

Behavioral Assessment

- ## Behavioral Assessment Model
- Personality assessment (e.g., MMPI, etc.) and self-report inventories have a place in this model
 - For sake of brevity, I will not cover those topics here
 - However, data obtained from psychometrically reliable tests can be useful in your formulation

- ## Behavioral Assessment Model
- ### Interpreting The Presenting Complaint
- Therapist must decide whether presenting problems are the problems to target directly and first or later
 - (e.g., alcohol problems may become secondary to interpersonal relationship problems, etc.)
 - Are there central or higher order problems?
 - Problem: I yell at my son too much
 - After Probing: It only happens after a fight with wife or criticism from Boss

Behavioral Assessment Model

Antecedent, Concurrent, Consequent Events

- Antecedent typically mean immediately before the occurrence of the problem behavior; but can mean distal or developmental factors
- Concurrent refers to thoughts and feelings occurring simultaneously with the problem
- Consequent refers to what events follow the problem behavior; important also for the maintenance role these events may play

Behavioral Assessment Model

The Assessment Interview

- Interview moves from the general to the specific
- Clinician works to establish rapport and trust

Rapport Building

1. Be Especially Attentive
2. Be Emotionally Objective
3. Be an Empathic Listener
4. Make Clear that Therapeutic Relationship is Confidential

Behavioral Assessment Model

Progression through Intake Interview

1. When did the problem begin?
2. How frequently does it occur?
3. When and in what situations does it occur?
4. Generally, what occurs before and after it?
5. What does the client think about while the problem is occurring?
6. What has been done to change it thus far?

Behavioral Assessment Model

Interview Data: A cautionary tale

- Interview data are notoriously unreliable and subject to distortion—particularly about the past
- Current situations, quantified behaviors, minimal inference and interpretation are best

Behavioral Assessment Model

Self-Recording (Self-Monitoring)

- Value-added component of many “self-control” based intervention
 - E.g., weight reduction programs, smoking cessation, depression and anxiety treatments, etc.
- Allows for assessment of infrequent, but important behaviors
 - E.g., seizures
- Higher reliability than retrospective accounts
- Act of self-monitoring may produce behavior change in and of itself (reactivity)

Behavioral Assessment Model

Observation in Vivo

- Observation of problems in natural environments
 - E.g., classroom settings, homes, hospital wards
- Generally reliable and sensitive to treatment change
- Susceptible to observer biases
 - E.g., expectations, self-fulfilling prophecy, allegiance effects
- May lead to behavior change (reactivity)

Behavioral Assessment Model

Self-Monitoring vs. Observation in Vivo

Discussion: What are the advantages and disadvantages of each technique?

Behavioral Assessment Model

Role Playing

- Having clients enact various interpersonal situations
- Origins in psychodynamic (Moreno) and gestalt/experiential (Perls) traditions
- A way to assess client skills
- A way to access thoughts or feelings in difficult situations
- Success may hinge on client's willingness to engage in the role playing

Behavioral Assessment Model

Physiological Measurement

- Heart rate, skin conductance, blood pressure, penile erection, vaginal blood flow, sleep studies, etc.
- Clinical, forensic, research utility
 - Assessment of bed wetting, marital conflict

Behavioral Assessment Model

Multimethod Assessment

- No assessment technique is superior to an other one
- Rather, it touches the elephant at a different point
- Even though method variance will account for much of the correlation, convergence among disparate assessment techniques may influence your formulation

Behavioral Assessment Model

Develop Hypotheses: Global

- Tend to focus on slow triggers and other broad contextual information
- Points to relationships between problem behaviors and some basic life stresses or circumstances

Behavioral Assessment Model

Develop Hypotheses: Specific

- Describe the triggers
- Describe behavior
- Describe what you believe is the payoff of that behavior under those conditions
