

Documentation in Geek Therapy



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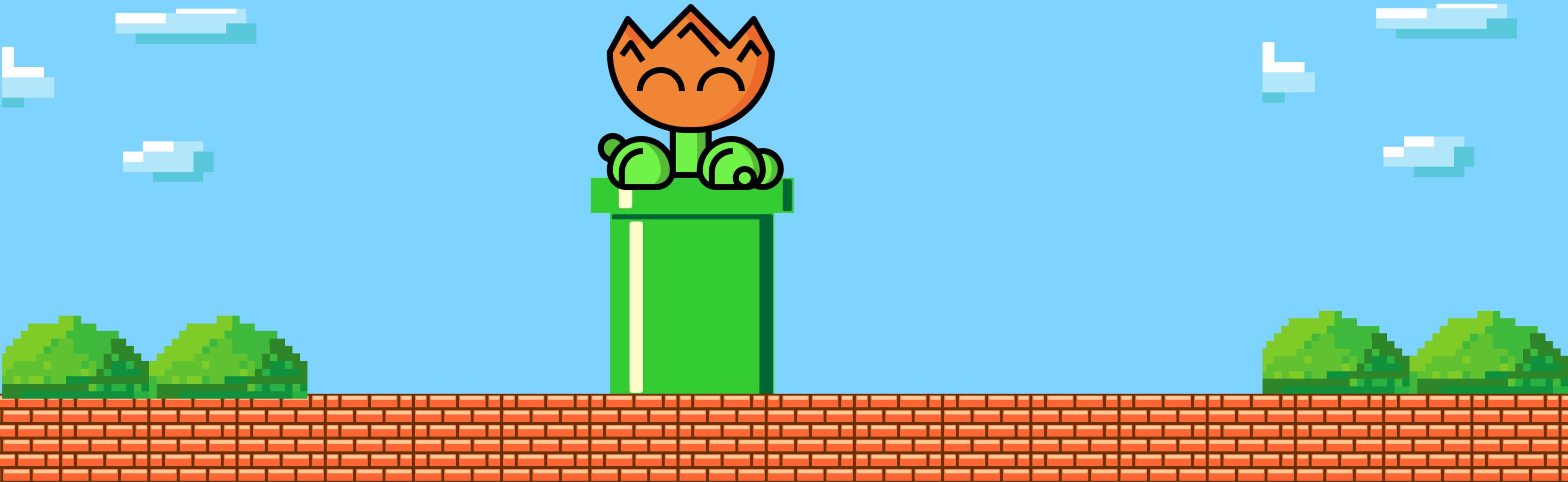
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Land Acknowledgement

We are privileged to live and learn as guests in the traditional homelands of the Tampachoa, Piro, Chiricahua, and Mescalero Apache Peoples.

We gain many benefits from the lands and thank these Indigenous People for their care of Mother Earth.

For those who do not know what a land acknowledgment is, you can learn more by watching this video.



If you want to learn more about the Native land you occupy and whom to acknowledge, here is an interactive map



Introductions

Jordan Kocon M.A.

- He/him, el pronouns
- Cisgender male, White Euro American
- Counseling Psychology Doctoral Student - New Mexico State University



Zac Egan, M.A. LMSW

- He/Him pronouns
- Cisgender male, White Euro American
- Licensed Master Social Worker- A New Hope Therapy Center



Learning Objectives

- The Clinical Loop
- Documentation of Services
- Translating Geek Therapy
- Let's Practice!

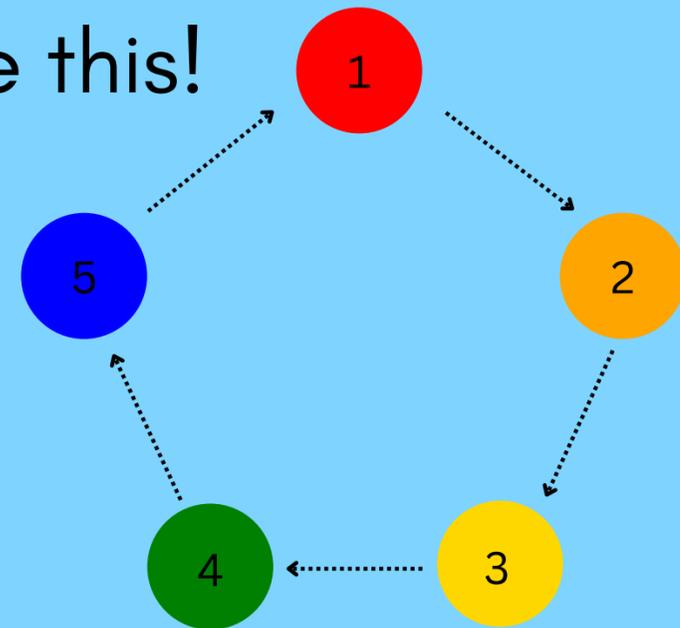


Clinical notes? Why Bother!

