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**Treatnet Family**

**Elements of family therapy for adolescent substance use disorders**

- **1**  
Introduction to family therapy and Treatnet Family
- **2**  
Family therapy core strategies
- **3**  
Family therapy phases and interventions
- **4**  
Possible issues and themes
- **5**  
Micro teaching and evaluation

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## Where are we so far?



Family therapy core strategies:

- ▶ Reframes
- ▶ Relational reframes
- ▶ Perspective taking
- ▶ Relational questions
- ▶ Rolling with resistance

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## Let's discuss!



**Your thoughts and reactions to what we covered yesterday**

- ▶ Which skills make most sense to you?
- ▶ Which skills appeal to you? Which don't? Why?
- ▶ Which skills or ideas do group members need more practice to learn?

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A basket for questions



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Let's begin!



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### Training objectives

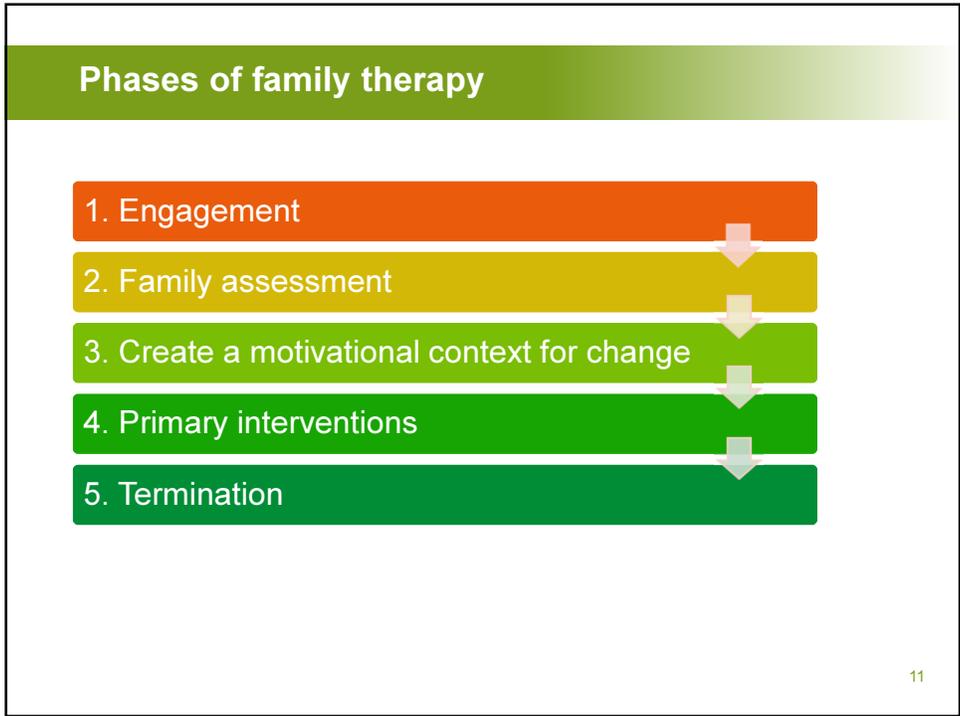
**At the end of this workshop you will be able to:**

Explain and employ Family Therapy phases and interventions:

