

Back to Basics

A constructivist understanding of counselling

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Reality isn't what it used to be

The Idea of Constructivism

Social Systems

From simple systems to complex systems

Learning-theories

Exercise: How do you learn?

Reduction of Complexity

Communication, a Unity of Information, Message and Understanding

Exercise: To check up on your Understanding

Constructivist Counselling

Vance Peavy's Lifestory

Sociodynamic Perspectives

The Constructivist Counselling Process

Narrative Methods - Telling your Life-story

Exercise: Chapters of my life makes a book

Life space Mapping

Exercise: Examining my Balloon

Meaningful Activities

Exercise: The Magic Wand

Deconstruction and Meaningful Questions

Exercise: My Previous Success

Co-designing and negotiating plausible projects

Exercise: Mapping Direction of my Life

Metaphors

The Constructivist Counselling Process

**ENTER AND
INVESTIGATE
LIFE SPACE**

**TELLING THE STORY
MAPPING, CREATING
COHERENCE**

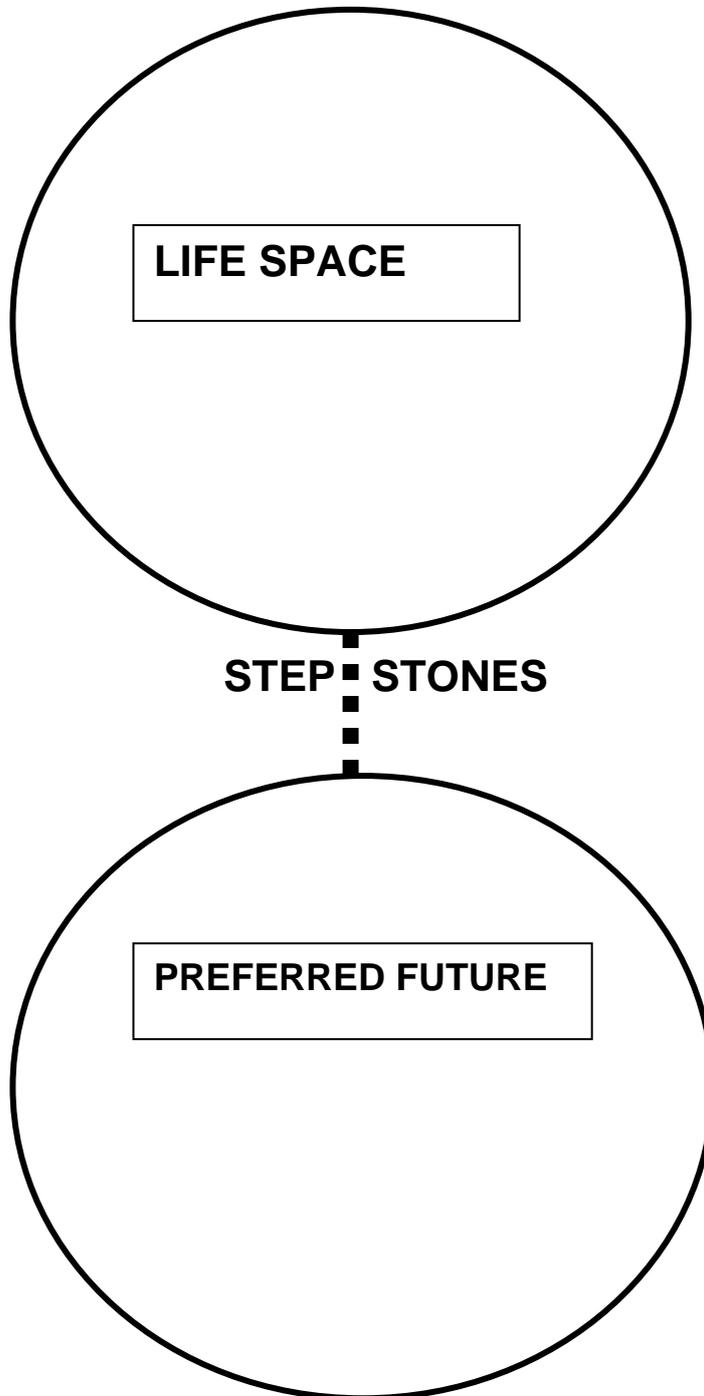
**CO-
CONSTRUCTING
SENSIBLE
CONVERSATION**

**SUSTAINING
COMMON
GROUND**

**FINDING
POSSIBLE
PATHS,
PRODUCING
CHOICES**

**CO-DESIGNING AND
NEGOTIATING
PLAUSIBLE PROJECTS**

CONSTRUCTIVIST COUNSELLING MAPPING MODEL



SOCIODYNAMIC PERSPECTIVES

- **There is no single “God’s eye” view of reality – rather there are multiple realities.**
- **Humans are “self-organizing” entities, not a set of traits. Each person’s life is a story, or a set of stories – an evolving biographical narrative under continuous revision.**
- **Individuals construct their own selves through the interpretation they make and the actions they take.**
- **A self is polyphonic, it has several voices. Four important voices are:**
 - The voices of health and well-being**
 - The voice of intimacy**
 - The voice of work-life and learning**
 - The voice of spirituality**
- **People are always in a context.**
- **People are meaning-makers and word munchers. They use language and action to make meaning out of daily activities.**
- **To exist as an empowered person requires reflection**

Chapters of my life makes a book

Each of us experiences critical events that turn out to be turning points in our life. Think back on your life from your earliest memories up to the present. Identify some such critical events and experiences which have shaped your life. First write a sentence or two to very briefly describe them. Next give each one a name as though it were the beginning of a new chapter in your life. When you have given names to the main chapters in your life, pick out one which you are especially interested in and talk to your counsellor about it. Try to remember details – who was part of the event, how did you change, and what influence did this experience have on you from then on?

MAPPING

Many kinds of maps

- Life-space map
- Problem map
