

From Gendlin to Rogers to Brodley to Bohart: My Evolution as An Integrative Person-Centered Therapist.¹

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I want to thank Marge Witty for my introduction, and I want to comment on her quoting the African proverb that I use to introduce a chapter by myself and Karen Tallman (Bohart & Tallman, 2010) on the role of the client in psychotherapy: “Until lions have their historians, all tales of hunting will glorify the hunter.” That refers to the fact that in most stories about psychotherapy, the “hero” is the therapist who slays the monster of the client’s problems (Duncan & Miller, 2000). What we argued was that research shows that it is actually clients who make therapy work. They are active self-healers who use therapy to make that happen. Therapists are more like their assistants. With that in mind, I want to mention that Karen Tallman, who’s now my wife, does research for Kaiser medical foundation. She’s planning to start doing a study. She wants to contact people who have type two diabetes who have successfully managed to self-regulate on their own so they don’t have the disease anymore, and interview them about how they did it. What she is discovering as she’s doing the literature review preparatory to proposing the study is that with all the research on diabetes—and you can imagine how much there is out there because it’s such a horrible epidemic -- there’s almost nothing on the patient. It’s all on interventions that the medical community comes up with. It’s like no one bothers to listen to the patient.

This talk is about my journey as a person-centered therapist. The first thing I want to bring up is, why should you care? My answer to that is that I don’t have the faintest idea. I hope that what I say will reinforce what you already know or maybe help sharpen and deepen it. If you disagree, as I’m sure some of you will, I hope that will also help you sharpen your thoughts as well.

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The second thing I want to bring up is my debt to Eugene Gendlin, and I have organized the talk around that for that reason. Gendlin is the single most important person in my professional life. I would not be here were it not for Gendlin's work, and since he passed away a few months ago I wanted to honor him³. That doesn't mean I entirely agree with everything he did or said, but he had a huge impact on me as you'll see. Finally, some of this talk is based on an article I wrote a year or two ago, published in the *Journal of Clinical Psychology* "From There and Back Again" (Bohart, 2015).

So, to go back a little bit in time, it is now 1968. I'm a third-year graduate student. I've been doing therapy for two years. My clinical placement is at a school for kids with learning disabilities. At this point, my orientation is existential. I had started out as a graduate student as an existential psychoanalyst. I believed what I was supposed to do was to help the client get insight into their childhood, and to be more authentic. However, after two years of my own psychoanalysis, I had grown disillusioned with psychoanalysis. I learned a lot from it, in a funny kind of way, in a negative direction. I learned the utter impotence of intellectual insight, and because of that I dropped the psychoanalyst part, and in 1968 I was just an existentialist.

The problem was that there was no method to existential therapy, and I still felt I didn't know what I was doing. In terms of the client acting as a self-healer, it's really interesting because I didn't know what I was doing for two years, and my clients got better anyway. So, starting at this placement at the school, my supervisor was a Gestalt therapist and I got enamored of Gestalt. I was told that Gestalt was existentialism with a technology. Fritz Perls came and did a demonstration at UCLA. I was really impressed. It was in the days of hippies and he came out in front of this audience of psychiatrists and psychologists with bare feet in sandals, and with a piece of rope holding up his pants. I fell in love with Gestalt, but unfortunately it was more of a fling. It didn't turn into a long term relationship.

I became disillusioned with Gestalt for two reasons. One, it was too confrontational. The second reason is that it was self-contradictory. I was told that the goal was to help clients find their own paths. However, I had gone into Gestalt therapy myself, and, although I was told it would help me find my own path, I soon discovered, in one incident, that the therapist was

³ Gendlin passed away on May 1, 2017.

the one who knew what my path was, and that didn't work for me. So, at that point, I was kind of lost as a therapist.

I was working with a ten-year-old boy doing existential and Gestalt and it wasn't working. I had to write a qualifying paper for my dissertation. I decided to do it on insight and interpretation in psychotherapy because I was interested in that topic. I got a book called *Use of Interpretation in Treatment* edited by Emanuel Hammer. It had an article by Gendlin in it called "The Experiential Response" (Gendlin, 1968). I had never heard of Gendlin before. I didn't know he was Client-Centered. I read it one night and it absolutely resonated. I mean it fit like a glove. The article did to me what Gendlin says good therapist responses do to people—they help you articulate what you already implicitly know in your body, and that's exactly what the article did to me. I went in the next day and worked with my ten year-old boy and applied Gendlin's method of responding to felt meaning. The session went much better. At the end of the session, my supervisor who had been watching through a one-way mirror, came out and said, "That's therapy! That's therapy!" The next week when the boy was brought in by his mother, the mother told me that he had been much better that week, and he continued to be much better thereafter.