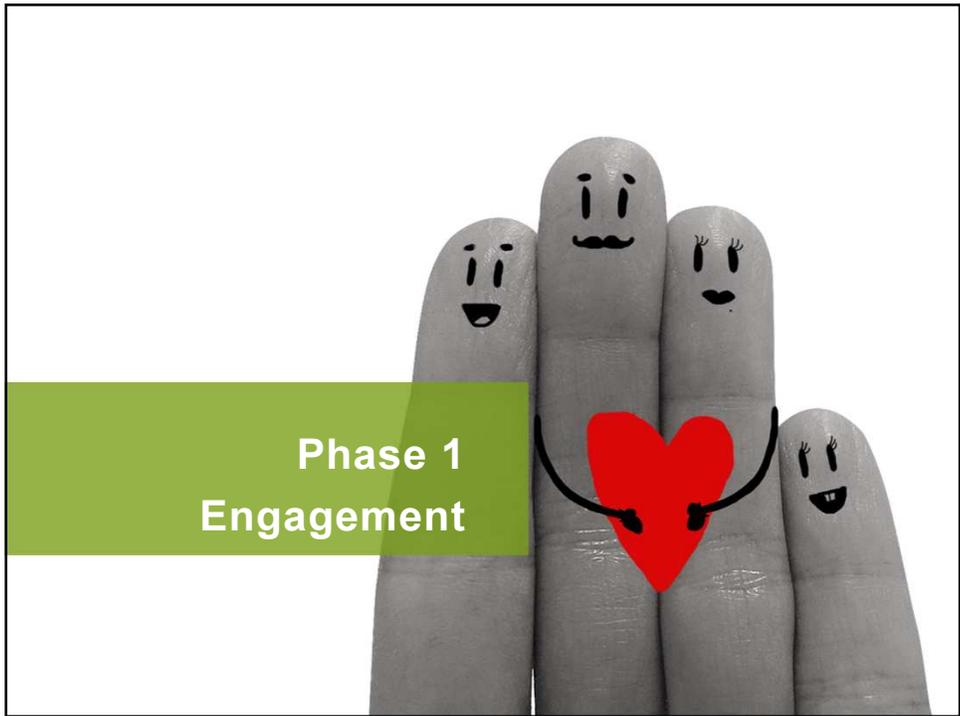
- Phase 1: Engagement
- Phase 2: Family Assessment
- Phase 3: Create motivation to change
- Phase 4: Primary family therapy interventions
- Phase 5: Termination

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## Phase 1: Engagement

1. Build a working alliance
2. Join
3. Validate
4. Stimulate hope



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## Let's observe!



### Engagement

*Situation: The therapist discusses with the mother and father how to set limits on their 15 year old teen.*

- ▶ Look for how the therapist
  - Builds an alliance (the family shares the same goal, feels trust)
  - Joins (connect with)
  - Validates (supports)
  - Gives hope that it can be completed successfully

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## Let's practice!



- ▶ “Build” a family with a parent, step-parent and teen + a therapist
- ▶ The therapist engages the family through discussing the family’s problems, strengths, etc.
- ▶ One participant reports back to the large group on the engagement skills used

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**Let's practice!**




**Phase 2: Family assessment**

- ▶ How do family members see the problem?
- ▶ Structure and process assessment:
  - Boundaries
  - Themes
  - Structure/hierarchy
  - Rules
  - Roles
  - Interactional patterns
  - Reinforcements
  - Family risks and strengths

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**Phase 2: Family assessment**

- ▶ Identify comorbidity
- ▶ Consider referral to additional services in your network



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## The Social Atom

- ▶ What is a social atom?
- ▶ Why use it?



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## Let's practice!



### The Social Atom

- ▶ Watch an example
- ▶ Draw your own social atom
- ▶ Discuss with a partner:
  - themes you noticed
  - how the social atom can be useful in therapy with a youth with a substance use problem

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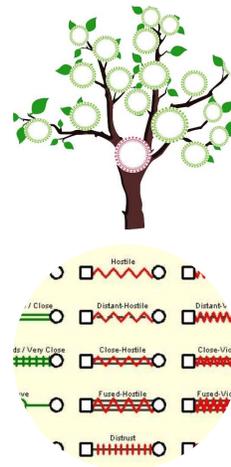
## The Genogram

### ► What is a Genogram?

- ✓ A genogram is a written symbolic diagram of the family system, not unlike a family tree

### ► Why use it?

- ✓ A potentially useful way to learn more about a youth's family system
- ✓ Can help identify and discuss themes in families
- ✓ Can help engage a quiet youth who may not say much without such an assessment aid



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## Let's practice!



### Genogram

- Observe an example
- Draw a genogram
- Discuss with a partner:
  - Themes you noticed
  - How the genogram can be useful in therapy with a youth with a substance use problem

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## Relational assessment questions

### Examples of relational assessment questions for family assessment:

- ▶ “How are conflicts usually resolved?”
- ▶ “What works?”
- ▶ “What does not work?”
- ▶ “When \_\_\_\_ does \_\_\_\_ what does \_\_\_\_ do?”
- ▶ “What led up to the recent problems?”
- ▶ “What goals do each of you have for therapy?”

