

T: It's kind of like there's always unresolved feelings and then they keep coming back. Like it's a lot of emotional baggage you're carrying. We talked about quite the painful history with your family and it's as though it keeps churning, right? I guess some of what we will do is try to work with that to maybe finish it and then pack it away.

While this pattern of moving into hopelessness is clearly evident, it is also clear that the client is capable of achieving an internal focus and this augers well for developing a focus.

As the therapist listens to the client, he begins to use his "pain compass" to hear the client's chronic enduring pain. When talking about her need to be supported and accepted by her family she expresses intense emotions, feeling immediately overwhelmed by the thought that it will never happen and that, ultimately, she does not deserve such intimacy.

"I tell myself a story over and over again to the point I believe it. I believe that it's so and that it can't be fixed. Or I don't care. I don't want it to be fixed. . . . That I'm not loved, that I'm not as good as them you know, my life is chaotic and theirs [sisters] seems to be going, you know their life seems so much easier."

The enormity of her aloneness was girded by a feeling of hopelessness. Not only did she feel she was not loved and that there was nothing she could do about it, but she felt that it was never going to change.

As the therapist listens to the client, he is attuned to possible markers that indicate openings where tasks may be undertaken. In the very first session the therapist hears two markers. Both unfinished business, around feelings of being badly treated by her family, and also a self-critical conflict between a part of herself that wants love and acceptance and another that labels her as failure and not entitled to love. As it is early in the therapy, these are simply noted and reflected on as something to return to:

C: I don't think I'm a bad. I believe I'm a bad person but deep down inside I don't think I'm a bad person. And I don't deserve all this. I haven't raped and murdered and robbed banks; I haven't done crazy things, there's no reason for them [family] to treat me this way.

T: So, in a way, it's almost like grieving for what you never had from them because you're beginning to say: "I do deserve better, I'm not a bad person, and it's like I feel really sad about what I never got. And I deserve it more."

C: Yeah, I guess so, yeah.

T: But the sadness is about all that you never got. The anger is.

C: Oh, yeah.

T: But some of part says I d

C: Well, I say this but then I know—yeah, I'm grieving never will have.

T: Yeah, probably that too. you are deserving even if how much can I get from

C: For myself. I realize now happy. Not to be happy t guess I'm doing this then that stuff won't mat told off enough that you

T: Yeah, so that's really an i why this disapproval is s ure and being told all al is almost in your head. A to stand up against it.

In session 2, a marker ag sibly returning to school. She further possibility of failure i apist initiates a two-chair dia Although this is a dialogue v self it is viewed as a self-critic sisters' criticisms suggests th jected onto or attributed to th ing because they activate the

"Yeah, unsupported, I fee teen left and it's like I do you win, I'm not as good alone."

In session 3, she recount ther. She describes not having apist initiates an empty-chair with her father:

C: I believe I'm a bad person. person . . . yeah, I'm gr know I never will have.