

SEVERE TRAUMA & STRESS RECOVERY WORKSHOPS

3. PRESUPPOSITIONAL LANGUAGE

The use of pre-suppositional language as a use of indirect communication was one of Milton Erickson's major innovations.

Presuppositions are ways of talking that presume something without stating it directly: they are "implicit, unconscious suggestions."

Counsellors and therapists can use pre-suppositions to introduce change notions and expectations during the counselling or therapy session.

Some useful examples of pre-suppositional language are as follows:

1. "Which problem do you want to solve first, A or B?"
2. "When you have got through this time of difficulty, what other changes will you make in your life?"
3. "Tell me about a time when the problem was less of a problem."
4. "When you have had similar difficulties in the past, what strategy/ies did you use to solve them?"
5. T: "Tell me about a time when things were better."
C: "There have been none."
T: "So, you can't remember a time right now."
6. "Who will be the first to notice when you've cut back on your drinking?"
7. "What will be different in your life when therapy is successful?"
8. "When you are attending school on a more regular basis, what will be the main reasons for doing so?"
9. "How have you coped with things being worse?"
10. "When things are better again, how might you have got that to happen?"
(Please add your own...)
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.

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