

## *Residential Counselor Orientation Series – Episode 3 – Therapeutic Relationships*

Therapeutic relationships help your clients become centered in four domains of psychological functioning. This can be visualized using The Domain Compass:

- In the East, there's the domain of emotions, consisting of feeling and moods.
- In the South, there's the domain of cognitions, consisting of thoughts and beliefs.
- In the West, there's the domain of behaviors, consisting of both all external actions and the internal actions of the physical body.
- In the North, there's the domain of executive skills and self-regulation.

### 1. Three relationship qualities to strive for within the domain of emotions.

- Focus on increasing clients' awareness of their own emotions.
  - The Check-In technique helps clients express their feelings and moods in words or in various kinds of rating scales.
- Help soothe emotions that become too powerful or chaotic.
  - The Low and Slow approach helps to cool down an overheating nervous system.
  - The Organized Activities approach helps to structure a chaotic nervous system.
- Build up clients' fragile and/or low self-esteem.
  - Praise works through high frequency repetition to help kids see their own strengths and worth.
  - Attention helps kids feel their own worth. Often times, older kids in residential treatment still need the intense level of attention that people appear to intuitively give to pre-schoolers.

### 2. Two relationship qualities that help kids within the domain of cognitions.

- Increase external structures to reduce cognitive chaos.
- Break sequences down into smaller chunks.

### 3. Three relationship qualities that help kids become behaviorally and physiologically centered.

- Attend to kids' basic physiological needs (water, food, sleep, exercise, rest).
- Become an active and skilled listener.
- Co-regulate with kids through joining them in play.

### 4. One key relationship quality that helps kids in the domain of executive skills.

- Help each kid make and keep friends.