

Goal Depictions

Depictions utilise one or more chairs as representational objects in order to map or measure aspects of the client's world (Dayton, 2005; Pugh, 2021). Goal depictions involve using a chair to measure the metaphorical distance between the client and a particular goal. This can also set the scene for 'externalising conversations' (White, 2007) regarding factors which support or obstruct the client's attainment of a particular goal.

Process of dialogue:

1). The facilitator asks the client to place their goal in an empty chair.

Facilitator: "Let's imagine that this chair holds your goal - to be more accepting of your body."

2). The facilitator asks the client to represent how near or far attaining the goal currently feels by moving the chair to an appropriate location.

Facilitator: "Move the chair to a place in the room that represents how close you feel to achieving this goal. Does it seem near or far away right now?"

3). The facilitator asks questions about the client's depiction. This might include exploring resources, exceptions, and alternative perspectives on the map.

- *How you do feel towards this goal? Why do you want it in your life?*
- *Why did you choose to place the chair there?*
- *Where do you want your goal to be? What difference would that make?*
- *Does your goal always feel this near or far away? What makes the difference?*
- *Has there been times when it's felt closer to you? How did you do that?*
- *Where would a close friend place your goal? Nearer or further away? Why?*
- *What gets in the way of reaching this goal? Can you show me with another chair?*
- *What resources do you have on your side for reaching this goal? Show me.*

Facilitation notes:

- If space or chairs are limited, smaller-scale depictions can be constructed using other representational objects (e.g., figurines in a sand tray or coloured icons on a Powerpoint slide).
- It can be informative to follow-up goal depictions with either two-chair dialogues between the client and their goal, or by interviewing the client in the role of their goal.

- As well as exploring goals, depictions can be just as readily applied to exploring the client's relationship with a problem, obstruction, or negative self-narrative / story / early maladaptive schema.

References:

Dayton, T. (2005). The living stage: A step-by-step guide to psychodrama, sociometry, and experiential group therapy. Health Communications.

Pugh, M. (2021). Single-session chairwork: Overview and case illustration of brief dialogical psychotherapy. British Journal of Guidance and Counselling.

White, M. (2007). Maps of narrative practice. W. W. Norton and Company.

Citation:

Pugh, M. & Bell, T. (2022). Goal depiction: Facilitation guidance. Retrieved from www.chairwork.co.uk.

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visit www.chairwork.co.uk