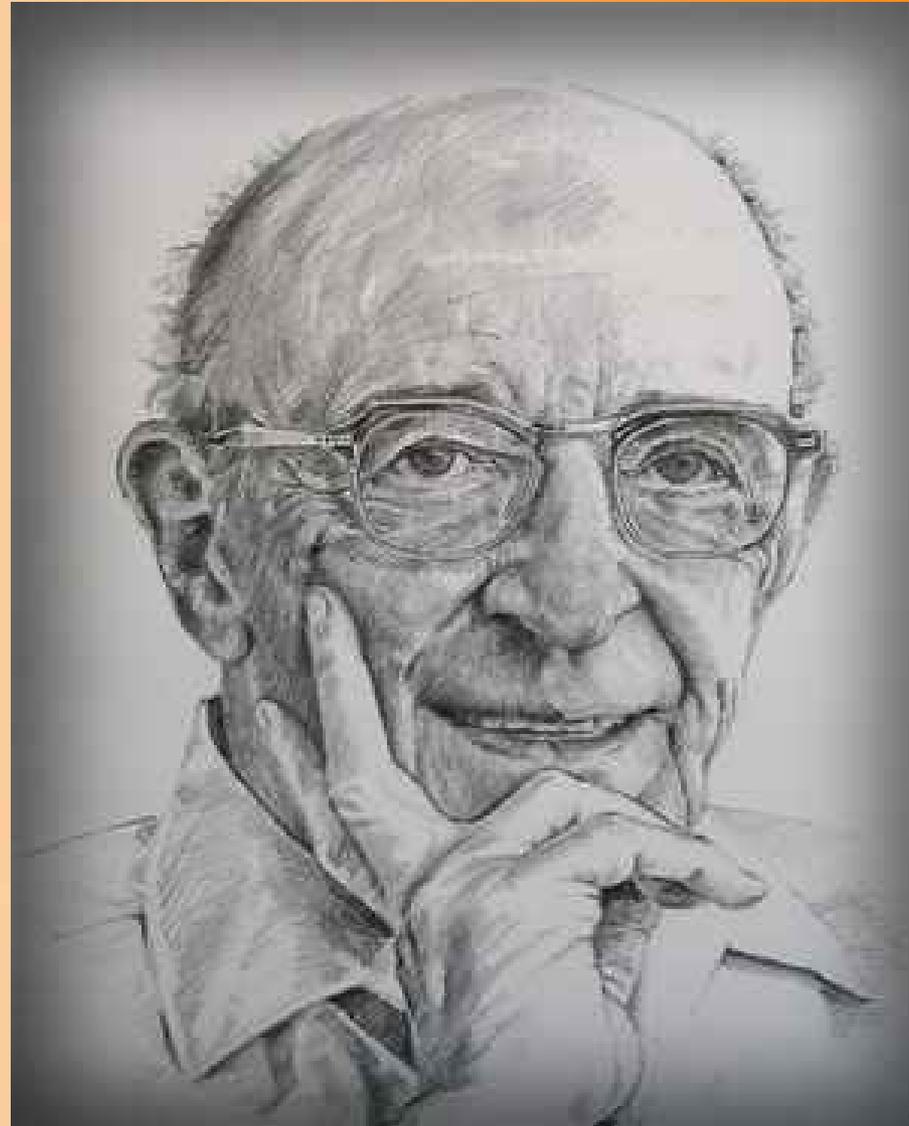
Therapeutic changes processes

Phases of therapy: Arriving and leaving

Neuroscience

Research

Client's experience of empathy



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A. Simple empathy

Empathic Reflection	Accurately represent most central, poignant or strongly-felt aspect of client's message.
Empathic Following	Brief responses which indicate that therapist understands what client is saying (acknowledgments and empathic repetitions).
Empathic Affirmation	Offer validation, support, or sympathy when client is in emotional distress or pain.

B. Empathic Exploration

Exploratory Reflection

Simultaneously communicate empathy and stimulate client self-exploration of explicit and implicit experience, through open-edge or growth-oriented responses.

Evocative Reflection

Communicate empathy while helping client to heighten or access experience, through vivid imagery, powerful language or dramatic manner.

Exploratory Question

Stimulate client open-ended self-exploration.

Fit Question

Encourage client to check representation of experience with actual experience.

