Instructor’s Manual for

GESTALT THERAPY
WITH CHILDREN

with Violet Oaklander, PhD

Table of Contents

Tips for Making the Best Use of the DVD  7
Group Discussion Questions  11
Reaction Paper Guide for Classrooms and Training  15
Suggestions for Further Readings, Websites and Videos  17
Session Transcript  21
Earn Continuing Education Credits for Watching Videos  47
About the Contributors  49
More Psychotherapy.net Videos  51
Tips for Making the Best Use of the DVD

1. USE THE TRANSCRIPTS
Make notes in the video Transcript for future reference; the next time you show the video you will have them available. Highlight or notate key moments in the video to better facilitate discussion during the video and post-viewing.

2. GROUP DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
Pause the video at different points to elicit viewers’ observations and reactions to the concepts presented. The Discussion Questions provide ideas about key points that can stimulate rich discussions and learning.

3. LET IT FLOW
Allow the session to play out some so viewers can appreciate the work over time instead of stopping the video too often. It is best to watch the video in its entirety since issues untouched in earlier parts often play out later. Encourage viewers to voice their opinions; no therapy is perfect! What do viewers think works and does not work in the session? We learn as much from our mistakes as our successes and it is crucial for students and therapists to develop the ability to effectively critique this work as well as their own.

4. SUGGEST READINGS TO ENRICH VIDEO MATERIAL
Assign readings from Suggestions for Further Readings and Websites prior to viewing. You can also time the video to coincide with other course or training materials on related topics.

5. ASSIGN A REACTION PAPER
See suggestions in Reaction Paper section.
6. ROLE-PLAY IDEAS

After watching the video, organize participants into pairs. Assign each pair to role-play a session with a child, using a Gestalt approach. Each role-play shall consist of one therapist and one child. (You can have pairs switch roles if time permits.) After the role-plays, have the groups come together to discuss their experiences. First have the clients share their experiences, then have the therapists talk about their experiences in the session. Open up a general discussion on what participants learned about Gestalt therapy with children.

An alternative is to do this role-play in front of the whole group with one therapist and one client; the entire group can observe, acting as the advising team to the therapist. Before the end of the session, have the therapist take a break, get feedback from the observation team, and bring it back into the session with the client. Other observers might jump in if the therapist gets stuck. Follow up with a discussion that explores what does and does not work in treating children using a Gestalt approach.

7. WATCH THE SERIES

This video is one in a series portraying effective approaches to therapy with children of different ages. Each video in the series presents a master therapist working with real clients, just as you see here. By showing several of the videos in the series, you expose viewers to a variety of approaches, allowing them an opportunity to see what fits best for their own style and orientation.

**Key Aspects of the Gestalt Therapy Model:** Gestalt therapy provides children an opportunity to know more about themselves and to experience parts of themselves they have cut off. With a therapeutic relationship based on the coming together of equals, the Gestalt therapist continually evaluates the child’s level of contact. Through creative and projective play techniques the child can begin to identify and express a full range of emotions, especially those that are difficult.
**Child Therapy Models:** Other videos in the series use different therapeutic models. You can reflect upon the differences among these models by exploring the following questions:

- How does the model explain the addictive process?
- What assumptions does the model imply about the purpose of therapy with children and teens?
- How is theory translated into practice in real-life situations?
- How does the model approach work with other family members besides the child?
- What is the role of the therapist?
- What outcomes are associated with successful therapy?
- What kinds of research support the approach?

**8. PERSPECTIVE ON VIDEOS AND THE PERSONALITY OF THE THERAPIST**

Psychotherapy portrayed in videos is less off-the-cuff than therapy in practice. Therapists or clients in videos may be nervous, putting their best foot forward, or trying to show mistakes and how to deal with them. Therapists may also move more quickly than is typical in everyday practice to demonstrate a technique. The personal style of a therapist is often as important as their techniques and theories. Thus, while we can certainly pick up ideas from master therapists, participants must make the best use of relevant theory, technique and research that fits their own personal style and the needs of their clients.

*A NOTE ON CONFIDENTIALITY*

Because this video contains an actual therapy session, please take care to protect the privacy and confidentiality of the client who has courageously shared his personal life with us.
Group Discussion Questions

Professors, training directors and facilitators may use a few or all of these discussion questions keyed to certain elements of the video or those issues most relevant to the viewers.

INTRODUCTION

1. **Coming Together of Equals:** *Oaklander bases her relationship with the child client on the coming together of two equals.* How do you react to the idea of the adult therapist and the child client being equals? In what way does this make sense or not make sense to you? How does this fit with the reality that the therapist is in a position of power and authority vis-à-vis the child?

2. **Contact:** *Oaklander describes contact as being present.* How do you think the therapist can evaluate the child’s contact level? What have you observed about your own contact level during therapy, especially when you work with children? What are the challenges for you in being fully present? How is the therapy impacted when both parties have high contact? When they don’t? How do you intervene and create a shift in contact level?

3. **Then What?** What do you think about Oaklander’s discussion of negative introjects and their part in the goal of Gestalt therapy? Do you believe that helping children identify and address negative introjects in therapy will change something about the way they grow into adults? What do you see as the “Then What?” of therapy with children? Does Oaklander’s description of her work address what seems important to you about therapy with children?
GESTALT THERAPY WITH CHILDREN

PSYCHOTHERAPY SESSION

4. **Clay:** How did you react to Oaklander beginning the session with Blake by trying all the different things one can do with clay? What do you think is the purpose of this intervention? Does it work? If you had been the client (as a kid, of course) at this first session with Oaklander, how might you have felt starting the session in this way?

