

## **Honoring Our Resourcefulness**

People seek counseling to talk about their feelings and thoughts or to find some solutions to problems that they experience. Traditionally therapists would tell clients what to do or not to do and offer solutions to their problems. This tradition has changed in the last 30 years and new ideas have emerged, providing new perspectives on therapeutic relationships. According to these new therapeutic approaches, it is essential to shift therapists' focus from solving problems for clients to discovering what clients have that could support them to take a new position in relation to their problems.

I am in the process of integrating this new perspective and would like to introduce it to you. I am hoping, by the end of this article, you will be able to acknowledge your resources that may have been overlooked by the dominance of problems in your lives.

What comes to your mind when you think of resourcefulness? Let's see how the dictionary defines it. It says resourcefulness is the "capability to deal with a situation or meet difficulties".

I would like you to imagine a difficult situation you have been in and then pay attention to ways in which you were able to deal with it. I believe some ways of dealing with that particular situation have come from your internal resources and some have come from your external support. I call that a sign of your resourcefulness. Let me explain what I mean by internal resources and external support.

Internal resources mean your life experience, self- knowledge, wisdom and skills or qualities that you have developed in your life. These internal and external resources are the outcome of your social interactions with your family members, friends, co-workers, and community in general. Resourcefulness includes the capacities, qualities, skills, wisdom, and knowledge that circulate among family members and your networks.

You weren't born with these resources. They don't come naturally to you. They are constructed through your social interactions with others. The more interactions we have with others, the more we learn about others and ourselves. Some interactions might bring out or mirror our best and some might not. That is how we learn about our limits and resources. Knowing our limits might help to invest our energy and time in our resources more, and knowing our resources and abilities might help us in expanding our resourcefulness.

Sometimes our ability to see those resources gets diminished under the shadow of problems. Although we have those knowledge and skills, we aren't able to use it at times of facing adversities or difficulties.

When you seek therapy, my primary duty as a counsellor is through my therapeutic conversation with you to probe the capacities, skills, knowledge that you possess through your life experience that may be overshadowed by the problem(s). By asking you a series of questions, we both begin to look for a glimpse of those overshadowed abilities, knowledge, and resources. My hopes are to identify and have appreciation for those capacities and knowledge, to support you to pay more attention to those resources and incorporate them in your everyday life, to ultimately connect you to the richer side of yourself, which might disentangle the problem (s).

I wish you well in your journey towards resourcefulness.

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