BILL

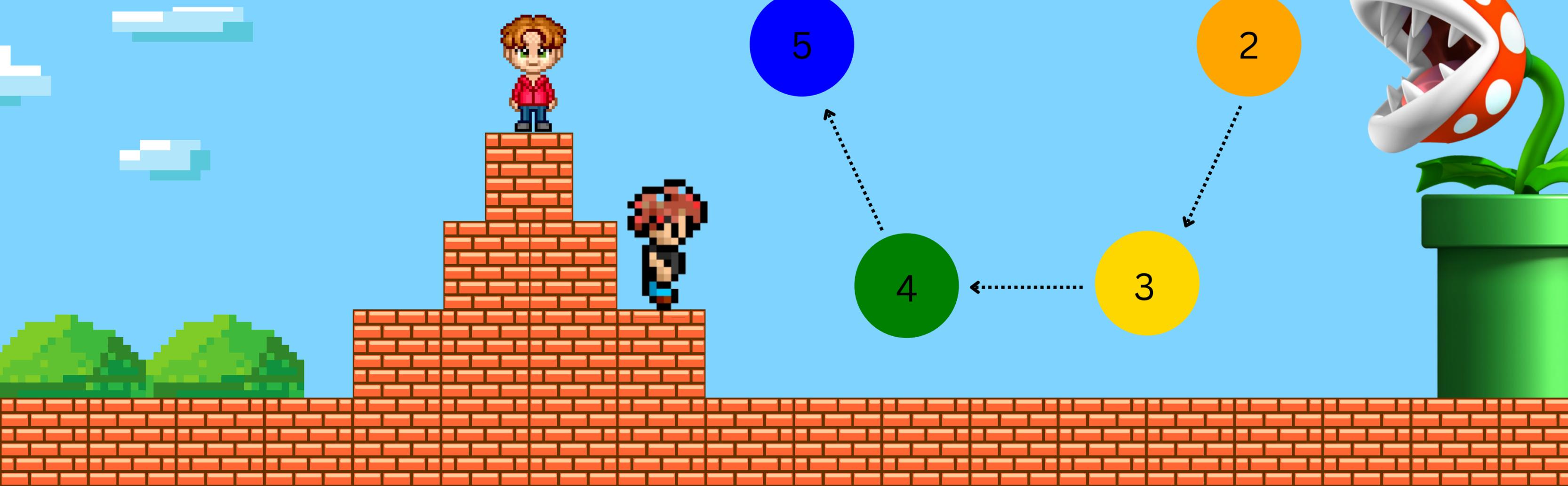
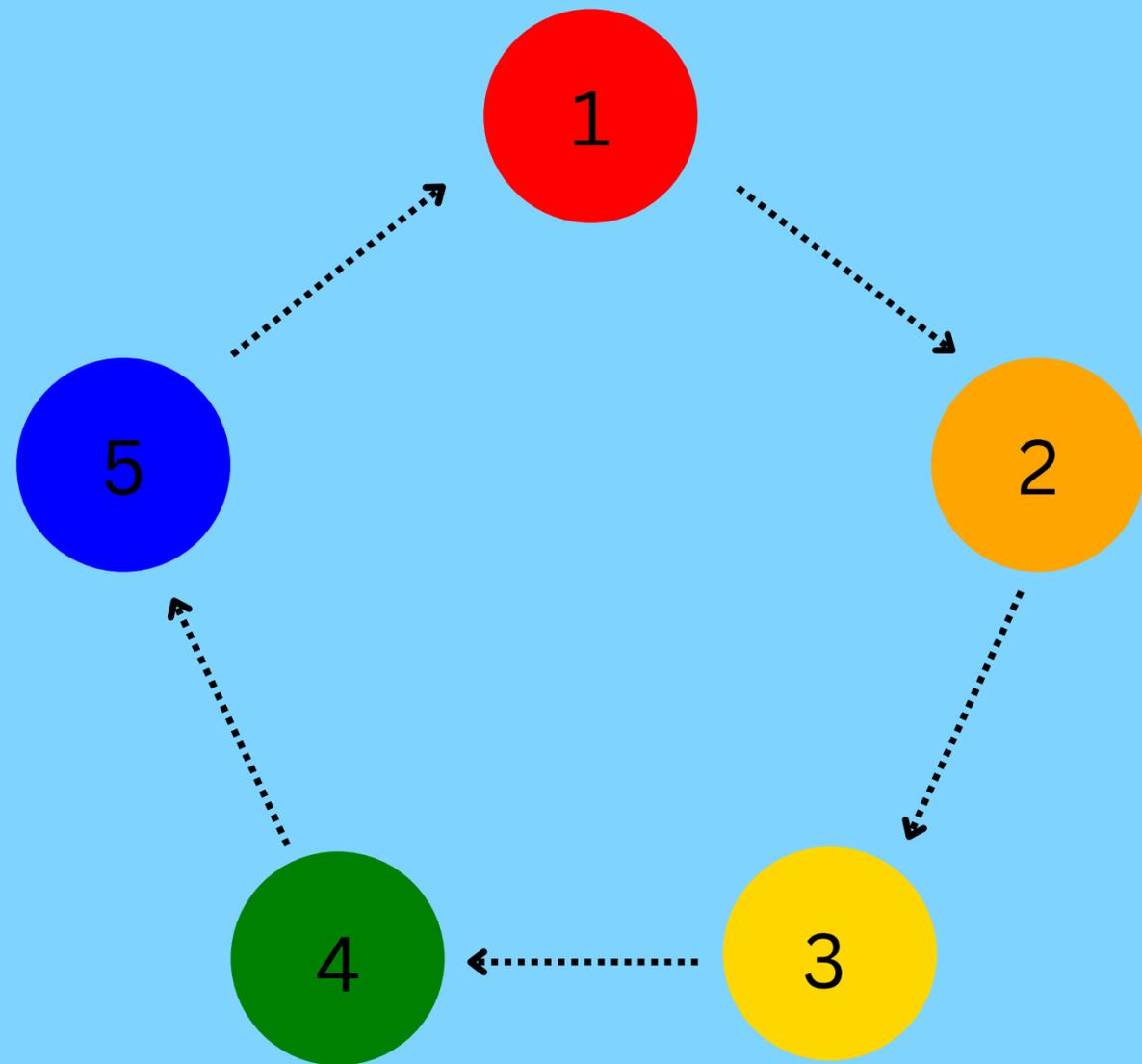


