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Human Services Program
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CLINICAL DEFINITIONS
Section One

affect: an individual’s expression of mood, temperament, and feelings. An individual’s overt emotional state.

catharsis: A release of emotional tension, as after an overwhelming experience, that restores or refreshes the spirit.

apathy: Indifference; lack of interest in or desire for anything.

empathy: Identification with and understanding of another's situation, feelings, and motives.

sympathy: A feeling or an expression of pity or sorrow for the distress of another.

ethics: Pertains to the beliefs we hold about what constitutes right conduct. Ethics are moral principles adopted by an individual or group to provide rules for right conduct.

countertransference: The inappropriate feelings that are aroused in the psychotherapist toward the client.

transference: In therapy the feelings that a client displaces onto the therapist, especially the feelings that they have toward a significant person in their past (i.e., mother or father).
**congruent**: Corresponding, fits together.

**incongruent**: Not corresponding, does not fit together.

**de-lu-sion**: A false belief strongly held in spite of invalidating evidence, especially as a symptom of mental illness.

**hallucination**: An imaged *perception* of some object or phenomenon that is not really present. Often a symptom of a *psychosis*, it may involve hearing nonexistent voices (*auditory hallucination*), seeing objects that are not there (*visual hallucination*), smelling (*olfactory hallucination*), and touching (*haptic hallucination*).

**substance use disorder**: The term substance use disorder is used to describe the wide range of the disorder, mild, moderate, severe. This includes alcohol and drugs.

**tolerance**: An individual’s capacity to endure or resist the effects of certain drugs. Because drug response tends to decrease with repeated doses, the user increases the amount taken to get the same effect.

**External Locus of Control**: Rely on others to make decisions.

**Internal Locus of Control**: Rely on their own inner sense in making decisions.
Hawthorne Effect: The phenomenon that often occurs in social research in which subjects behave differently from their norm because of their awareness of being observed.

labeling theory: The hypothesis that when people are assigned a label, such as paranoid schizophrenia, to indicate some kind of disorder or deviance, others tend to react to the subjects as though they were deviant. Also, the subjects may begin to act in a way that meets the others’ expectations. This may be a type of self-fulfilling prophecy and an example of the Hawthorne effect.

learned helplessness: Helpless responses learned in one situation are likely to carry over into other situations. People failing repeatedly due to lack of ability increase their chances of not trying harder in later situations because they feel helpless over one’s environment which leads to giving up.

self-fulfilling prophecy: A chain of events that result in an apparent confirmation of the expectations.

social comparisons/theory: Judgments of abilities, behavior, appearance, and other characteristics in relation to those of others.

social learning theory: An approach that emphasizes the role of modeling, or observational learning, in the development of behavior.

race: The major subdivision of the human species whose distinguishing characteristics are genetically transmitted.

culture: The customs, habits, skills, technology, arts, values, ideology, science, and religious and political behavior of a group of people in a specific time period.

ethnic group: A distinct group of people who share a common language, set of customs, history, culture, race, religion, or origin.
**assessment:** Procedures by which a counselor/program identifies and evaluates an individual’s strengths, weaknesses, problems, and needs for development of a treatment plan.

**treatment plan:** Process by which counselor and client identify and rank problems needing resolution; establish agreed upon immediate and long term goals; and decide on a treatment process and the resources to be utilized. Developed mutually as a result of a focused interview and patient history gathered during initial session. Most importantly, the goals are measurable and obtainable.

**case management:** To bring together services, agencies, resources, and people within a planned framework of action toward the achievement of established goals.

**consultation:** Relating with our own and other professionals to assure comprehensive, quality care for the client.

**screening:** Purpose of screening is to determine that a client is appropriate and eligible for admission to a particular program.

**intake:** The administrative and initial procedures for admission to a program. Includes completion of various forms; State and Hospital forms; initial assessment documented; appropriate releases obtained and consent for treatment signed; primary counselor assigned.