B. Empathic Exploration

Process Observation	Nonconfrontationally describe client in-session verbal or nonverbal behavior (usually with Exploratory Question).
Empathic Conjecture	Tentative guess at immediate, implicit client experience (usually with Fit Question).
Empathic Refocusing	Offer empathy to what the client is having difficulty facing, in order to invite continued exploration

D. Experiential Presence

General	Generally communicated via speech, paralinguistic, nonverbal manner (e.g., warm/gentle vocal quality, responsive facial expression, self-deprecatory humor, exploratory manner, respectful silence).
Process Disclosure	Share own here-and-now reactions, intentions or limitations.
Personal Disclosure	Share relevant information about self.

Empathy and case formulation

Emotions

Primary, Secondary, Instrumental, Adaptive or maladaptive

Emotion schemes

Intensity, experiential depth,

Differentiation, narration

Affect regulation

Core conditions facilitative attitude

1. Safety
2. Ideal working space
3. Therapeutic Bond
4. Promote autonomy
5. Affect regulation

(Watson, 2007)

Affect regulation - CC

1. Awareness of affective reaction
2. Label and symbolise inner experience
3. Affective reaction are modulated
 - Represent in words
 - Internalization of therapist soothing, nurturing and accepting stance of therapist
4. Cultivate clients reflective capacity on them self (Watson, 2007)

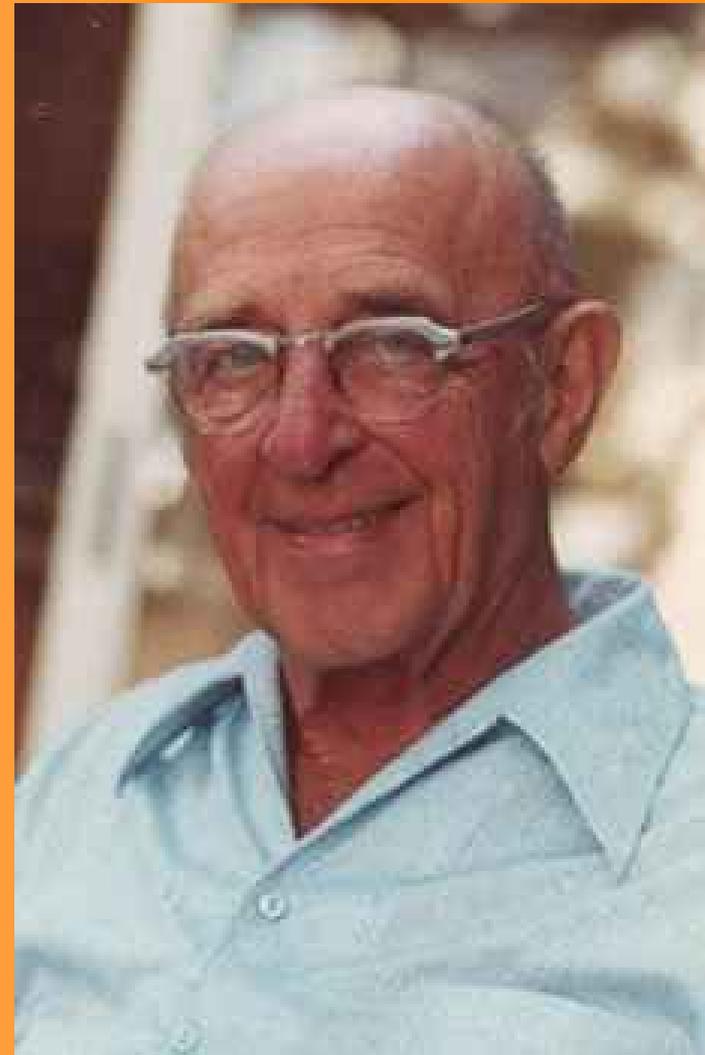
Process-out

In a safe relationship,
with reflection and attuned
to the client

- ⌘ Access emotion in therapy
- ⌘ Experiential depth
- ⌘ High emotional intensity
- ⌘ Expression of high emotional intensity
(Not too much and not too often)
- ⌘ Processing of emotions (symbolising, congruence, accept, ownership, regulating and differentiating)
- ⌘ Transformation of emotional schemes

