



# LEARN PSYCHOTHERAPY

PRESENTED BY  SENTIO  
UNIVERSITY

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# Introduction

## About the Learn Psychotherapy Podcast

The Learn Psychotherapy podcast was created by Sentio University to help listeners - including licensed clinicians, graduate students, and anyone curious about therapy - to develop the foundational skills of effective clinical work using an innovative training method known as Deliberate Practice. Podcast episodes feature individual skills, and this resource packet includes the skill criteria, client statements, and sample responses referenced in every episode.

## About Sentio University

Sentio University is a nonprofit institution that integrates Deliberate Practice and outcome data into therapist education and training. In Fall 2023, Sentio University will begin admissions for a new master's-level Marriage and Family Therapy graduate program. More information is available at [www.sentio.org](http://www.sentio.org).

## About Deliberate Practice

Deliberate Practice (DP) is arguably the most evidence-based method we know of to improve performance in an effective and reliable manner. The principles of DP systematically target an experiential and procedural type of learning that defines top performers. In fact, decades of research have demonstrated that lengthy engagement in DP is associated with expert performance across a variety of professions (Ericsson et al., 2018; Ericsson & Pool, 2016).

The science of expertise and deliberate practice has recently come to the attention of psychotherapy practitioners and researchers. There is now a growing consensus from prominent therapy authors that DP might constitute one of the main vehicles to achieving psychotherapy expertise (e.g., Anderson & Perlman, 2020; Norcross & Karpiak, 2017; Rousmaniere, 2016; 2019; Rousmaniere, Goodyear, Miller, & Wampold, 2017; Wampold, Lichtenberg, Goodyear, & Tracey, 2019).

## Credits

Thanks to the following people for helping to create Learn Psychotherapy:

- Jen Ang, New York, USA
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## **Season 1: Common Factors**

# Episode 1: Empathic Understanding

## Skill Criteria (E1: Empathic Understanding)

1. Make a statement that reflects back the client's underlying internal experience in different language.
2. Use a tone that is tentative and exploratory.

## Client Statements (E1: Empathic Understanding)

**Client Statement #1:** (sad) You know, when my cat died it really hurt. Like I lost a little piece of myself. I think I still need to deal with these feelings.

**Client Statement #2:** (hopeful) The last few days have felt different, like that mental fog in my head is finally lifted and I can start making some changes.

**Client Statement #3:** (overwhelmed) There's so much piling up. I'm worried I won't be able to handle it all. It's just all too much.

**Client Statement #4:** (irritated) The cable guy was supposed to come today but he never showed up. I waited for three hours...it's ridiculous.

**Client Statement #5:** (anxious) I'm nervous as hell. I think I'm going to hear back about that promotion later today.

**Client Statement #6:** (frustrated) My mom is always telling me what to do. I keep trying to get her to relax but nothing helps. I don't know if she'll ever stop.

**Client Statement #7:** (depressed) I've had such a lack of energy lately. It's been hard to focus, and I just don't really want to do anything anymore. Nobody understands.

**Client Statement #8:** (annoyed) I've got these automatic thoughts that keep popping into my head whenever my partner and I have sex. It takes me out of the moment and I don't know how to stop it from happening.

**Client Statement #9:** (sad) Every time I get into a new relationship, I feel really attached right away but it's like I end up sabotaging things before anything can happen. It's too scary to let it get real.

**Client Statement #10:** (hurt) When I was in fourth grade, I had a teacher who told me I was stupid. It stuck with me. Now anytime my girlfriend makes me feel dumb, I just shut down. I hate it, but I don't know what to do.

**Client Statement #11:** (reserved) I don't think I've fully recovered from what happened when I was younger. I haven't really talked about it with anyone, but sometimes I feel like I'm back there and I'm not myself until I snap out of it.

**Client Statement #12:** (unsure) I know we have ten minutes left but I don't really have much else to say. Are there any other good therapy topics we can talk about?

**Client Statement #13:** (worried) I want to quit meth, really I do. But I just can't enjoy sex without it, and last time I tried to quit I actually ended up in the hospital.

**Client Statement #14:** (withdrawn) I spent so much time thinking about my ex last week. I know our relationship was mostly good, but I can't stop the image of him hitting me from replaying in my mind.

**Client Statement #15:** (embarrassed) I'm not sure whether to talk about this and to be honest I feel embarrassed, but I've gained a lot of weight recently. If I don't get to the gym to work out, I get really angry at myself. But I also engage in a lot of mindless eating, like I'll come home from work hungry and just keep eating until it's time for bed. I need to fix my habits.

## Sample Responses (E1: Empathic Understanding)

|                           | Client Statement   | Example Therapist Response  |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Client Statement 1</b> | You know, when my cat died it really hurt. Like I lost a little piece of myself. I think I still need to deal with these feelings.       | You've lost something that meant a lot to you, and it's important to let yourself grieve.                               |
| <b>Client Statement 2</b> | The last few days have felt different, like that mental fog in my head is finally lifted and I can start making some changes.            | You're ready for some personal growth. It's time to put your recent struggles in the past and start feeling better.     |
| <b>Client Statement 3</b> | There's so much piling up. I'm worried I won't be able to handle it all. It's just all too much.   | You're overwhelmed. With all that's going on you just don't have the resources you need to get by right now.            |
| <b>Client Statement 4</b> | The cable guy was supposed to come today but he never showed up. I waited for three hours...it's ridiculous.                             | It's like you were told your time isn't important, and that feels unjust to you.  |
| <b>Client Statement 5</b> | I'm nervous as hell. I think I'm going to hear back about that promotion later today.  | You've got some really important news coming up and it's making you extremely anxious.                                  |
| <b>Client Statement 6</b> | My mom is always telling me what to do. I keep trying to get her to relax but nothing helps. I don't know if she'll ever stop.           | It's frustrating to try and make things better and not see any progress. Almost like you're helpless in this situation. |
| <b>Client Statement 7</b> | I've had such a lack of energy lately. It's been hard to focus, and I just don't really want to do anything anymore. Nobody understands. | You've been feeling low and it's showing up in a lot of different ways. Even worse, you've been alone in your struggle. |