What that demonstrated to me was the power of genuine, careful—and responsive—empathic listening, because that's what I thought Gendlin's method was all about. I thought what Gendlin had done was to specify what it was to empathically listen. Here was proof positive that just carefully and genuinely understanding someone could be really powerful. I had read Rogers and I had generally agreed with Rogers. All my experiences previously, my previous placements, were working with people labeled schizophrenic which led me to believe that the general ideas Rogers espoused were right. Being empathic and warm and caring and showing positive regard, being genuine and congruent were the attitudes needed to help people grow. But Rogers had never hit home to me because I couldn't figure out what to do when I was being warm and empathic. I had seen the videos and it seemed as if he was just saying back to the client what the client had already said, which, of course, is not true, as I later learned. My students see videos of Rogers and they think the same thing, until they try to learn careful empathic responding, and come to know better, as I did. So, at the time, I wasn't a Rogerian. Gendlin provided not only a method but a theory of why empathic responding was working, and I had had proof positive with this from working with this boy. I thought I had found a home.

What I thought Gendlin to be doing is the following. We know more in our bodies than we know in words. When we talk, we're putting that holistic understanding into words. Words point at what we know implicitly.

Words come from felt meanings and experiencing. By listening to the felt meanings, you are listening to where the client is coming from, what they're trying to say, what they're trying to get at, their gist, if you will. So I saw Gendlin as trying to develop a theory of what it is to really hear someone, to really understand them, to really try to get what they're trying to get at, and to respond to them from that. I discovered that Gendlin was a Client-Centered therapist (at the time). So I went back and read Rogers, and now Rogers made more sense to me. I watched Rogers and now I could see more of what he was doing. I decided I was a Rogerian.

I want to talk a little more about Gendlin's theory of experiencing. I eventually came to disagree with Gendlin about some things and I'll come to that later, but I still think his theory of experiencing is essentially right. Gendlin was talking about the idea that we know more in our bodies than we can say; that we think in some sense in our bodies as well as our minds. This has become a hot idea now in cognitive science, and there's a whole lot of talk about what they call "embodied cognition." Of course, Rogers had the same idea with the organismic valuing process.

Gendlin talked about how people change. He pointed out that other theories were really good at describing what was wrong with people, their personality structures, and things like that (for instance, dysfunctional cognitive schemas in cognitive therapy), but they didn't have a theory of how change happens. For Gendlin, change occurred by tuning into felt experiencing. Experiencing is primary. Thinking and emotion are secondary to how we experience the world. Rogers basically agreed with that. Therapy has to be experiential in some way or another for change to occur. It's not enough just to know something in your head.

This is actually an insight that all therapies have had going back to Freud. Freud knew that it wasn't good enough to explain things to people to have them change. Cognitive therapy—you may think that's not experiential but Aaron Beck in one article said you have to get it in your gut. He literally said that. Cognitive therapists talk about it in computer metaphors—about how cognition has to be hot and "on line" to change. So for them, too, change has to be experiential. So it's really an insight that all have had. The interesting thing is that modern psychodynamic theory is becoming heavily experiential. They've really moved to a more Person-Centered point of view in a lot of ways.

Gendlin went on to say that people have an intrinsic capacity to grow--in our ability to experience the world, to move to more complex and differentiated forms, to become more balanced and open to new ideas. These are more my words than his words—to take more aspects of our

experience into account, and to trust things that just bubble up. Carl Rogers was always talking about new ideas bubbling up. And this allows us to access new and better ways of being in the world intuitively and experientially. There's an intrinsic creative process. Therapy is intrinsically creative. This is one of the big differences between Person-Centered therapy and other approaches. Other approaches are reparative. Person-Centered therapists believe that by helping people grow forward that problems get resolved. To use a metaphor of the redwood trees that grow in the area where I live: You can cut a redwood tree down and look at its inner rings and you can see an injury in there that happened hundreds of years before, but the tree grew up and around it. So therapy is intrinsically creative and this is another example of an idea I got from Gendlin. Change occurs when the therapeutic interaction provides experiences that help the client carry forward their own experiencing.

