

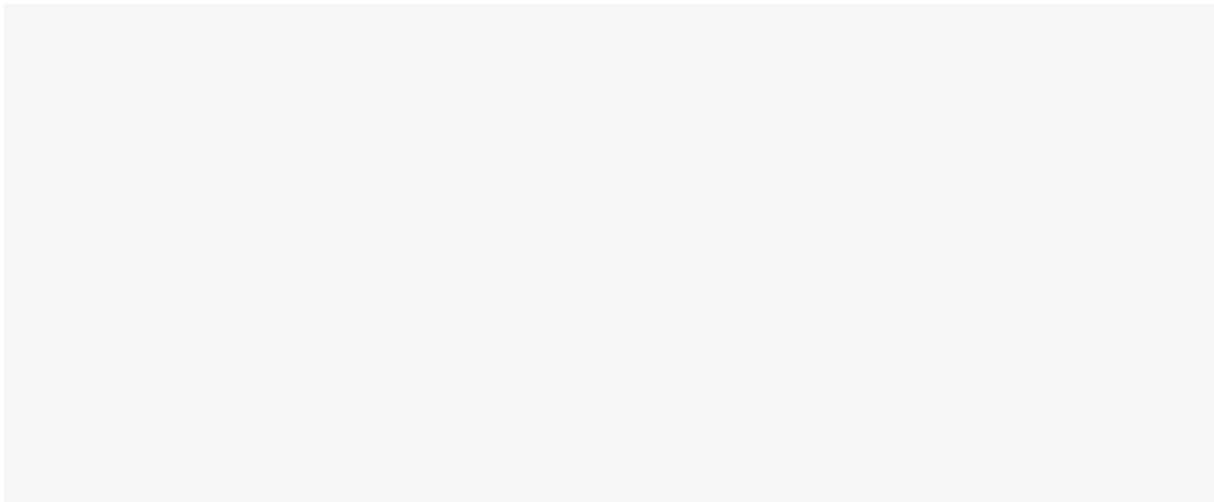
Being Present

Awareness and *being present* are vital for effective communication in both counseling and therapy (Westland, 2015).

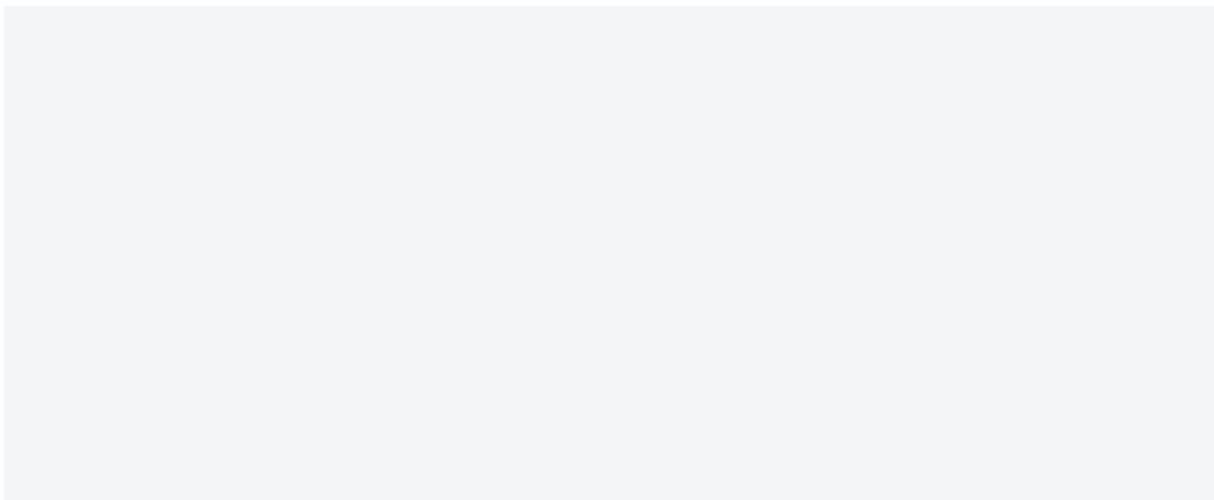
Use the following questions to increase awareness of what is happening inside your head and body and what you are aware of in the environment.

Take a few moments to reflect on your awareness during a recent session or conversation with a client. Choose a particular moment – difficult, happy, or sad – and visualize what was happening.

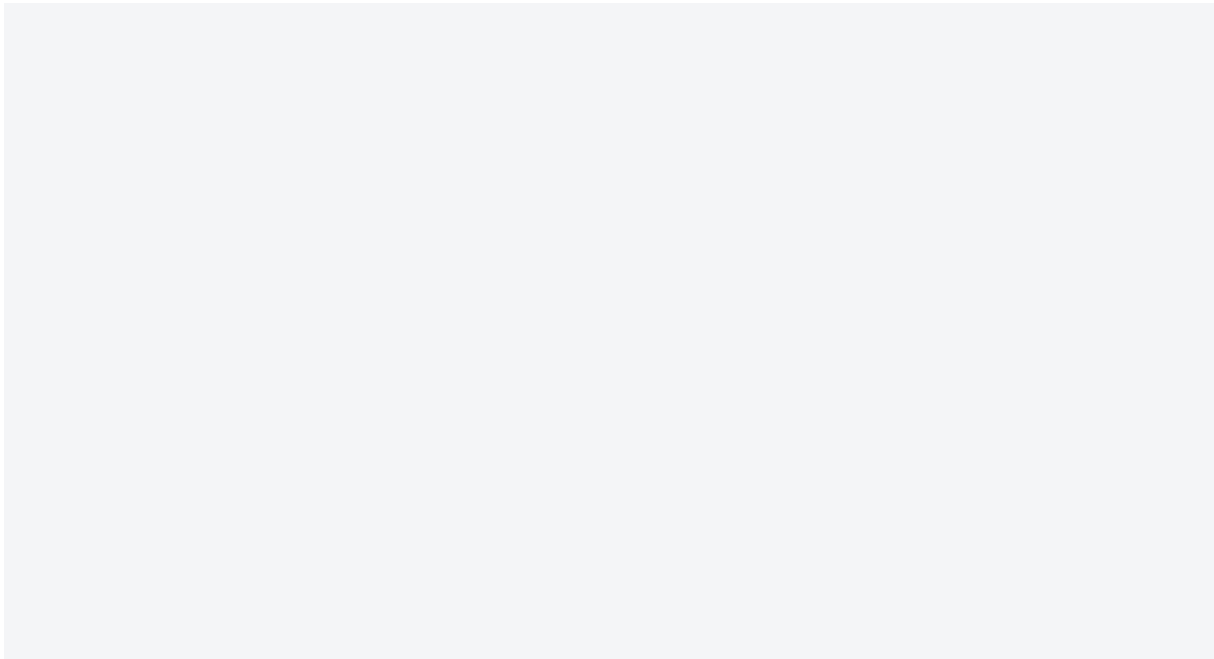
Describe your **subjective awareness** at that time. What physical sensations did you experience, for example, tension, tingles, pressure, etc.?



Describe your **outer awareness** at that time. What did you sense in the environment, such as noises, smells, touches, taste, etc.?



Describe your **awareness of fantasy** at that time. What mental processes took you out of the present moment into planning, explaining, and thinking?



Reflection on each answer will help you increase understanding and awareness of your inner and outer world and improve your communication and understanding of the client.

References

- Westland, G. (2015). *Verbal and non-verbal communication in Psychotherapy*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.

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