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| <b>Client Statement 8</b>  | I've got these automatic thoughts that keep popping into my head whenever my partner and I have sex. It takes me out of the moment and I don't know how to stop it from happening.                          | You feel helpless against these thoughts that keep you from the level of intimacy you desire with your partner.   |
| <b>Client Statement 9</b>  | Every time I get into a new relationship, I feel really attached right away but it's like I end up sabotaging things before anything can happen. It's too scary to let it get real.                         | The closeness of relationships can be tough for you, and you recognize that some of your behaviors are a way to keep things from getting too serious.                         |
| <b>Client Statement 10</b> | When I was in fourth grade, I had a teacher who told me I was stupid. It stuck with me. Now anytime my girlfriend makes me feel dumb, I just shut down. I hate it, but I don't know what to do.             | You're ready to stop shutting down, but you're not sure how to keep your past experiences from showing up in the present.   |
| <b>Client Statement 11</b> | I don't think I've fully recovered from what happened when I was younger. I haven't really talked about it with anyone, but sometimes I feel like I'm back there and I'm not myself until I snap out of it. | It's like you're back in a really difficult part of your life and you can't really control what happens until you're able to bring yourself back to the present.              |
| <b>Client Statement 12</b> | I know we have ten minutes left but I don't really have much else to say. Are there any other good therapy topics we can talk about?  | There's not much on your mind that feels important to discuss here, and you're curious about what else could be helpful.  |
| <b>Client Statement 13</b> | I want to quit meth, really I do. But I just can't enjoy sex without it, and last time I tried to quit I actually ended up in the hospital.   | There are some significant reasons why quitting seems hard, but it's still important to you. This feels like the right decision, even if it isn't going to happen right away. |
| <b>Client Statement 14</b> | I spent so much time thinking about my ex last week. I know our relationship was mostly good, but I can't stop the image of him hitting me from replaying in my mind.                                       | Of course, you experienced something significant – maybe even traumatic – and it's hard to not think about that kind of an experience that had such an impact on you.         |

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| <b>Client Statement 15</b> | <p>I'm not sure whether to talk about this and to be honest I feel embarrassed, but I've gained a lot of weight recently. If I don't get to the gym to work out, I get really angry at myself. But I also engage in a lot of mindless eating, like I'll come home from work hungry and just keep eating until it's time for bed. I need to fix my habits.</p> | <p>So, it's hard to talk about because it brings up tough feelings, but you're recognizing that it's important for you to make some positive changes related to your eating habits and exercise.</p> |
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## Episode 2: Collaborative Goal Setting

### Skill Criteria (E2: Collaborative Goal Setting)

1. Begin with a short response, reflection, or validating comment.
2. Invite the client's input on the goals of therapy, focusing on goals that are specific and actionable.

### Client Statements (E2: Collaborative Goal Setting)

**Client Statement #1:** (sad) I'm miserable. I don't even know where to begin.

**Client Statement #2:** (hopeful) I get panic attacks. I know it's not realistic to get rid of them right away, but I'd really like for them to happen less.

**Client Statement #3:** (nervous) This is my first time in therapy. I'm pretty nervous about this whole thing.

**Client Statement #4:** (defeated) Social anxiety is the worst. I went to a party last weekend and ended up leaving after a half hour because nobody was talking to me and I felt so awkward.

**Client Statement #5:** (miserable) My trauma gets in the way of all my relationships. Every time I get close to somebody, there's this alarm that rings in my head and tells me to run away.

**Client Statement #6:** (accomplished) My anger is so much better than when we started. Can we focus on something else?

**Client Statement #7:** (depressed) I make a decent living, but I never have any money. I just spend it all, and then I feel worthless.

**Client Statement #8:** (worried) My son is failing out of school. His teacher called me yesterday to tell me that he hasn't been to class in two weeks. I had no idea.

**Client Statement #9:** (hurt) This bully at my high school keeps making fun of me because I have two dads. I spent all night crying last night. I just want things to be better.

**Client Statement #10:** (frustrated) I'm not sure if therapy is helping anymore.

**Client Statement #11:** (jealous) The guy who left your office while I was in the waiting room seemed really happy. I'm jealous. What does he have that I don't?

**Client Statement #12:** (overwhelmed) I know you asked me to think about what I wanted to get out of therapy and let you know. There are a million different things. I didn't write anything down because I have no idea where to begin.

**Client Statement #13:** (neutral) Can we just talk? Therapy feels best for me when I can just bounce ideas off you without working on anything specific or planned.

**Client Statement #14:** (hopeless) Last week you told me to keep a thought journal. I tried it for a few days and it did nothing. How is that supposed to lower my anxiety anyway?

**Client Statement #15:** (angry) Do you even care about my goals or is that just what your supervisor wants you to ask me about?

## Sample Responses (E2: Collaborative Goal Setting)

|                           | Client Statement   | Example Therapist Response  |
|---------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Client Statement 1</b> | I'm miserable. I don't even know where to begin.   | That sounds tough. Maybe we can figure that out together. (Criteria 1) What specific thing about feeling miserable do you most want to change? (Criteria 2)   |
| <b>Client Statement 2</b> | I get panic attacks. I know it's not realistic to get rid of them right away, but I'd really like for them to happen less.                                 | OK, that gives us a good target to keep in mind. (Criteria 1) Can we say that having fewer panic attacks than you've been having is one of the goals for us to work toward? (Criteria 2)  |
| <b>Client Statement 3</b> | This is my first time in therapy. I'm pretty nervous about this whole thing.   | Of course, therapy can feel intimidating at first for a lot of people. It's helpful to start by figuring out what you want to get out of it. (Criteria 1) Do you have any goals in particular for our work together? (Criteria 2) |
| <b>Client Statement 4</b> | Social anxiety is the worst. I went to a party last weekend and ended up leaving after a half hour because nobody was talking to me and I felt so awkward. | If you like, part of our session today can be talking about how to deal with those feelings when they come up. (Criteria 1) Is social anxiety something you want to work on in therapy? (Criteria 2)                              |
| <b>Client Statement 5</b> | My trauma gets in the way of all my relationships. Every time I get close to somebody, there's this alarm that rings in my head and tells me to run away.  | That's really tough. It can be hard to keep past trauma from getting in the way. (Criteria 1) If we were to make this one of our goals for therapy, what specifically would you want to accomplish together? (Criteria 2)         |
| <b>Client Statement 6</b> | My anger is so much better than when we started. Can we focus on something else?   | That's great! It sounds like we need to set some new goals. (Criteria 1) What kinds of actionable things do you want us to shift our attention to? (Criteria 2)   |

