



Modum Bad Research Institute 2010

THE MULTI-CENTER FAMILY THERAPY PROJECT

Will Online Feedback Improve Therapy?

A national and international collaboration on a comprehensive, cutting edge clinical and research tool in psychotherapy.

Terje Tilden

The multi-center family therapy project in Norway includes:

- **Modum Bad:** The Center for Family and Relations.
- **Kristiansand/Arendal:** The Unit for Child and Adolescence's Mental Health, Sørlandet Sykehus HF.
- **Ålesund:** Family therapy agency.

The short term aim for the project:

To implement and test the feasibility of an online feedback system in couple and family therapy within and between three different sites in Norway.

Why is a feedback system needed?

- Only 50% of psychotherapy clients show improvement (Lambert, 2007).
- Clients do not report no-change.
- Therapists believe therapy improves when it in fact, it does not.
- Early improvement and established therapy alliance predict outcome.
- Strengthening client collaboration.

MONITORING THERAPY VIA FEEDBACK YIELDS VALID INFORMATION ON THERAPY PROGRESS AND PROCESS.



This feedback system consists of two questionnaires:

- STIC (Systemic Therapy Inventory of Change) for the clients, assessing background information, individual problems/strengths, family of origin, relationship with partner, family and household, children's problems/strengths, relationship to children, process/therapeutic alliance.
- ITSR (Integrative Therapy Session Report) for the therapists, assessing systemic focus and types of interventions, progress and process/therapeutic alliance.

This system has a dual purpose:

1. Feedback informs ongoing therapy.
2. Accumulating information to data files for research purposes, enabling sophisticated analyses for the exploration of change mechanisms in therapy.

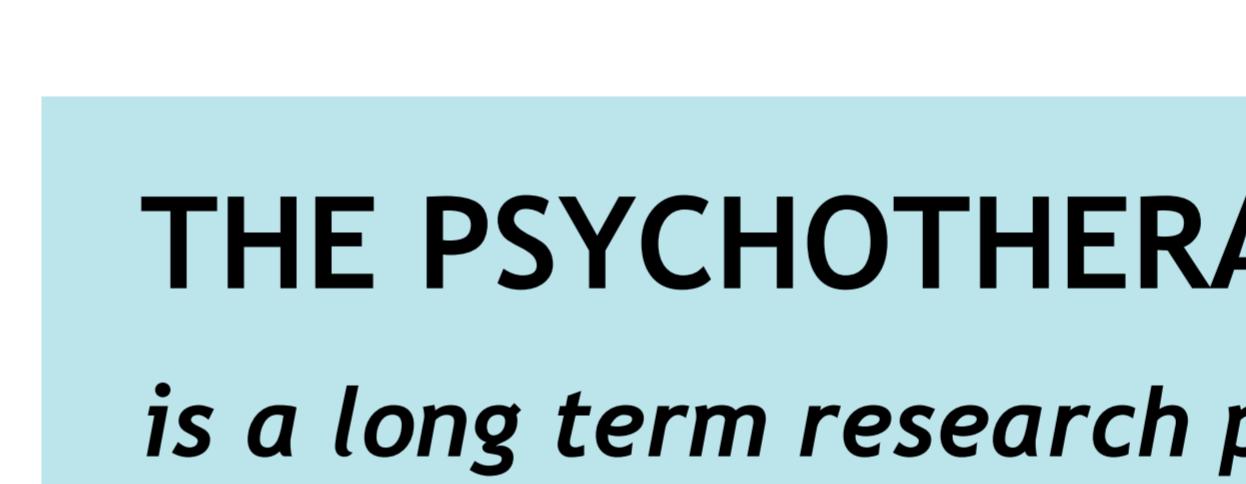
Accomplished in the pilot period:

- Translating STIC to Norwegian
- Establishing and experiencing online procedures for clinical enhancement
- Establishing national and international collaboration

The long term goal is to continue this work in a main project, exploring whether feedback makes a difference in couple and family therapy. Comparisons can be conducted between national and international sites.

FACTS:

- Pilot project financed by a grant from Helse Sør-Øst 2009 - 2010.
- Administered from the Research Institute, Modum Bad.
- Affiliated to Department of Behavioral Sciences in Medicine, Institute of Basic Medical Sciences, Faculty of Medicine, University of Oslo.
- Affiliated to, and supervised by Professor William M. Pinsof, Family Institute at Northwestern University, Chicago, USA.



Professor William M. Pinsof, PhD, LMFT, ABPP, director of the Family Institute, is one of the originators, and the principal investigator of the Psychotherapy Change Project.

THE PSYCHOTHERAPY CHANGE PROJECT

is a long term research program that has three aims:

1. To delineate how people change in psychotherapy.
2. To identify the therapist behaviors associated with those changes.
3. To develop a procedure for regularly feeding that information back to therapists and clinical supervisors during the process of therapy.

What is online feedback?

- Client completes an online questionnaire before the first session and between the following sessions.
- This is processed and returned to therapist as a report with graphs and numbers.
- Therapists use this information for session preparation, sharing results with their clients.
- This informs the ongoing therapy as basis for clinical judgements and decisions = "Empirically informed therapy".
- Same procedure for the therapist questionnaire.



EVALUATIONS FROM CLIENTS:

"We became curious about how our information could inform the therapists in helping us."

"Filling out the forms enhanced my self-awareness of what was related to change."

EVALUATIONS FROM THERAPISTS:

"The report gave a rapid and precise picture of the problems and constraints."

"The report helped us to focus and know that we pulled in the same direction."



TERJE TILDEN is a clinical social worker/family therapist defending his PhD in 2010.