He also talked about responding to feeling and this is another thing I learned. What it is to respond to feelings. Most Western psychologists think that to respond to feelings is to respond to emotions, but Gendlin said that was not true. Feelings are more than emotions. Western psychology typically splits the person into two things, cognition and emotion. By feelings, most Western psychologists mean emotions. Gendlin introduced the concept of felt meanings. He pointed out that we know things in our body—as I said—in this sort of implicit way. There are endless examples of feelings that are not emotions. So I'm going to talk about feelings for a moment—examples of feelings that are not emotions. Feeling cold is not an emotion. Feeling hot is not an emotion. Feeling sweaty is not an emotion. If you consider those, you get a feeling about what a feeling is. A feeling is a feeling—"feel-ing," a touching. Feel-ing is a way of knowing. It's not something inside you, it's transactional, something between you and yourself and between you and the world.

So there are endless examples of feelings that aren't emotions. Love and hatred are emotions. We can *feel* love and we can *feel* hatred. But we can also feel appreciated. We can feel listened to. We can feel ignored. We can feel alienated. We can feel competent and none of those are emotions. We can feel disembodied. We can feel stuck on a problem today. We can feel like having pizza for dinner. We can feel like someone doesn't like us, and I'll come back to that in a minute. We can feel like a failure. We can leave a room and come back in a room and feel like something's happened and we don't know what it is. I think a lot of people have had that experience. So coming back to the example that someone doesn't like me, I can definitely feel that someone doesn't like me, while thinking in my head I'm wrong and believing intellectually that they do like me. One more example. Einstein said he was following a feeling in developing relativity

theory and surely he wasn't saying he was following an emotion when he came to develop relativity theory. So what kind of feeling was he following? Some kind of intrinsic sense, or "feeling" of how something works. It wasn't in words or mathematical symbols yet. It was something he sensed, a direction he sensed. And that was what he was following. But it was a feeling in a different sense than an emotion.

Let me give you an example in a story about one of my clients. This has to do with feeling that someone doesn't like me. There are those who will tell you if you say 'I feel you don't like me,' "That's not a feeling! That's a thought or a belief!" They're wrong. I had a client who came to see me⁴. He was very depressed. He had been seen by a psychoanalyst. I don't know how he found his way to my door but the psychoanalysis wasn't working. So he told me a story, and the story was that he had started having the feeling that his wife didn't love him, but it didn't make sense to him because she certainly acted loving. They were making love and she was loving in other ways. She said she loved him. He was troubled enough to see this therapist, this psychoanalyst. The analyst had the wife come in. After the meeting, the psychoanalyst was convinced the wife loved the client. He concluded that the reason the client had this nagging feeling was that he couldn't accept his wife's love was because of his childhood. In fact, he did have a bad childhood. He had a mother who would have gotten the borderline personality diagnosis.

This is when he got depressed, after he had been told by the analyst that his belief that his wife didn't love him was a distorted perception based on his childhood. So he had come into therapy with one problem, which was this nagging feeling he didn't understand, and now he had two problems, which is now not only does he have that problem, but now he's all screwed up. So this is when he got depressed. Therapy wasn't helping, so somehow he wound up seeing me. A couple of months later a magical change appeared to take place. It had nothing to do with me. He came in. He just walked in different. He still looked sad but instead of looking haggard and beaten down, he walked in with strength in his walk. He sat down and told me his wife had left him. She had admitted she had been having an affair for over a year, and that she didn't love him. As devastating as that might have been, it actually made him feel better because at least he wasn't crazy. That's just an example of how you can feel something in your body; you can feel a meaning in your body, and it's not a thought; it's not a belief. His feeling she didn't love him had been right on. So if anybody tells you 'that's a thought or belief'—be aware that it may *not* be. It may be

⁴ This case is disguised.

a “felt sense.” By the way it was something like this that made me break up with my Gestalt therapist. I said I had a feeling like that, and the gestalt therapist told me that it was a thought and not a belief. I didn’t agree with him and he wouldn’t accept my perspective, and I decided that was it. Although overall he was a good therapist, this empathic failure on his part paradoxically got me to trust my own judgment.