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| <b>Client Statement 7</b>  | I make a decent living, but I never have any money. I just spend it all, and then I feel worthless.  | This seems important to you. Let's talk about a plan to change things for the better. (Criteria 1) Am I right that you want to have better spending habits and not feel so worthless? (Criteria 2)   |
| <b>Client Statement 8</b>  | My son is failing out of school. His teacher called me yesterday to tell me that he hasn't been to class in two weeks. I had no idea.  | That's tough news to hear, I imagine you're having pretty strong feelings about it. (Criteria 1) I'm curious – would you be interested in identifying some concrete things we can work toward to improve the situation in some way? (Criteria 2) |
| <b>Client Statement 9</b>  | This bully at my high school keeps making fun of me because I have two dads. I spent all night crying last night. I just want things to be better.   | It's really hard to get bullied, I'm sorry to hear that. It makes sense that you'd want things to be better. (Criteria 1) Let's look at that more carefully – how would we know if things had gotten better? (Criteria 2)                        |
| <b>Client Statement 10</b> | I'm not sure if therapy is helping anymore.  | I'm glad you shared that with me. It might be that we need to take another look at what we're focusing on. (Criteria 1) What do you think is most important for us to be working on together? (Criteria 2)                                       |
| <b>Client Statement 11</b> | The guy who left your office while I was in the waiting room seemed really happy. I'm jealous. What does he have that I don't?   | I can't talk about him for confidentiality reasons, but I hear you say that you want to feel the kind of happiness you saw in him. (Criteria 1) What could we work towards that might give you that same happiness? (Criteria 2)                 |
| <b>Client Statement 12</b> | I know you asked me to think about what I wanted to get out of therapy and let you know. There are a million different things. I didn't write anything down because I have no idea where to begin. | I know, it can feel overwhelming to set concrete goals in therapy. (Criteria 1) Maybe we should use that to guide us - let's work on helping you prioritize what feels most important. What do you think? (Criteria 2)                           |

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| <b>Client Statement 13</b> | Can we just talk? Therapy feels best for me when I can just bounce ideas off you without working on anything specific or planned.               | Of course. We don't need to set an agenda or anything like that. (Criteria 1) Just so I have an idea of what to be paying attention to, is there a general idea of what you hope to get out of our work together? (Criteria 2)   |
| <b>Client Statement 14</b> | Last week you told me to keep a thought journal. I tried it for a few days and it did nothing. How is that supposed to lower my anxiety anyway? | So it didn't really work for you. (Criteria 1) We can talk more about the thought journal in a second, but I just want to check in on something real quick. Would you say that lowering your anxiety is a priority for you in therapy? (Criteria 2)                              |
| <b>Client Statement 15</b> | Do you even care about my goals or is that just what your supervisor wants you to ask me about?   | I do care, but it sounds like that's something you're not sure about. I want you to feel like I'm actually focused on you, not just doing what I'm told. (Criteria 1) Can this be a goal of ours – to talk about this and see if you can get a sense of resolution? (Criteria 2) |

## Episode 3: Reflecting Client Strengths and Resources

### Skill Criteria (E3: Reflecting Client Strengths and Resources)

1. Validate the client's perspective.
2. Point out the strengths and/or resources communicated in the client statement.
3. Invite the client into a dialogue about the identified strengths and/or resources.

### Client Statements (E3: Reflecting Client Strengths and Resources)

**Client Statement #1:** (disappointed) I feel so unappreciated at work. I don't think my boss realizes just how much I do for the company.

**Client Statement #2:** (worried) My son is a huge source of stress for me. I worry so much. He doesn't know what he wants to do with his life and he's wasting his days playing video games.

**Client Statement #3:** (anxious) I don't know how I'm going to pay rent next month. It just feels like I'm in survival mode, but I have no choice but to do everything I can to put food on the table for my kids.

**Client Statement #4:** (sad) My childhood was so scary. My sister would get really violent and I was constantly living in fear. I had to keep myself safe.

**Client Statement #5:** (defeated) It's hard for me to get to know new people. The friendships I have are great, and I know I'm a good friend, but I get anxious around people I don't know well.



**Client Statement #6:** (unsure) I'm committed to this therapy process, but it really doesn't feel like anything is different. Are we doing this right?

**Client Statement #7:** (reserved) Sometimes I think I care too much. It's hard to provide emotional support for my girlfriend because I feel things so deeply. It's like I take on her pain.

**Client Statement #8:** (sad) I wish more people cared about the things I care about. I'm great at crossword puzzles, but that's not exactly getting me dates every weekend.

**Client Statement #9:** (frustrated) Being a successful woman at my job is like having to be a therapist on the side. I have to manage all these guys' egos. If they feel like I'm outworking them, they get so defensive. It's exhausting.

**Client Statement #10:** (ashamed) I'm letting my family and friends down. They're always there for me and I still keep relapsing.

**Client Statement #11:** (annoyed) How do people end up in healthy relationships? Even with my friends, I feel like some of my relationships are completely toxic. They drive me crazy.

**Client Statement #12:** (nervous) It's hard to basically start over in a new city. I know it was my decision to move here, but I keep having these nervous thoughts about having to create a whole new life for myself.