- Paperwork is the villain we love to hate
- Empathy does not pay the bills!
- Laws and ethics **require** clinicians to be up-to-date with best practices.
- It's dangerous to go alone, take this!



The Clinical Loop

1. Assessment
2. Medical Necessity
3. Diagnosis
4. Treatment Plan
5. Documentation of Services



The Golden Thread

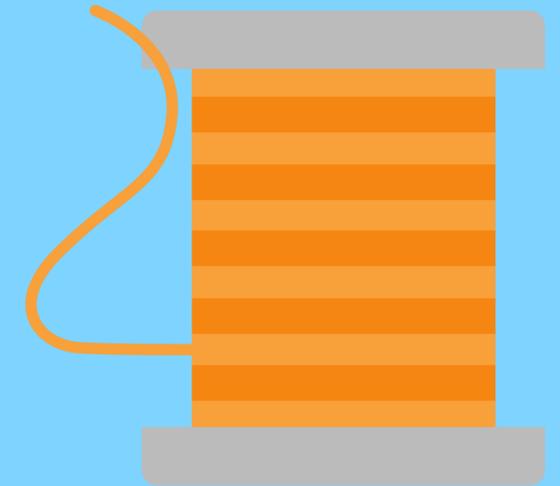


Assessment

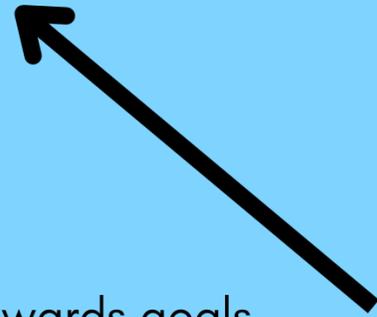
Presenting Problems
Impaired functioning
Medical Necessity
Diagnostic Justification



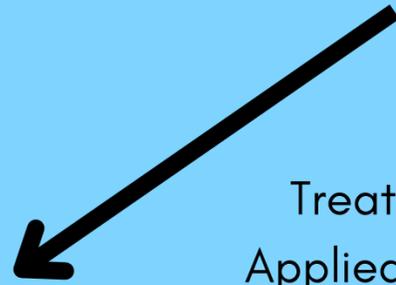
Treatment Plan



Progress towards goals
Response to interventions



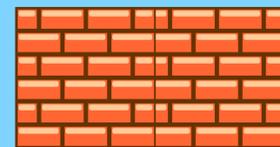
Treatment Goals
Applied Interventions



Documentation of Services



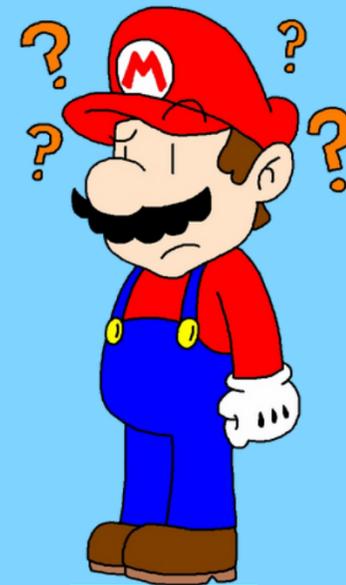
Documentation of Services



Maintaining clear and concise documentation is vital for creating a record of therapeutic services and progress regarding treatment. Documentation of clinical services must be accurate and timely and indicate the same services provided to clients. Whether the documents are paper or digital, all documentation must be stored in a confidential and secure environment.

