

Effective Techniques for Dealing with Highly Resistant Clients

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Mind Management Seminars

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Keynote/Plenary Handout

1.5 hours

Conventional Definitions of Resistance

- "Any client behavior that exhibits a reluctance, on the part of the client, to participate in the tasks of therapy as set forward by the therapist,"
- "...any behavior that indicates covert or overt opposition to the therapist, the counseling process, or the therapist's agenda," (Bischoff & Tracey, 1995, p. 488).

Alternative Perspectives: The Social Interaction Theorists

Resistance occurs as a result of a "...negative interpersonal dynamic between the therapist and the client" (Otani, 1989, p. 459).

"Resistance is defined as psychological forces aroused in the client that restrain acceptance of influence (acceptance of the counselor's suggestion) and are generated by the way the suggestion is stated and by the characteristics of the counselor stating it" (Strong and Matross, 1973, p. 26).

Resistance and Influence: Breaking the Negative Cycle

A general hierarchical list of the least forceful to most forceful methods to influence:

least forceful	completely non-directive
	indirectly suggest
	directly suggest
	provide advice/educate
	confront
most forceful	punitive force

Resistance is created when the method of delivering influence is _____ with the clients' current propensity to accept the manner in which the influence is delivered.

General Principles for Managing Resistance

Do the Unexpected_____

Slow the Pace_____

Focus on Details_____

Seek Emotionally Compelling Reasons for Change_____

Maintain an Attitude of Naïve Puzzlement _____

Establish Mutually Agree Upon Goals _____

Conclusion _____

All a client has to do to thwart your efforts is _____.

Adapted from King, 1992

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NOTES

References

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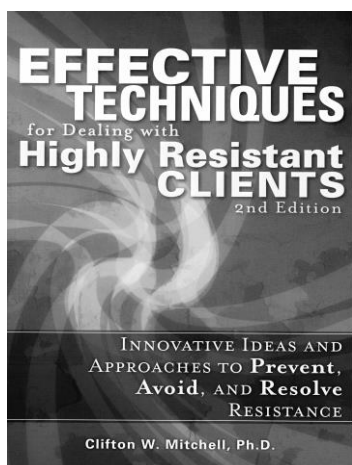
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Clifton W. Mitchell, Ph.D.

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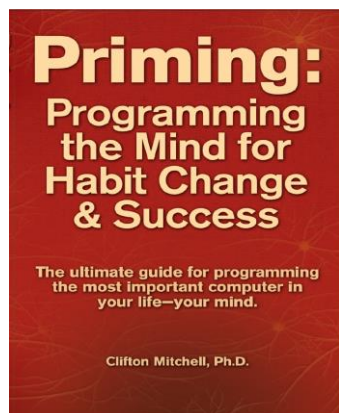
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