5. **Commenting:** What do you think about the way Oaklander comments on what Blake does and says in the session? Are her comments effective therapeutically? How so or how not? If you were the therapist, in what ways would you be inclined to comment differently? Would you make more interpretations, more suggestions, or would you perhaps say less?

6. **Getting in Touch with Feelings:** How do you observe Oaklander helping Blake identify and express feelings? What is it about her and the techniques she employs that help him talk more about what he does with his anger? Is her approach effective?

7. **What Happened?** What would you say happened in this session? Did you see any movement? Let’s talk about your observations. If you were Blake’s therapist, where would you like to take the therapy after this first session?

DISCUSSION

8. **Anger:** Do you agree with the emphasis in the session on anger as being Blake’s main therapeutic issue? Why or why no? What did you think about the question of repressed anger being more of an issue for girls than for boys? What else might be important for Blake to work on in therapy?

9. **The Therapeutic Relationship:** How would you characterise the therapeutic relationship in this video? Was a working alliance formed What would you say about the contact in this session? How significant do you think the relationship was in this particular course of therapy?
10. **The Model:** What do you think about using this model with child clients? Does it make sense to you? Do you see yourself using it in your work with this population? What in particular would you do different from Oaklander’s model?

11. **Oaklander’s Style:** What was it about Oaklander that allowed Blake to feel comfortable enough to engage in the therapy? How did Oaklander join with him?

12. **Personal Reaction:** How would you feel about being Oaklander’s client? Do you feel an alliance could be made and that she would be effective with you? Why or why not?
Reaction Paper for Classrooms and Training

• **Assignment:** Complete this reaction paper and return it by the date noted by the facilitator.

• **Suggestions for Viewers:** Take notes on these questions while viewing the video and complete the reaction paper afterwards, or use the questions as a way to approach the discussion. Respond to each question below.

• **Length and Style:** 2-4 pages double-spaced. Be brief and concise. Do NOT provide a full synopsis of the video. This is meant to be a brief reaction paper that you write soon after watching the video—we want your ideas and reactions.

**What to Write:** Respond to the following questions in your reaction paper:

1. **Key points:** What important points did you learn about Gestalt therapy and therapy with children? What stands out in how Oaklander works?

2. **What I am resistant to:** What issues/principles/strategies did you find yourself having resistance to, or what approaches made you feel uncomfortable? Did any techniques or interactions push your buttons? What interventions would you be least likely to apply in your work? Explore these questions.

3. **What I found most helpful:** What was most beneficial to you as a therapist about the model presented? What tools or perspectives did you find helpful and might you use in your own work?

4. **How I would do it differently:** What might you have done differently from what Oaklander did in the video? Be specific in what different approaches, strategies and techniques you might have applied.

5. **Other Questions/Reactions:** What questions or reactions did you have as you viewed the therapy in the video? Other comments, thoughts or feelings?
Suggestions for Further Readings, Websites and Videos

BOOKS


WEB RESOURCES

Violet Oaklander’s Website

www.violetoaklander.com

Violet Solomon Oaklander Foundation

www.vsof.org

Gestalt Review

www.gestaltreview.com

Gestalt International Study Center

www.gisc.org

Psychotherapy.net Interview with Erving Polster on Gestalt Psychotherapy

www психотерапия.net
RELATED VIDEOS AVAILABLE AT WWW.PSYCHOTHERAPY.NET

Psychotherapy with the Unmotivated Patient
  — Erving Polster, PhD

Adlerian Parent Consultation
  — Jon Carlson, PsyD, EdD

Adlerian Play Therapy
  — Terry Kottman, PhD

Adolescent Family Therapy
  — Janet Sasson Edgette, PsyD

Cognitive-Behavioral Child Therapy
  — Bruce Masek, PhD

Narrative Therapy with Children
  — Stephen Madigan, MSW, PhD

Object Relations Child Therapy
  — David Scharff, MD

Person-Centered Child Therapy
  — Anin Utigaard, MA

Psychotherapy with Medically Ill Children
  — Gerald Koocher, PhD

Reality Therapy with Children
  — Robert E. Wubbolding, EdD

Solution-Focused Child Therapy
  — John J. Murphy, PhD
Complete Transcript of a Demonstration of Gestalt Therapy with Children with Violet Oaklander, Phd

Note to facilitators: We have indicated on-screen minute markers throughout the transcript. You will find chapter markers on the DVD at five-minute intervals so that you may easily skip to desired points within the session.

PSYCHOTHERAPY SESSION

2–1

Oaklander: Blake, hi. You know, I have this clay, and you can touch it. I mean, I….It’s kind of a hard, it’s kind of hard. That’s why I asked them to bring me some water in case you….And I have some paper towel in case you want to get, you know, if you need it.

And you know what I thought we would do with it. I like to do a little exercise, but before that I like to do something else that kind of shows all the different things you can do with clay.

Blake: Oh, okay.

Oaklander: In the past, you’ve had, you’ve worked, what did you do with it? Do you remember?

Blake: I drew—not drew—made people.

Oaklander: People, yeah.

Blake: Trees.

Oaklander: Right. Okay.

Blake: All that…

Oaklander: Well, this is kind of fun. So I’m going to tell you do a, different things. I’m going to do them and you’ll do them and I want
to see…

2–2

Oaklander: …if you can, like, what you like doing and what you don’t like doing. Okay?

Blake: Okay.

Oaklander: Alright. So first—and you might think of some things, too—first, we’re going to pinch the clay. Let’s just, you know, pinch it. You know, like if somebody comes up and pinches your cheek.

Blake: Right.