**Client Statement #13:** (sad) Yesterday, I brought some injera from home as part of my lunch – it's a big part of the culture where I'm from in Ethiopia – and some of my coworkers made fun of me for it. It made me so sad. I like doing things that remind me of home, and those guys just ruined it.

**Client Statement #14:** (annoyed) I passed some pro-vaccine protestors on my drive over here and yelled at them to go home. I hate that they don't care about our freedom to not wear a mask if we don't want to. What's more important than freedom?

**Client Statement #15:** (hesitant) I've been thinking about this for a few weeks now – I'm not sure if I still need therapy. You've helped me so much. Honestly, I feel bad telling you that I don't need you anymore.

### Sample Responses (E3: Reflecting Client Strengths and Resources)

|                           | Client Statement  | Example Therapist Response   |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Client Statement 1</b> | I feel so unappreciated at work. I don't think my boss realizes just how much I do for the company.   | I hear a lot of frustration in your words, and rightfully so. (Criteria 1) It sounds like you're a very hard worker. (Criteria 2) Would you describe yourself in the same way? (Criteria 3)                                      |
| <b>Client Statement 2</b> | My son is a huge source of stress for me. I worry so much. He doesn't know what he wants to do with his life and he's wasting his days playing video games.                       | That must be so hard. (Criteria 1) It's clear that your son's future is something that's very important to you. (Criteria 2) Tell me more about that. (Criteria 3)   |
| <b>Client Statement 3</b> | I don't know how I'm going to pay rent next month. It just feels like I'm in survival mode, but I have no choice but to do everything I can to put food on the table for my kids. | I know how tough this is for you, and I see you fighting for your kids. (Criteria 1) It's clear how much they mean to you. (Criteria 2) How does it feel when you're able to give your kids what they need? (Criteria 3)         |
| <b>Client Statement 4</b> | My childhood was so scary. My sister would get really violent and I was constantly living in fear. I had to keep myself safe.   | That must have been hard, I understand why it was so scary for you. (Criteria 1) But you were able to keep yourself safe, even as a child. That takes a lot of strength. (Criteria 2) How were you able to do that? (Criteria 3) |

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| <b>Client Statement 5</b>  | It's hard for me to get to know new people. The friendships I have are great, and I know I'm a good friend, but I get anxious around people I don't know well.   | Being around people you don't know well can be challenging, that's so true. (Criteria 1) You mentioned how your friendships are great and you're a good friend. (Criteria 2) Can you tell me more about that? (Criteria 3)  |
| <b>Client Statement 6</b>  | I'm committed to this therapy process, but it really doesn't feel like anything is different. Are we doing this right?   | It can take some time for therapy to make an impact, but I appreciate that you want to better understand what we're doing. (Criteria 1) I can tell that you're motivated, which is great. (Criteria 2) Is there anything you think we should be doing differently to make better use of that motivation? (Criteria 3)             |
| <b>Client Statement 7</b>  | Sometimes I think I care too much. It's hard to provide emotional support for my girlfriend because I feel things so deeply. It's like I take on her pain.   | All that empathy can really take a toll on you. (Criteria 1) But that's a real strength of yours – how much you care and how deeply you feel things. (Criteria 2) Is it hard to see it as a strength when you have these thoughts? (Criteria 3)   |
| <b>Client Statement 8</b>  | I wish more people cared about the things I care about. I'm great at crossword puzzles, but that's not exactly getting me dates every weekend.   | Absolutely, those kinds of shared interests can be hard to come by at times. (Criteria 1) I didn't know that you were so good at crossword puzzles. (Criteria 2) I'm curious to hear more about that hobby of yours. (Criteria 3)   |
| <b>Client Statement 9</b>  | Being a successful woman at my job is like having to be a therapist on the side. I have to manage all these guys' egos. If they feel like I'm outworking them, they get so defensive. It's exhausting. | That's so frustrating, I'm sorry you have to deal with that. (Criteria 1) Until your work culture changes for the better, it seems like you've figured out that this is necessary to be successful, even if it is exhausting. (Criteria 2) Do you give yourself credit for still having that inner drive to succeed? (Criteria 3) |
| <b>Client Statement 10</b> | I'm letting my family and friends down. They're always there for me and I still keep relapsing.  | You're really beating yourself up, and I know how hard it is for you to feel this way. (Criteria 1) I actually want to ask about your friends and family. (Criteria 2) What motivates them to always be there for you? (Criteria 3)   |

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| <b>Client Statement 11</b> | How do people end up in healthy relationships? Even with my friends, I feel like some of my relationships are completely toxic. They drive me crazy.   | That is definitely a valid source of frustration, no doubt. (Criteria 1) You said “some of my relationships,” so I’m assuming at least a few of them are healthy. (Criteria 2) Let’s talk about those and see what we learn together. (Criteria 3)                        |
| <b>Client Statement 12</b> | It’s hard to basically start over in a new city. I know it was my decision to move here, but I keep having these nervous thoughts about having to create a whole new life for myself.  | It’s completely understandable and normal to feel the way you do. There’s a lot of uncertainty right now. (Criteria 1) You’ve also made a decision that makes it clear you have a lot of courage. (Criteria 2) Do you see it that way at all? (Criteria 3)                |
| <b>Client Statement 13</b> | Yesterday, I brought some injera from home as part of my lunch – it’s a big part of the culture where I’m from in Ethiopia – and some of my coworkers made fun of me for it. It made me so sad. I like doing things that remind me of home, and those guys just ruined it. | I’m so sorry that happened, that’s just terrible. I get why that would make you feel sad. (Criteria 1) Can you tell me more about what it means to you to stay connected to Ethiopian culture? (Criteria 2) I’d like to hear more about that. (Criteria 3)                |
| <b>Client Statement 14</b> | I passed some pro-vaccine protestors on my drive over here and yelled at them to go home. I hate that they don’t care about our freedom to not wear a mask if we don’t want to. What’s more important than freedom?  | I can understand why that would bother you since this is clearly a big value of yours. (Criteria 1) You have a strong passion for freedom. (Criteria 2) Is that accurate to say? (Criteria 3)   |
| <b>Client Statement 15</b> | I’ve been thinking about this for a few weeks now – I’m not sure if I still need therapy. You’ve helped me so much. Honestly, I feel bad telling you that I don’t need you anymore.  | That’s wonderful news! I’m so glad you feel that this has helped so much, and I get it – it’s hard to bring up that you don’t need me anymore. (Criteria 1) That’s your empathy and compassion shining through. (Criteria 2) Is that what makes it feel bad? (Criteria 3) |

## Episode 4: Soliciting Client Feedback

### Skill Criteria (E4: Soliciting Client Feedback)

1. Begin with a short response, reflection, or validating comment.
2. Ask the client for feedback about some aspect of therapy that is related to the subject of the client statement.

