

Narrative Therapy Principle Chart

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<i>Principle</i>	<i>Metaphors</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Ideas that Support Principle</i>	<i>Ideas that Conflict with Principle</i>	<i>Sample Questions Using "Anger" (a Symptom of PTSD) as the Problem</i>
Narrative Metaphor	Path	Person makes meaning of own life by using their story (personal narrative).	Personal narratives are events linked in sequence, across time, and according to a plot.	Internal characteristics control the outcome of person's capabilities.	What stands out about "the anger" at this moment in time?
Positioning: De-centered but Influential	Hiker and Guide Flashlight	Therapist listens closely to person's words; words inform questions about meaning and action.	Person is the expert. Therapist is curious, both de-centered and influential.	Therapist is expert, directing to an outcome.	I am curious to know what you see as the problem.
Positioning: Externalization	Flowers and Rocks	Problem is seen as separate from the person. Therapist and person view problem together.	Person is not the problem; the problem is the problem.	Problem is a symptom of person's internal character.	When you consider "the anger," when does it influence you the most?
Personal Agency	Provisions Backpack	Person determines the problem and the preferred; makes own decisions.	Therapist respects and supports person's ability to make choices.	Person's assessment of own life is secondary to the therapist's.	What aspects of "the anger" do you want and what aspects do you not want?
Subordinate Story Development: Repositioning	Perspective Camera	Person identifies when problem is not present or has less influence; perspective shifts.	There are exceptions to all problems and multiple meanings in any plot.	An alternative story is just a precursor to focus on problem.	Tell me a time when "the anger" has less influence.
Subordinate Story Development: Absent But Implicit	Direction Train Track	When a person identifies a problem, there is also knowledge of the preferred.	Problem stories imply there are also preferred stories or vice versa.	Primary focus is on problem.	When you don't want "the anger," what do you want in its place?

Intentionality	Compass	Person's values determine what is preferred. When values are the focus, problems have less influence.	Person's values and beliefs, developed over time, describe personal identity.	Therapist interprets personal values and chooses direction.	How does "the anger" support and interfere with values you hold?
Identity Proclamation	People on Path Walkie-Talkie	Influential others can strengthen a person's alternative, preferred story.	Identity is socially constructed.	Focus is only on the therapist-person relationship.	Who would support your preferred relationship to "the anger"?
Deconstruction: Societal and Cultural	Environment- Distant View Binoculars	Questioning cultural and societal norms allows a person to recognize their influence.	Cultural and societal norms influence how a person makes meaning of own life.	Cultural and societal norms are not explored or questioned. Focus is on internal experience	What are some cultural and societal messages about "the anger"?
Deconstruction: Personal Day-to Day	Environment- Close-up Microscope	Examining the relationship between problem and daily living habits supports intentionality.	Daily personal patterns of living can both support and challenge problems.	Daily routines represent symptoms of internal character problems.	What personal daily events both support and deter "the anger"?