

Identifying Core Hurts and View of Self

Oftentimes clients are unaware that their Core Hurts and View of Self (VOS) are driving their problematic coping mechanisms (both proactive and reactive). Because they work so hard, unconsciously, to avoid them, their Core Hurts remain hidden, implicit. In order for lasting and permanent changes to take place in our clients lives, it is imperative that we help them make explicit what is implicit - i.e., we need to bring to their awareness their Core Hurts and VOS that exist deep within them. Here are some steps:

PRESENTING PROBLEM/RECENT EXPERIENCE

Describe the triggering event (who, what, when, where, and how):

Identify Any Hurts

These are the hurts that have been experienced during the event. Use the list below to identify them. "I was..."

Disregarded	Devalued	Disrespected
Disapproved	Accused	Rejected
Unloved	Uncared for	Judged
Abandoned	Condescended	Betrayed
Exploited	Emasculated	Discarded
Neglected	Deceived	Excluded
Other _____		

Ask your clients if they have experienced those same hurts before - is the experience familiar? If so, the hurts will often be much more intense and fit in the category of Core Hurts - hurts and wounds that have been experienced repeatedly throughout their lives. If they haven't been addressed in their past, it would be natural for those hurts to have been carried into adulthood, but with more volume and intensity. Core Hurts almost always get internalized into what's called the "View of Self".

Identify View of Self

The View(s) of Self are negative beliefs about ourselves that have been internalized due to Core Hurts. We try very hard to redeem these beliefs and/or avoid experiencing them. These are the internalized shame messages: “People keep hurting me this way - therefore I am...”

Unworthy	Worthless	Unimportant
Unacceptable	Unlovable	Defective
Bad	Unredeemable	Failure
Inadequate	Helpless	Hopeless
Deserving of Punishment	Not Good Enough	Incompetent
Ugly	A Disappointment	A Pariah
Weak	Unwanted	Disposable
Other _____		

PAST EXPERIENCES

Take your time helping your clients reflect on their life stories to recall events where they experienced similar Core Hurts that reinforced their View of Self. Help your clients make connections between how their past experiences affect present ones.

Age	Events	Core Hurts (How have I been hurt?)	View of Self (What does this say about me?)

Please note that this is mainly a tool for assessment, used as an integral step in the larger process of healing and change. It would be appropriate to ask what we should do with these Core Hurts and VOS once we've identified them. We will address these in future tools.