ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: A Task Analysis of the Withdrawer Re-engagement Event in Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy

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A discovery-oriented task analysis was conducted to delineate what therapist interventions, behaviors, and responses and client emotional processes are involved in successful withdrawer re-engagement in Emotionally Focused Couples Therapy (EFT). EFT is an empirically validated approach to treating couples. Withdrawer re-engagement is seen as a key element of the change process in EFT; yet limited research is available as to how the process is facilitated in session. Seven videotaped samples of successful withdrawer re-engagement were critically examined using task analytic methods. Therapist interventions and client emotional experiencing were assessed using the Emotion Focused Therapy Coding Scheme (EFT-CS) and the Experiencing Scale (EXP). Implications for future research, clinical practice, and training are discussed.

Keywords: withdrawer re-engagement, task analysis, emotionally focused couples therapy, EFT