**referral:** Identifying the needs of the client that cannot be met by the counselor or agency and assisting the client to utilize the support systems and community resources available.
Section Two

an-te-ce-dent: Something that produces a result coming before in time, place, rank, or sequence.

classical conditioning: A procedure in which a neutral stimulus is paired with a stimulus that triggers a reflexive response until the neutral stimulus alone provokes a similar response.

operant conditioning: A type of learning defined by B.F. Skinner (1904-1990) in which behaviors are strengthened or weakened by altering the consequences that follow them.

negative reinforcement: In behavior modification, the strengthening of a response through escape or avoidance conditioning.

positive reinforcement: Strengthening a desired behavior or response by presenting a reinforcing stimulus contingent on performance of the response. The reinforcer may be a desired object, a privilege, verbal approval, or any other stimulus that strengthens the response.

punishment: 1. A penalty imposed for misbehavior (for example, a parent spanking, isolating, or withdrawing privileges from a child) or illegal acts (for example, incarceration). 2. In behavior modification, the presentation of an unpleasant or undesired event following a behavior, the consequence of which is that there is decreased probability that the behavior will be repeated.

extinction: In behavior modification, the elimination of a behavior.

flooding: A procedure used in behavior therapy in which stimuli that elicit anxiety are presented with such regularity or intensity that the subject eventually stops responding with anxiety.

successive approximation: A technique commonly used in behavior therapy in which each small, incremental step toward the goal behavior is reinforced.

token economy: The therapeutic procedure in which the clients are given tokens, slips of paper, or coupons whenever they fulfill specified tasks or behave according to some specified standard. These tokens may then be redeemed for the client’s choice of certain goods or privileges.
**factitious disorders:** Physical or behavior symptoms that are voluntarily produced by the individual, apparently in order to play the role of patient, and often involving chronic, blatant lying.

**somatoform disorders:** Physical symptoms for which no medical causes can be found. These symptoms are apparently not under voluntary control and are linked to psychological factors or conflicts.

**sub-jective:** Based on individual judgment; proceeding from or taking place within a person's mind such as to be unaffected by the external world.

**ob-jective:** Uninfluenced by emotions or personal prejudices.

**a-cute:** Extremely sharp or severe.

**ad-vo-ca-cy:** The act of pleading or arguing in favor of something, such as a cause, an idea, or a policy; active support.

**am-bi-gu-i-ty:** Capable of being interpreted in more than one-way. Doubtfulness or uncertainty as regards interpretation.

**chron-ic:** Of long duration; continuing; lasting for a long period of time or marked by frequent recurrence.

**co-hort:** 1. A group or band of people. 2. A companion or an associate.

**dog-mat-ic:** Steady and persistent; unremitting.

**ho-me-o-sta-sis:** The tendency of a system or organism to maintain stability and, when disrupted, to adapt and strive to restore the stability previously achieved.

**paradoxical directive (reverse psychology):** In certain types of family therapy, an approach in which the social worker or other therapist tells the family members to continue their symptomatic behavior and sometimes to “improve on it.” This makes them more aware of the existence of the behavior and the gains they derive from it and finally gives them more control over it.

**process:** To think about something.
S.O.A.P.: Format for case presentation.
- **Subjective Statement:** Actual statement made by client.
- **Observations:** What happened during the session.
- **Assessment:** Based on the client’s statement and your observations, what can be interpreted or assessed about the client’s condition, situation, or thought processes.
- **Plan:** What specific interventions are needed; who will provide them; how will the results be measured; and, what timeframe will be used.

**Additional Definitions**

**causal-i-ty:** The principle of or relationship between cause and effect; a causal agency, force, or quality.

**cov-ert:** Deliberately hidden from view or knowledge; secret.

**DAP:** Charting method.
- **(D) Data:** The content of the session. Include client’s mood and orientation and topics covered/behaviors during session.
- **(A) Assessment:** Your assessment of the client’s status and progress toward treatment goals. Goals can be stated and/or numbered. Assessment of new treatment needs that have emerged in the session can be included here.
- **(P) Plan:** Include the plan for future sessions. This could include “continue with treatment plan” or more specific actions to be taken. It would be appropriate to include date of next session in this area.

**empir-i-cal:** Based on fact, observation, or experience.

**empow-er-ment:** To help clients develop and make their own decisions for improving their circumstances.

**gran-di-ose:** Characterized by greatness of scope or intent; grand.

**in-nate:**
1. Possessed at birth; inborn.
2. Possessed as an essential characteristic; inherent.
3. Of or produced by the mind rather than learned through experience; possessed at birth.

**in-sight:** Self-understanding and awareness of one’s feelings, motivations, and problems.

**o-vert:** Open and observable; not hidden.

**pre-dis-pose:** To be (someone) inclined to something in advance.

**rap-port:** Relationship, especially one of mutual trust or emotional affinity.
Human Services Program, *Clinical Definitions*

**Release of Information:** Signed form that gives permission for the counselor to talk to someone on behalf of the client.

**ret-ro-spect:** A review, survey, or contemplation of things in the past.

**toxic:** Poisonous, deadly, dangerous.

**values:** Pertain to beliefs and attitudes that provide direction to everyday living.
Bibliography

