

Rutgers DSW Program Syllabus

Module Title: Understanding and Using Common Factors

Instructor:

Residency:

Date:

Module Description:

For many social workers and social work organizations, counseling and psychotherapy is a significant part of their work. As a profession, we need to support social workers in providing effective and culturally sensitive therapy based on research evidence. The research shows psychotherapy is an effective treatment. However, despite the development of countless psychotherapy models over the years, decades of research have not conclusively proven any single model more effective than the others (except for some very specific disorders - e.g. phobias). Why is this? Are the models, which are all widely different in their focus and techniques, all surprisingly effective or is there something else occurring in the practice of psychotherapy that is outside of the models that is actually accounting for their effectiveness?

This module will introduce the common factors of psychotherapy research, review specific common factors, and explore ways to incorporate them into your work with clients, supervisees, and organizations.

Module Objectives:

1. Understand what the common factors model is.
2. Recognize specific common factors and identify ways to incorporate them into work with clients, supervisees, and an organization's culture.
3. Identify the need to routinely start with the client's cultural understanding and response to their problems.

Required Readings:

Cameron, M., & Keenan, E. K. (2010). The common factors model: Implications for transtheoretical clinical social work practice. *Social Work, 55*(1), 63-73.

Drisko, J. (2013). The common factors model: Its place in clinical practice and research. *Smith College Studies in Social Work, 83*(4), 398-413.

Recommended Readings:

Feinstein, R., Heiman, N., & Yager, J. (2015). Common factors affecting psychotherapy outcomes: Some implications for teaching psychotherapy. *Journal of Psychiatric Practice*[®], 21(3), 180-189.

Lampropoulos, G. K. (2003). A common factors view of counseling supervision process. *The Clinical Supervisor*, 21(1), 77-95.

Module Assignment (required):**Due:**

In a 1-2 page reflection paper: a) explore how aspects of the common factors model are currently present in your work as a social worker or in your organization's work, and b) outline some ways that specific common factors can be increased or introduced.