Oaklander: Like you’re pinching them back here. Pinch the clay. Okay. Now we’re going to…let’s see. We’re going to poke holes in the clay like this. Poke, poke the clay. Just poke the clay. Makes all these interesting marks. Okay. Now we’re going to tear the clay. Tear it apart. Just tear it apart. Just rip it apart. Big pieces and little pieces. Just rip it apart. Okay. Alright. Now the thing that’s so great about clay is that you can rip it apart but you can also….

Blake: Put it back.

Oaklander: Right. Put it….Exactly. Put it back…

2–3

Oaklander: …together. Right. So, now we’re going to put it all together. Get yourself a big bunch of clay because you need a big bunch of clay because we’re going to kind of throw it down. See how I…. Throw it down. Throw it down. Just throw it. See how hard you can throw it. Throw it. Right. That’s right. Good. Now, the thing is when you throw the clay it makes a nice….See how flat? It makes a nice flat thing.

Blake: Very smooth.

Oaklander: So let’s smooth it. Let’s pat it. Let’s pat the clay and let’s pat it and kind of, you know, make a nice little groove and pat it. And maybe we could slap it a little. And we could slap it harder. We could
do a drum, kind of a drumbeat. The clay.

2-4

**Oaklander:** Okay. Let’s see. What else can we do with the clay? We can lift it up, and we can squeeze it. We can squeeze it. And we can squeeze it. Alright. We can rip off a little piece—you’ve probably done this—and make a....

**Blake:** Ball.

**Oaklander:** Well, I’m making a snake.

**Blake:** Oh, yeah.

**Oaklander:** A snake. Yeah. But you could also make a ball, but you know, when you make a ball, you have to turn it this way. This way, yeah. That’s it. And then you can throw the ball, and it can throw down on the floor. There it is back there. Okay.

Now let’s see. Can you think of anything else we could do with the clay?

2-5

**Blake:** No.

**Oaklander:** Oh, no. You know, you could….Did you ever bore a hole in the clay?

**Blake:** Oh, yeah.

**Oaklander:** All the way…. Let’s see if you could get kind of a thick piece, see if you could bore a…. See how I got my finger all the way through?

**Blake:** It’s going through.

**Oaklander:** It’s, it’s coming through. And then, if you look through that hole, you can just decide what you want to look at, you know. I see you. Okay. So now let’s just bunch it all up again. And if you want to, you can use more. I don’t, you know, know if you like the big piece or....

**Blake:** This is fine. Yeah.

**Oaklander:** Oh, you know what we haven’t done? Okay. We can punch
the clay. Punch the clay. Punch it with the side or your knuckles or your back of your hands. Do your other hand. Both hands.

2-6

Oaklander: Try both hands. See how it….

Okay, now let’s...Watch it. Before we go do this next thing I want to do, tell me what, which of those things did you like doing the best? Or…. You don’t have to say that. Which of those things did you like? You know, maybe you liked something today and tomorrow you like something different, but you know.

Blake: Right. I liked making the snake.

Oaklander: Did you really?

Blake: Yeah. I used to do that a lot in elementary school.

Oaklander: Make just a bunch of snakes?

Blake: Right.

Oaklander: And scare people with them or no?

Blake: I don’t really like real snakes but I just made snakes. Yeah.

Oaklander: I liked…. I liked throwing it. I really like throwing it.

Blake: Right.

Oaklander: Yeah. Is there something we did that you didn’t like too much?

2-7

Blake: No.

Oaklander: No. You liked… I…. Yeah. I sometimes don’t like poking it because it gets on my nails....

Blake: I didn’t like driving it through. I guess. My finger’s weak or something. Yeah.

Oaklander: Oh, I see. That was…. Well, you had a pretty thick piece. That’s why.
Blake: Yeah.

Oaklander: Okay now, I want you to just take your clay. How it…. Let me see how it feels. Oh, that’s…not bad. And I just want you to put both hands on it. And I want you to close your eyes and then take a deep breath. When you let the air out, imagine it’s going right down your arms into the clay. Try that again.

Now this clay, it sort of has a lot of your energy in it if you’ve been fooling with it. So what I want you to do is with your eyes closed…

2-8

Oaklander: …at first, start making something with the clay. It could be just a shape. Or it could, or you could imagine you’re making an animal or a person or a, you know, you might think you’re making something. It might not turn out to be that because your eyes are closed.

Blake: Right.

Oaklander: And it might just be a shape or it might be a thing. Whatever. Just let your fingers move the clay and sometimes the clay tells you where it wants to go and sometimes you just have to push so it will know where it wants to go. So just let yourself with your eyes closed make something. And you’ll be surprised because your eyes are closed.

2-9

Oaklander: And after awhile, when you want to, you can open your eyes and finish it off and turn it around. Look on the back and finish it. But don’t change it. Just kind of finish it like you want to. Okay.

Now since this was, since you, a lot of your energy is in this clay, it really is a part of you. So what I’d like you to do is to be this piece of clay and tell me about yourself.

2-10

Oaklander: “I’m this piece of clay.” And you could just describe how you look or whatever. Just tell me about yourself as this piece of clay.
Blake: I don’t know how to really describe myself. Well, um, this is supposed to be a whale.

Oaklander: Alright. “I’m a whale.”

Blake: Whales swim.

Oaklander: Oh, okay. Now here’s what I want you: you’re the clay. So you have to say, “I’m a whale. I swim.” You know.

Blake: Oh, okay. I’m a whale and I like to swim. I like to go underwater and go really deep. I like to eat fish. And that’s about it.

Oaklander: So do you get a lot of fish to eat?

2-11

Blake: Yes.

Oaklander: Yeah? And are you a young whale or an older whale?

Blake: An older whale.

Oaklander: Yeah. How do you know that? Is…. It seems…. Is that because you have a lot of cracks and things. You’re older. You’ve been around a long time.

Blake: Right. Yeah.

