

Your Eulogy

What do you want your eulogy to be about after you are gone?

I know this may seem like a morbid topic for therapy but we deal in the heavy subjects for therapy, such as the meaning of life and what happens after we die.

For this technique, you're going to help the client envision a future that they are proud of and what they will need to get them to their preferred future.

Helpful hint: This technique is especially useful with adolescents because they often have difficulty seeing past what is immediately in front of them. Building this in the sandtray will allow them to not just talk about but really SEE what they need to do to have the life they want.

Step 1: Discuss the meaning of a eulogy. The dictionary states a eulogy as “a speech or piece of writing that praises someone or something highly, typically someone who has just died. "His good friend delivered a brief eulogy"

Acknowledge that this may seem like an odd thing to discuss in therapy, but it is helpful for the client and the therapist to see the ultimate goal of what the client wants out of life.

Step 2: Instruct the client to build a world that represents the different aspects of what a person would state about themselves at their funeral. What kind of things does the client want people to say about their values, what they did for others, the kind of life they lived, etc?

Encourage the client to place as many detailed miniatures in the tray to represent the different parts of the client, such as where they worked, what type of family they had, where they lived, and so forth. Again, the purpose of this is to allow the client to really SEE and EXPERIENCE how others will view them at the end of their life.

Step 3: When processing this tray, prompt the client to go deeper in terms of feelings. Who will feel sad? Why will they be sad? What legacy will they leave? In addition, the therapist should also highlight any inconsistencies between what the client is doing now and what they want to be said about them. Use the Jack-in-the-Box technique as needed to allow the client to find solutions to these incongruencies.

This technique is best used during the working phase of treatment or when you feel a client may be stuck on what they want out of therapy. Psychoeducation is an important part of this technique to help the client understand the purpose of building this type of sandtray with the therapist.