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Approach to Empowering Psychotherapy

Empowering psychotherapy works from these basic principles:

**Appreciation is for you, what the sun is for the plants.
You have strengths, resources, skills, special talents and gifts.
You will develop your potential when you are appreciated.
What you focus on becomes your reality – Choose to focus on strengths and abilities.
When you over-focus on problems (thin conclusions), you tend to create more problems.**

You will feel secure when changes in your life are related to something you already know (past success stories). Choose to bring into your awareness the best of what you already have.

- 1) I use a respectful, non-blaming approach.**
- 2) I assume that the problem is the problem. You are not the problem.**
- 3) I assume that you have expertise on your own life.**
- 4) I assume that you are capable of finding solutions to your problems. You can become the primary author of the stories of your own life.**
- 5) I assume that, by the time you ask me for help, you will already have made many attempts to reduce the influences of the problem(s) in your life and relationships. You know what does *not* work for you. But you also know what works for you. I will encourage you to focus on what works.**
- 6) I assume that there always are occasions in your life upon which you have escaped a problem's influence. Problems never successfully claim 100% of your life or relationships.**
- 7) I see problems as constructed in cultural contexts. These contexts include power relations of race, class, sexual preference, gender, and disadvantages. You are not alone having these problems and problems are not always your faults.**
- 8) I assume that the problems for which you seek help usually cause you to reach "thin conclusions" about your life and relationships. Often these conclusions have encouraged you to consider yourself as deficient in some way and this makes it difficult for you to access your knowledge's, competencies, skills and abilities. The "problem-story" is not the whole story. Thin conclusions can be made thick by including existing alternative stories – stories of success, which focuses on your strength and abilities, and your capacity to create a more satisfying life.**
- 9) I assume that skills, competencies and knowledge can be made available to you to assist with reclaiming your life from the influences of the problem for which you seek help.**

It is my responsibility as your therapist to ensure an atmosphere of curiosity, respect and transparency. You play a significant part in determining the direction that is taken. There is no single direction. I don't assume to know what's best for you. My role is to facilitate your healing process.