Oaklander: Hmm?

Blake: Yes. Because it has, pretty disabled, you know.

Oaklander: Pretty what?

Blake: Disabled.

Oaklander: Oh, it’s disabled. And like what, there are some things you can’t do anymore, whale?

Blake: Probably can’t swim that fast.

Oaklander: Has that become a problem for you?

Blake: No.

Oaklander: Do you have anybody after you any time?

Blake: No.
Oaklander: Are you pretty safe in the water?
Blake: Yes. I feel comfortable.

Oaklander: You feel comfortable. Well, whale, are you by yourself or do you have a family?
Blake: I have a family.

Oaklander: Who’s in your family?
Blake: My mother, my playground mother and my sister.

Oaklander: You have a lot of family. Whale families.
Blake: Yeah.

Oaklander: They swim with you or are you pretty independent? Or maybe they, maybe you’d like to be more independent? I don’t know.
Blake: They sort of swim with me.

Oaklander: They sort of swim with you.
Blake: Yes.

Oaklander: Do they bother you?
Blake: No.

Oaklander: No. They let you kind of go off by yourself sometimes?
Blake: Yes.

Oaklander: They do? That’s good...good, whale. You’re a pretty neat whale.

Blake: Thank you.

Oaklander: Alright. Yeah. I’m just wondering if there’s anything about your whale that’s for you, Blake, that you could say, “Yeah, I’m like that, too,” or, “That’s like my life, too.” Or....

Blake: During the summer, I basically live in the water.

Oaklander: Really?
Blake: Yes.

Oaklander: That’s one of your favorite things to do, swim?

Blake: Yes. Swim. I’m very active. Whales are active. Yeah. That’s about it.

Oaklander: That’s about it. Well, that’s a lot, too. Yeah. Do you feel safe in your life? I mean, the whale feels safe in the water. Do you feel safe?

Blake: Yeah, very safe.

Oaklander: Very safe. And it sounds like the whale family...

2-14

Oaklander: …is a little bit like your family. I have a feeling…. I don’t know. You have a sister?

Blake: Yes.

Oaklander: And a mother and a playground—What is that, a playground mother?

Blake: She’s not my real grandmother, but she acts like it. She—

Oaklander: I see. I see. I bet that’s nice, too.

Blake: Yeah.

Oaklander: And what about your father?

Blake: He lives in Indiana and I don’t see him much.

Oaklander: Your father…. Your parents divorced?

Blake: Yes.

Oaklander: Yeah. You wish you could see him more or....

Blake: Sometimes, yes. In different situations.

Oaklander: Like what do you mean?

Blake: I like to play basketball a lot and I wish I could see him more to play basketball.

Oaklander: Yeah, that’s hard when your dad lives far away like that. Is
that far away? I don’t know. I know I live far away.

**Blake:** Twenty minutes.

**Oaklander:** Twenty minutes from....

2-15

**Blake:** Homewood. I live in Homewood. A drive.

**Oaklander:** Yeah, and he’s.... It’s a 20 minute drive. Oh, that’s not very far away.

**Blake:** No.

**Oaklander:** I get mixed up between the Midwestern states because I live in California.

**Blake:** Right. Oh, okay.

**Oaklander:** I’ve got to study my geography.

**Well, that’s not very far away at all. So he doesn’t really spend much time with you, then.**

**Blake:** No. It’s sometimes nice because when he does, we watch—I like basketball, yeah—we watch the NBA basketball games together. And yeah.

**Oaklander:** Well, that’s nice.

**Blake:** Yeah.

**Oaklander:** Well, you know what I’d like you to do? You know you said that you.... You could put your whale over here. You know. We can put that over here.

You said you like, you make, you know how to make people. You know, and the thing that’s great about clay is that you can make this kind of very rough thing and it’s, you know, and there’s a person.

2-16

**Oaklander:** It’s very.... It doesn’t have to be like a perfect.... But I’d like you to make your family out of clay. Like people. Like maybe your mother and your sister and your grandmother and then your father,
too, because that’s your, he’s part of your family.

**Blake:** Oh, okay.

**Oaklander:** Okay. You want me to help you? I’d be glad to help you if you want me to.

**Blake:** Yes. That’d be fine.

**Oaklander:** If I helped you?

**Blake:** Yes.

**Oaklander:** So you…. Who would you like me to make?

**Blake:** My mother.

**Oaklander:** Okay. So how…. I don’t know how big your people are going to be.

**Blake:** Well, my mother’s going to be short.

**Oaklander:** But in your…. If you make…. In your clay people, are they going to be about…. I don’t want to make them a different size, you know. If I make—Who are you making?

**Blake:** I’m going to make my dad and my sister.

**Oaklander:** Okay. So is this about the size or is that too small?

**Blake:** That’s fine.

2-17

**Blake:** That’s my grandmother.

**Oaklander:** That’s good.

**Blake:** Thank you.

**Oaklander:** So is there somebody else you want me to make?

**Blake:** My sister.

**Oaklander:** Is she younger than you or older?

**Blake:** Older.

**Oaklander:** Older. Taller than you or….

**Blake:** Yeah, she’s two inches taller than me.
Oaklander: How old is she?
Blake: Thirty.
Oaklander: And you’re 12?

2-18
Blake: Thirteen.
Blake: Yes.
Oaklander: And she’s….
Blake: Thirty.
Oaklander: Thirty. Oh, much older.
Blake: Yeah.
Oaklander: Oh.
Blake: She’s my half sister.
Oaklander: I see. Okay.
Blake: Here’s my dad. He’s pretty tall.
Oaklander: Ah.
Blake: Might not stand up correctly.
Oaklander: You’re fairly tall. I guess you’re going to be tall like your dad.
Blake: Yeah.
Oaklander: You like to play basketball.
Okay. Okay. Does that…could that be your sister?
Blake: Yes. That’s perfect.