What Info Does a Note Need?

- The date and duration of service
- Location (if outside of the office)
- Interventions used (1 per every 15 minutes of session)
- Client response to interventions
- Goal/Treatment Plan Progress
- Plan: What will therapist do? What will client do?





Basic Outline of a SOAP note

- **Subjective information** – Client interpretation of why they need continued services; client description of symptoms, the impact of symptoms, and how it relates to diagnosis
- **Objective information** – What is objectively observable? Includes: affect (with supporting descriptors), verbatim client quotes, theoretical approaches, interventions, and how the client responds to intervention.
- **Assessment** – Subjective observations and inferences: therapist's professional interpretation of why the client needs continued services.
- **Plan** – What's next?

Important Documentation Considerations

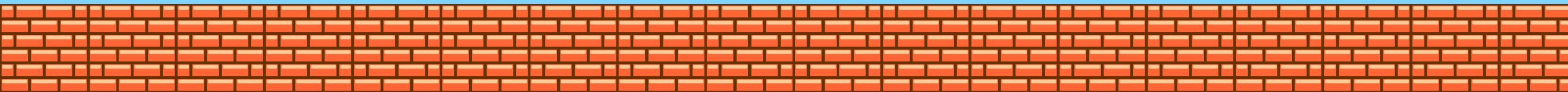
- Balancing specificity and generativity
- Client Identities
- Population (e.g., vulnerable adults, minors)
- Safety and Risk Assessment
- Who will have access to the records?



Time for Reflection & Questions

- What comes to mind to think about geeks or nerds?
- Do you identify as a Geek?
 - Think of fandoms, games you like to play, favorite superhero/villain.
 - You may be a geek about hot air balloons, gardening, and animals.
- What interventions do you use that might classify as a geek therapy intervention?
 - How might you know this intervention will fit your client's treatment plan goals or needs that day?

What To Know About Geeks



Engagement



Activities

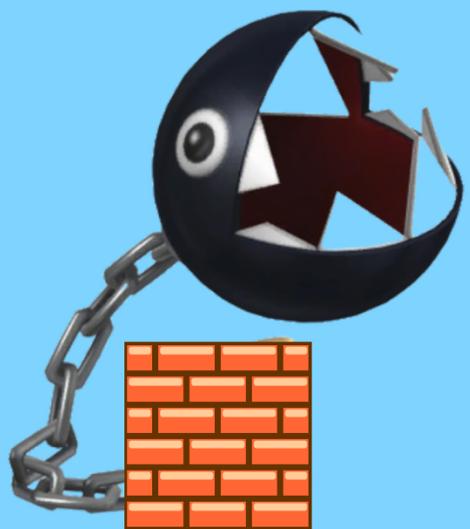
Board Games
Computer Games
Cosplay
Create Meme's
Fan Fiction Writing
Live Action Role Play (LARP)
Paranormal
Puppetry
Renfaire
Robotics
Society for Creative
Anachronism (SCA)
Theater

Interests

Alternate History
Anime
British TV
Broadway
Cartoons & Comics
Fantasy
Filking
Horror
Joss Whedon Films
Manga
Rocky Horror
SciFi
Superheros & Villians

Mental Health Correlations

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Personality Disorder
- Low Self-Esteem