The next thing that Gendlin taught me—and this is compatible with Rogers—is the idea of following the client’s experiential track (Gendlin, 1968; Gendlin, 1990). Careful listening helps the client go from one step to the other. It may seem that step two is a detour from step one but if you listen carefully, to the felt meanings, you’ll see there is a felt intuitive logic to why the client went from step one to step two. Therefore, we Rogerians are willing to follow a client even when they are off on presumably irrelevant topics. Other points of view assume that when a client changes topics sometimes they are trying to avoid going into something and want to stay away from it. We believe there is some intuitive logic to that. We believe that clients will come to things in their own good time when they’re ready to deal with it. Even if they are avoiding it, they will come to it when they’re ready to. Often they’re not avoiding, it’s just not ready to be processed yet. They’ll come back to it when it’s ready to be processed.

One of my favorite examples of this is if you’ve ever deviated from being a Person-Centered therapist, which I have, because I’m aware that I’ve tried out every single thing. You try to apply an insight. You have a brilliant insight you’re sure is meaningful and you share it with the client. They say, “Oh yes; thank you,” and they go on. Two or three weeks later they come back to it on their own. Now it works. Now it’s meaningful. Of course, as I tell my students, “It’s no fair to say, ‘I told you so.’” The point is that they came to it when they were ready for it and that’s when it’s meaningful. This is the key point here: It is this unfolding step by step process that is important. Change occurs through this process but it can occur without any insight, or any noticeably emotional experience. It’s a process. To quote Gendlin:

“Rogers’s method brought it home that the decisions a person must make are inherently that person’s own. No book knowledge enables another person to decide for anyone. That goes for life decisions and life-style as well as, moment by moment, what to talk about, feel into, struggle with. Another person might make a guess, but ultimately personal growth is from the inside outward. A process of change begins and moves in ways even the person’s own mind cannot direct, let alone another person’s mind.” (1984).

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The last thing I want to talk about that I learned from Gendlin before I move on to Barbara Brodley, is that the whole idea that therapy needs to be experiential goes beyond responding to felt meanings. The other article I read shortly after “The Experiential Response” was Gendlin’s article on working with schizophrenics from the Wisconsin schizophrenia project (Gendlin, 1967). That article I still use with my students. That article is about the power of meaning conveyed experientially. The whole idea of that article is about the power of being with the client at a level beyond words. What you say to the client is nowhere near as important as how you are with the client. I believe that. I think you and the client can talk about baseball and it can be therapeutic. I quote from Frieda Fromm Reichmann, who was a psychoanalyst. Some of you have heard this before: “The client needs an experience, not an explanation.”

Let me give an example of this. This is from one of my years working as an intern in graduate school. I was working in a mental hospital, and was assigned a nineteen year-old boy who was hearing voices and was diagnosed schizophrenic. We met in my office and nothing was happening. I had a very wise supervisor. She said, “Why don’t you take him for a walk?” So I did. Actually we didn’t walk but sat outside on the hospital lawn. I abandoned doing therapy. I just decided to be his big brother. We sat and we bullshitted about this and that. Of course, you can imagine what happens when you bullshit about this and that. Inevitably, personal stuff comes up. You do therapy just naturally when it’s happening. But it was without “doing therapy,” if that makes any sense. He got so much better by the time I left the hospital he had volunteered to become an aide on the ward. He was going toward becoming a nursing assistant himself. There was one point when I thought I said something that really helped him but mostly I think it was just that kind of companionable relationship that did it.

I want to tell a story, and some of you have heard this too from John Shlien (1997) about an experientially meaningful encounter; one of my favorite stories. To quote myself:

[Shlien] tells of a client he was working with, a schizophrenic in a hospital, who began to cry, recalling something deeply sad about his life. The client blew his nose on his handkerchief and then he noticed that Shlien also had tears in his eyes. He offered Shlien the handkerchief, then drew it back as they both realized first, the sympathy of the offer, and second why it was withdrawn. Shlien writes “It is not the tears, but the exquisite awareness of dual experience that restores the consciousness of the self” (and not a word was spoken during this episode.)” (p. 76). (Bohart, 2016, p. 126)

To me that's a wonderful example of experiential encounter and by the way I think that is why empathic reflections help. They too create the exquisite awareness of dual experience that restores the consciousness of the self.