2-19
Oaklander: Oh, your people are really better than my people, but I’m not going to compare. That’s fine. They’re both good.
Blake: Right.
Oaklander: Alright. So there they are. That’s your family, right.
Blake: Yes.
Oaklander: Now how about you?
Blake: Ah.
Oaklander: Okay.
Blake: I have long legs, so I’ll make my legs long.
Oaklander: Okay.

There you are. Alright. Now, there’s your, there are the family. So well, does your sister live with you?
Blake: No.
Oaklander: No. So your sister lives…

2-20
Oaklander: …over here somewhere.
Blake: Yes.
Oaklander: And this is your mother. And this is your….
Blake: Grandmother.
Oaklander: Grandmother. They don’t live together. Do they live together?
Blake: No.
Oaklander: So they all kind of live in separate spaces. But you live with your mother.
Blake: Yes.
Oaklander: You live with your mother. And your dad’s over here someplace. Okay. Now I want you to imagine that you—there you are—you could talk to them and you could tell them one thing you like and one thing you don’t like about each one. Who do you want to go first? Who do you want to—I’ll move it for you.
Blake: Oh, okay.
Oaklander: Alright? Or do you want to move it?
Blake: No, you can move it.
Oaklander: Okay. So we’re talking to your sister. What’s her name?
Blake: Ebony.
Oaklander: Ebilene?
Blake: Ebony.
Oaklander: Ebony.
Blake: Uh-huh.
Oaklander: Ebony, one thing I like about you….Okay.
Blake: One thing I like about her is that…

2-21
Blake: …she spends time with me when I go over, over to her house.
Oaklander: “You spend time with me when I go over to your house.” Okay.
Blake: And the thing I don’t like about her…. She sort of treats me more like I’m younger. And she does this weird thing when I have a birthday and says that I’m not 13; I’m 7 or…. And treats me like I’m younger sometimes.
Oaklander: Yeah. Did you hear that? Because that’s a lot to repeat: “You treat me like I’m younger sometimes, and I don’t like that.”
Okay. Who do you want to do next?
Blake: That’s my mother.
Oaklander: Okay. “Mom.” You just say, “One thing I like about you is…” as if you were talking for this.
Blake: Alright. One thing I like…

2-22
Blake: …about you is that you take me downtown and to lots of places, that you carry me around to basketball practice and swim
practice and a lot of things.
And the thing I don’t like about you is that you sort of run things in
the ground to me.

Oaklander: Say that again?

Blake: She runs things in the ground to me, and when I do bad on
something, she’ll talk about it through the whole car ride or....

Oaklander: Oh. “You talk, you talk, run things into the ground with
me and talk about things like, and talk about them and talk about
them.”

Blake: Yeah.

Oaklander: Alright. Okay. Here’s your grandmother.

Blake: The thing I like about....

2-23

Oaklander: You.

Blake: Oh, yeah. The thing I like about you is that you let me come
over anytime I want to and the thing I don’t like about you—it’s not
that good of a reason but—you won’t let me eat in the family room or
any other room than the kitchen.

Oaklander: Well, that’s got value, something you don’t like, so that’s
good. I mean, it’s.... If you don’t like it, you don’t like it.

Blake: Right.

Oaklander: You don’t have to judge it, you know.

Blake: Oh, okay.

Oaklander: Yeah. Like some things are better not liking and other
things. I think that’s a good one.

Blake: Alright.

Oaklander: Okay. Your dad. Oh, we’re running this to the ground.

Blake: One thing I like about my dad—

Oaklander: You.
Blake: Oh, yeah.
Oaklander: Talk to him. Yeah.
Blake: One thing I like about you is that when you do spend time with me, or when you do have time...

2-24
Blake: …to spend with me, you use it wisely. You use it wisely.
Oaklander: You use a…?
Blake: He uses it wisely.
Oaklander: Wisely?
Blake: Yes.
Oaklander: Oh.
Blake: And the thing I don’t like about you is that you don’t use that time a lot.
Oaklander: There isn’t enough of that time.
Blake: Right.
Oaklander: Yeah. Not enough of that time.
Blake: Yes.
Oaklander: Yeah. That was pretty good. Is there anything else you want to say to them or ask for something from them or—I mean, I don’t know. Is anything else….
Blake: No.
Oaklander: Okay. Alright, let’s put this, let’s put this away. Sorry we have to…. But you know, there’s one more thing I wanted to do but we’ve got to put these away.
Blake: Oh, okay.

2-25
Oaklander: Is that okay if we just throw them in here?
Blake: Mm-hmm.
Oaklander: Okay.

Blake: There’s your....

Oaklander: The whale. The whale’s swimming right into....

Do you.... Do you ever.... How do you express.... When you’re, when you don’t like something, does it, do you feel mad or....

Blake: Frustrated.

Oaklander: Frustrated.

Blake: Frustrated.

Oaklander: Yeah. And what I’d like you to do is show me a little bit about how you feel frustrated. Let’s say you could hit this clay in a frustrated way. What is, what is that like for you to hit clay frustrated?

Blake: I don’t want to hit the table. I have bad aim.

Oaklander: Well, it’s a pretty sturdy table. I don’t think it will.... If you want, I’ll take these off, so I’ll put this over here. I’ll hold it.

2-26

Oaklander: We can add a little more clay.

Blake: Okay.

Oaklander: That might help a bit. Could I add your what may be alleged whale?

Blake: Okay, yes.

Oaklander: Bye, whale. Okay, we could, because that might help you. Okay. Frustrated. Okay.