- Relationship map
- Culture map
- My family
- Future

Examining my balloon

What is the most important balloon in your life that lifts you up?

What do you do to make your balloon flying?

What are the important features of your balloon? Places? People? Situations? Thoughts? Feelings? Skills?

In the space below, draw your balloon and show what it is made of – use words, symbols, anything you wish to show.

The magic wand

Imagine that you are sleeping and a magical figure appears in your dream and says to you: Here is a magic wand. Take it and use it to make your balloon fly higher and brighter.

Which features would you like to add to make your balloon more valuable to you?

What would you put into your balloon?

Use the space below and draw your magic balloon. Talk to your counsellor about the differences.

What could you do to realize some of the differences?

Deconstruction and meaningful questions *Blind-spot-reflections*

Questions that establish a context

Who has an opinion about this?

Who will be influenced by your decision?

Questions that build a time perspective

When did this problem begin? Drawing the line of my life

Questions that require descriptions

How would you describe.....?

Questions that search for possible futures

Which expectations do you have?

Questions that help the client to see things from another person's viewpoint.

What would your parents say to that?

Questions that help the client to see multiple realities.

In how many ways could you.....?

Questions that help the client to make meaning

What makes sense in this situation?

Questions that help the client to re-define himself

If you imagine yourself in three years, what do you see?

Questions that focus on peoples' forces and resources

When did you do something like this with success?

My previous success

A: Tell the story of an occasion where things turned out successfully because of something you did. Tell as many details as possible.

B: Ask good questions to elaborate the story. Ask for descriptions and details.

C: Fill out post-it-slips with all the resources and skills that **A** shows in her story.

C: Give **A** feed back by showing her all the post-it-slips, explain your choice of words and stick the slips to **A**'s body.

Mapping direction of my life

Just as an architect designs a house and a carpenter builds it, we can design and build our own life. The kind of life we build will depend a lot on the values and guiding principles which we hold on to. Values are like a compass, we are guided by them as we journey along.

In the space below, put the names of the values or guiding principles which you think act as your compass in life. Then try to think of examples where these values or principles have influenced you in important decisions or plans. Use words, symbols, drawings or scribbles.

Introduce your values and principles to the group and discuss the differences