# Appendix 1: Models and protocols for working with metaphor

Each of these has something of value to offer the Pluralistic approach to developing and drawing on an explicit shared understanding.

#### Kopp & Craw’s (1998) 7 steps

Kopp & Craw (1998) offer a 7-step model. They stress the need to “avoid interrupting the client’s process with interpretations, empathic reflections, comments, questions (other than those in the protocol), conclusions and so forth” (p.307-8) until the final step has been completed. This allows the client to stay with the metaphor and create connections between it and their life problem. Allowing the client to come to this deeper understanding provides the therapist with a window on the client’s world, that personal, relational and cultural knowledge advocated by Miller & Willig (2012).

Their first step is to notice the metaphor, writing down the exact words, which are repeated throughout. Step two involves a visual exploration of the metaphor, followed, step three, by a sensory exploration (including setting, action, interaction, time). Step four is an experiential and emotional exploration of the metaphor. Step five introduces the chance to change any aspects, and only at step six do you explore parallels between the metaphor and the original situation. Step seven explores whether the changes made apply to the current situation.

Once the client has fully explored their metaphor, then the therapist can help them consider how they might change it, and what that might mean. They hypothesise that shifting between explored and transformed imagery allows for new insights and possibilities, but they note that more research is required.

**Step 1** – notice metaphors! [The therapist should write down the exact words the client uses, and repeat these precisely whenever they need to refer to the client’s metaphor]

**Step 2** – “When you say [the metaphor], what image or picture comes to mind?” or, “…what image or picture do you see in your mind’s eye?” or “What does the [metaphor] look like?”

**Step 3** – explore the metaphor as a sensory image:

1. *Setting* (e.g. “What do you see?” or “Describe the scene or an aspect of the scene [associated with the metaphoric image]”);
2. *Action/interaction* (e.g. “What else is going on in [the metaphoric image]?” or “What are the other people [in the metaphoric image] saying/thinking/doing?”);
3. *Time* (e.g. “What led up to this?” “What was happening [just] before [the situation in the metaphor]?” “What happens next?”).

**Step 4** – “What is it like to be [the metaphoric image]?” or “What is your experience of [the metaphoric image]?” or “What are you feeling as you [the metaphoric image]?”

**Step 5** – The therapist says, “If you could change the image in any way, how would you change it?”

**Step 6** – “What connections (parallels) do you see between your image of [the metaphoric image] and [the original situation]?”

**Step 7** – “How might the way you changed the image apply to your current situation?”

#### Sim’s (2003) 6-stage model

Sims considers imagination one of our best coping skills, thus working with metaphor can encourage an imaginative response to challenging circumstances. He offers a 6-step model:

1. Hearing a metaphor – ‘suspend the activity of making sense’
2. Validating a metaphor – show interest, be fascinated, intrigued
3. Expanding a metaphor – associations, images, emotions, embryonic story
4. Playing with possibilities – only now think about/play with meaning/s
5. Marking and selecting – whatever is significant, to promote treatment goals
6. Connecting with the future – engaging with the future from position of shared understanding, shared assumptions, using the client’s words

At stage three, Sims might consider offering some of his own associations to the metaphor, which is slightly at odds with some other models which ask the therapist to resist such interjections.

#### Tay’s (2012) enhanced protocol

Tay is interested in the ‘how’ of linking source and target domains. He is in accordance with the models of Kopp & Craw and Sims, but takes issue with the 6th step: “Neither protocol provides clear guidelines on how the connection (Step 6) between source and target is to be made” (p.144). He suggests two possible ways to ‘bridge’ the source and target. One (correspondence – a mapping exercise) expands the source domain “to elicit different entities, focussing on the relations between them, then transfers these entities and relations to corresponding ones in the target domain” (Tay, 2012, p.147). The other (inclusion) focuses “on attributes of source domain entities, which could be applied to the target domain, then transfers these attributes and emphasises their applicability to both the source and the target” (p.147). He acknowledges that his approach could be seen as more interventionist that those of the original protocol authors.

#### Grove: interrogating the metaphor

David Grove, a New Zealand psychotherapist, developed a technique for interrogating a metaphor “until it confesses its strengths” (Geary, 2011, Location 3588), addressing “the metaphor itself, not what the client or the therapist happens to think about the metaphor” (Location 3595). He called his language ‘clean language’ (<http://www.cleanlanguage.co.uk>) because it was pared back to create a clean slate “on which the client paints a metaphorical landscape” (Location 3588). “You have to walk side by side with the person through their metaphor landscape” (Geary, 2011, Location 3595).