Now, do you ever get mad at anything?

Blake: What I could get mad about is when I really need to do something important and people don’t take me seriously or my mother doesn’t take me seriously.

Oaklander: Seriously, your mother doesn’t take you seriously. But that, that kind of thing makes you mad.

Blake: Yeah.
Oaklander: I want you to hit the clay like you’re mad now.
Blake: Alright.
Oaklander: Okay. Now, great. Keep hitting it because, you know, when you’re mad you have to hit it more than….

2-27

Oaklander: Okay, now…. Great. Now maybe you could say, imagine your mother, like this is your mother, and while you’re hitting it you could say, “I want you to take me seriously.”
Blake: Alright. I want you to take me seriously.
Oaklander: More. Again. A couple more times.
Blake: Alright.
Oaklander: Alright. Is it hard for you to say when you’re mad to people or your mother or your father?
Blake: No.
Oaklander: You’re good at telling them when you don’t like something or when something makes you mad?
Blake: Well, my mother, I’m very good at telling her.
Oaklander: Yeah?
Blake: Other family members that I stood up, I don’t see them as much as I do my mother.
Oaklander: Yeah, not really mad at them so much but, you know, most kids, if they’re mad, they’ll either, they’ll be mad at mother or father. You know, the close, those are the people…

2-28

Oaklander: …they get mad at.
Blake: I take things out on my mother sometimes, I believe.
Oaklander: Take it out on her, like where it belongs to something else and then….
Blake: Yes. When I come home from my father’s house and something
didn’t go right, I can’t, I don’t take it out on my father. He doesn’t spend enough time with me anyway, so if I make it worse, so…. And I know my mother will always be there for me, so I just go after her.

Oaklander: That’s, okay. I want you to tell her…. Make believe this is your mother and you could tell her that, I think, I know I take things out on you.

Blake: I know I take things out on you, Mom.

Oaklander: And when they don’t, like….

Blake: And when they don’t go right at my dad’s house, I take things out on you.

Oaklander: You feel bad about that?

Blake: Yes.

Oaklander: Yeah. It’s pretty, I think I see that a lot with kids, other kids I’ve…

2-29

Oaklander: …worked with, they do…. Because you’re, just what you said, you know, your mother’s there for you so she, it’s safe to do that.

Blake: Right.

Oaklander: What would happen if you did that with your dad, if you told him?

Blake: I do not think anything would happen. I think…. I don’t think that he wouldn’t spend time with me, but I want to be careful.

Oaklander: You want to make sure.

Blake: Right.

Oaklander: And be careful. Yeah. Yeah, I wonder if there’s some way that you could express feeling mad without taking it out on your mother. What does she do when, I mean, does she get mad back because you’re….

Blake: Most of the time, she’ll have a positive attitude, and then…and then you know, she’ll try to tickle me or something to get me happy.
And then I stay mad and then when I do get happy, she’s in a bad mood. I try and get her happy...

2-30
Blake: …and it goes downhill.
Oaklander: Yeah, going round in circles like that.
Blake: Right.
Oaklander: Well, you know, sometimes I think it’s important to express your mad feeling when you’re mad but—and… I think there are ways of doing it for yourself where you won’t get into trouble or take it out on your mother there are, because it’s, you know, it’s sort of inside of you. You’ve got to get it out.
Blake: Right.
Oaklander: So there are ways of doing that. I’m wondering if you know what I mean. If you can think of any…. I can tell you some, but I’m wondering if you…. Like if you had clay in your house—which most people don’t—but you could just take the mallet and you could say, “I’m so made at what….” You know, and you could do that and then you’d probably feel better and then you’d go in the other room and, “Hi, Mom.”
Blake: Right.
Oaklander: So I’m wondering if you could think of something you could do...

2-31
Oaklander: …privately for yourself to get that mad feeling out. Let’s think of something. Maybe I could write, want me to write them down so….
Blake: Sure.
Oaklander: Yeah, I have a pad here, so if you, what is something, let’s see. I’ll put…. 
Blake: Playing, playing basketball could ease the anger.
Oaklander: Playing basketball. Now, okay. Now the thing that’s important in this is, is like when you’re playing it, you have to be in touch with that feeling. You know, you have to—it isn’t like you’re trying to play basketball so you’ll forget it. Because then you’re only pushing it down. You have to, “I’m so—“ every time you throw the ball or smack the whatever, it’s like knowing you’re angry about something and pretty soon it, it sort of goes away because you’ve worked it through.

Blake: Yeah.

2-32

Blake: And I do, I do that when I’ve been mad at my mother. Going, going, driving to practice and then when I get at practice since you could use some physical contact, I use that contact and, or I score, be aggressive…. I’m aggressive when I’m angry. It makes me a better player, too.

Oaklander: So, so we have to, you know, when you’re going to play basketball, go visit your dad and then come back and play.

Blake: Right. That would be good.

Oaklander: Alright. So play basketball. I’ve got to give this a heading: Getting Mad Feelings Out. Or something. You’ll know what that means, right?

Blake: Right.

Oaklander: I don’t have very good handwriting but....

Blake: Don’t worry.

Oaklander: “Playing basketball when angry.”

2-33

Oaklander: Okay, can you think of some other? What if you weren’t going to play basketball and you were, you know....

Blake: The other sport is football. That’s the only other sport I can think of, yeah.
Oaklander: “Or other sports.”

Blake: Yeah.

Oaklander: Alright. You know, sometimes if there aren’t any sports, you could just even run around the block feeling that, you know, and with your anger or something like that. But I’ll put, I’ll just leave it like that.

Can you think of anything else? What if it’s like you don’t have a game and it’s raining out and you have to just be in the house. Can you think of....

