

Intro SST 4 Transcript

BELLACK: One of the other things that often comes up with very ill folks that I find is a distraction or dysfunctional is this concept of motivation.

WOMAN: Matt, how about you come up and do some practice?

MATT: I'm just not really in the mood today, sorry.

CINDY: He never comes up. He never role-plays.

WOMAN: Why don't you come up and give it a try?

MATT: All right, I'll give it a try.

WOMAN: Okay.

BELLACK: "This person isn't motivated, you know. If they were only motivated, they would do better. If they were only motivated, they would come to treatment more often and they would change their behavior. If they were only motivated, they would try harder."

That really is oftentimes an excuse for the clinician. It's a way to discount the person and say, "There's nothing I can do for you -- fix yourself! Make yourself motivated. Then come talk to me."

We think motivation is very frequently a function of self-efficacy -- the belief that you can succeed -- and skill set. If you have the skills in your repertoire and you believe you can be successful, then, magically, you behave as if you're motivated. But if you don't know what to do or you don't think you're going to be successful, you don't try, and it appears as if you're not motivated, you don't want to try.

So we think that's really a pretty dysfunctional concept for most clinicians. It's another one of those things that really is counterproductive and that really is a block to clinicians' being able to work effectively with folks.

Some people, for sure, that aren't interested in things -- you know, that's fine, you know. I might not be interested in learning how to start conversations this week, like I might not be interested in learning French this week. That doesn't make me a bad person. I'm just not interested in it this week.

The other possibility is that I've tried in the past and I haven't been able to do it effectively. Or I don't have any opportunity, you know. "And who am I going to speak French with? I don't want to learn French. What else can you teach me?" So...

And there are also, you know, there are many people with serious illnesses that are really suffering, you know, from biological disorders. I mean, these are neurobiological conditions. It's not as if there is no neurobiological impairment and that it all is a function of skills and self-efficacy.