

# Exiting psychotherapy – finding balance in saying goodbye to the client



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# Let's check something...

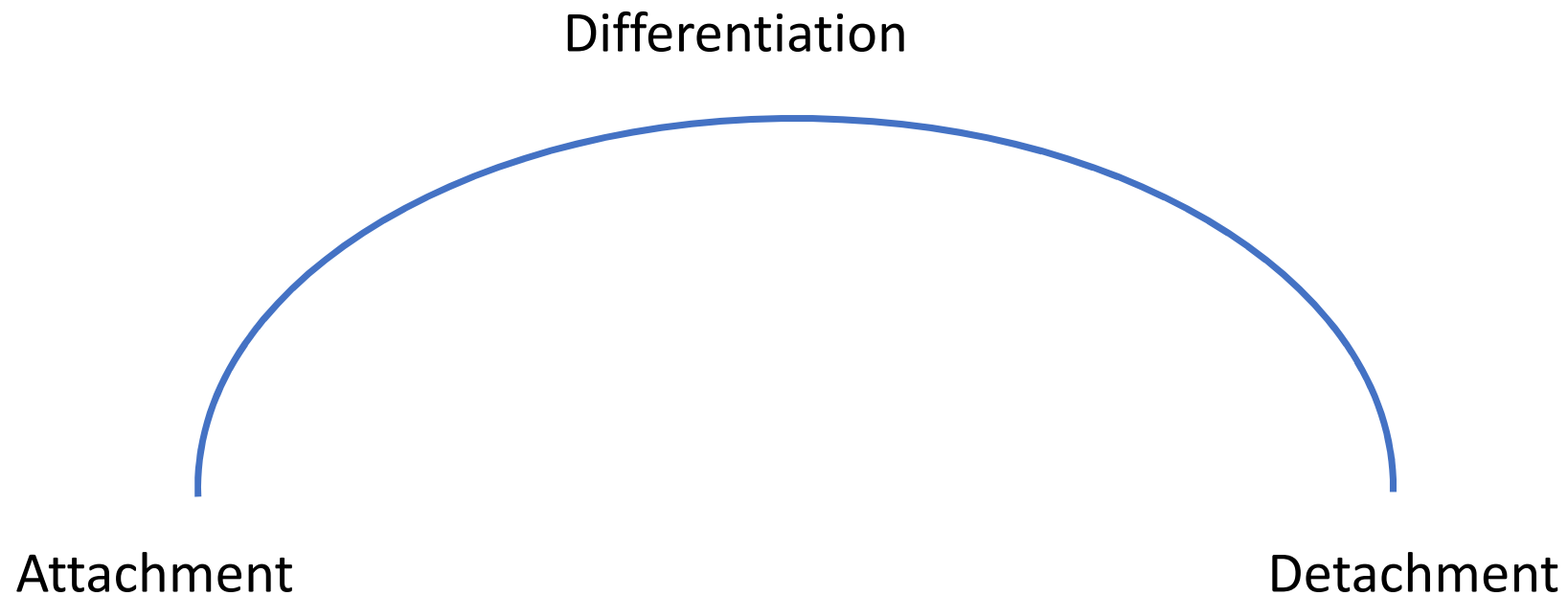
- Please find a pair. Try to arrange contact between two of you. No words and sounds, please!
- I'll touch some of you, just remember that
- Those whom I touched – after I make one clap, you have 30 seconds to go away
- How did you feel, knowing he/she will leave soon? How did your feelings towards the person change?
- How was it preparing to go? How did your feelings towards the person change?

# Reasons to finish psychotherapy

- Psychotherapist stops therapy
- Client stops therapy
- Finishing therapy



# Three stages of interaction



Most of first two situations happen when one of the participants is on differentiation stage.  
Speed of going from stage to stage matters!

# Let's see how it works on different stages

- T attachment – C attachment
- T differentiation - C attachment
- T attachment – C differentiation
- T differentiation – C differentiation
- T detachment – C attachment
- T detachment – C differentiation
- T attachment – C detachment
- T differentiation – C detachment
- T detachment – C detachment

# Psychotherapist stops therapy. How can it happen?

- Therapists passes client to another therapist because of personal restrictions;
- Forcing the client to quite with specific behavior;
- Abandoning client (refusing to work further after several sessions without suggesting any alternatives);
- Trying to expel the client when therapist thinks that it's time to finish psychotherapy