There are three phases to his approach: ‘developing questions’ which take the client deeper into the metaphor, repeating the client’s exact words; ‘moving time questions’ which create the metaphor’s back story; and ‘intention questions’ which link to actual experience and possible change. Each question begins with ‘and’ to create a sense of continuing narrative.

##### Developing questions

These are signposts to direct clients deeper into their metaphor. Questions begin with ‘and’ to emphasise sense of narrative, that the metaphor will lead somewhere. “The therapist also repeats the client’s exact words when posing questions, thus keeping the landscape clear of everything but the client’s own metaphors” Location 3602

1. And is there anything else about X?
2. And what kind of X is that X?
3. And whereabouts is X?
4. And that X is like what?
5. And is there a relationship between X and Y?
6. And when X happens, what happens to Y?

##### Moving time questions

These create the metaphor’s backstory – context against which metaphor plays out:

1. And then what happens?/And what happens next?
2. And what happens just before X?
3. And where could/does X come from?

##### Intention questions

These nudge the metaphor toward the client’s actual experience – the metaphor landscape connects with changes client would like to see:

1. And what would you/X like to have happen?
2. And what needs to happen for X to [achieve what X would like to happen]?
3. And can X [achieve what x would like to happen]?

#### Strong’s 3-step model (cited in Bayne & Thompson, 2000)

The first two steps relate to exploring the client’s metaphor; the third comes from the therapist, but pays homage to the client’s original metaphor.

* Explicating the implicit
  + Reflective listening, drawing the client’s attention to the metaphor, helping the client to stay with the metaphor by focussing on the words.
* Therapeutically extending or modifying the metaphor
  + Thoroughly engage with the client inside the client’s own metaphoric structure; collaborate to generate extended metaphors which provide a framework
* Creating and delivering therapeutic metaphors
  + The counsellor chooses a metaphor that is isomorphic to the client’s metaphor

#### Cirillo & Crider (1995)

“We aim at a more fluid view of metaphors, based on a constructivist position, that meaning is constituted within the interaction between speakers, contexts, goals and instruments (burke, 1945; Fish, 1989; Werner & Kaplan, 1963). They offer the idea that “the ‘same’ metaphor, recurring through the course of therapy, may serve different functions at different times” p.519).

They want to enable therapists to use metaphors “more precisely and with greater range” (p.512) and identify four ways in which metaphors can be used:

##### Making a point vividly with an implied comparison

Therapist generates metaphors as a way to highlight or simplify problems, patterns, themes to enable client to work on them. Metaphor is a rich, concise & memorable way to do this. Metaphors are succinct, graphically concrete, memorable.

##### Accommodating disparate interests through multiple meanings

“The psychoanalyst interprets metaphorically utterances that the patient treats literally, making psychoanalysis ‘essentially a metaphorical enterprise’ (citing Arlow, 1979, p.373)” (p.514).

“If a relationship is described as a tennis match, this can refer metaphorically to its competitive nature or to the opportunity it provides for achievement and mastery” (P.515) *– a Pluralistic approach here would be to find out the client’s understanding of the tennis match*! *Doubtless it could be many other things too*.

They refer to Combs & Feedman’s 1990 activity – door & stone – see Appendix 3: Practical ideas to use with clients. “Therapists use for integrative purposes the power of the metaphor to express multiple meanings simultaneously” (p.515).

##### Changing perspective on a topic with borrowed terminology

The therapist can draw attention to metaphors that implicitly indicate a fixed behaviour or viewpoint. “Once this implicit perspective is made explicit, it becomes more open to change” (p.515) *– but note the various models which suggest the need to tread carefully here!!*

In the psychoanalytic approach there might be a desire to ‘provoke’ the client into gaining a new perspective – quite alien to the Pluralistic counsellor, who is looking to facilitate rather than fix.

##### Using a novel combination to create something new

“Sometimes therapy aims at greater innovation. Its goal may be to invent new possibilities, to discover novel patterns of feeling or behaviour that were not previously thought of, or even entertained as possible for that individual or group” (p.516).

“Novel metaphors also may be used to facilitate self-discovery” (p.517) – by helping to connect with unconscious aspects of the self.

#### References

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