Worksheet
Shiny Object Syndrome: Aligning with Your Strengths versus Chasing Trends

For Clinical Therapists

A Guide to help you Evaluate, Re-focus, and Grow your strengths.

Purpose:

To guide you through a reflective process to help identify if you are pursuing trendy therapy modalities at the expense of working within your established strengths, while encouraging alignment with your authentic clinical skills and values.

Section 1: Recognizing Signs of Trend Chasing

Exercise 1: Self-Assessment

Reflect on your current approach to therapy. Check off any statements that resonate with you:

- I feel pressured to adopt the latest therapy modalities to stay competitive.
- I often sign up for trainings or certifications without feeling deeply connected to the approach.
- I am drawn to therapy trends because they appear popular rather than because they align with my values.
- I rarely integrate new techniques into practice after learning them.
- My excitement about trendy approaches fades quickly after initial exploration.

What recent trend have you explored, and how did it impact your practice? Was it genuinely helpful or did it feel like a detour from your established skills?

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What emotions do you associate with adopting new trends in therapy? Are these feelings motivating or draining for you?

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Section 2: Evaluating Your Strengths and Values

Exercise 2: Strength Inventory

Write down your established strengths as a therapist. Consider the following:

1. What therapeutic modalities am I already proficient in?
2. What client populations do I serve most effectively?
3. What feedback have I received about my abilities that affirm my skills?
4. What approaches resonate deeply with my values?

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Exercise 3: Value Alignment

Match your strengths to your values:

Strength	**Core Value It Aligns With**
Empathy with trauma survivors	Promoting healing and resilience
Building rapport with teens	Supporting vulnerable youth
Active listening and reflection	Helping clients feel seen and heard

What therapy practices bring you the most fulfillment, and why do they resonate with your values?

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Section 3: Navigating Trends Thoughtfully

Exercise 4: Pause and Reflect

Before pursuing a new therapy trend, answer these questions:

1. Does this modality align with my current strengths and values?
2. Will this trend truly benefit my clients, or am I attracted to its popularity?
3. Do I have the capacity to learn, implement, and integrate this approach effectively?

Exercise 5: Trial Evaluation

If you decide to explore a new trend, try it on a limited scale:

- Work with one or two cases where the modality might apply.
- Document how it impacts client outcomes and your own engagement in the process.

Reflect on the trial: Did this modality strengthen your practice or detract from your focus?

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Section 4: Refocusing on Authentic Practice

Exercise 6: Realignment Plan

If you recognize you've been chasing trends, create a plan to refocus on your strengths:

- Identify modalities you feel confident in and enjoy using.
- Plan professional development activities to deepen these skills.
- Create boundaries to prevent trend-chasing, such as setting criteria for pursuing new approaches.

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Exercise 7: Affirming Your Path

Write a letter to yourself reaffirming your commitment to working within your strengths and values. What would you say to yourself to encourage staying authentic in your practice?

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Section 5: Ongoing Reflection

Exercise 8: Monthly Self-Check-In

Set aside time each month to reflect:

1. Am I focusing on approaches that align with my strengths?
2. Have I been drawn to any new trends recently? Why?
3. How have my chosen methods positively impacted my clients?

Write down one lesson or insight from your monthly self-check-in.

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