# Dangers for the client when therapist exits therapy

- Retraumatization - «feeling abandoned», pressure on AC-1 “Love”, “Patience”
- Decrease of self-esteem – pressure on AC-1 «Model»
- Decrease of “Trust” towards all the psychologists
- Stronger dependency of client



# How to protect client from stress and yourself – from the spoilt reputation

- Verbalize your competence zone
- Find out about the problem of the client before meeting him/her
- If it is very hard, warn about possible passing to the other professional in concrete period, take supervisions meanwhile
- Have all needed professional contacts



# How not to let yourself throw the client out?

There are always difficulties. If there are no, you don't see something

- What's the most difficult for me with this client?
- When do I feel anger/fear/contempt etc with client?
- Does it happen sometimes that client starts to justify themselves? What do I do do for that?
- How long ago did I visit the supervision? 😊



# How to prepare the client for selfhelp, not to just throw him out?

- Why do I think that the client can already manage without me? How did I understand that? (which signs)
- Why does the client needs therapy now? What does he get from it?
- What do I feel about the length of our therapy?
- What do I think about client's progress? What's my attitude to it?
- Have the conditions and circumstances of our work somehow changed for me?



# Client stops therapy. Why does it happen?

- Leaving after first meeting
- Leaving in the middle of psychotherapy
  - difficult topic in work (fear, pain)
  - unexpressed anger
  - hysteroid behavior
  - pressure of the relatives, which the psychologist did not see
  - psychologist «attacking» client's values (including client's addictions)



# Client stops therapy. What is it for the therapist?

- Punch for the self-esteem
- Feeling abandoned
- Financial difficulties
- Relief

# Leaving after the first meeting

- About 30 % of clients won't match characters, styles of work with you or just not ready to work, want a miracle



# Leaving in the middle of the therapy. Difficult topics

«I think I already feel better», «I want to take time-out».

Signs:

- You reached a difficult topic in previous sessions, which was hard for the client to bare
- On previous session the client was very enthusiastic to continue, but “suddenly” changed hid mind



# Difficult topics. What can we do?

- Show that we worry and care for the client
- Verbalize if we noticed how hard was the previous meeting or how sharply the mood of the client has changed
- Talk about fears



## Leaving in the middle of the therapy. Unexpressed anger

«I'm very afraid to hurt you. But I won't come back to psychotherapy any more. I feel discomfort».

### Signs:

- Client stiffly says, that everything is good in his life;
- Client non-verbally shows anger, but gives a neutral verbal message about the ending of the therapy
- Client tells about his discontent in common words





# Unexpressed anger. What can we do?

- We give a client the possibility to talk about their anger
- We say we a sorry for bringing him/her pain
- We avoid proving that «you misunderstood everything, I was right»



# Leaving in the middle of the therapy. Hysteroid behavior

«I knew that, nothing can help me!», «You just can't understand me, no one can!»

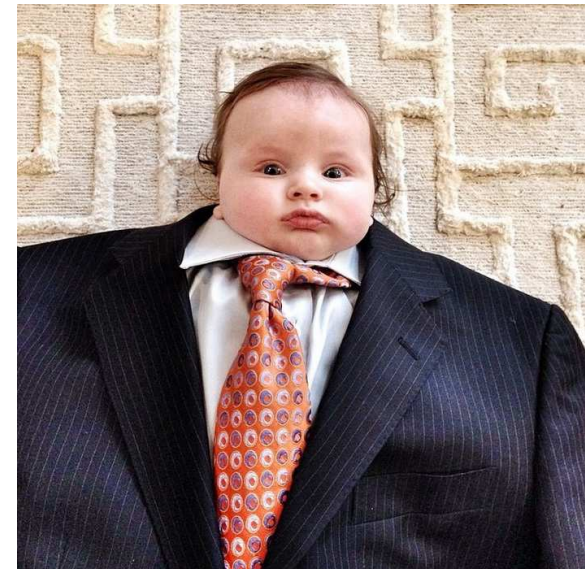
Signs:

- Client leaves a lot of opportunities for the answer (for example, makes it during the session).
- Messages of the client sound dramatic.



# Hysteroid behavior. What can we do?

- Don't rush into saving the client (yes, he/she can possibly leave, but it would happen anyway)
- Showing that we DO care, finding out, what the client wants now, what he misses (show sympathy for the unrealistic wishes)



# Leaving in the middle of the therapy. «Relatives' pressure»

## Signs:

- Repeating messages about relatives' devaluation of psychotherapy
- A lot of awkwardness while leaving therapy
- «Disappearance» of the client

**Don't ignore this messages!**

# Leaving in the middle of the therapy. Psychologist attacks client's values

«I was shamed to tell you that I entered that relationship again. I would be disappointed in me: all the work for nothing».