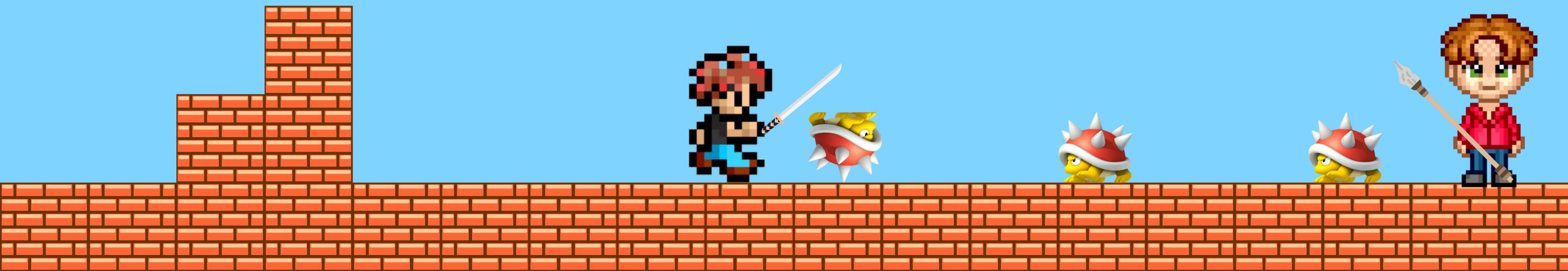
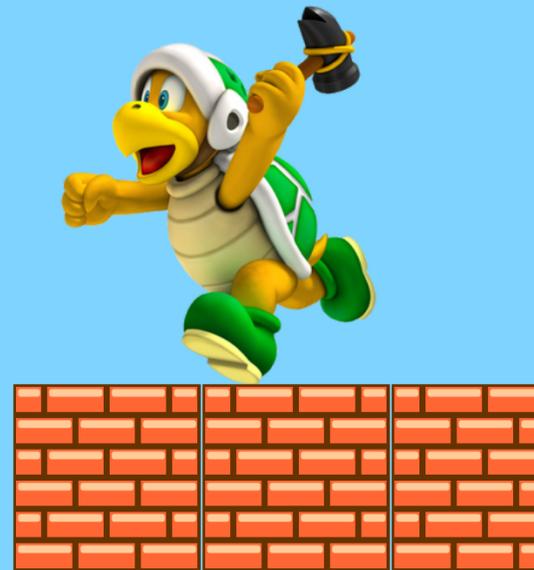
Stereotyping Geek Clients

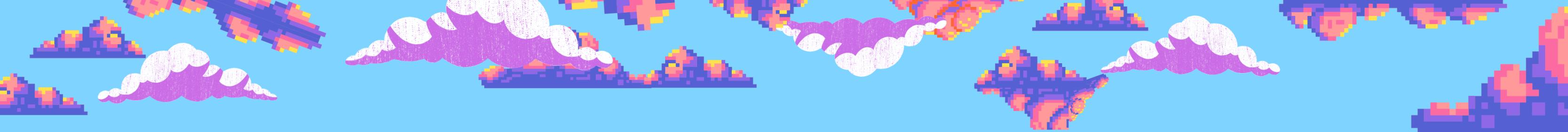


- Avoidance/Escapism
- Violence/Aggression
- Lack of social skills
- Sexist

Helpful Equipment in Geek Therapy

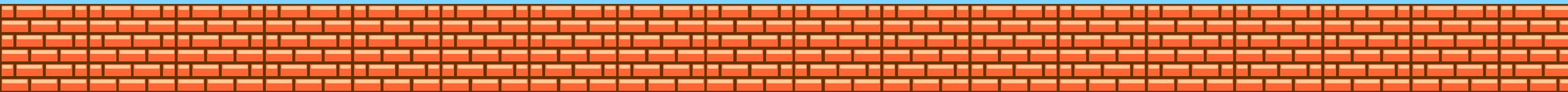
Gaming Equipment
Streaming Services
Comic Books
Composition Notebooks
Board Games
Biofeedback Devices

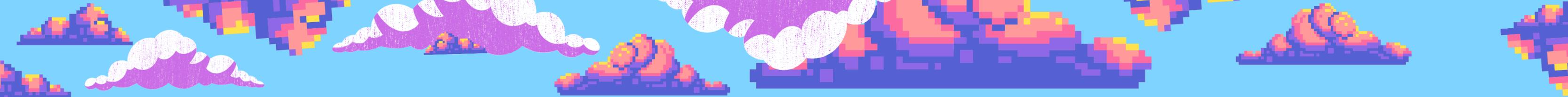




Translating Geek Interventions into Clinical Terminology

Appeasing our insurance overlords!





Documenting Geek Interventions

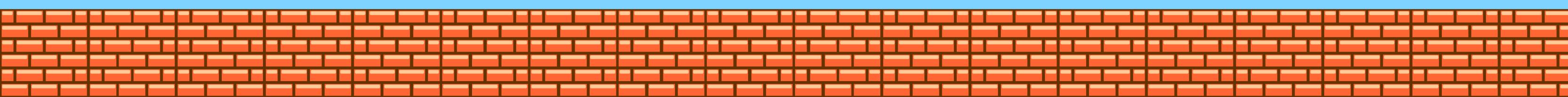
1. Identify the theory/modality

a. A ***theory*** is a system of evidence-based ideas used to explain human thoughts, behaviors, and emotions.

b. A therapeutic ***modality*** includes the different approaches used for improving a client's well-being

2. Identify the intervention

a. An ***intervention*** is the actions taken by the therapist to support change in the client.