### Client Statements (E4: Soliciting Client Feedback)

**Client Statement #1:** (grateful) I feel really connected to you. I just wanted to tell you that and say thank you for being a great therapist.

**Client Statement #2:** (defensive) You sure seem to ask me about my childhood a lot.

**Client Statement #3:** (appreciative) My last therapist was really hard to get along with. You seem different.

**Client Statement #4:** (guarded) Sorry, I... I still don't feel all that comfortable here. Two sessions isn't enough for me to feel safe enough to open up to you.

**Client Statement #5:** (questioning) You don't really give me a whole lot of specific things to work on. My friend said her therapist gives her a lot of homework. How come you're different?

**Client Statement #6:** (surprised) I can't believe it's already been ten sessions. It seems like I just started coming here.

**Client Statement #7:** (curious) When I was journaling last night I started thinking about how much better I feel because of therapy. Is that something you can tell in our sessions?

**Client Statement #8:** (honest) Therapy is hard. I'm 11 and you're an adult. I feel like I have to listen to you even though you keep telling me that I get to decide what we talk about.

**Client Statement #9:** (calm) You know, whenever we focus on my marriage I always feel lighter at the end of the session. Like a weight has been lifted off my shoulders.

**Client Statement #10:** (inquiring) I know it's part of our treatment plan, but can we not talk about my self-harming today? I'd just rather not if that's OK.

**Client Statement #11:** (unsure) I'm not sure what to talk about today. It's weird, this is the first time I haven't had something specific I wanted to work on.

**Client Statement #12:** (curious) My insurance company will only cover two more sessions after this unless there's some kind of documentation that I still need therapy. So what happens after those two weeks?

**Client Statement #13:** (direct) Your waiting room makes me feel uncomfortable. It's kind of a mess.

**Client Statement #14:** (hesitant) I saw you get out of your BMW in the parking lot. We've been talking about me not being able to find a job and you're obviously making a lot of money. That made me feel really uncomfortable.

**Client Statement #15:** (straightforward) I was looking at my bank statements and I realized that I've spent just over \$2,000 on therapy with you. That's a lot.

## Sample Responses (E4: Soliciting Client Feedback)

|                           | Client Statement   | Example Therapist Response   |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| <b>Client Statement 1</b> | I feel really connected to you. I just wanted to tell you that and say thank you for being a great therapist.  | Thank you, that's very meaningful to hear. (Criteria 1) I'd like to know more if that's OK with you. What is it that we do together that makes you feel so connected? (Criteria 2)   |
| <b>Client Statement 2</b> | You sure seem to ask me about my childhood a lot.  | Tell me more about that. (Criteria 1) Is that something you'd like to be different in our work together? (Criteria 2)  |
| <b>Client Statement 3</b> | My last therapist was really hard to get along with. You seem different.   | I'm glad that you feel like I'm different, thank you for sharing that with me. (Criteria 1) Could you tell me a bit more about what I'm doing that gives you that feeling? (Criteria 2)  |
| <b>Client Statement 4</b> | Sorry, I... I still don't feel all that comfortable here. Two sessions isn't enough for me to feel safe enough to open up to you.                        | I understand, and that's perfectly fine. It can take some time to create that safety, and we'll go at a pace that's right for you. (Criteria 1) Do you feel comfortable telling me more about what therapy has been like in these first two sessions? (Criteria 2) |
| <b>Client Statement 5</b> | You don't really give me a whole lot of specific things to work on. My friend said her therapist gives her a lot of homework. How come you're different? | That's just my typical style, but I often give homework if it's something that you or any of my clients prefer. (Criteria 1) Is that something that you want to try? (Criteria 2)  |
| <b>Client Statement 6</b> | I can't believe it's already been ten sessions. It seems like I just started coming here.  | Time can really fly by sometimes, right? (Criteria 1) Knowing that it's been ten sessions, how much progress would you say we've made toward your goals so far? (Criteria 2)   |
| <b>Client Statement 7</b> | When I was journaling last night I started thinking about how much better I feel because of therapy. Is that something you can tell in our sessions?     | That makes me very happy to hear, thank you for sharing that with me. It does seem like you've been feeling better. (Criteria 1) Can you tell me more about what we've been doing that you feel has been most helpful? (Criteria 2)                                |

