

Transparency of the Process

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It has been four years since I completed my externship and went on to do Core Skills. When I look back on each year, I realize my skills have increased ever so slightly from the year before. As I continue to deepen my learning of the EFT model, it is exciting when I hear of another way to fine-tune my application of EFT.

Sometimes I learn tips from my fellow EFT colleagues in my community or through the ICEEFT listserv. Sometimes I learn new tips or concepts from trainings or from my supervisor. Most recently, I learned a lesson from a client about the importance of being transparent about the process with my clients. I learned that it is not enough to tell a couple once at the beginning of our work together how the EFT process works. Rather there needs to be repetitions of my transparency with them about the process. In particular, this couple showed me the value of seeding attachment – offering them a picture of the hope of secure attachment that I envision for them. Our clients teach us so much, don't they?

I was working in Stage 1 with a lovely couple thinking I had built an alliance with both the husband and the wife. I noticed my male withdrawing client seemed to interrupt me frequently. He is a wonderful pastor, by the way, and he would often go off on tangents into what sounded to me like one of his sermons, and I would have to bring him back into the present moment.

I remember thinking how I'd love to go to his church and hear him preach, as he sounds pretty gifted in our sessions; however, at the moment I wished he wouldn't exit from my attempts to do good step 2 and 3 work.

I had given my "EFT elevator speech" – an overview of the EFT process – at the first session and thought the husband was on board, but hoping to help him especially get more focused on the process of EFT, I recommended they read *An Emotionally Focused Workbook for Couples: The Two of Us* by Kallos-Lilly and Fitzgerald

Wow! When they returned for their next session, the husband told me how much he appreciated reading the materials I recommended, he felt like he was the Karate Kid and I was Mr. Miyagi. It was like I was teaching him "wash on, wash off" without understanding the purpose it would serve later in the ring.

I listened and it was in that moment I understood that some of his exiting came as a result of his not trusting what I was doing with them. He did not grasp what I was doing as I tried to lead them into steps 2, 3 and 4. He told me that as a pastor, he made sure his congregation knew the "vision" he had for them and their community. Until he read the homework material, he admitted he hadn't understood where I was taking them. He didn't have my vision or a clear understanding of the EFT road map.

It was then (after validating and repeating, of course) that I elaborated on my EFT elevator speech (which he likely couldn't take in at the first session because he was so anxious). I explained the steps and stages of EFT more explicitly. When I described how they would have those sweet, sacred bonding moments in Stage 2 (where they would naturally gaze into one another's eyes, reach for the other's hand while the oxytocin was flowing, and I would just sit back in awe of how amazing and courageous they are), they both seemed mesmerized. Both were leaning in and the husband burst out saying, "I'm all in. Let's do this!"

He proceeded to ask me which step we were working on. I told him the first step was building a trusting alliance with me and that I was afraid I had tried to move too quickly into the other steps. This time he actually validated what I was saying by telling me he had struggled to trust me because he didn't know my vision for them and why I was doing what I was doing.

Now that I have been more transparent about the process of EFT, our therapy has gone much more smoothly. I plan to continue being transparent about the process along the way with them, too, as they need repetition of MY words about the process as well.

Recently, I attended a workshop taught by Marlene Best and Kathryn Rheem on Stage 2 change events. While there, I learned how transparent Kathryn is about the EFT process with her clients and where they are in the process along the way. That was so validating for me to hear on the heels of the experience I had with this couple.

Since I returned from the training, I have been more explicit and transparent with my other couples about what we are doing and why. In just a short time, I have already seen how fine-tuning my application of EFT by being more transparent about the process has deepened the level of trust my clients have with me. I have seen my clients' nervous systems visibly settle down after being more transparent.

Deepening my learning of EFT is so enjoyable and rewarding! I look forward to what comes next!