



Getting Started as a Therapist. . .

Common Mistakes	Helpful Hints
Trying to take the clients pain away	Appreciate and empathize with the pain
Mind reading the client's thoughts and feelings	Help clients express their own experience
Getting lost in the laundry list	Help clients clarify what is most important
Telling the client what to think or feel	Look at the world from your client's perspective
Trying too hard. Becoming terminally serious. Trying to do it perfect.	Relax, be yourself. Be genuine, warm, and curious. Allow humor a place in the room.
Getting silenced. Can't get a word in edgewise.	Interrupt very talkative clients. Give yourself permission to be therapeutically rude.
Slipping into long winded commentary	Keep your input short (e.g. 10 word limit)
Getting stuck in the client's complaints	Ask about client's goals.
Running sessions overtime	Begin to wrap up a session 5 minutes early
Presenting paperwork like a zombie	Welcome the client to the first session. Summarize what's written in an easy to understand way.
Talking in jargon and psychobabble	Speak in plain language. Use the client's words.
Feeling you have to do something! Intervening without doing an assessment	Don't just do something, sit there! Tolerate the anxiety.