Identify the Theory

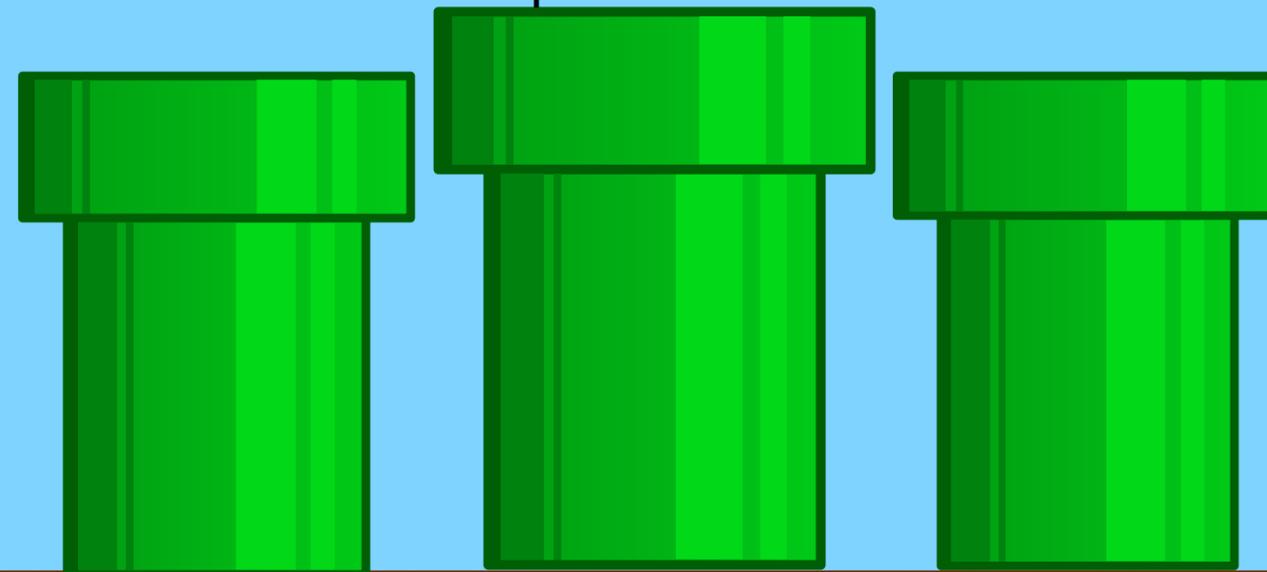
No matter what you doing in the session, there is a basic theoretic approach at play. Below are some theories frequently used in geek therapy:

Role

Behavioral

Cognitive Behavioral

Empowerment





Common Modalities

Acceptance and Commitment Therapy

Client-Centered

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

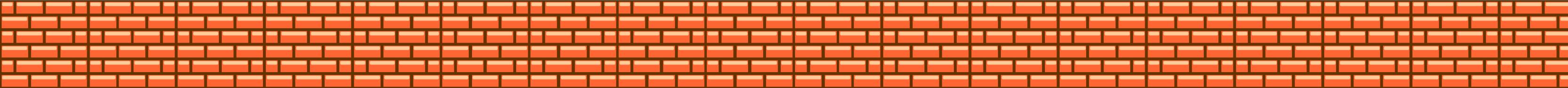
Dialectical Behavioral Therapy

Mindfulness

Integrative Therapy

Narrative Therapy

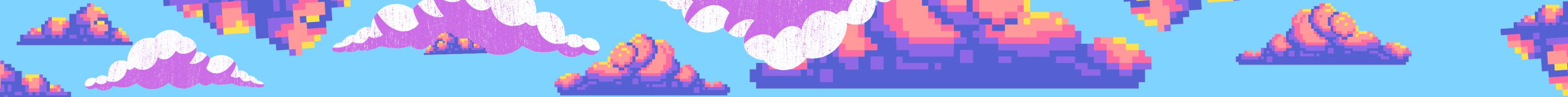
Holistic Therapy



Identify the Intervention

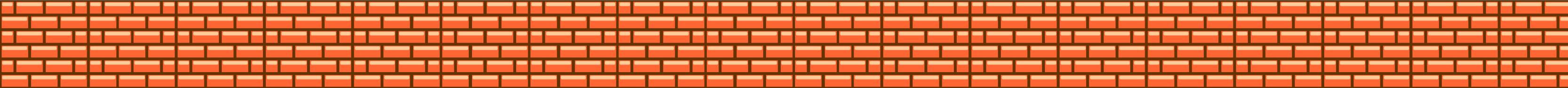
- Coping-Skill Development
- Distress Tolerance Skills
- In-Vivo Prompting
- Mindfulness
- Narrative development
- Parts Development
- Psychoeducation
- Rapport Building
- Role-Play
- Strengths Identification
- Symbolism Exploration
- Trigger Identification





To Consider

- How would you describe the theory?
 - Where in the note would you include this?