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## Assessment of immediate needs



Ask about:

- ▶ School
- ▶ Court
- ▶ Health
- ▶ Living situation
- ▶ Jobs
- ▶ Financial situation
- ▶ Social support

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## Relational frame

Use assessment information to create a **relational frame**: understanding one's behavior as influenced by and influencing others

- ▶ Empathize with each client's experience
- ▶ Encourage perspective taking
- ▶ Move from intrapersonal to interpersonal and systemic understanding of the problem
- ▶ Reframe/relabel events and interactions systemically
- ▶ Use relational questions and interpretations

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## Let's observe!



### Relational frame

Observe the role-play and think:

- ▶ Which assessment questions would you ask?
- ▶ Can you venture one or more relational frames? What might they be?
- ▶ How would you introduce these relational frames?

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## When to bring up alcohol or drug use with the family

When would you bring it up? How would you bring it up?

- ▶ “We have talked a lot about your son’s problems at school. I wonder if these problems are related to any other issues, such as alcohol or other substance use?”
- ▶ “I noticed that substance use has not been discussed. Are we avoiding that topic? I wonder if it is difficult to talk about?”

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**Phase 3**  
Create a motivational  
context for change

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## Create a motivational context for change

**Remember, you are more likely to create a context for change if you:**

- ▶ Roll with resistance
- ▶ See each person's positive intent
- ▶ Create a safe environment
- ▶ Introduce a relational frame
- ▶ Come across as respectful, competent, and active
- ▶ Address issues important to the family
- ▶ Stimulate hope, and have hope yourself!

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## Power of hope

**Don't underestimate the power of hope:**

- ▶ "We will work on this together. This therapy has helped many families with similar struggles."
- ▶ "If you are tired of things staying the way they are, they don't have to. I'm not going to give up on you and don't want you to give up on yourself. It is one step at a time, but it will be in the right direction."
- ▶ What else might you say to stimulate hope?



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**Phase 4: Family therapy interventions**

1. Intervene to break negative cycles of behavior
2. Enactments
3. Problem solving
4. Speaker-listener communication skills



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## Phase 4: family therapy interventions (cont.)

5. Other useful skills
  - Urge surfing
  - Do something different
  - Drug/drinking refusal skills
  - Contingency contracting
6. Reinforcement ideas from the adolescent community reinforcement approach (ACRA)
7. Outside-therapy assignments to change behaviors and relational cycles

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## Phase 4: Family Therapy Interventions

### Break Negative Cycles of Behavior



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## Break negative cycles of behavior

The therapist should help the family members:

- ▶ See the positive intentions behind their angry words
- ▶ Find the more vulnerable feelings beyond “angry” – hurt, scared, caring, alone, rejected etc.
- ▶ Plan and do a shared rewarding activity
- ▶ Value parent/child/sibling doing something nice
  
- ▶ Can you think of more ways to break a negative cycle?

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## Let's observe and practice!



### Breaking negative cycles of behavior

- ▶ Which strategy does the therapist use?
- ▶ Can you think of more ways to break a negative cycle?

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## Phase 4: Family therapy interventions

### Enactment

Enactment refers to therapist-initiated interventions that change family interactions.



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## Video example

### Jake and mom explore the dilemma



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## Phase 4: Family therapy interventions



### Problem-solving

- ▶ Define problem
- ▶ List solutions
- ▶ Rank solutions
- ▶ Pick one
- ▶ Try it out
- ▶ Revisit the solution, if needed

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## Phase 4: Family therapy interventions



### Speaker-listener communication skills

#### Steps:

1. Instruct family member to speak clearly and without anger to another family member about what he or she wants the person to understand
2. Ask the other family member to repeat the essence of what was said
3. Confirm understanding

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## Let's observe!



### Speaker-listener communication skills

- ▶ How does the therapist make the voices of all family members heard?
- ▶ In which way does the therapist enhance understanding of each others perspectives?
- ▶ What else did you observe?

