

Chapter Eight

Doing MOL

*F*or psychotherapists interested in the practice of MOL, there is much to consider. More than anything MOL is an experience, and any verbal or written description falls dramatically short of experiencing MOL. As I mentioned earlier, our individual tapestries of MOL may all be different but the thread of PCT will be common. This book is not meant to answer every question that was ever asked or has yet to be asked about MOL. My aim is to provide information to help you get started.

It's important to realize that, as a psychotherapeutic practice, MOL is still in its infancy. Very few people know about the ideas of MOL and perhaps even fewer use these ideas to practice a "plain vanilla" MOL. Psychotherapists seem to be a pretty creative bunch, and it appears that MOL is too bland for the tastes of many. Also, psychotherapists like to help, and it seems that it is very hard to get used to the idea that in psychotherapy we often need to do less, rather than more, in order to be maximally helpful.

It may well be the case that the plain vanilla MOL will eventually need some modifications. Currently, however, psychotherapists wanting to improve MOL are not in a position to make this kind of evaluation. We need numbers of skilled MOL practitioners who are prepared to use the plain vanilla MOL for extended periods before we can begin to understand what adjustments need to be made. As an application of the principles of PCT, it seems like a reasonable start. The accuracy of this conclusion, however, will only be established over time.

Without meticulous thought and planning, any additions to MOL will probably get in the way of effective psychotherapy. A useful way of evaluating your psychotherapeutic practice might be to ask: How much of what I'm doing now is helping clients become aware of higher perceptual levels? If the answer is "very little" or "don't know," then you are quite probably getting in the way more than you could be, thereby delaying your clients' elimination of conflict.

MOL is about not getting in the way. To do MOL is to accept that the clients who come before you already have everything they need to help themselves. Their only difficulty is that they are stuck. All they need from you is a little nudge because you know the direction to nudge them in. The direction is up.

Clients sitting in front of you don't need your advice or wisdom. They've got a life to get back to living. They don't need to figure out how to live the life you might have in mind for them. They just need some help to get out of the mud they are

stuck in. MOL not only helps them out now, it is a way of learning how to get out of any future mudpits as well. I'll return to this idea in Chapters Ten and Eleven.

When you do MOL, what you are doing is participating with your clients in conversation. It doesn't really matter what your clients talk about, because you're not interested in the content of what they've got to say anyway. Your only interest is in finding pointers to higher levels. The general idea is to help clients get some of their "now" experiences "out on the table." When they're on the table the clients are able to look at them. As they look at them, "looking at them" becomes the now experience. The task then is to put "looking at them" on the table and to look at it. Then put "looking at looking at them" on the table and look at it . . . and so on.

As an MOL psychotherapist you will be busy. The idea is not to just sit there waiting for an up-a-level event to pop up. Rather, as an MOL psychotherapist you will be busy curiously asking clients about their current experiences. You're not interested, however, in what they have to tell you about their problem because you understand that the problem they tell you about is not the problem to focus on. Their problem is not feeling a particular way or thinking a particular way or behaving a particular way. The problem is that they are conflicted. Your only interest therefore is in helping them explore their conflicts. Just as an artist might explore expressionism through the medium of watercolors, you'll be helping your clients explore their hierarchies through the medium of the verbal and nonverbal material they present you with.

MOL psychotherapists will be active in another sense as well. Often, the MOL psychotherapist will need to hold the conversation on the conflict. It will be important not to be distracted by the kaleidoscope of information that clients can put before you. MOL is a blinkered approach—you might certainly go down some blind alleys and that's OK. With the model of conflict provided by PCT, however, you will have a road map for getting back on track whenever a diversion occurs.

The present conversation in the MOL session is important from the perspective of giving you a forum to explore the client's current experience. You don't want to know what Diego did on the weekend, nor Audrey's experience when she drove to your clinic, not even Seth's experience in your waiting room. The current experience is the experience Diego, or Audrey, or Seth has right now in the present as each of them sits in front of you and talks. What is Diego experiencing? Perhaps what's bothering him is something that occurred on the weekend. The point of the conversation then would be the botheration that is *currently* occurring for Diego as he actively churns the memories over in his mind, rather than the actual event of a few days ago. MOL is an exploration of the experience of *now*. Now is all there is anyway so we may as well get to know it.

This really is what MOL is all about: to help clients discover and examine the *now* state of their minds. In the final analysis, now is all there is to work with. Nothing can be done about how a mind got to be in its present state and no one knows how it will be in the future. If a mind is troubled, it is troubled now and therefore the discovery, examination, and reorganization of the trouble can only happen now.

What's been said

MOL conversations are about the *right now* experiences of the client.

MOL psychotherapists need to “half-listen” to the conversation but also need to be on the lookout for up-a-level events that might occur.

Not all shifts of awareness will lead to the right place for reorganization, so the process continues until the right place is found.

The big deal

MOL psychotherapists offer as much help as they can, and obstruct as little as possible, by providing clients with assistance to consider their situation from higher perceptual levels.

Coming up

MOL in practice.