

# THERAPEUTIC CONSIDERATIONS WHEN TREATING MEN

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Podcasts: The Commute;  
Ten Minutes to Save Your Marriage

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## Outline

Vinnie Barbarino:

Who?

Who comes into therapy?

What?

What issue(s) bring them through our doors?

Why?

Why are they really here?

How does a therapist interpret the "why?"

How?

Intervention ideas:

Individual

Within a relationship



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□ Making Changes:

□ Don't know how

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### Matt Damon (*The Departed*)



- ▣ "It's gotta be you that gets out. Because I'm not capable..."
- ▣ I'll deal with something being wrong for the rest of my life."
- ▣

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### Who?

- ▣ All walks of life
- ▣ Lean white collar/professional
- ▣ Blue collar—kicking and screaming (end up (+))
- ▣ Young & Old—
  - younger >emotional (not always)
  - older >rational (not always)
- ▣ Generally higher SES
- ▣ Emotional vs Rational continuum

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### What?

- Some for Touchstone; General health
  - consultant role
  - corporate, relationship, mental health
- Alcohol, sex
- ▣ Anxiety
- ▣ Depression
- ▣ Relationship issues
- ▣ General lack of purpose (expressed as depr/anx)
- ▣ "Existential Funk"

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### Why?

- ▣ Almost invariably, those M because of spouse
  - ▣ (\*those in rel. because of partner)
- ▣ Some have hit a point of discomfort that rivals comfort
  - ▣ Chronic issues
- ▣ ETOH scares them
  - ▣ Or other drug/compulsive behavior
- ▣ Realize something isn't right (many times b/c of relationship)
- ▣ \*Can evolve into a place to process
- ▣

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### Background / Etiology

- ▣ Coping strategies evolve young
- ▣ \*Arrested development?
  - Escape (hide-leave)
  - Peace Maker/Caretaker (co-dependent)
- ▣ -Fight/defend
- ▣ Small; can't win

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### Background / Etiology

- ▣ (Transition into "How")
- ▣ Grow emotional awareness
  - ▣ Anger secondary emotion?
  - ▣ Emotional range
  - ▣ "upset"
- ▣ Mad, sad, glad, afraid, ashamed, hurt, guilty
- ▣ Levels of anger
  - ▣ Annoyed; irritated; frustrated; ...not "angry"
  - ▣

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### How

- ▣ Metaphor
  - ▣ -Engine chugging but not turn over (communication)
  - ▣ -Motion parallax
    - ▣ (see future but anxiety in the foreground)
    - ▣ -Hard to remember examples - spontaneous
- ▣ Humor
  - ▣ -Keep appropriate, but can relax therapy r reluctance
  - ▣ -Join - "I know...I feel \_\_\_ too"
  - ▣ -Express/instill hope "I think we can figure that out."

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### How?

- ▣ "I want to know why...?"
- ▣ Solution-focused
  - ▣ Treat like a problem to be solved
  - ▣ Connect dots
  - ▣ *You know more than them*
- ▣ Sneak emotional content in like vegetables in a smoothie
  - ▣ Simple techniques (i.e. intentional dialogue)
- ▣ Rosetta Stone
- ▣ Join with them and don't assume emotionality

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### How?

- ▣ Cognitive/Behavioral
  - ▣ Get at narrative that drives behavior
  - ▣ Hidden files on the hard drive
  - ▣ \*Recognition of mistakes
    - ▣ After the fact first
    - ▣ Then correct
    - ▣ Then move to prior to fact

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### How?

- ▣ Cognitive Behavioral
  - ▣ Speech Patterns:
    - ▣ \*clients concerned they aren't making sense
  - ▣ Client asides:
    - ▣ Sorry (self esteem)
    - ▣ You know what I mean? (Misunderstood)
    - ▣ To make a long story short (self esteem)
    - ▣ Whatever (frustration/unheard)

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### How - Relationships

- ▣ The Satisfied vs Happy conundrum
- ▣ The price of intimacy
  - Family of origin issues
  - "I don't want to blame my parents"
  - Pick a partner who either mirrors or condones your aversion
  - Others are dismissed along the way
  - Sex as intimacy?

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### How - Relationships

- ▣ Response Cycle to conflict (back to preferred method of coping)
- ▣ Process/overwhelmed/blow
- ▣ Escape
  - ▣ Video game
  - ▣ Sex/porn
  - ▣ Work
  - ▣ Alcohol/drugs
  - ▣ Affair
    - ▣ Virtual
    - ▣ Physical

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**How - Relationships**

- ▣ Rosetta Stone
  - ▣ -What did \_\_\_\_\_ mean by that?
  - ▣ -What do you think \_\_\_\_\_ really wanted?
  - ▣ -What was \_\_\_\_\_ trying to say?
- ▣ If \_\_\_\_\_ was here, what would s/he say?

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**How - Relationships**

- ▣ 20 second statement can spare a 20 minute argument
  - ▣ -"I understand"
  - ▣ -"What do you mean by that?"
  - ▣ -\*YOUR role
  - ▣ -Do you want to WIN or do you want a satisfying relationship?
- ▣ Sensate Focus  
For sexual intimacy issues related to anxiety

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**Contact**

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