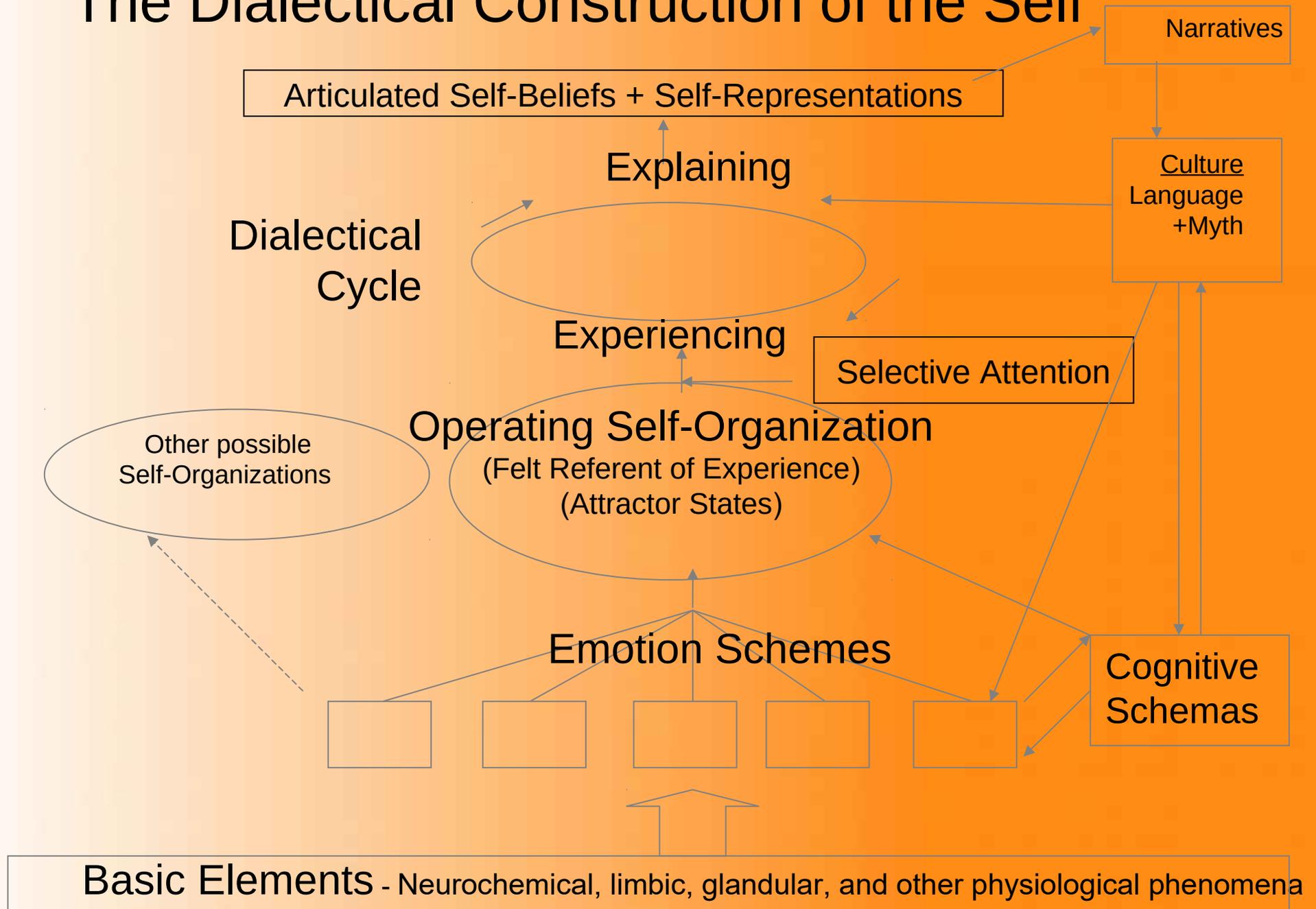
Carl Rogers

- & 1902 – 1987
- & Amerikansk psykolog
- & Humanistisk psykologi
- & Psykoterapiforskning
- & Klientcentreret Terapi
Personcentreret Tilgang
- & Bøger, artikler, film ect
- & President APA, priser

