

Guidelines for functional case formulation

1. Danger and safety
 - a. Identify critical dangers. What makes the client/ patient feel threatened (in communication style, emotionally etc.)
 - b. If a couple give a formulation of how they make each other feel threatened (in their communication style, in what they need from each other, etc.)
 - c. What do they need to get a feeling of secure base
2. Estimate how real the danger is
 - a. If a couple do they really endanger each other to a point that their attachment strategies may be adaptive
 - b. Are there any real dangers in their lives which ask for these strategies or is it just their perception
 - c. If the danger is real somewhere start thinking about how you can help them get rid of this danger and achieve a sense of secure base and safe heaven with each other (if a couple)
3. History of traumas and unresolved issues
 - a. Identify if there are any unresolved traumas – what type (preoccupied, avoidant, resolved) and what they relate to (eg. Unresolved preoccupied trauma regarding the mother or a specific event such as an assault)
4. Plan of treatment
 - a. How can you increase their repertoire of attachment strategies
 - b. How can you help them remove critical dangers from their relationships
 - c. How can you help them heal traumas
 - d. How doing all this will eventually come together and result in reorganisation of their attachment strategies
5. Where do you see potential pitfalls?
 - a. What will your client find difficult to change?
 - b. Where could you stir a conflict between a couple?
 - c. Reflecting on your attachment strategy, where could you struggle as a therapist/ transitional attachment figure?