


SAFER SOCIETY FOUNDATION
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Safer Talk

**Everything You Always Wanted to Know
 About Using Workbooks in Work with
 Young People in Treatment**

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**Using Workbooks
 In Treatment**

**First... what
 workbooks are not!**



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**Workbooks are Not
 Treatment Manuals**

- Workbooks provide treatment content, and even a curriculum for treatment.
- Workbooks help deliver and teach important ideas, information, and tools.
- Workbooks shape and guide treatment, and provide a means for testing and measuring acquisition and understanding.
- However, workbooks are not treatment manuals.



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Workbooks are Not Treatment Manuals

- A manualized approach to treatment usually...
 - ✓ requires a single approach
 - ✓ defines the elements that comprise treatment
 - ✓ requires a prescribed sequence
 - ✓ requires a regimented application of the treatment model
 - ✓ often present a "one-size-fits-all" approach to the treatment of all clients.
- Manuals often eliminate or dampen clinical flexibility and the ability to individualize, not just treatment itself...
... but also the clinician's approach to treatment



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Workbooks are Not Treatment Manuals

- Treatment workbooks are not manuals.
- They are, instead, designed to assist, shape, guide, anchor, and add to treatment.
- They are not designed to define, drive, or "manualize" treatment or the treatment process.



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Workbooks are Not The Treatment

- Workbooks are not *the* treatment; they are part of treatment.
- Workbooks are an aid or adjunct to treatment.
- Workbook use represents only one part of treatment.
- Workbooks add to a model of treatment that is far greater than the material in the workbook itself.
- When used alone, workbooks cannot meet the need for the whole treatment of whole people.

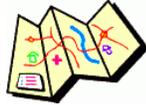


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Workbooks are Not The Treatment

- Think of a workbook as a guided set of ideas and exercises that help to structure and standardize treatment.
- Think of a workbook used within a larger treatment model, in which the use of the workbook is guided by the larger model; the workbook itself does not define treatment.
- When used as intended, the workbook is part of treatment, an aid to treatment, not the whole of it.
- Do not mistake the map for the territory.



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Workbooks are Not For All Clients: The Responsivity Principle

- To be most meaningful and effective, the workbook must be designed for the appropriate target population:
 - ✓ male
 - ✓ female
 - ✓ age
 - ✓ cognitive capacity
 - ✓ culture
- Workbook material should otherwise be modified, and/or new workbook material and exercises developed, to best match the population with which it is being used, using the workbook only with caution, and only in absence of more appropriate alternatives.

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The Approach of Workbooks

- Workbooks provide a primarily psychoeducational approach to treatment.
- Basic psychoeducational ideas are often taught and explored through the completion of experiential and written exercises.
- The tools, concepts, and exercises found in workbooks help to increase self-knowledge and provide a language that can help clients learn to recognize problem areas and how to avoid or negotiate them.
- Clients are thus helped to think about and escape problematic thinking and behavioral cycles before they progress too far, or avoid problems completely.



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The Value of the Workbook

- Workbooks are self-reflective by design; they can help clients think about the things that are important to them and others, the things they want, and how to work toward and achieve success.
- Extending treatment beyond the therapist's office or treatment program makes the use of the workbook still more important.



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Fitting the Workbook to the Treatment Program

- It is possible that some workbook material may not fit with or differ from the materials and ideas taught by clinicians and treatment programs.
- It is important to ensure an integrated fit between workbooks and the larger treatment model into which workbook use is embedded.
- Clinicians and treatment programs that use workbooks must ensure that the workbook fits the approach and ideas of the program, or adapt the program and methods to match the workbook.
- It is important to ensure the workbook does become the "tail that wags the dog."



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Fitting the Workbook to the Treatment Program

- As useful as workbooks can be, they may also limit the development of individualized clinical style and approach, or the use of a wider range of treatment approaches and materials.
- Despite its best intentions, a workbook may force a version of one-size-fits-all treatment onto all clients, and clinicians.



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Parroting: The Appearance of Learning

- There is also the ever present risk that clients may learn to simply mimic what they are being taught.
- In some cases, clients may even fool themselves into believing that they have actually acquired and can apply new information and ideas in their everyday lives.
- Clinicians using workbooks must stay alert for parroting, and work with clients to help ensure that they actually understand what they are learning and able to recite.



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Behavioral Change: The Application of Learning

- Real-life application of workbook material is REALLY important!
- If workbook material is being assimilated into their daily lives, clients will be able to show people through their behavior, social interactions, and relationships that they are able to make changes...
... and able to apply new ideas and skills in their everyday lives.



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Using Workbooks to Standardize Treatment

- Typically, workbooks are aimed at a particular subject area of concern.
- For instance, sexual-abuse-specific treatment is in some respects substantially different from other forms of treatment, and aimed at specific treatment targets.
- Accordingly, it is important to have a set of standardized ideas and tools that represent its core elements.
- Workbooks designed for work with young people with sexually problematic behaviors help to fill that need.