 - What Interventions did you notice?
 - How would you document that?
 - Where/what information would you include in the note?
- 

Intervention Examples

- Playing Mine Craft and building safe space
- Discussing a client's D&D Character
- Playing Fable and exploring the impact of choice
- Watching Star Wars and discussing the Heroes' Journey
- Playing Spiritfarer to process grief



Let's Practice Together!

Subjective:

Objective:

Assessment:

Plan:



Case Example 1.1

Scotty: **while legs are shaking** I have been having much trouble managing stress and anxiety. Like when I get hit with anxiety, I almost lose control and don't know what to do.

Therapist: Are you familiar with mindfulness exercises?

Scotty: Not really

Therapist: Would you be willing to try a little bit of breathing with me?

Scotty: Sure.

The therapist teaches and practices exercise with the client for 15 minutes.

Therapist: How would you like to play a game with that covered? Have you ever played Overcooked?

Scotty: Sure, I haven't played that before!

Therapist: Eggcellent, let's give this a shot.

The therapist starts the video game console and selects the game.



Case Example 1.2

While playing the game (explicitly chosen to stimulate a stress and anxiety response in the client), the client begins to struggle and become overwhelmed. His breath rate increases, his face tightens, and he constantly shifts sitting positions. After attempting the level twice, the client only earned one star. About 20 minutes of session time

Therapist: Dang, that was rough. I know I was starting to get a little overwhelmed there at the end. How about you?

Scotty: Yeah, I noticed my heart pounding, and I had all these thoughts racing through my head. And I am not too proud of how poorly we did.

Therapist: How about we try this again, but this time, try using those breathing exercises when you start feeling your heart race.

Scotty: I guess we can try again.





Case Example 1.3

The therapist and client restart the level. As with last time, the game begins to pick up the pace and become more stressful. However, this time, the client audibly began utilizing breath techniques. The client maintains a consistent affect, lower motor activity, and a more stable breath rate. By the end of the round, the client has achieved the highest score: 3 stars! And in a record time. About 8 minutes of session time

Therapist: Whoa! That is quite an improvement. What did you do differently in this example?

Scotty: That's amazing. I noticed my breath and my heart going faster when I got stressed. And then the thoughts started racing. But I remembered what you said, and I just started breathing. And suddenly, I was able to concentrate on the game simply. The anxiety was still there but nowhere near as intense as it had been.





Putting it all together!

Subjective:

Objective:

Assessment:

Plan:



Let's Practice Together!

Client Name: Shannon

Age: 14

Presenting Problem: Seeking services for depressive symptoms and stress resulting in overwhelming sadness, missing school, not engaging in hobbies, isolation behaviors, and distracting behaviors.

Goal: The client will develop a healthy grieving process, resolve feelings of loss, reengage in relationships, and initiate new contact with others.

Objectives:

1. The client will develop tools and skills for managing feelings of sadness, as evidenced by the client's self-report of increased mood 80% of the time for four weeks.
2. The client will reengage with previously enjoyable hobbies, as evidenced by the client's self-report of higher engagement in these activities 60% of the time over eight weeks.



Example 2.1

Therapist: Hello, Shannon; it is good to see you again.

Shannon enters the office, her face is downturned, and her hands are in the pockets of her hoodie.

Shannon: Hey.

Shannon takes a seat on the couch.

Therapist: So last week, you shared that you enjoyed playing Dungeons and Dragons, and I thought we might explore that a little bit today. What do you think?

Shannon looks up with an inquisitive expression

Shannon: Sure, that might be cool.

Therapist: **producing D&D character sheets** Maybe we could make fun characters together?



Example 2.2

Shannon: **Smiling** Yeah, that sounds like fun.

Therapist: Excellent!

The therapist provides instructions throughout, and they begin working on making D&D characters. Shannon makes a Human Cleric for her character.

Therapist: So, tell me a little bit about your character.

Shannon: Well, their name is Ko Didrorsk, and they are a Life Domain Cleric

Therapist: Oh, very excellent! What made you choose the life domain?

Shannon: Well, life-domain clerics are all about healing those who are sick or wounded and caring for people in need. When they reach higher levels, they can even cast spells that stop people from dying.

Therapist: Wow! That is some pretty powerful stuff. And it sounds like this character values life and caring for others. I wonder, do you feel pretty similarly? Was there a time when you felt powerful or wished you had similar powers?



Example 2.3

Shannon: **breaking eye contact and shifting tone of voice** Kinda. I guess.

Therapist: How do you mean?

Shannon: Well, I wish I could have been this character when my sister died. We were close, and she died very suddenly. And if I was this character, maybe I could have stopped the accident. Or I could have helped her before the accident, and then it wouldn't be my fault she died.

Therapist: That is a lot to carry around with you. A hefty burden. What makes you believe it was your fault?