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| <b>Client Statement 8</b>  | Therapy is hard. I'm 11 and you're an adult. I feel like I have to listen to you even though you keep telling me that I get to decide what we talk about.                                      | That makes sense – most adults are usually telling you what to do and this is kind of the opposite. (Criteria 1) Can you tell me more about your experience of therapy and our relationship here? (Criteria 2)  |
| <b>Client Statement 9</b>  | You know, whenever we focus on my marriage I always feel lighter at the end of the session. Like a weight has been lifted off my shoulders.  | That's helpful to know. (Criteria 1) Would you like to spend more time talking about your marriage going forward? (Criteria 2)  |
| <b>Client Statement 10</b> | I know it's part of our treatment plan, but can we not talk about my self-harming today? I'd just rather not if that's OK.   | Sure, it's fine if you'd rather not talk about that today. (Criteria 1) Overall, how do you feel about what we usually talk about in sessions? (Criteria 2)   |
| <b>Client Statement 11</b> | I'm not sure what to talk about today. It's weird, this is the first time I haven't had something specific I wanted to work on.  | Maybe this is a good time to zoom out and talk about our work together. (Criteria 1) Do you feel like we've been making progress toward your goals in the way you hoped? (Criteria 2)   |
| <b>Client Statement 12</b> | My insurance company will only cover two more sessions after this unless there's some kind of documentation that I still need therapy. So what happens after those two weeks?                  | That depends on the documentation that you mentioned. (Criteria 1) This is a good time for me to check in and get your perspective on how therapy has been going so far. Has this been helpful, and do you feel that you still need therapy? (Criteria 2) |
| <b>Client Statement 13</b> | Your waiting room makes me feel uncomfortable. It's kind of a mess.  | I appreciate you letting me know that, I'll see if I can clean it up a bit. (Criteria 1) Is there anything else in this environment that makes you feel uncomfortable? (Criteria 2)   |
| <b>Client Statement 14</b> | I saw you get out of your BMW in the parking lot. We've been talking about me not being able to find a job and you're obviously making a lot of money. That made me feel really uncomfortable. | I can understand why you'd feel that way. And I imagine that might not be easy to share with me, so thank you for doing so. (Criteria 1) I'd like to hear more about that – how does it impact how you feel about me and our work together? (Criteria 2)  |



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| <b>Client Statement 15</b> | I was looking at my bank statements and I realized that I've spent just over \$2,000 on therapy with you. That's a lot. | Absolutely. (Criteria 1) Do you feel like spending that money has been worth it so far? (Criteria 2) |
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## Episode 5: Responding to Therapeutic Ruptures

### Skill Criteria (E5: Responding to Therapeutic Ruptures)

1. Express appreciation for the client's disclosure.
2. Convey empathy, validation, and/or accountability.
3. Respond with a question or statement that invites the client to discuss their subjective experience related to the rupture.

### Client Statements (E5: Responding to Therapeutic Ruptures)

**Client Statement #1:** (hurt) Last session, when you got my girlfriend's name wrong...that really bothered me. It felt like you haven't been paying attention.

**Client Statement #2:** (sad) This is kind of hard to say, but you've been late to all our sessions this month. Sometimes I wonder if you even care.

**Client Statement #3:** (angry) That was a really abrupt ending last session. I know we only have an hour, but I was kind of in the middle of something. That's been on my mind and I'm a little pissed off about it.

**Client Statement #4:** (withdrawn) You know, when you take extra time at the end of the session to make sure I'm calm, sometimes I get the message that you don't think I can handle being upset after therapy. I feel like a child.

**Client Statement #5:** (uncertain) Sorry, I'm a little taken aback by what you just said. It feels like you're judging me really harshly.

**Client Statement #6:** (offended) Does therapy have to be this expensive? Am I just a paycheck to you?

**Client Statement #7:** (frustrated) I just don't think you know how to help me. This whole "being mindful of my inner experience" thing seems bogus.

**Client Statement #8:** (irritated) My mother was trying to remind me to "check in" on my thoughts yesterday. So annoying. At least she's not as bad as you – you're always trying to solve my problems without possibly being able to understand what I'm going through.

**Client Statement #9:** (anxious) I know you like feedback, so you should know that our work felt off today...but I'm not sure I want to talk about it.

**Client Statement #10:** (defensive) Seriously, I don't want to be here. The courts make me go and now you're agreeing with them that I'm the problem.

**Client Statement #11:** (direct) I've been thinking about this for weeks. I saw you get off the bus before a session last month...are you good at your job if you can't even afford a car?

**Client Statement #12:** (disappointed) You're the worst. You keep asking me to interpret the situation in different ways, like my perspective is always wrong. It's like you're calling me a liar.

**Client Statement #13:** (angry) This is bullshit, I'm sick of you asking me how I feel all the time.

**Client Statement #14:** (hurt) I heard you talking to your receptionist about me when I was leaving last week and you used the wrong pronouns. I shouldn't have to correct my therapist of all people.

**Client Statement #15:** (confrontational) You know, I've thought about not coming back ever since I saw that book about climate change on your shelf. You know it's a hoax, right? Do you really believe in that?

### Sample Responses (E5: Responding to Therapeutic Ruptures)

|                           | Client Statement  | Example Therapist Response  |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Client Statement 1</b> | Last session, when you got my girlfriend's name wrong...that really bothered me. It felt like you haven't been paying attention.  | I'm glad you're sharing this with me (Criteria 1), and I can understand why you're bothered by it. (Criteria 2) Can you tell me more about how that made you feel? (Criteria 3)   |
| <b>Client Statement 2</b> | This is kind of hard to say, but you've been late to all our sessions this month. Sometimes I wonder if you even care.  | You know, you're right and I'm sorry for being late. (Criteria 2) Thanks for bringing that up. (Criteria 1) How has it impacted you? (Criteria 3)   |
| <b>Client Statement 3</b> | That was a really abrupt ending last session. I know we only have an hour, but I was kind of in the middle of something. That's been on my mind and I'm a little pissed off about it.             | Of course, I can imagine it was tough to have to stop at the end last week. (Criteria 2) I appreciate you telling me how you feel. (Criteria 1) I'd like to hear more about the thoughts you've had about what happened. (Criteria 3) |
| <b>Client Statement 4</b> | You know, when you take extra time at the end of the session to make sure I'm calm, sometimes I get the message that you don't think I can handle being upset after therapy. I feel like a child. | Oh OK, I didn't know that. Thanks for telling me (Criteria 1), and I'm sorry for causing you to feel that way. (Criteria 2) Tell me more about what it's like for you when I take that time at the end of the session. (Criteria 3)   |
| <b>Client Statement 5</b> | Sorry, I'm a little taken aback by what you just said. It feels like you're judging me really harshly.  | I can see that something important just happened. (Criteria 2) I'm glad you're telling me this (Criteria 1) and I'd like to hear more about what's happening right now. (Criteria 3)  |