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Using Workbooks to Standardize Treatment

- Workbooks can help ensure that clinicians, while individualizing treatment...
 - ... are also tightly focused on the sexually problematic or abusive behavior that brought the young person into treatment.
- The same will be true of workbooks that are aimed at fire setting behaviors, for instance, or aggression.
- That is, they are teaching and discussing common ideas and tools that are specific to the particular behavior that brought the young person into treatment, and teaching a common language to clients...
 - ... and furthermore to the families of clients, if they are included in treatment.




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Using Workbooks to Standardize Treatment

- Recalling that workbooks are not treatment manuals...
 - ... they can nevertheless be used as the basis for a structured model of treatment that...
 - ✓ includes standardized content and elements
 - ✓ follows a standardized sequence
 - ✓ provides a standardized core for a program of treatment




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Using Workbooks to Individualize Treatment

- However, although standardized in content and design, workbooks can be adapted in many ways to meet the needs and goals of individualized treatment...
 - ... including the needs of different clients at particular points in their treatment.
- For instance...
 - ✓ when workbooks are introduced into treatment for different clients
 - ✓ in the choice of reading and workbook exercises that clinicians assign to individual clients
 - ✓ in how clinicians eliminate or add material and go beyond the material and confines of the workbook




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Using Workbooks to Individualize Treatment

- In addition, the use of workbooks will be influenced by other factors, including...
 - ✓ the treatment setting
 - ✓ the ability of each youth to work on specific and often increasingly difficult material
 - ✓ the client's participation and progress in therapy
- Workbook content and exercises vary in content, in which different exercises are intended for different purposes, and at different points, in the therapeutic process.
- Part of the art and skill of therapy lies in knowing when and how to help clients tackle the issues they are facing.
- This includes their use of workbooks.



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The Clinician's Work in Using Workbooks

- Clinicians using a workbook must be familiar with the workbook, its approach, its ideas and content, and its written and experiential exercises, in order to know...
 - ✓ when the workbook is likely to be most useful
 - ✓ when the client is ready to meaningfully tackle the work
 - ✓ when to assign an exercise or reading assignment
 - ✓ when to re-assign an exercise or reading assignment
 - ✓ when the completion of certain material is not likely to be productive at any given point in treatment, or may even be counter-productive.



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The Benefits of Workbooks

- Extends treatment beyond the confines of the clinician's office, beyond group treatment, and beyond time-bound restraints.
- Extends the ideas discussed and taught in individual, group, and family therapy sessions.
- Can be used to teach information and ideas, engage clients in self-discovery, prepare clients for further discussion, and develop a knowledge and skill base in clients.
- Can be used to prepare clients for planned sessions that are yet to happen.



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The Benefits of Workbooks

- Provides an alternate means for clients to acquire and retain information, augment classroom education, and provide more time for learning.
- Places a level of responsibility on the client for engagement in the learning process.
- Allows for self-paced learning.
- Provides a way to test for client comprehension, motivation, and engagement in the learning process.
- Maintains a permanent record of information taught, the acquisition of such information, and the depth of learning.



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The Benefits of Workbooks

- Can be re-visited and serve to refresh memory over time, and workbooks tasks and exercises re-assigned as deemed necessary or relevant to any given situation or client.
- Allows others who have legitimate access to treatment records and materials gain insight into material taught, client exploration and comprehension, and client motivation and participation.



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The Limitations of Workbooks

- Workbooks can homogenize and give treatment the appearance of being one-size-fits-all.
- Clients can "successfully" complete workbook materials without actually learning anything, or without incorporating any real change into their thinking or behavior.
- Some young people either don't complete the homework at all or hurry through assignments, completing them in the most minimal of ways, and in the process learn little if anything at all.
- Workbook material may go right over the heads of some clients for any number of reasons.



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The Limitations of Workbooks

- Workbook use requires that clinicians review and understand their content before use.
- Workbook assignments require that staff have the time to review and evaluate the youth's level of understanding.
- Without reviewing and re-visiting the material covered in workbooks, workbook assignments may never be discussed during individual or group sessions, or integrated into the larger treatment program.
- There may be an unwarranted assumption that the material has been learned, retained, and integrated when, in fact, it has not.



The Limitations of Workbooks

- Workbooks are finite and limited in space.
 - ✓ They always have a beginning and an end, and there is usually only enough space to complete each exercise once.
 - ✓ This can create the illusion that once completed, the work has been completed, even when this is not the case.
- The workbook is not the treatment.
 - ✓ The completion of the workbook neither represents the end of treatment nor the end of the utility of the workbook itself.
 - ✓ Nevertheless, the physical limitations of workbooks represent an inherent problem.
 - ✓ It suggests that workbook completion equals content mastery and perhaps even the completion of treatment.