So as of 1969, I had found a home. At that time I felt more effective as a therapist than I had been before, and have ever felt since. Why ever since? Because I got corrupted. So how did I get corrupted? I got corrupted by interventionism. What is interventionism? It is the dominant philosophy today. I attend meetings with Association for the Development of the Person-Centered Approach folks, but I also go to meetings with groups like the Society for Psychotherapy Research and the American Psychological Association. All you hear about in those groups is "intervention." Everything is about interventions. "My intervention does this; my intervention does that." When you talk about how you work with a client, you talk about what interventions you're going to use. This is all over the place. It's not limited to cognitive behavioral therapy. Psychodynamic therapists talk about interventions. Narrative therapists talk about interventions. Family therapists talk about interventions. Emotion Focused therapists talk about interventions, and Emotion Focused therapy came from Client-Centered therapy.

I'm going to point out there's nothing wrong with thinking about therapy from an interventional point of view. Medicine thinks about things interventionally and we don't object to that. Thinking about therapy interventionally is perfectly legitimate, perfectly valid, and perfectly helpful. It's just that it's not Person-Centered therapy. Person-Centered therapy is fundamentally different. I just gave a talk to the Society for the Exploration of Psychotherapy Integration (Bohart, 2017) a few months ago, trying to make clear the difference.

People— identified with the dominant point of view— map Person-Centered therapy onto an interventionistic universe, and this is what happened to me in the seventies, because there were also a lot of Person-Centered people that started mapping Person-Centered therapy onto an interventionistic universe. How do you map Person-Centered therapy onto an interventionistic universe? There's a lot of research on the idea of empathy responses as interventions that do this or that, so you would talk about how you would plan your empathy response to have a deliberate effect. You would use this kind of empathy response when the client is doing this and that kind of empathy response when the client is doing that, so it becomes very planful and interventionistic. Again, there is nothing wrong with this. It is just not Person-Centered therapy per se. Gendlin valued this--and this is where I actually had to break with Gendlin. The reason he did this is because of the research he and others did which seemed

to indicate that the client's ability to focus on their experience was what made therapy work. Clients who were low on the ability to focus were not able to benefit from therapy, Gendlin said. That's why he developed the focusing technique and, by the way, focusing is a perfectly good, valid technique. I think it can be used in Person-Centered therapy at least the way I do it, and I'll talk about that later.

But I'm not going to talk about focusing. I'm going to talk about one other thing. Gendlin and a bunch of others, Laura Rice and others, got into the idea that you should design empathy responses so that they enhance experiencing. So you would deliberate try to use your empathy responses to have an effect. You would make them vivid. You would use evocative metaphors. So you would use words like "heavy" and stuff like that. You're really trying to have impact on the client's experiential process. I now see this as a shift from Gendlin's earlier work on felt meaning, which I thought was an explication of what we were already doing---trying to understand and hear our clients. I got into the idea of enhancing experience, and I did a lot of research related to that. I still thought I was being client-centered.

Then I had the fortune, or misfortune, at the 1988 Leuven conference of hearing Barbara Brodley (Brodley, 1990). She gave a talk where she basically said Client-Centered therapy is different from Gendlin's experiential therapy. I was absolutely shocked; not only shocked, but devastated. It was like my whole paradigm had been upset. It took me a long time to process that, but I finally came to agree with her. What she was saying was that when you're responding to enhance experiencing you're doing something different--this is such a key point-- you're doing something different from listening to the whole person. Now, as a therapist, if I'm trying to enhance experiencing, I'm looking at or listening to a *part* of a person. That may be a perfectly legitimate thing to do from another point of view, but it's different from listening to and dialoging with the whole person. I believe in general the idea of interventionism is fundamentally different from whole person dialogue as an approach to therapy. I came to agree with Barbara. I realized that enhancing experience hadn't worked for me anyway. In fact interventionism hasn't worked as a philosophy for me. Finally, the idea of enhancing experiencing doesn't make philosophical sense. We're *always* experiencing.

Barbara Brodley brought me back to Rogers. So now--I have to get this in--even though I still think the idea of felt meaning has a lot of truth in it, I would say now that I don't respond to felt meanings so much anymore.