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## Learn useful skills: urge surfing

### Cravings rise and fall like waves

If you can ride out the wave for 20 minutes, chances are the craving will have dissipated on its own. Strategies:

- ▶ Delay and distract for 20 minutes
- ▶ Deep breathing
- ▶ Challenge catastrophic thoughts
- ▶ Drink a glass of water
- ▶ Call a support person



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## Ask youth about the craving



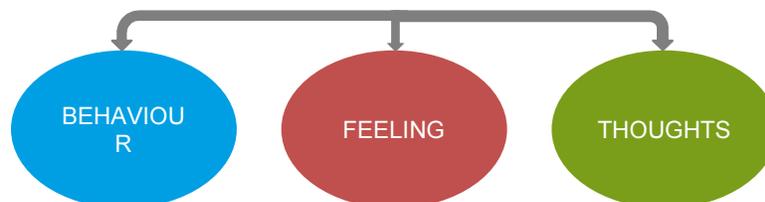
- ▶ Do you sometimes feel like you want to take drugs again?
- ▶ What do you do then?
- ▶ What's worked?
- ▶ What is the craving like for you?
- ▶ How bothered are you by it?
- ▶ How long do cravings last?

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## Ask the youth to keep a craving diary

- ▶ Keep track of each craving during the week
- ▶ Summarize each craving in terms of:



- ▶ Then, plan for how to address each: Eliminate cues, deep breathing, distract, relax, challenge with positive self talk, etc. In doing this, you and the youth are developing a concrete plan to handle the next craving.

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## Teaching drug/drink refusal skills

**Many people with substance use disorders relapse as a result of social pressure**

- ▶ Refusal skills can be learned
- ▶ How?

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## Let's practice!



**Drug/drink refusal skills**



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## Problem solving: contingency contracting

### Negotiation as a form of conflict resolution

#### Potential issues:

- ▶ Useful when an immediate tool is needed, when communication is faulty, when problems are specific behavioral
- ▶ All parties receive something that they want. Child washes dishes, parents allow child to stay up late.

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## Problem solving: contingency contracting

### Negotiation as a form of conflict resolution

#### Recommendations for contract:

- ▶ Behaviorally specific
- ▶ Behavior must be able to be monitored
- ▶ Reasonable request (80% attendance rate for habitually truant child)
- ▶ Contract is changeable (Dictatorial parents and rigidly authoritarian parents are poor candidates.)

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## Focus on problem solving: Contingency contracting

### Example Contract

*This contract is between <child name> and his/her parents. <child's name> agrees to be home on-time for dinner at least four days of the week.*

*Each day <child name> is home on time for dinner s/he earns one hour of video games or television (or other reward attractive and appropriate for the child and/or family). If four days in the week are reached, parents will take child to the movies or take child and his/her friends <or other reward>. This contract shall be re-evaluated in one month.*

Signed: <Child Name>    Signed: <Parent Name>

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## Reinforcing behavior change

- ▶ Attain goals with additional external reinforcements
- ▶ Teach communication and problem-solving skills
- ▶ Introduce social and recreational activities
- ▶ Use Happiness Scale to identify other life goals



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## ACRA Happiness Scale

### Happiness Scale

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Adolescent ID: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

This scale is intended to estimate your *current* happiness with your life in each of the 16 areas listed below. You are to circle one of the numbers (1 to 10) beside each area. Numbers toward the left side of the 10-unit scale indicate various degrees of unhappiness, whereas numbers toward the right side of the scale reflect increasing levels of happiness. Ask yourself this question as you rate each area of life: "How happy am I today with this area of my life?" In other words, state according to the numerical scale (1 to 10) exactly how you feel today. Try to exclude yesterday's feelings and concentrate only on today's feelings in each of the life areas. Also, try *not* to allow one category to influence the results of the other categories.