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| <b>Client Statement 6</b>  | Does therapy have to be this expensive? Am I just a paycheck to you?  | I'll answer those questions in a moment, but I understand if you're bothered. (Criteria 2) I'm glad you're able to ask me those questions. (Criteria 1) Can you share how this makes you feel? (Criteria 3)  |
| <b>Client Statement 7</b>  | I just don't think you know how to help me. This whole "being mindful of my inner experience" thing seems bogus.  | Right, I'm sorry it hasn't been helpful for you so far (Criteria 2), and thanks for letting me know what's on your mind. (Criteria 1) What's it like for you that we're focusing on something that's seemed bogus so far? (Criteria 3)   |
| <b>Client Statement 8</b>  | My mother was trying to remind me to "check in" on my thoughts yesterday. So annoying. At least she's not as bad as you – you're always trying to solve my problems without possibly being able to understand what I'm going through. | I think it's good that you're sharing this with me (Criteria 1), because I hear you saying that what your mother does bothers you, and that I'm doing similar things. (Criteria 2) Can you tell me more about how it feels when I try to solve your problems like that? (Criteria 3) |
| <b>Client Statement 9</b>  | I know you like feedback, so you should know that our work felt off today...but I'm not sure I want to talk about it.   | I appreciate your honesty (Criteria 1), and I know it's tough sometimes to talk about when sessions feel off. (Criteria 2) I'd like to hear more about your experience, but you certainly don't have to share if you don't want to. (Criteria 3)                                     |
| <b>Client Statement 10</b> | Seriously, I don't want to be here. The courts make me go and now you're agreeing with them that I'm the problem.   | Let's talk about this. If you feel like I think you're the problem, I'm glad you're bringing it up (Criteria 1) and it's probably important to discuss. (Criteria 2) What makes you think I'm agreeing with them? (Criteria 3)   |
| <b>Client Statement 11</b> | I've been thinking about this for weeks. I saw you get off the bus before a session last month...are you good at your job if you can't even afford a car?   | It sounds like this is important to you if you've been thinking about it for weeks (Criteria 2), so I appreciate you letting me know that it's been on your mind. (Criteria 1) How do these doubts about me change your feelings about therapy? (Criteria 3)                         |

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| <b>Client Statement 12</b> | You're the worst. You keep asking me to interpret the situation in different ways, like my perspective is always wrong. It's like you're calling me a liar.             | Oh, I can see how that would be like me calling you a liar. (Criteria 2) I appreciate you bringing it up. (Criteria 1) How does it impact you when you hear me suggesting that your perspective is always wrong? (Criteria 3)                                |
| <b>Client Statement 13</b> | This is bullshit, I'm sick of you asking me how I feel all the time.  | You know, I can understand how that might be bullshit. (Criteria 2) Thanks for telling me that my approach hasn't been right for you. (Criteria 1) I'd like to hear about what you think would work better to help meet your goals for therapy. (Criteria 3) |
| <b>Client Statement 14</b> | I heard you talking to your receptionist about me when I was leaving last week and you used the wrong pronouns. I shouldn't have to correct my therapist of all people. | Thank you for telling me (Criteria 1) – that's my mistake. I'm really sorry about that. (Criteria 2) If it's OK with you, I'm curious to know what it was like hearing me get your pronouns wrong. (Criteria 3)  |
| <b>Client Statement 15</b> | You know, I've thought about not coming back ever since I saw that book about climate change on your shelf. You know it's a hoax, right? Do you really believe in that? | Hmm, let's talk about this. First, I'm glad you're telling me what you've been thinking. (Criteria 1) It's clear this bothers you. (Criteria 2) What does it mean for your feelings about therapy now that you've seen that book? (Criteria 3)               |

## Episode 6: Therapist Self-Disclosure

### Skill Criteria (E6: Therapist Self-Disclosure)

1. Begin with a short response, reflection, or validating comment.
2. Briefly share something about yourself in response to the client statement that is designed to benefit the client.
3. Invite further exploration of the topic being discussed in a way that shifts the focus back to the client.

### Client Statements (E6: Therapist Self-Disclosure)

**Client Statement #1:** (curious) I saw something on Instagram earlier about this idea of intrusive thoughts – thoughts you don’t want but just pop up in your brain. I thought I was the only one who dealt with that. Do you get those?

**Client Statement #2:** (stressed) The last month has been miserable. I am just so tremendously stressed with all of my schoolwork. Every day is just stress, stress, stress.

**Client Statement #3:** (envious) You seem to have a great life. Like there’s nothing wrong and you just wake up every day feeling good about yourself and the world.

**Client Statement #4:** (pained) This week has been tough. Someone close to me really let me down. It’s been hard to deal with, and I have no idea how to move on. Has that ever happened to you?

**Client Statement #5:** (annoyed) I hate it when people get in my personal space – like right up against me when there’s no reason to. Especially when it’s someone I don’t know.

**Client Statement #6:** (curious) Are you married? Are you in a relationship right now?

**Client Statement #7:** (sad) You know, I see everyone else’s social media and I can’t help but feel like a loser. Like other people are leading happier, more interesting lives.

**Client Statement #8:** (hesitant) I think about death sometimes. Not in a suicidal way, but out of fear more than anything else. I don’t want to die, and it seems like I’m the only person who has these thoughts.

**Client Statement #9:** (direct) Do you have kids?

**Client Statement #10:** (unsure) I was feeling pretty bad yesterday. Then I remembered that I’m pretty lucky compared to the billion people around the world who live in poverty, and that just made me feel ungrateful. Like it’s not OK for me to be sad because my life is actually pretty good, you know?

**Client Statement #11:** (cautious) So... I’m gay. You’re the first person I’ve told. It’s really scary to say that out loud.

**Client Statement #12:** (thoughtful) Lately I’ve been worrying a lot about this idea that I’m more shallow of a person than I want to be. When I’m on dates, I tend to focus on how attractive the person is – I wish I could just turn that off.