Blake: Talking to a friend.

Oaklander: Oh, that’s a good, that’s good, yeah.

Blake: I don’t take anything out on him, but he makes me laugh.

Oaklander: Oh, but you tell him that you’re mad?

Blake: No. Sometimes when it’s really bad, I would.

2-34

Blake: And then I just say that I’m mad, and then he’ll try to make me feel better and it usually works.

Oaklander: It’s good that you tell him. You don’t have to tell him why or what or anything, you know: “I’m really mad. Not at you, but I’m mad.” And then you know, so “Talking to a friend.”

How about....

Blake: Watching TV helps me.

Oaklander: Now see, the thing is to get your mad feeling out, watching TV doesn’t do it because it sort of pushes it back down.

Blake: Oh, right.

Oaklander: You have to try to, you want to forget it. It has to be something outward physical. For, here’s an example might be, even writing, like writing “I am so mad,” you know, and then throwing the paper away is a good, is okay. So I’ll write that. I’ll put that down: “Writing.”
Oaklander: Another good thing would be tearing old magazines, just ripping them and saying, “I’m so mad,” and in two minutes you’d feel better. Because I’ve done that. I don’t know if you have any old magazines around.

Blake: Yes. I have a lot.

Oaklander: Tearing—And the reason I say magazines is because they’re harder to, you have to really work at it, you know.

Blake: Right.

Oaklander: And there’s…. You could hit a pillow or hit your bed.

Blake: Yeah, I tend to…. This might not be good at all, but I probably throw pillows.

Oaklander: No, well, if it doesn’t hurt anybody or hurt anything, I think that’s good.

Blake: I throw them at the wall.

Oaklander: Yeah, I think that’s terrific. Yeah. “Throwing pillows against the wall.” I think that’s very good, actually.

2-36

Oaklander: So you get the idea.

Blake: Another good one I have is beating up my teddy bear.

Oaklander: Beating up a teddy bear?

Blake: Mm-hmm.

Oaklander: Okay, that’s—Do you have a teddy bear?

Blake: I have a collection of stuffed animals from when I was younger.

Oaklander: Okay: “Beating up a teddy bear.” That won’t hurt anybody.

Blake: Right.

Oaklander: Yeah, and it will make you feel better. Okay. I think you’ve got plenty of stuff here, but you could probably think of more
stuff.

Blake: Yeah.

Oaklander: I’m going to give you this.

Blake: Okay.

Oaklander: And you could kind of put it somewhere where, when you get mad, you do any one of these things or more or other stuff so you won’t have to take it out on your mother.

Blake: Oh, okay.

Oaklander: Or whatever. You know, because I could imagine even beside your father you might get mad sometimes at, from what happens at school sometimes or a friend might make you mad or....

Blake: Right.

Oaklander: Somebody, you know, makes you.... You know what’s a, like if you ever feel hurt feelings, somebody says something and it hurts you, that’s really being mad but it’s pushing it down against yourself so you feel hurt. But if you, like if somebody, if you could be mad at that person who hurt your feelings in private, you feel better and then it’s over, you know. You know.

Blake: Yeah.

Oaklander: Yeah. So where do you have to go tonight?

Blake: Swimming practice.

Oaklander: Swimming. Yeah, because you’re the swimmer.

Blake: Yes.

Oaklander: Right. Yeah. Well, this is kind of a real pleasure to work with you.

Blake: Oh, thank you.
Earn Continuing Education Credits for Watching Videos

Psychotherapy.net offers continuing education credits for watching this and other training videos. It is a simple, economical way for psychotherapists—both instructors and viewers—to earn CE credits, and a wonderful opportunity to build on workshop and classroom learning experiences.

• Visit our CE Credits section at www.psychotherapy.net to register for courses and download supplementary reading material.

• After passing a brief online post-test you will receive your Certificate of Completion via email. Voila!

• **CE Approvals:** Psychotherapy.net is approved to offer CE courses for psychologists, counselors, social workers, addiction treatment specialists and other mental health professionals.

Psychotherapy.net also offers CE Credits for reading online psychotherapy articles and in-depth interviews with master psychotherapists and the leading thinkers of our times.

To find out more, visit our website, www.psychotherapy.net, and click on the CE Credits link. Check back often, as new courses are added frequently.
About the Contributors

VIDEO PARTICIPANTS

Violet Oaklander, PhD, Featured Therapist, has been on the faculty of the extension program of the University of California, Pacifica Graduate Institute in Carpenteria, CA, and the California Graduate Institute in Santa Barbara. Her unique approach to working with children -- which combines Gestalt Therapy theory, philosophy, and practice with a variety of expressive techniques -- has won international recognition and she has received several awards for her contribution to the mental health field.

Dr. Oaklander has traveled extensively throughout the world giving training seminars on her approach to working with children and adolescents. She offers training, consultation, and supervision to child and adolescent psychotherapists, including an annual two-week training program that draws people from all over the world. She is certified by the Play Therapy Association as a play therapist supervisor, as well as with Play Therapy International.

Dr. Oaklander is the author of Windows To Our Children: A Gestalt Therapy Approach to Children and Adolescents, and Hidden Treasure: A Map to the Child’s Inner Self, as well as several journal articles and book chapters.

Jon Carlson, PsyD, EdD, Host, is Professor of Psychology and Counseling at Governors State University and a practicing clinical psychologist. He has authored 40 books, 150 journal articles, and developed over 200 videos featuring leading experts in psychotherapy, substance abuse treatment, and parenting and couples education.

