

Southern Adventist University
School of Social Work and Family Studies

My Own Philosophy on Homework

By

Mike Hoback

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Dr. Rene' Drumm

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My View

After listening to the expert panel and reading the required chapter I found myself agreeing with a lot of what was said, which is pretty odd considering my opinion prior to this assignment. The expert panel explained that the word homework is associated with punishment and I totally agree. It's also associated with time consuming and difficult. When we first started studying CBT this semester and were put into small groups and told to role play, it felt somewhat odd when it came to the part of assigning homework. The first thing that I thought about was if that were me sitting there and someone was asking me to take on a bigger load of work than what I already have I would not be too acceptable to the idea. We have all been in the situation where you have stayed up all night in a desperate effort to get homework done or attempted to complete it only to find out that you don't comprehend it. For this very reason I cringe at the thought of homework and like many find it hard to find the motivation to get started on it.

The expert panel was excellent and provided great rebuttals for many of the arguments I had against the homework however the Beck readings kind of hit a nerve with me when discussing homework. When reading the chapter it was frequently noted that the therapist would ask the client if they got "all" of the homework done. As the chapter progressed it appeared to me as though the therapist was pressuring the client to complete homework. I do understand the importance of homework which I will get to later in this paper but I'm just not too convinced that the first session is where I would want to start throwing out homework and risk the client not returning. Maybe my views are somewhat skewed due to being in this graduate program and the heavy workload involved here but I will admit that the first time we had to complete a record of monitoring automatic thoughts it worked. I would find myself in a situation and stop and ask myself "what's going through my mind right now?" I then would try and

change my thought process and this would in turn change not only how I felt but how I acted. So even though I don't like the thought of homework I would have to agree it works as I still use those skills to this day.

Importance to Client's Progress

Both the reading and the panel of experts did open my eyes to several things that I really didn't think of after hearing the "homework" word. I believe that homework is not only important for client progress but vital. The book noted that homework is an integral, not optional, part of therapy. Homework does help the client to gain knowledge of their own issues and to also deal with difficult situations when they arise. Homework also helps the client develop the skills that will serve them as they proceed in therapy and beyond. It helps them plan and organize tasks, manage time, make choices, and solve problems, all of which are essential to the functioning in life.

One of the most important aspects of homework in my opinion is it teaches the client how to take responsibility not just for the tasks assigned but for their overall decisions. Do to spending large amounts of time on homework myself, whenever I hear the word "homework" I tend to think frustration, exhaustion, and loss of time for my child. But I would have to agree that after completing my own school homework I get a sense of accomplishment and empowerment that I can actually handle the load and there is no disputing the fact that it does help you improve your abilities as you move forward.

Assigning Homework

Broaching the issue is still somewhat tricky for me when dealing with clients as I am still learning the skills. During my first client video we conducted I was uneasy about what to say or how to bring it up but I think I have gotten much better now. In my last video I started the

homework with the client while we were still in the session and it seemed to flow a lot better. I was also able to ensure that the client was following along and knew what we were talking about. Although it may be wrong I believe that simply talking to a client about homework may help as that is what I would prefer.

Therapist: *So this week when you notice your changing do you think you could write that down and bring them in next session so we can review them.*

Client: *I guess but what if I forget?*

Therapist: *That's fine if you forget or for some reason can't do it we can discuss the situations next session and complete it together.*

Client: *Ok.* (Even if the client does not write it down I think I still accomplished a small form of homework because they will still bring the situations back for us to discuss. I think this would be an easy way of first hitting the topic of homework).

When assigning homework I will try and ensure to tailor the homework to the client. As mentioned in the text some individuals catch on faster than others and some clients won't or can't write things down. I believe that starting the homework in session will provide me with some insight on whether the client can and will complete the homework given. I would also try and explain to the client why what we are trying to gain from the homework and how it might help them progress. I especially like what the panel said about making homework fun. If you can actually find something that sparks the client's interest and then tie it to their homework, you have a great chance they will complete the homework. An example that came to my mind when writing this was a video we watched in class in which the therapist and the client are making animals out of clay and the client stated that he liked this type of activity. In this situation it

would seem logical to try and incorporate something like this into his homework so that he completes it and enjoys it.