**Client Statement #13:** (lonely) I just want to fit in. I have this burning desire to feel a sense of belonging, and when I get the sense that I’m not part of the group I end up dwelling on it.

**Client Statement #14:** (depressed) It’s so hard. Being single again makes me feel so bad about myself.



**Client Statement #15:** (curious) Have you ever had suicidal thoughts?

## Sample Responses (E6: Therapist Self-Disclosure)

|                           | Client Statement  | Example Therapist Response  |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| <b>Client Statement 1</b> | I saw something on Instagram earlier about this idea of intrusive thoughts – thoughts you don’t want but just pop up in your brain. I thought I was the only one who dealt with that. Do you get those? | Absolutely. I think it’s something that everyone deals with at times. (Criteria 1) Mine tend to be about bad things happening in the world. (Criteria 2) What are yours about? (Criteria 3)   |
| <b>Client Statement 2</b> | The last month has been miserable. I am just so tremendously stressed with all of my schoolwork. Every day is just stress, stress, stress.  | The stress of school can feel overwhelming. (Criteria 1) I remember feeling like it was never going to end. (Criteria 2) I know what worked for me when I was stressed – do you want to see if we can figure out what will work for you? (Criteria 3)                         |
| <b>Client Statement 3</b> | You seem to have a great life. Like there’s nothing wrong and you just wake up every day feeling good about yourself and the world.   | That’s interesting to hear. (Criteria 1) Sometimes I feel that way, but other times I go through the same kind of struggles as everyone else. (Criteria 2) I’m curious, what’s it like for you to hear me say that? (Criteria 3)  |
| <b>Client Statement 4</b> | This week has been tough. Someone close to me really let me down. It’s been hard to deal with, and I have no idea how to move on. Has that ever happened to you?  | I’m so sorry to hear that. It’s really painful to be let down. (Criteria 1) It has happened to me – I had a pretty severe betrayal by a coworker last year. (Criteria 2) Would it be helpful for me to talk about it and how I got past the hurt that it caused? (Criteria 3) |
| <b>Client Statement 5</b> | I hate it when people get in my personal space – like right up against me when there’s no reason to. Especially when it’s someone I don’t know.   | I agree completely! (Criteria 1) That actually happened to me yesterday, it was so annoying. (Criteria 2) Tell me more about why that bothers you. (Criteria 3)   |

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| <b>Client Statement 6</b>  | Are you married? Are you in a relationship right now?  | Good question. (Criteria 1) I'm not married, but I am seeing someone. (Criteria 2) If you don't mind sharing, I'm curious about what made you want to know that about me. (Criteria 3)  |
| <b>Client Statement 7</b>  | You know, I see everyone else's social media and I can't help but feel like a loser. Like other people are leading happier, more interesting lives.  | I hear you. (Criteria 1) To be honest, I have that same experience sometimes when I'm on social media. It can make me feel bad about myself too. (Criteria 2) What would you think if you knew that a lot of people feel the same as we do? (Criteria 3)                |
| <b>Client Statement 8</b>  | I think about death sometimes. Not in a suicidal way, but out of fear more than anything else. I don't want to die, and it seems like I'm the only person who has these thoughts.  | Thank you for sharing that with me. Most people don't talk about death, but it's something that we all think about. (Criteria 1) I also have that fear and think about death sometimes. (Criteria 2) How do those thoughts impact you? (Criteria 3)                     |
| <b>Client Statement 9</b>  | Do you have kids?  | Good question. (Criteria 1) I do, yes. Two kids – three and seven years old. (Criteria 2) We can talk about me being a parent if you'd like, but I want to make sure we don't spend too much time focusing on me. What makes you interested in this topic? (Criteria 3) |
| <b>Client Statement 10</b> | I was feeling pretty bad yesterday. Then I remembered that I'm pretty lucky compared to the billion people around the world who live in poverty, and that just made me feel ungrateful. Like it's not OK for me to be sad because my life is actually pretty good, you know? | Absolutely. (Criteria 1) I have those thoughts from time to time as well, and it can be difficult. (Criteria 2) Would you like to talk more about the idea that you're not supposed to be sad? (Criteria 3)   |
| <b>Client Statement 11</b> | So... I'm gay. You're the first person I've told. It's really scary to say that out loud.  | Wow, thank you for sharing that with me. (Criteria 1) I'm straight, so I can't know what you're going through, but I know it takes a lot of courage to come out. (Criteria 2) How do you feel right now after having told me? (Criteria 3)                              |

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| <b>Client Statement 12</b> | Lately I've been worrying a lot about this idea that I'm more shallow of a person than I want to be. When I'm on dates, I tend to focus on how attractive the person is – I wish I could just turn that off. | That really says a lot about your values, and how focusing on attraction doesn't really fit with who you want to be. (Criteria 1) But what you're describing is normal – I do the same thing, it just happens naturally. (Criteria 2) I think we all do that to some degree. Does that change how you feel at all? (Criteria 3) |
| <b>Client Statement 13</b> | I just want to fit in. I have this burning desire to feel a sense of belonging, and when I get the sense that I'm not part of the group I end up dwelling on it.   | That can be so difficult. It really hurts to feel like an outsider. (Criteria 1) I've been there myself – that actually happened to me recently with some friends. (Criteria 2) Let's talk more about what it's like for you. (Criteria 3)  |
| <b>Client Statement 14</b> | It's so hard. Being single again makes me feel so bad about myself.  | Loneliness can be such a powerful emotion. (Criteria 1) I know what it's like to be single and have those kinds of thoughts. It can be devastating. (Criteria 2) Tell me more about the feelings you're having. (Criteria 3)  |
| <b>Client Statement 15</b> | Have you ever had suicidal thoughts?   | That's a big question. (Criteria 1) Sort of, yes. When I was younger I had what I now understand as passive suicidality – I would think about the idea of suicide but I had no real plans or intent to try anything. (Criteria 2) If I may ask, what's it like for you to hear me say that? (Criteria 3)                        |