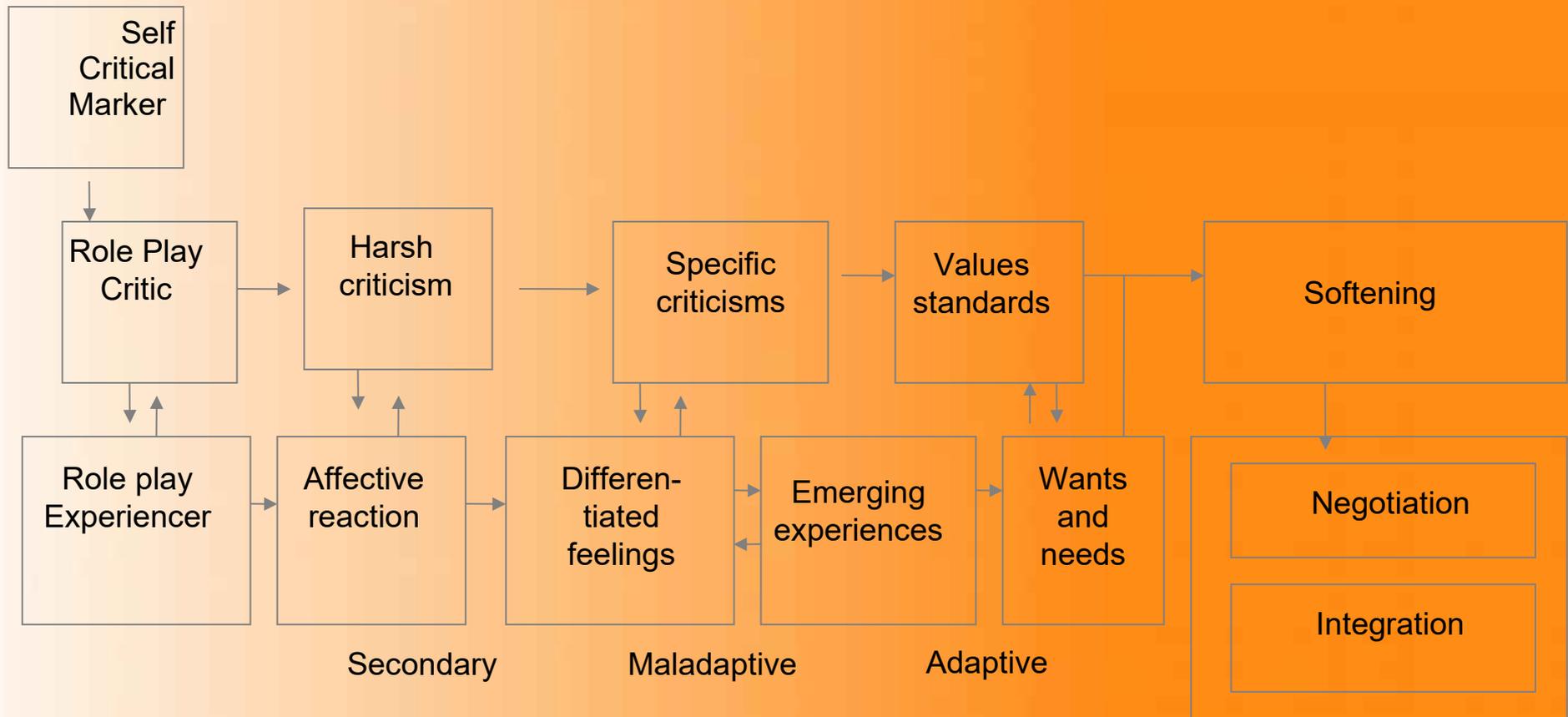


Task Resolution Stage	Client Process	Therapist Responses
0. Premarker	Marker is not clearly present, but may be implicit in client's experiencing.	•Listen for, reflect toward possible task markers.
1. Marker/ Task Initiation	Client presents indication that he/she is currently experiencing a particular kind of processing difficulty and is agreeable to work on it with therapist.	•Reflect, confirm client marker. •Elicit client collaboration for task.
2. Evocation	Client begins to explore and express difficulty, so that it starts to come alive.	•Offer special procedures to address particular task, as appropriate. •Help client explore difficulty •Evoke, intensify client's arousal.
3. Exploration/ Deepening	Client explores difficulty via a dialectical process, either with therapist or between different aspects of self. (Exploration process may be lengthy.) Eventually, primary underlying feelings begin to emerge, along with underlying emotion schemes and related needs and values.	•Help client access and differentiate primary and secondary feelings, emotion schemes, needs, values. •Help client stay involved with task and in contact with experiencing.
4. Partial Resolution (Emerging Shift)	Client accesses new aspects of experiencing, including previously overlooked aspects of emotion schemes; as a result, begins to feel at least a small shift in experiencing.	•Listen for, reflect emergence of new experiencing.
5. Restructuring/ Scheme Change	Client experiences a clear shift in how he/she seeing self or others, such as owning/accepting previously ignored aspects of self, coming to understand something about self or others better, or coming to see self or others in a more positive light or self as more powerful.	•Help client solidify emerging shift by exploring, appreciating, or symbolizing it.
6 Carrying Forward (Full Resolution)	Client pursues further implications of shift, including negotiation among competing needs/values, and commitments to pursue action consistent with new experiencing. Experiences greater contact with experiencing, clear symptomatic/ bodily relief	•Facilitate exploration of implications, including negotiation and appreciation of emerging experiencing.

