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• Aggression
• Control
• Traumatic Transference – Including Borderline Personality and other personality Disorders
• Emotional responses to the therapeutic process

Turbulence in a Holding Space
• Informed Consent
• Setting
• Safety and Context
• How much do they know?
• How much do you presume to know?
• De-Escalation based on Stages of Change

**Lets Start at the Beginning**
• When I say, “turbulent client,” what do you think of?
• Do you have your own mutual escalation concerns?
• What are some of your rules?
• Do you know how those rules effect clients?
• Do you have a cool down period?
• Are you isolated?

Who are we thinking about?
• Do you actively cope with isolation?
• Do you process "bad sessions?"
• Can we ever know what all we have done for people?

A Lonely Profession
• Judith Herman, “Trauma and Recovery”
  • Sole Purpose of the therapeutic relationship is to promote the recovery of the patient.
  • Therapist is ”Disinterested,” meaning the therapist will not use power to gratify personal needs.
- Otto Kernberg, “It is as if the patient’s life depends on keeping the therapist under control.”
  - Identify the actors in the borderline patients inner world.
• Herman-A Destructive force enters the room.
  • Voice of the perpetrator
  • Dyad into a Triad
  • Displaced anger
  • Displacement of rage from perpetrator to caregiver
  • Fear of needing to establish a control that will not come
• Herman-”The patient enters the therapeutic relationship prey to every sort of doubt and suspicion.”
  • How do you hold space for that?
  • Do you know your limits?

Borderline Personality Disorder
• Turbulence and unsettling emotion are hallmarks of change.
• These reactions are amplified in the presence of complex trauma.
• Scrutiny is amplified
• Trauma survivors (and subsequently people diagnosed with Borderline Personality Disorder) are exceptionally attuned.
• Our Role becomes utilizing this attunement to accept safety and process.

Destabilizing Safety
• Our emotion can be the difference
• Do not assume naïveté (Think of attunement)
• The importance of boundaries to allow for awareness and acknowledgement of countertransference.
  • We cannot communicate a reaction if we are not creating space to have it.

Countertransference and Awakened Emotion
• Many of the incidents we may recount in our practice that include aggression or acting out also include our own distancing from self awareness.

• Protective patterns exist as a result of exposure to traumatic narrative.

• How do you handle your inevitable helplessness in the face of these narratives?

Traumatic Countertransference/Vicarious Trauma
• Guiding presence- Dark Nights
• Trusted intuition
• The constant Seeker
• The art of the Non-Rescue
• Avoiding Self Importance

The Self Aware Practitioner and Reducing Escalation
• Think of an experience of you at your best.
• How long have you been a trusted individual?
• The role of the witness
• Grounding/Intentional awareness
• A person will go as deep as you will.

The Self Aware Practitioner as a safe place
Applied and Accepted Expertise

• Outcomes (Your own take)
• Checking the relationship
• Psychoeducation
• CURIOSITY
• Allowing your knowledge in the room
• Allowing the honesty that comes from authentic presence
  • Rogerian concepts
• Connections to a larger process
• Working within a narrative
• Getting to still waters
• Titration of the process
  • View this as part of your role
• Danger of working without a narrative
  • This can make the situation too unstable
  • Or dependent

Applied Practice
• Affective Shifts
  • One of our greatest gifts
• A distracted practitioner can be the source of escalation
• A focused practitioner is a source of strength
• The benefit of the full hour
• Timing
• Patience
  • The art of the push
  • Meeting a person where they are at does not mean just one direction

The FEEL of Change
The FEEL of Change

• Reduction of the clinician ego
• Acceptance of intuition while respecting process
• Reduction of the ego based corrective dialogue
  • Difference between identifying discrepancy and confrontation
  • Further response to helplessness
  • Helplessness unrealized is a breeding ground for escalation.
- Right brain to Right brain communication
- Your presence is an initial resource for internal process
- The gift of internalization
  - Growth of internal resources reduces certain escalation
- Transactional Analysis
  - Who’s Talking?
- The Greatness of D.W. Winnicott

The SPACE for Change
• The Craft of being a stable presence
• Being a presence without taking up space
• Moment to Moment awareness
• Moment to Moment appreciation

The De-Escalated Practitioner
• Supervision
• Reflective Supervision
• Isolation as a concern
• Your own therapy
  • Utilizing countertransference as an awareness tool in a general sense

The De-Escalated Practitioner
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• Trauma Stewardship (Van Dernoot Lipsky)
  • Warning Signs
  • Microculture
  • Plan B
Our Luminous Limitations

• The gift of uncertainty
• The power of, ”I Don’t Know.”
• The Strength of Authenticity
• Around the end of nineteenth century, a tourist from the United states visited the famous Polish Rabbi Hafez Hayyim. He was astonished to see that the rabbi’s home was just a simple room filled with books. The only furniture was a table and a bench. “Rabbi, where is your furniture?” asked the tourist.

“Where is yours? “ replied Hafez

“Mine? But I am only a visitor here.”

“So am I,” said the rabbi.

The Spirituality of Imperfection

By Ernest Kurtz
• Thank you for all that you do!!
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