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GUIDED IMAGERY & STORYTELLING

Practical uses of stories and imagery in healthcare settings

'Such a useful day and yet so imaginative and liberating too. It has left the team with many new skills and a much better appreciation of their own abilities to heal and soothe with stories.' Lynn Hastings, Day Hospice Care Manager.

In this enjoyable and highly practical day, the connections between the kind of storytelling that is done for imaginative fun and guided imagery for purposes of healing, soothing and working with practical difficulties is fully explored. It was originally developed for the children's charity, Kids Out for training health care workers with young people with serious health challenges, but skills learned can be applied to all ages.

You will learn:

- how various kinds of entertaining stories and other images can also work in healing, soothing, coping with pain and fears and mobilising the power of optimism
- how to take clients (both children and adults) on life-enhancing, enabling imaginary journeys and the practical skills of working with the imaginative mind
- 3 x guide patterns for multi-sensory picturing and story making
- how to use effective language to enhance the effect of imagery, make therapeutic suggestions, stimulate the relaxation response etc.
- how to tell simple stories that have large effects
- a mini-repertoire of powerful short story patterns that can be adapted creatively to both entertain and help in many everyday healthcare situations
- how to identify the useful elements in stories and how to emphasize these
- how to use 3 x 5 stage solution-focused story frames as guided imagery and as guides to make up stories with specific effects and outcomes in mind
- how to involve clients of all ages in making enabling stories and imagery through talk and games
- to understand the power of metaphorical re-framing as a valuable and highly effective tool

WORKSHOP OUTLINE

A typical outline for this day is given below. Session length and content can be adapted to suit differing professional needs. The course has now successfully been presented for both practical carers etc. and for those with specialist training and knowledge. Levels of theoretical content are adjusted accordingly, though ideas are always presented in an engaging and entertaining way. The usual pattern in training days would be 2 x approx. 90 minute sessions a.m. and 2 x shorter (60 to 80 mins. approx.) sessions p.m.

Session 1. Imaginary Journeys

Introductory talk: How imagery works and how telling stories is also a form of guided imagery -- What reframing is and how it helps to reframe clients ideas about their challenges/problems – How mind and body relate and the power of the imaginative mind – How in all conditions, there is an element of choice that can be emphasized – How this connects to basic patterns of human need - The practicalities of doing formal guided imagery (as distinguished from informal guided imagery in the telling of tales, playing of games etc. dealt with later in the day) – How to improvise around a guide script and debrief through story telling – How to make this approach effective, natural and entertaining with children

Exercises in pairs:

1. Giving imagery for relaxation
2. Taking an imaginary journey through specific imagery (guide scripts provided e.g. The Fantasy Room. Cloud 9 etc.)
3. Story game based on the guided imagery (see *Imagine On* booklet games in Part 2)

Session 2. Powerful Stories (Following coffee etc. break)

How to find the healing/soothing/reframing elements in stories – How to tell (and play with) stories to emphasize those healing etc. elements – The thieves in the wardrobe (story) – The Mbala Effect: looping around natural opposition - Language use and making interspersal suggestions in a natural way as part of stories/imagery – Trusting the imaginative/metaphorical mind

Exercises: Telling stories in pairs
Finding healing/affecting elements – small groups
Telling stories with a purpose/ reading the need (pairs)

(Lunch Break)

Session 3. Adapting and Making up Stories and Imagery.

How to adapt a story to suit different situations and individual personality, age and need and stay in good rapport - How to make up new stories using plots or smaller elements from old ones – Exploring a 5 stage solution-focused story frame as a pattern for making a spontaneous new tale with specific effects and outcomes in mind -- Using the stages as guided imagery before story making – inventing new 5 stage patterns and using these Fantasy imagery ancient and modern: from castles and queens to space ships and celebs – Being imaginative on the hoof: how to utilize the immediate

Exercises: Re-telling disguised versions of story patterns learned earlier
Making up and sharing stories and guided imagery based on two more 5-stage patterns
Sketching new story patterns and finding old and new images, heroes & heroines etc.

(Afternoon tea break)

Session 4. Playing with stories and imagery

How story making games can also make useful enabling imagery - How to play with and through stories - How to read clients' metaphors emerging in forms of verbal and non-verbal play and reframe them in playful ways – Using forms of role play as storytelling – Making up stories and imagery with clients – How to shape a playful story or image to deal with common challenges, for example pain, fear, discomfort etc.

Exercises: Being Joe Bloggs (role playing story game)
The Bite of the Dragon (picturing – game)

Summary of day and skills learned. Reading and listening recommendations.

Back-up materials: Well-focused handouts back up each of the 4 sessions and enable participants to re-visit the knowledge and consolidate understanding. Where appropriate technology is available, helpful Powerpoint presentations and video footage are introduced, though this is not essential. Some material is drawn from the practical Imaginary Journeys booklets, Tall Tale Telling and Imagine On and these are available on the day at discounted prices with various CDs

Your presenter:

Rob Parkinson has been a professional storyteller since 1984 and has run a thriving therapeutic practice for the past 6 years. He holds qualifications in

counselling, psychotherapy and hypnotherapy. He is one of the leading professionals working in storytelling education, therapy and training in the UK today and is highly skilled in telling tales to all ages. Rob has run training courses for very many professionals in education, counselling, therapy and healthcare and contrastingly also for communications specialists in major corporations such as DHL and Habitat. He has also written extensively on the subject of storytelling, story games and stories and is the author of a major book on the subject of change through stories. Various CDs, publications and free downloads of Rob's work are also available from www.imaginaryjourneys.co.uk

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