

Guide to Working with Lost Performative, Complex Equivalence, and Presuppositions

These **language patterns** distort reality and limit thinking. The goal is to **question and challenge these patterns** to help clients gain clarity and make more empowering choices.

1. Identifying & Challenging Lost Performative Statements

Definition:

A **Lost Performative** is when a person states something as a **universal truth**, but **doesn't specify the source** of that belief.

Common Client Statements:

- *"It's wrong to criticize."*
- *"You should always put others first."*
- *"That's just the way things are."*

These statements lack a clear origin and are accepted as **absolute truths** without questioning.

Reframing Questions to Challenge Lost Performative:

- *"How do you know that?"*
- *"Who told you that?"*
- *"Where did that belief come from?"*
- *"Is this always true?"*
- *"What exceptions exist?"*

Example Reframe:

- ◆ **Client's Belief:** *"It's wrong to criticize."*
- ◆ **Reframe:** *"Who told you that? What about constructive criticism—can that be helpful?"*

Impact:

Shifts the client from **blind acceptance** to **critical evaluation**, allowing **flexibility** in their beliefs.

2. Identifying & Challenging Complex Equivalence

Definition:

Complex Equivalence happens when someone **connects two unrelated things** and assumes one **must** equal the other.

Common Client Statements:

- “You don’t listen to me, so you don’t love me.”
- “If I fail, that means I’m a loser.”
- “If they don’t text me back, they don’t care about me.”

These statements **create unnecessary emotional suffering** by making **false cause-and-effect relationships**.

Reframing Questions to Challenge Complex Equivalence:

- “How does not listening mean there’s no love?”
- “Have you ever been busy and not listened to someone you love?”
- “Is there another way to interpret this?”
- “What else could love look like?”

Example Reframe:

- ◆ **Client’s Belief:** “If he doesn’t compliment me, he doesn’t find me attractive.”
- ◆ **Reframe:** “Could he still find you attractive even if he doesn’t verbalize it? What other signs of attraction exist?”

Impact:

Breaks the **false connection**, giving clients a **wider perspective** and **more emotional freedom**.

3. Identifying & Challenging Presuppositions

Definition:

A **Presupposition** occurs when a client **assumes something is true** without direct evidence. These assumptions often reinforce **self-limiting beliefs**.

Common Client Statements:

- “If you knew how hard I worked, you’d respect me.”
- “Since I’m bad at math, I’ll never be successful.”
- “If they really cared, they’d call me first.”

These statements **assume** that something **must** be true, limiting personal agency.

Reframing Questions to Challenge Presuppositions:

- “How do you know I don’t know how hard you work?”
- “What makes you believe that?”
- “What if your assumption is wrong?”
- “Could there be another explanation?”

Example Reframe:

- ◆ **Client’s Belief:** “If you knew how much effort I put into this, you’d appreciate me more.”
- ◆ **Reframe:** “What makes you think I don’t appreciate your effort?”

Impact:

Encourages **self-awareness** and **clarifies assumptions**, helping clients develop **more balanced perspectives**.

4. Practical Client Session Framework

Step 1: Listen for These Language Patterns

- **Lost Performative:** Statements with no clear source (“It’s wrong to...”).
- **Complex Equivalence:** One thing must equal another (“If *X* happens, then *Y* must be true.”).
- **Presuppositions:** Assuming something without evidence (“They must think I’m unworthy.”).

Step 2: Ask Reframing Questions

- Challenge **assumptions** and **false cause-and-effect relationships**.
- Help clients **think critically** and **find new perspectives**.

Step 3: Guide Clients Toward Alternative Beliefs

- Explore **exceptions** to the rule.
 - Help clients **discover more empowering interpretations**.
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5. Final Takeaways

- ✓ **Language patterns shape beliefs—question everything for the truth.**
- ✓ **Lost Performative beliefs lack a clear source—find where they came from.**

- ✅ **Complex Equivalence creates false links—break the connection.**
- ✅ **Presuppositions reinforce limiting beliefs—challenge the assumption.**

By using this guide, you'll be able to **dig deeper into your clients' thought patterns** and **help them challenge limiting beliefs in a structured and repeatable way.** 🚀