Signs:

- Client starts to avoid the important topic, which was connected with a lot of confrontation between you
- The client «disappears» (sometimes for some period)



# Psychologist attacks client's values. What can we do?

- Check our position if it is mentor.
- Checking our tolerance: what is my attitude towards different aspects of the clients life? What to I evaluate as wrong, bad?





Problems with saying goodbye

# What prevents us from letting client go?

## Primary capacities

- Our own addiction (the fear of losing love, contact)
- A need to be needed (importance of saving “Ideal”, “Meaning”)
- Own ideas of when it is time to let the client go (lack of trust to the client)
- \*Financial aspect





# Appealing to the need of psychotherapy for the psychotherapists

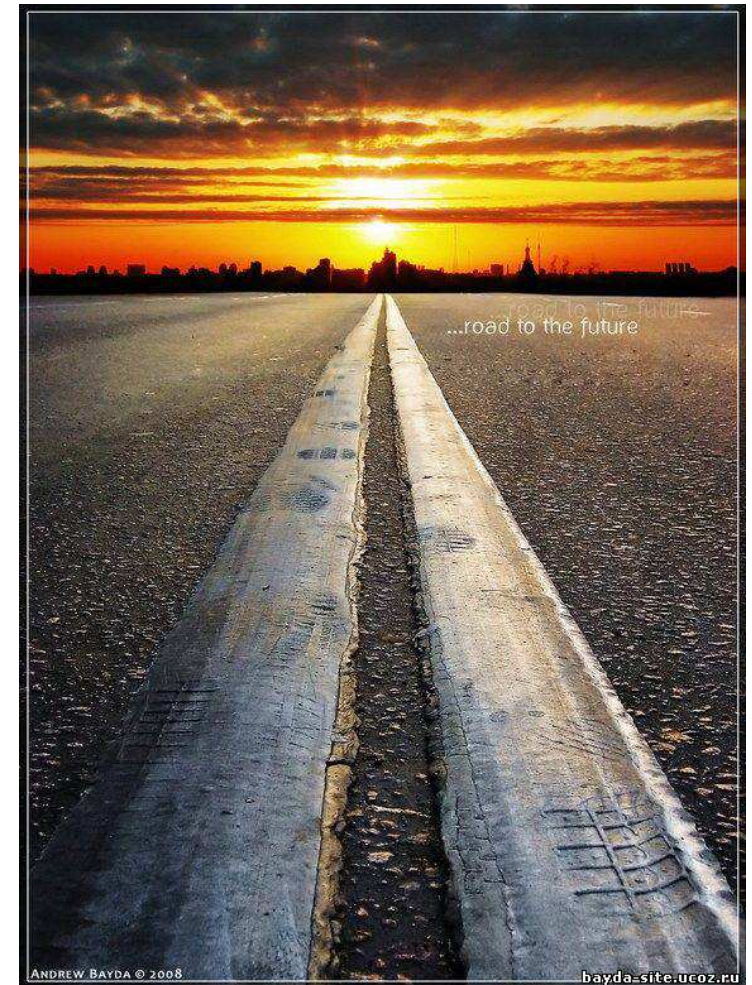
- We learn to fulfill our primary needs by ourselves
- We remember about our deficitary primary capacities (for me it's trust, and for you?), challenge and check ourselves all the time in this spot.
- We listen to the client, not to our inner conflicts.



Finishing psychotherapy

# Step of «Widening of view» as a preparations for saying goodbye

- We pass more and more responsibility to the client.
- We emphasize aspects, where the client is already managing without us.
- Remind the client that therapy has its end, discuss client's life after the end of therapy.
- Permit ourselves and the client to share emotions about finishing of this work.



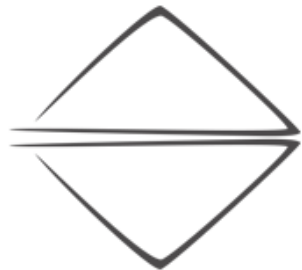
## Widening a view

Questions for the fifth stage:

- What will you do, when you solve all the difficulties?
- Which new perspectives will open up for you?
- What will you spend your time and your money for, when you finish therapy?
- Who around you can provide you support?



Thank you for your attention!



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