I don't deliberately do that, and I have to say this because I couldn't resist it, I now respond more "broadly" than that.

So now I'm going to tell you now what I currently think and this may or may not resonate with you—I don't know where you all are now. I now am back to being a Person-Centered therapist but I come at it from my own direction which is primarily based on Carl Rogers' statement to Martin Buber in 1957 (Cissna & Anderson, 1994). What he said was that therapy was a meeting of persons, or more accurately a byproduct of a meeting of persons. The meeting of persons comes first; therapy is a byproduct. That's basically what I think: Therapy is a byproduct of a meeting of persons. I want to read you a quote from the developmental psychologist Allison Gopnick (2016). This is from her recent book called the *Gardener and the Carpenter*. I think it's a wonderful description of Person-Centered therapy only it's in the disguise of talking about parenting. Gopnick is a research developmental psychologist at Berkeley. Gopnick is opposed to "parenting." She contrasts two models of parenting. She says: " 'to parent' is a goal-directed verb: it describes a job, a kind of work. The goal is somehow to turn your child into a better or happier or more successful adult.... The right kind of parenting will produce the right kind of child..." (p. 3). She calls this the 'carpenter' model of parenting. By contrast, she argues for the metaphor of parent as 'gardener.' She goes on to note that parenting

"...is not a form of work, and it isn't and shouldn't be directed toward the goal of sculpting a child into a particular kind of adult. Instead, to be a parent...is to be a part of a profound and unique human relationship, to engage in a particular kind of love... Love doesn't have goals or benchmarks or blueprints, but it does have a purpose. The purpose is not to change the people we love, but to give them what they need to thrive" (Gopnick, 2016, pp. 9-10).

"So our job as parents is not to make a particular kind of child. Instead, our job is to provide a protected space of love, safety, and stability in which children of many unpredictable kinds can flourish. Our job is not to shape our children's minds; it's to let those minds explore all the possibilities that the world allows. Our job is not to tell children how to play; it's to give them the toys and pick the toys up again after the kids are done. We can't make children learn, but we can let them learn." (2016, p. 20).

I'm not sure I know any better description of Person-Centered therapy.

In that regard, I'd like to say a word about empathy responses. Empathy responses are not interventions. We are not trying to do *to* the

client. We are not ‘providing’ empathy as if it were a drug. We are not *using* empathy to access emotions, enhance experience, help client’s process, provide support, increase mentalizing, stimulate insight, or whatever. As some of you know, toward the end of his life, Rogers said he wasn’t trying to reflect feelings. He was trying to test his own understanding. The direction of therapy is not from therapist to client, but from client to therapist. I am trying to receive and hear the client. If I’m intervening with anyone, I’m intervening with myself.

Peter Schmid (2004) says that therapy is not I-thou. Therapy is thou-I. In that regard I’d like to give you a little different way of thinking about empathy and oddly it contradicts Rogers. I’m going to read Rogers and then give my alternative view. He says “Empathy is the therapist’s sensitive ability and willingness to understand the client’s thoughts, feelings, and struggles from the client’s point of view” (Rogers, 1980, p. 85). From the client’s point of view. “It is the ability to see completely through the client’s eyes, to adopt his frame of reference. It means entering the private perceptual world of the other, being sensitive moment by moment to the changing felt meanings which flow from this other person. It means sensing meanings or which he or she is scarcely aware” (Rogers, 1980, p. 142).

I’m going to borrow Marge Witty (sitting next to me) to illustrate my point of view. So empathy is for me to face Marge, project myself into her head, and see it through her eyes. That’s how Rogers thinks about it. Right? Face to face. I ran into this quote a while back. I really liked it and I think it gives a different view of empathy. This is from Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, the author of *The Little Prince*. “Life does not consist of gazing at each other but at looking outward in the same direction” (de Saint-Exupéry, undated). So, the way I think of empathy is just like myself and the client are sitting next to each other and we’re both trying to look out at what the client is looking at. It could be something out of her life. It could be something inside her but we’re really trying to look at it together. I think that’s a better metaphor than the idea of me trying to get in their head. So I say, “Imagine you and the client are on a hill looking at clouds. The client says that she sees a cloud that looks like a lion. It doesn’t look that way to you. Perhaps it looks more like a horse. But you aren’t judging whether she is right or wrong. You’re trying to see it as she sees it. So in essence what you’re trying to do is say to the client, ‘I’d love to understand you. I want to see it as you see it, so help explain it to me.’” Some of the following things happen.