Responsivity: Fitting the Workbook to the Client

- Young people in treatment vary widely – in age, cognitive development, intelligence, emotional maturity, language skills, social skill development, learning style, and culture.
- The workbook must be designed for the relevant target population.
- Workbooks and workbook material must be otherwise carefully scrutinized and adapted or modified as appropriate.



**Responsivity:
Fitting the Workbook to the Client**

- This not only increases the chances that clients will understand and internalize the material, and experience success...
...but is also a facet of individualizing treatment, gearing treatment to the needs and capacities of each client.



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13 Pointers for Best Use

- 1. Be selective and judicious**
Don't feel compelled to use all of the material or ideas in workbooks if they do not fit with other materials or ideas you use.
- 2. Bring ideas and materials to life**
Use discussion, explanation, illustration, reflection, and examples to bring the content of workbook assignments to life, helping to ensure not just clarification but also relevance and depth of meaning.
- 3. Complete some workbook assignments in therapy sessions**
Working on assignments together, at least on occasion, can:
 - help bring material to life
 - help clients learn how to best use workbooks
 - help clients work through difficult areas
 - allow you to see the client's understanding and use of the workbooks in "action"



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13 Pointers for Best Use

- 4. Customize treatment**
Individualize your use of the workbooks so that it recognizes and meets the treatment needs of each client and the needs of treatment at any given point in time.
- 5. Expand upon the workbooks**
 - Don't allow the fact the workbook is finite, with limited space and exercises that are provided only once, to limit your use of it.
 - Workbook exercises can be repeated, and reading material and content can be re-assigned as appropriate.
 - Of equal value, clinicians can easily extend workbook exercises and content by creating and adding their own written exercises and additional material.
- 6. Go beyond the boundaries of the workbooks**
Expand upon the workbook's boundaries, build upon their ideas, and develop new ideas and materials.



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13 Pointers for Best Use



7. Integrate and blend material
Integrate the workbooks with your own ideas and approaches, and with other prepared materials than you may use in treatment.

8. Repeat and re-visit
Whenever necessary or it seems appropriate have clients go back to earlier workbook sections or material.

9. Pace workbook use to match the needs and abilities of each client
Ensure that you match workbook use and assignment to the individual needs, level, and strengths of each client.

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13 Pointers for Best Use



10. Review, discuss, and test for retention and comprehension

- Review the manner in which young people use the workbooks and complete assignments, and discuss this with clients.
- Through review and discussion, ensure that clients complete exercises, retain knowledge, and demonstrate understanding of the material.
- Can clients, for instance, apply learned ideas to real life situations, interactions, and circumstances?

11. Show interest
Beyond reviewing and discussing the workbooks simply to ensure they are completed, show interest in the work your clients are completing

- Read their materials
- Listen to their ideas and their experiences
- Ask additional questions, and answer any questions that your clients may have

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13 Pointers for Best Use



12. Don't depend on workbooks as the source of all treatment or the completion of workbooks as a measure of treatment completion
Use workbooks as part of treatment, but do not mistake workbooks for the treatment.

13. Integrate workbook material and assignments into a larger and more comprehensive model of treatment
Incorporate workbook use into the larger treatment framework, and ensure workbook use is relevant in the larger treatment picture.

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Client Motivation

- No matter how good the workbook, absent of client motivation all workbooks lack any real or deep utility.
- Consequently, an early and on-going element of treatment involves fostering and nurturing motivation in the client.
- Unless the client is internally motivated, it is unlikely that any workbook can provide the necessary level of motivation to ensure that treatment is meaningful.
- Motivation is key to treatment gain, and often needs to be developed through the relationship with the clinician.



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The Therapeutic Relationship

- Some of the elements pertinent to the therapeutic relationship are reflected in the thirteen pointers for best use.
- When the clinician recognizes these elements and builds them into work with individual clients, the relationship itself is likely to enhance, support, and make more effective all treatment...
... including the use and value of workbook assignments.



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Workbook Use and Treatment Success

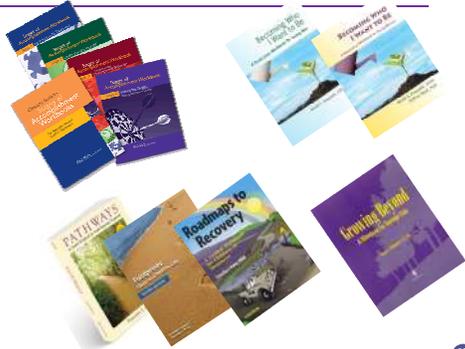
- Without minimizing the work accomplished by young people in completing a workbook...
... we reiterate that the completion of workbooks alone does not equal "success" in or completion of treatment.
- All workbooks should be used, tied into, and understood as part of a broader treatment process.



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Some Workbook Resources



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