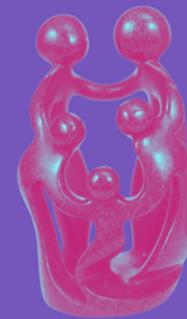


FAMILY SCULPTING



A Down & Dirty Guide To Family Sculpting to accompany THIS video:



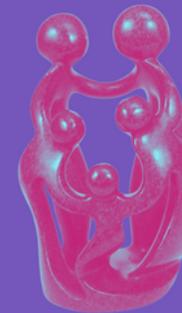
Family sculpting is an incredible exercise where you use people in the group, or real members of the family if it's a family therapy session, to create a living sculpture that reflects a subjective experience that the client has of their family.

Here's how I would run this in a group or family session

- I'd ask the person who volunteered to sculpt their family and we're normally going with the IP to think about who in the group, they're going to get to play each family member. Obviously, if this is a family, they're probably going to pick dad to play dad and the sibling to play the sibling. But if it's a group of teenagers, I'm curious who they pick and why. And I might process that later.
- Then I would ask where they would like to position themselves in the sculpture and remind them that they have the whole space to use.
 - a. I say space instead of room because occasionally some bright spark will want to put dad outside of the office, which I actually let them do for a few minutes until the point is made. And then I bring whoever it is back inside so they can hear the session and participate. So the client or the IP decides where in the room they want to be.
- Then I asked them what they will be doing in their sculpture. Because this is a sculpture, we can position ourselves to do whatever we want. The teen in the video says he's going to be on the floor on his phone or just feeling depressed and I'll have him assume that position, and remember it, before standing up to help me continue to direct the activity.
- Next I ask who they want to position next in the family and I'm kind of curious about the order in which they pick family members. In this example, they picked dad who they positioned by the window, and he was instructed to be reading a book or looking out the window and not to pay attention to anyone else.
- The next person they wanted to sculpt was an older sibling. And they wanted them very close to dad but not on the same level. So the instructions were the sibling was to be sat down on the sofa trying to get dad's attention.
- Finally, this client positioned their mom on the coffee table staring down at their sibling and yelling about homework.
 - I use props whenever I can. So you can see Dad reading some random magazine that was in the waiting room. And Mum is holding a copy of the DSM four because that was the closest thing that I could think about the look like a textbook.
 - This is supposed to be fun and spontaneous. So if you model things like getting excited about props and ideas, it rubs off and you will find that the family is super engaged faster than when you play it straight and seriously.



FAMILY SCULPTING



- The last thing that I do is to pull the IP or whoever sculpting the family off to the side to get as much perspective as possible. And we stand all the way back there. And I will ask them if it feels right. If they want to change anything or tweak anything, I'll let them do that and remind them that this is their sculpture. And they get to be in charge. It has to feel like an accurate representation of what they're feeling about their family.

INTERPRETATIONS

- The next job that I have to do is come up with some interpretations about what I'm seeing, which I may or may not share with the family. - it depends what it is. If you're going to say any of these things to the family, you might want to position it as reframe - a structural family systems technique.
- The goal would be to offer a differing image of how you see the family with the hopes they might start to think differently about themselves. Instead of saying, "Wow, dad, it looks like you're about to run away there". I might say, "It seems the family really needs to keep you close". Or I might say directly to Dad, "This family really wants you to know how important they are to them. How does it feel to be so wanted?"

OTHER THINGS TO NOTICE

- DISTANCE AND CLOSENESS

Who is the furthest apart?
Who is the closest?

- EYE CONTACT / DIRECTION

Who is making eye contact with who?
Who is facing each other?
Who is facing away from who?

- HEIGHT

Encourage clients to stand on things, or sit down on the floor - be creative, but also be curious as to why who and what it represents.

- THE BIG PICTURE

If you zoom out, what is the story telling?
What do you feel when you look at the sculpture (I CANT BELIEVE I DIDN'T SAY THIS IN THE VIDEO - grrrr! Your countertransference is so useful here)
Is there a message being conveyed in the creation?

- SYMMETRY

Is there anything worth commenting on with regards to spacing and distribution of 'figures'
Are people closer together?
And other people further away?
Are they evenly spaced out?
Are they all together?

- TOUCH / CONTACT

I'm curious about who's touching who and who isn't and why.



My People Patterns
GROWING GREAT RELATIONSHIPS