The Dialectical Construction of the Self

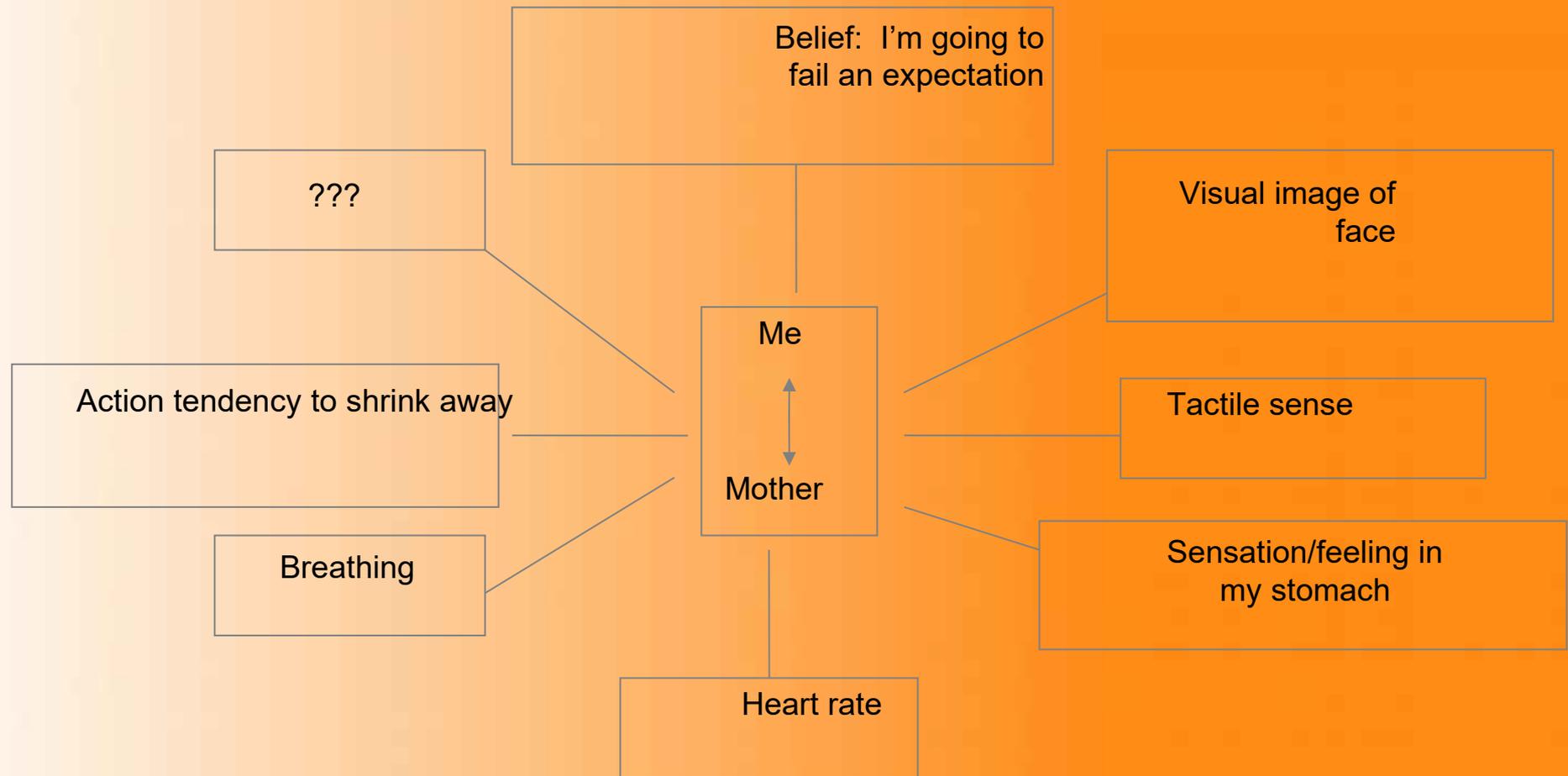


Model of Resolution of Self Criticism



Greenberg, 2002

Emotional Scheme



More conditions and relationship factors

- Rogers
 - Contact
 - Presences
- Other
 - Alliance

Working Alliance and Empathy

- The Working Alliance correlates .35 with outcome accounting for about 12% of the outcome variance (Weeresequera, Linder, Greenberg & Watson 1998 *Psychotherapy Research*, 8, 5)
- The Relationship conditions(E, P.R & C) predicted about 10% of outcome variance (Watson J & Geller, S. 2005 *Psychotherapy Research*, 15, 1-8)