Donald B. Keat II, PhD, ABPP, Host, was formerly Professor of Counseling Psychology and coordinator of the elementary school counseling program at Pennsylvania State University, as well as a practicing child psychologist. Dr. Keat has authored nine books and five chapters, published numerous journal, newspaper and magazine articles, served as editor of the Elementary School Guidance & Counseling Journal and presented regularly at conventions and on TV.
MANUAL AUTHORS

Randall C. Wyatt, PhD, is Editor-in-Chief of Psychotherapy.net. He is the Director of Professional Training at the California School of Professional Psychology, San Francisco at Alliant International University and a practicing psychologist in Oakland, California.

Erika L. Seid, MA, MFT, Educational Programs Manager at Psychotherapy.net, is a practicing psychotherapist in the San Francisco Bay Area, specializing in cultural issues and sexual offender treatment.
More Psychotherapy.net Videos

New videos are added frequently. Visit us at www.psychotherapy.net or call (800) 577-4762 for more information.

Ackerman Institute  Couples and Infertility  Gender Differences in Depression
Constance Ahrons  Making Divorce Work
Ellyn Bader & Dan Wile  Couples Therapy: An Introduction  “I’d hear laughter”  Irreconcilable Differences
Insoo Kim Berg
Stephanie Brown  Treating Alcoholism in Psychotherapy (2–DVD series)
James Bugental  Existential-Humanistic Psychotherapy in Action  James Bugental: Live Case Consultation
Tian Dayton  Trauma and the Body  Healing Childhood Abuse through Psychodrama
George De Leon  The Therapeutic Community (3–DVD set)
Pamela Dunne  Exploring Narradrama
George J. DuPaul & Gary Stoner  Assessing ADHD in the Schools  Classroom Interventions for ADHD
Bruce Ecker  Down Every Year
John Edwards  Tools and Techniques for Family Therapy
Stephen Feldman  Legal and Ethical Issues for Mental Health Professionals
Arthur Freeman  Depression: A Cognitive Therapy Approach
Linda Gask  Suicide and Self-Harm
Glendon Association  Sex, Love and Intimate Relationships  Invisible Child Abuse  Voices About Relationships  Voices of Suicide
Kenneth V. Hardy  The Psychological Residuals of Slavery
Susan Heitler  The Angry Couple
Karin Heller & Bill Domonkos
Harville Hendrix
Evan Imber-Black
Arnold Lazarus
Steve Lerner
Ronald Levant
Hanna Levenson
Marco J. D. Maida
Rollo May
Monica McGoldrick
Donald Meichenbaum
Scott Miller
Jacob Moreno
Zerka T. Moreno
Rod Mullen
Frank Ochberg
George Papageorge
Erving Polster
Ron Scott (Producer)
Martin Seligman
Lenore Walker
Irvin Yalom
Harry Wexler
Jon Carlson & Mary Arnold
Pat Love
Gus Napier
Richard C. Schwartz

Coming Out
Harville Hendrix on the Healing Relationship
Family Secrets
Arnold Lazarus: Live Case Consultation
She's Leaving Me
Effective Psychotherapy with Men
Time-Limited Dynamic Psychotherapy
Jacob Levy Moreno: His Life and His Muses
Rollo May on Existential Psychotherapy
The Legacy of Unresolved Loss
Mixed Anxiety and Depression
What Works in Psychotherapy
Moreno Movies (4–DVD series)
The Zerka T. Moreno Series (3–DVD series)
Encounter Groups for Addictions
Explaining PTSD
PTSD and Veterans
The Counting Method
Connecting with Our Kids
Psychotherapy with the Unmotivated Patient
Psychotherapy with Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Clients (7–DVD series)
Positive Psychology and Psychotherapy
The Abused Woman
The Gift of Therapy
Irvin Yalom: Live Case Consultation
Understanding Group Psychotherapy
Therapeutic Communities in Prisons
Culture-Sensitive Therapy
Imago Therapy
Experiential Therapy
Couples Therapy
Internal Family Systems Therapy
BRIEF THERAPY FOR ADDICTIONS SERIES
Bruce S. Liese  Cognitive Therapy for Addictions
G. Alan Marlatt  Harm Reduction Therapy for Addictions
Barbara S. McCrady  Couples Therapy for Addictions
William R. Miller  Motivational Interviewing
John C. Norcross  Stages of Change for Addictions
Robert E. Wubbolding  Reality Therapy for Addictions
Joan Ellen Zweben  Integrating Therapy with 12-Step Programs

CHILD THERAPY WITH THE EXPERTS SERIES
Jon Carlson  Adlerian Parent Consultation
Janet Sasson Edgette  Adolescent Family Therapy
Gerald Koocher  Psychotherapy with Medically Ill Children
Terry Kottman  Adlerian Play Therapy
Stephen Madigan  Narrative Therapy with Children
Bruce Masek  Cognitive-Behavioral Child Therapy
John J. Murphy  Solution-Focused Child Therapy
David Scharff  Object Relations Child Therapy
Anin Utigaard  Person-Centered Child Therapy
Robert E. Wubbolding  Reality Therapy with Children

PSYCHOTHERAPY WITH THE EXPERTS SERIES
Insoo Kim Berg  Solution-Focused Therapy
James Bugental  Existential-Humanistic Psychotherapy
Jon Carlson  Adlerian Therapy
Mary Goulding  Transactional Analysis
Kenneth V. Hardy  Family Systems Therapy
Allen Ivey  Integrative Therapy
Jeffrey Kottler  Integrative Counseling
John Kumboldt  Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy
Arnold Lazarus  Multimodal Therapy
Donald Meichenbaum  Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy
Natalie Rogers  Person-Centered Expressive Arts Therapy
Ernest Rossi  Mind-Body Therapy
Jill Savege Scharff  Object Relations Therapy
Lenore Walker  Feminist Therapy
Robert E. Wubbolding  Reality Therapy