First, in order to make it clear to you, the client must better articulate her own vision to herself. So in explaining to you, she comes to know her

own vision better. Second, and this is really important, in explaining to you, through the sharing process, she becomes aware of another's mind, and of the need to communicate to other minds. In other words, she develops empathy for you. She must practice understanding you as well. If you watch Rogers and Gloria you will notice how often Gloria tests her understanding of Rogers as much as Rogers tests his understanding of Gloria. Third, by looking out at the clouds together and trying to share an understanding, the client is learning how to build bridges to other people. And you helped in this by dialoguing with her to share her understanding.

I want to say a little about psychotherapy integration. I've always been an integrationist. Even in my early days of being a Client-Centered therapist I was. At that point I took license from the writings of books like *New Directions in Client-Centered Psychotherapy* (Hart & Tomlinson, 1970) that argued that Client-Centered therapist could offer techniques, if they did it in a respectful empathic two-person way. And, of course, Carl Rogers himself supported that and his daughter Natalie was a good example (Bohart, 2012). I still believe that. I believe it is not whether I offer a technique but how. That's why I think of Allison Gopnick giving toys to her kids and picking up the toys afterwards but not telling them how to play.

If I give a client a technique, it's for them to use and to play with. I'm not the expert who knows what's best for them. To me that makes all the difference. Do I come from an expert's stance or do I come from a kind of fellow traveler, friend, colleague, person on the road, bystander. When the client is looking for something in the moment and something to persevere, it might be useful to them as part of our process together, just like if he was looking for something to hammer a nail and I had a toolbox with a hammer in it. The difference is that he's the expert on what he needs. If he does not want what I offered, we don't use it. If he tries it and doesn't like it, he knows best. We both learn from this encounter. Remember the steps are the most important thing. It's the encounter that matters. It's the connection that matters.

I'll end with this little bit from an autobiographical novel I'm writing and this just sort of summarizes everything I said:

"The client comes to see me...I begin to empathically listen to them. My interest is in meeting them in the moment...I listen carefully to what they have to say. I try to sensitively grasp the sense in what they are saying and I reflect it. I try to join with them so that we are sharing that understanding. I go step by step. I am, in the sense of following a story, trying to follow them. What I am saying back to them is, in a sense, 'If I follow you correctly'... I believe that as they begin to be heard, they will begin to zero in on what

bothers them. They will be able to stand back and gain perspective. They will begin to listen to themselves in a friendly manner. They will find insights and intuitions bubbling up out of their pre-conscious awareness. They will find themselves relaxing and being more at home with themselves, and that may be by itself therapeutic and enough...They may also discover that some of their crazy behavior has made sense. It did not arise from craziness within.

“The steps they take in our discussion will not necessarily follow a logical unfolding path. It may go here and there. Something may bubble up that is apparently unrelated and they may talk about that. But it turns out that it is intimately connected. This is the organismic wisdom process. Overall they are changing through this process. As they listen and hear each bit in each moment, as they dwell in each step, their organism is assimilating it and they are changing. They are becoming more balanced and more wise. They may not necessarily come up with the answers that they had originally sought. But they become different... They find new and more ecologically wise ways of functioning in the world. By ecologically wise I mean that their solutions take account of their situations. They balance the factors in their life, including what is wise for others.

I may at given moments also suggest a technique if it seems like something the client might want to try. I trust the client, as an intelligent agent, to dialogue with me on what they want. If the client decides to use it, we try it. It becomes a step on the path. It is the steps on the path that count. Whatever comes out of it becomes fodder for the next step.

In one sense the process may never get ‘finished.’ It is not like a story where, at the end, all loose ends are wrapped up....[Clients] leave because they are now finding their way in their worlds more effectively on a moment to moment basis. Like our therapy, which was moment to moment, life is a matter of moment to moment decisions unfolding towards the future and they are finding that they are better at riding that wave. They still may have struggles and unclarities. But they have learned how to live better with them and to live a productive life in spite of them and to work with them and on them when they arise, gradually assimilating them over time” (Bohart, in preparation).

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