

WEB FORM H
CLIENT BEHAVIOR SYSTEM

Client behavior

Definition

1. Resistance

Includes complaining or blaming others inappropriately, defenses (e.g., projection, dissociation, intellectualization, avoidance, denial), sidetracking (changing the topic), and inappropriate requests (reflecting excessive helplessness or dependency); resistant behavior tends to block progress in helping and is often used by clients to suggest that they cannot change or to protect themselves from a perceived abusive or hostile helper; the client's tone of voice is often defensive, whiny, defeated, abusive, or hostile.
2. Agreement

Indicates understanding or approval of what the helper has said without adding substantially to the helper's statement; must be more than a simple response that serves to maintain conversation (e.g., "um-hmm" or "yeah").
3. Appropriate request

An attempt to obtain clarification, understanding, information, or advice from the helper; if client acts helpless or overly dependent, code as resistance.
4. Recounting

Includes small talk, answers to questions, or factual information about past events; client reports in a storytelling style (e.g., "I said ..., he said ...") rather than actively exploring current feelings and thoughts or interacting with the helper; tone of voice tends to be monotonous or conversational, with minimal immediate involvement.
5. Cognitive-behavioral exploration

Indicates that the client is currently involved exploring significant thoughts or behaviors; clients are actively thinking about their issues, although they do not have all the answers and are exploring to understand more; voice tone tends to have a lot of energy and to be irregular, with pauses and thoughtfulness; disagreeing with or challenging the helper would be coded here if clients are actively exploring their own thoughts or behaviors; this category is not coded when a client is talking about another person unless understanding that person's behavior has significant implications for the client.

Client behavior

Definition

6. Affective exploration

Statements that indicate that the client is currently involved and exploring feelings about therapeutically significant material; specific feeling words must be stated (e.g., happy, sad, anxious), or clearly visible nonverbal behavior (e.g., audible sighs, clenched fists, lowering of the head, crying, or shifting body position) must accompany affective material; the client's voice must sound as if feelings are being experienced in the present moment; discussion of past feelings would be coded as recounting, unless the client is re-experiencing the feelings in the present moment; disagreeing with or challenging the helper would be coded here if clients are actively exploring their feelings.

7. Insight

Client expresses an understanding of something about himself or herself and can articulate patterns or reasons for behaviors, thoughts, or feelings. Insight usually involves an “aha” experience, in which the client perceives himself or herself or the world in a new way; the client takes appropriate responsibility rather than blaming others, using “shoulds” imposed from the outside world, or rationalizing (note that these latter behaviors would be coded as resistance).

8. Therapeutic changes

Client expresses changes in her or his behaviors, thoughts, and feelings in therapeutically significant areas; changes can be increases in positive target areas, decreases in negative areas, or indications of action-oriented plans or decisions; if client reports changes but no change is apparent to judges, code as resistance.

Note: The terms *helper* and *helping* are used here instead of *therapist* and *therapy* as in the original system. From “Client Behavior in Counseling and Therapy Sessions,” by C. E. Hill, M. M. Corbett, B. Kanitz, P. Rios, R. Lightsey, and M. Gomez, 1992, *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, 39, pp. 548–549. Copyright © 1992 by the American Psychological Association.