

CAT Practitioner Training March 2026

Andy

AS YOU LISTEN TO THE MATERIAL, START MAPPING. DOES THE BROKEN EGG HELP YOU TO ORGANISE THIS MATERIAL?....

- 33, white British, male, heterosexual.
- 3 courses of CBT prior
- Lives alone, (in a new relationship).
- Trained as a lawyer, not worked for 6 months, running out of savings
- Key problems as described by Andy:
 - Relationships quickly start to feel 'boring'
 - Irritation at friends seeming to 'do better' than me
 - Not motivated to work
 - Low mood, days in bed

HISTORY

- Only child
- Successful family business that ended 5 years ago ("dad's fault"). Family wealthy when he was growing up
- Father – often away working, 'well respected', moments of real excitement with him, but also heavy drinker, MH diagnosis? frightening. Andy described him as 'pathetic, un-helpable'.
- Mother – vulnerable, (low mood?), heavy drinker, needed protection, slept in her bed until 12.
- Memories – DV between parents and Andy trying to prevent. Lavish parties ('take me with you'), the 'front', Christmas, mum talking to neighbours about his exam results.
- Now – Andy feels responsible for them.

RELATIONSHIPS AND FRIENDSHIPS

- Relationships – intensity/excitement/anxiety/ 'The Chase' and 'Disney make ups'. Then boredom.
- Good circle of friends but lonely. Social events feel draining. Aware that he pre-rehearses subjects to talk about.

ROLE PLAYS

WRITING EXERCISE

- Based on the clinical information you have heard so far, spend 15 mins writing parts of the reformulation letter:

- Either/and or:

- How would you describe the target problems
- Write a section that describes the pulls so far (how the patterns might already be playing out between you), what they might mean, and how you and the client might work with them.

- What would an ordinary, good enough course of therapy with me look like? Perhaps despite us having not covered everything in detail and there being disappointment about that, the ending feels tolerable and you leave feeling you can hold onto some useful little bits that you can slowly build on after therapy ends?
- It feels like the shape of our work needs to be aimed at looking at the (perhaps) messier, greyer, but more genuinely connected place in the middle between special, or absent. A place of good enough, rather than safely special. In our sessions that might look like you feeling I'm less 'on your side' but still safely with you, and in a place where I can helpfully challenge you, but that feels ok.
- I'm mindful that this letter is really long (I normally only write 2 pages) so I'm already curious about why that is? Am I trying to impress you? You've already talked about recognizing a growing dissatisfaction with therapy "what the point? Nothing will change" "Its just moaning", and an urge to walk away. Let's keep talking together about how the therapeutic process feels for us both.
- I feel that part of my role here, particularly with you x, is to be a 'good enough' therapist – to not strive to offer you something Disney perfect or especially successful because that doesn't exist, and isn't necessary. Tolerating me just offering you the little bit that I am able to with the boundaries that are there without shifting to a rejecting, contemptuous position will be important.

- I often feel I am anxiously waiting for others to hear me/see me
- People often disappoint me
- The closer I get to people, the colder I act
- One of the first things you shared with me was your sense of needing me ...'to understand everything about me ...'. I wonder if this is pattern 1 at play – connections only having worth if they are special and do everything? I noticed feeling a pressure when you said that – aware that we have limited time, that for me to understand everything isn't achievable (or necessary) and how at some point you are likely to feel disappointed by me as a result. I also noticed how distancing it made it feel between us – the sense of feeling overwhelmed with listening, and not enough time for working together, exploring, making new connections through collaboration and balance.

- Going back to how you recounted your past to me, in that careful, measured way. You seemed lost in the memories at times – working hard to tell me all the details. You were creating your world for me. At times I noticed that something about the way you were lost in thought meant it felt a little harder for me to join in with you and be curious with you, about you, together. The risk of not being able to 'join in' with you more is that I am less able to offer you different ways of thinking about you – which is one of the aims of therapy. This might link to that sensation you describe of never really feeling you've developed. I wonder if others sometimes feel a little on the outside of your experiences, that it can be hard to join you fully. As I type this I am wondering if this might be us in pattern 1? Therapy can be a really daunting and anxiety provoking thing to do – I wonder if it feels safer to be with me in a special way?

CHANGE WITH ANDY

- Mapping early the 'words with legs'.
- Tuning into process as much as possible
- Self care? s/v, the little boy, other ideas?
- Starting in the bottoms of the RR's and the self-self.
- Taking it back to early pain and compassion, keeping that link.
- Noticing the feeling at the start of each session – pressure to impress me. Experiment – to share what felt like a disappointing week.
- Dream – staying with the sadness. Praise of this. Highlighting the difference.
- Connection as an exit? Experiment: noticing and experimenting with not rehearsing. Key phrases task with noticing.
- Me sharing my sense of 'getting it a bit wrong'
- More CT moments 'Jo, in terms of your other clients, I imagine I'm on the more complex end?'

THE ENDING

- Counting down the sessions, using the map to make predictions and work with the pulls
- Andy doubting the worth of therapy, mostly discounting any gains, but also, asked for another course of therapy with me.
- Goodbye letter –
- Andy asked for another course of therapy – I offered 3 follow ups instead of 1
- By follow up 3 – Continuing to doubt impressiveness of self and therapy, but also, more noticing of the pull to impress others and experiencing more moments of connection. Less pre rehearsal. Wondering about changing careers and looking into a game design course.

CHANGE – WHOLE GROUP DISCUSSION

- What does change look like when working with narcissistic traits?:
 - What does change feel like in the connection between you?
 - What might the client be more able to do?
 - How can small (i.e. not seemingly admirable) changes feel valuable?