

needs for closeness and acceptance. This can be seen as a form of maladaptive emotional processing.

Throughout the first session a pattern is presented where the client expresses many emotion episodes of pain, anger, or shame. During each episode her emotional arousal is fairly full, disrupting her normal speech patterns. Immediately following such intense expressions of emotion the client describes emotions of helplessness or hopelessness. In fact, hopelessness is the most predominant emotion in the first session, constituting almost 50% of all her emotion episodes. There are different points at which she demonstrates this pattern. In the first example from early in the first session, she is describing how she just cannot cope with her family anymore:

- C: My sister called me and said and left a message saying, "I'd like to take you out for your birthday." And for some reason it really upset me all day yesterday and I was out in the coachhouse and I cried, I was very emotional and I thought I won't go to lunch with you because I might say something and you'll criticize me. She's very critical. She has, I guess, an ideal life and she looks at my life and she's the one who called me and told me to get a lawyer, and then I never heard from her for months when [husband] came out of the hospital. And she wonders why I don't come around. How do you think we feel? They told me to go, to leave him. Because he's mentally ill. So you're supposed to go over there and feel like everything's OK?
- T: So actually it sounds you're feeling quite resentful toward them.
- C: I am.
- T: It's hard to sort of put on a funny face and go for a birthday lunch or whatever. It's a pretend. But it also ends up somehow in you crying and—
- C: It makes me depressed. Yes.
- T: Because in a way it's like you're mad at her for how's she's treated you.
- C: Yes, I am.
- T: And also it gets into a kind of vulnerability to, that she's going to criticize you or something—
- C: I feel that I'm too sensitive. I mean sometimes when I have got angry in the past I just told her to—but I'm at the point now where I don't want to argue. Basically I want them to leave me alone. That's how I feel. And I know that's not good. Christmas is coming and I dread it.
- Her relationships with family members are difficult, and often painful. Her mother is an alcoholic with whom she and her three sisters no longer have contact. Her father is a concentration camp survivor. He has always

been emotionally removed from and judgmental. There is a history of emotional abuse in her childhood, particularly from the first session, she says:

"And she [mother] does that and call you names, and that's not enough. I can't take this. My father is just, he's just not there. Last year, my husband's had a heart attack, he never called once to touch me. He just doesn't; he's not there."

The therapist, hearing a client just not being there, focused on her loneliness implicit in her client's words: "nobody really there."

Soon after this the exploration of her vulnerable feelings and she moved this as a potential focus of the session. The rationale for an emotion-focused approach to dealing with such emotions:

- C: Oh, I think I should be feeling bad for myself.
- T: You're saying you hate yourself?
- C: Oh, yeah, a waste of time.
- T: Somehow your emotion is about yourself.
- C: Well, yeah, I've been doing that.
- T: Yes, so its here you want to cry as you begin to cry? Do you want to cry?
- C: I guess that's it. I just—feeling bad.
- T: Tired of the struggle.
- C: Yeah, I'm tired of thinking about it, just like, "Oh, God, I just want to sleep because there's nothing else I can do."
- T: Yeah, yeah, but somehow you go around and around.
- C: All the time.