	Completely Unhappy	Completely Happy
1. Marijuana use/nonuse	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
2. Alcohol use/nonuse	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
3. Other drug use/nonuse	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
4. Relationship with boyfriend or girlfriend	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
5. Relationships with friends	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
6. Relationships with parents or caregivers	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
7. School	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
8. Social activities	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	
9. Recreational activities	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	

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## Treatment plan / goals of counseling

- ▶ Use ACRA-HS to select goal category
- ▶ Set goal/strategy using "SMART" guidelines
- ▶ In general, set short-term goals that are scheduled to be completed (tie in reinforcers)
- ▶ Develop a step-by-step weekly strategy for reaching each goal (homework)
- ▶ Homework assignment: check on progress of goals

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## ACRA positive communication components: to make a request...

- ▶ Be brief
- ▶ Be positive
- ▶ Be specific and clear
  
- ▶ Label your feeling: "I feel \_\_\_\_"
- ▶ Offer an understanding statement
- ▶ Accept partial responsibility
- ▶ Offer to help

Content of the request

Increase the likelihood to get a "Yes"

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## ACRA social / recreational counseling

- ▶ Discuss importance of healthy social/recreational life
- ▶ Identify areas of interest

With money /  
With others

With money /  
Without others

Without money /  
with others

Without money /  
Without others

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## Let's practice!



### Happiness Scale

- ▶ Fill in the Happiness Scale on behalf of other person or yourself
- ▶ Discuss with your colleague the results and different ways to use this scale in your work

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## Community reinforcement and family training

Parents can be trained to motivate youth to seek treatment through being taught how to:

- ▶ Use contingency management and other strategies to reinforce the youth's non-using behaviors and to extinguish drug use
- ▶ Communicate effectively and engage in problem-solving skills
- ▶ Plan activities which compete with youth's drug use
- ▶ Parents also taught stress reduction and self-care
- ▶ Therapist initiates treatment with youth when he/she is ready

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## Outside activities: “homework”

**Goal: to help families apply skills from therapy into their daily lives**

Examples of possible outside activities:

- Family will sit together for dinner. Can also assign what to talk about.
- Father is to ask daughter about her day after she returns from school
- Activities can be planned for the family to engage in (e.g., a movie, fishing, shopping)
- A youth will pursue an interest at school
- After school, youth will leave a note identifying where he/she is, a phone number, and return time

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## Outside activities

**How to make it more likely the family will actually do the activities?**

- ▶ Ideally, the family should be part of deciding on the task
- ▶ Task should provide relief or pleasure to all involved
- ▶ All must agree that it can be accomplished and will have mutual payoffs
- ▶ Have family members explain the task
- ▶ Keep it simple
- ▶ Keep track of the task and tell the family you will ask about it at the next session

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## Let's discuss!



### Outside activities

- ▶ What happens if the family doesn't follow through and complete the task?
- ▶ How might you prevent this from happening?

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## If you decide to meet individually with family members

### Do so with respect for all

- ▶ Explain your reason
- ▶ Let them know that you will not side with one person against another
- ▶ Seek permission from all family members
- ▶ If a family member does not feel comfortable with individual meetings, respect their wishes



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## Try something different



**“If it doesn't work, then don't do it again – do something different!”**

*Berg and Miller*

Strategic therapy is a form of interactional therapy because it does not focus on the root causes of the client's problems but instead tries to **increase competency** and **develop problem-solving skills** that will help the client in her interactions

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## Phase 5 Termination



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## Phase 5: Termination

- ▶ As termination approaches, ask about changes they have observed, and what they still have to pay attention to
- ▶ What was liked and not liked? What was most useful?
- ▶ How will they know when they need help again?
- ▶ Ensure family is connected to ongoing community supports as needed
- ▶ Others?

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## Points to remember



- ▶ Five phases of FT:
  - Engagement
  - Family Assessment
  - Create motivation to change
  - Primary family therapy interventions
  - Termination
- ▶ Some possible FT interventions:
  - Breaking negative cycles of behavior
  - Enactments
  - Problem solving
  - Speaker-listener communication skills
  - Outside-therapy assignments
  - Happiness Scale

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## End-of-workshop reflections



- ▶ What was the most meaningful to you today?
- ▶ What will you take away with you?
- ▶ What did you enjoy the most?
- ▶ How will you use this information?
- ▶ What skill(s) do you think you will begin to practice in your work?

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Thank you for your time!  
End of Workshop 3



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