Shannon: Well, I have always been good at helping people when they are feeling really bad. And she was breaking up with her boyfriend just before she died. If I had tried harder to help her, maybe she wouldn't have gotten in the accident, and she would be alive now. I know that isn't entirely realistic, but it is how I feel and what my brain tells me.





Example 2.4

Therapist: Do you think there is any meaning behind your feelings?

Shannon: How do you mean?

Therapist: Well, let me ask you this; has this experience changed you?

Shannon: Yeah, I think it has hardened me a lot.

Therapist: So it has only made you harder?

Shannon: Not only that. It has also helped me develop much empathy for people who have gone through something similar.

Therapist: That's right, you had told me about that classmate who also had a family member die recently. And how before you didn't talk or spend time with them. But you could speak and connect with them when you find out about their situation.

Shannon: Yeah, that's true. I did help them out a lot, and now we are friends.

Therapist: So, with all this that you are carrying and how this experience has changed you, how can you go on? What keeps you from giving up?



Example 2.5

Shannon: Well, I want to work through these feelings, and I want to learn how I can keep moving. But I think that one of the other things that keeps me going is the rest of my family. After what happened, I feel much closer to my mom, dad, and even the rest of my family. And we have been making new memories together that are good.

Therapist: Wow, I bet it feels perfect to have better relationships with your family. I know it is hard, and nothing will ever replace the relationship with your sister.

Shannon: It is lovely. And I even look forward to the new memories I will be able to make with my family.

Therapist: So, with all that in mind, I want to ask again. Looking at how you have been changed and the things that keep you going, what do you think the purpose of these feelings and this experience is?



Example 2.6

Shannon: Well, I think it has given me much dedication to become a surgeon.

Therapist: Oh, how so?

Shannon: Well, the thing that killed my sister was that there wasn't a doctor who could fix one of her veins that had ruptured. And she might have survived the crash if there had been one of those doctors. So that's what I want to do, and I want to be able to help and save people.

Therapist: Wow, that is admirable. And sounds a lot like your character Ko.

Shannon: Yeah, I guess there is more of me in Ko than I thought.

Therapist: It almost sounds like this is your call to the cowl.

Shannon: **laughing** Yeah, it kind of is.

Therapist: How many superheroes do you know who have lost someone important, and that was why they became superheroes?

Shannon: Dang. That is like all of them, and I can only think of one who didn't have that happen to them right now. But that's many heroes.



Example 2.7

Therapist: Right? They all had something happen to them that was their call to adventure. Something that gave them a sense of purpose and motivation. Specifically, something that called them to help others. Kind of like you, wouldn't you say?

Shannon: Yeah, I think so. It still hurts a lot.

Therapist: Of course it does! And that hurt may not go away, but you will learn ways to cope. And let me ask you this; what would happen if your roles were reversed? What if it was you who passed away and she had lived?

Shannon: Well, I would be happy because she was alive.

Therapist: Of course! I bet Peter Parker would also have been glad if his Uncle Ben had still lived. But how do you think your sister would have felt?

Shannon: Probably bad. She was a lot more emotional than me and took things harder than I did.





Example 2.8

Therapist: So, weirdly, you have spared her of that.

Shannon: How so?

Therapist: Well, by you still being alive, she doesn't have to experience your loss, and now she doesn't have to feel that. And her passing has given you an incredible purpose to help and save others. To be a hero. And just like so many other heroes, this purpose comes at the cost of having to survive and mourn. Is that worth it?

Shannon: Yeah, I think so. It feels nice that I am doing something helpful for my sister by living and doing my best to be the kind of person she would be proud of.



Putting it all together!

Subjective:

Objective:

Assessment:

Plan:



References

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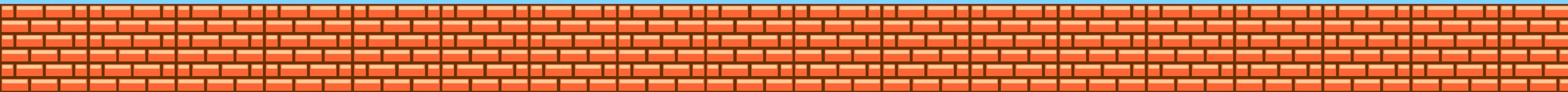
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Governing Authorities:

Who holds power and monitors your clinical license(s)?

Counselor → <https://www.counseling.org/>

Psychologist → <https://www.apa.org/>

School
Counselors → <https://www.schoolcounselor.org/>

School
Psychologist → <https://www.nasponline.org/>

Social Work → <https://www.socialworkers.org/>



Resources to Geek Out On!

- <https://www.guidancett.com/additional-resources>
- <https://www.opennotes.org/onc-federal-rule/>
- <http://www.superhero-therapy.com/books/>
- <https://geektherapy.org/>
- <https://geektherapeutics.com/>
- <https://taggsummit.org/>

