

Ability to understand and respond to the emotional content of sessions

Eliciting emotions that facilitate change

An ability to help clients access, differentiate and experience their emotions in a manner that best facilitates change

Management of strong emotions that interfere with effective change

An ability to help clients recognise and accurately label their emotions
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An ability to help clients process their emotions, by acknowledging and/or containing emotional levels that are too high (e.g. anger, fear, despair) or too low (e.g. apathy)

An ability to deal effectively with emotional issues that interfere with effective change (e.g. excessive levels of anxiety, anger or hostility, or avoidance of strong affect)

An ability to help clients express their emotions while also monitoring their capacity to tolerate emotional expression and to deploy in-session strategies that help to manage any difficulties that emerge, for example by:

ensuring that discussion moves at the client's pace (i.e. their readiness and capacity to discuss an issue)

'pulling back' if the client appears to find an area too difficult, and returning to it at a later stage
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helping the client to stay with the emotion without escalating it

An ability to introduce techniques designed to manage unhelpfully strong emotions (such as aggressive behaviour or extreme fear), e.g.:

helping the client to name emotions and the 'messages' that they convey

indicating what behaviour is appropriate in the session (setting limits)
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When significant others are participants in the session, an ability to help them:

support the client's capacity to express emotion in an appropriate manner (in the session)
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express emotion in an appropriate manner
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Ability to reflect on the expression of behaviours and emotions

An ability to understand that the client's emotional expression (including aggressive behaviour) is a form of communication

An ability to reflect on the meaning of the behaviour or emotional expression and its relation to the current and past context
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An ability to describe the emotion or behaviour and elicit the client's interpretation of its meaning, and:

an ability to discuss any such interpretations with clients

An ability for the clinician to reflect on their own reaction to the emotional or behavioural expression and their influence on the client's behaviour, and:
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an ability for the clinician to make use of supervision to reflect (and, if need be, act) on these issues
