The GEM Process to Help Clients Find their Sparkle the Adlerian Way

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Put Sparkle in Lifestyle Analysis with GEM

Four GEM Steps:
1. Gather Essential Memories
2. Gain Enlightened Meanings
3. Generate Empowered Movement
4. Grow Encouraged Mindfulness

A gem is anything prized for its value. When memories are processed with GEM steps, they become “gemories!” They’re prized for their value in reframing old meanings that may have been hurtful into new, enlightened, helpful ones. Clients experience the GEM process as a treasure map to discovering precious values about themselves.

The GEM process can also be remembered as the 4Ms: Memories – Meanings – Movement – Mindfulness

GEM Step 1 – Gather Essential Memories

1. Gather Essential Memories

Gather means “to summon up or draw close to.” Memories that stand out vividly may be remembered because there was some significant meaning applied to them by the client. In that regard, they’re essential for growth.

Such memories oftenhold the key to clients’ unconscious beliefs, those they’re unaware of until they’re unlocked. Memories can be great assets.

Gathering them is considered an essential first step because meanings given to vivid recollections have guided client thoughts, feelings, and behaviors like an unconscious road map. Sometimes they’re overdue for a new key to unlock, modify, refine, and redirect mistaken beliefs that were formed earlier in life. This opens up new possibilities for wellness.

Specific or thematic memories are viewed as very short clips like a video. They’re seen as a brief, temporary glimpse in the rearview mirror to help clients visualize a new, more powerful perspective as they go forward.

GEM Step 2 – Gain Enlightened Meanings

2. Gain Enlightened Meanings

Here, clients explore meanings they may have given the memory at the time it happened, even if from a pro-language early recollection.

Enlightened means “to inform or impart special knowledge or spiritual insight.” Clients are guided to have self-compassion as they gain insights from noticing the inaccuracies embedded in past meanings.

Clients further explore mistaken beliefs in old meanings they’ve had from the past, then gain enlightened new meanings (their sparkles).

Clients begin to reconstruct mistaken beliefs into new and positively encouraging ones. By gaining enlightened meanings, they’re able to formulate new behavioral goals they now feel empowered to act on.

Step 3 – Generate Empowered Movement

3. Generate Empowered Movement

Generate means “to bring into existence, originate, create, produce.” Empowered means “to enable, give authority, permission or power to.” Movement in this step means “to take action, to try new behaviors.”

GEM Step 3 is vital for using the insights and enlightened meanings gained in Step 2 to originate and engage in new behaviors.

Clients create new possibilities and self-authorization for actions they can practice that fit their corrected interpretations of past memories.

AHA is an acronym for “Action Honoring Awareness,” which clients can easily remember to help them continue to practice new behaviors.

Clients picture the lighthouse to continually visualize shining light on important new insights and commitments gained in the GEM process.

AHA is important, but without gaining new Action that Honors it, therapeutic progress is stifled. AHA honors Adlerian movement.

GEM Step 4 – Grow Encouraged Mindfulness

4. Grow Encouraged Mindfulness

This is the maintenance step of the GEM process. It’s the philosophy of pursuing lifelong therapeutic growth through encouragement, emotional intelligence, and mindfulness. Being encouraged (and learning to self-encourage) inspires confidence, spirit, or courage.

Mindfulness integration helps clients shut off their “automatic pilot” and be more present moment-to-moment in their lives. It helps prevent habitually repeating old patterns and instead makes healthier intentional choices that lead to improved well-being overall.

Mindfulness is an excellent addition to Adlerian therapy. It’s encouraging, non-judgmental, and compassionate. It helps clients integrate and maintain what they’ve learned from the Adlerian process guided by the GEM steps, and to continue pursuing therapeutic progress.

“Mindfulness is the miracle by which we can call back our dispersed mind and restore it to wholeness so that we can live each minute of life.”

~ Thich Nhat Hanh, The Miracle of Mindfulness

Abbreviated GEM Story

Gather Essential Memory (child’s recollection):

I’m Pat and my mother died when I was six. I remember it was the first time I saw my father cry. He seemed to be hiding in his room with the door mostly closed yet open a crack. I entered his room crying out, “Daddy,” and he yelled at me to stop crying, get out, and close the door. When he came out of his room later, he didn’t say anything about it. He was never as nice to me after that and he quit tucking me in at bedtime.

Gain Enlightened Meanings (child & adult meanings applied):

[Old mistaken meaning] – I’m bad and unlovable. It’s never ok to cry. If I feel sad I should hide it & not talk about it. If I talk about it, I’ll be rejected.

[New empowered meaning] – My father was grieving and didn’t know how to be emotionally available to me as a single parent. It wasn’t because I was bad or disliked. I am lovingly and fiercely loved by my father, even though he didn’t show it in ways I would have preferred at the time. There were other ways he showed his love. It’s healthy to cry when I’m sad, grieving, or disappointed. It’s helpful to share emotions with trusted people and when I do, I feel encouraged and accepted. I am strong.

Generate Empowered Movement (new behaviors created):

I’m open with others and share feelings in appropriate settings with people I trust. I allow myself to cry when alone and sometimes when talking with others. If they seem distant, it’s not rejection. It’s their own discomfort of some kind, which I may or may not ever know. I’m able to encourage myself at times when others are unavailable for me.

Grow Encouraged Mindfulness (self-compassion & presence):

I try to encourage myself at my old patterns that still come up at times. If I feel afraid to talk, instead of being quiet or leaving, I check to see if the fear is based on real danger, or just old doubts about rejection. If the feeling of uneasiness is coming from my old doubts, I’m compassionate. I trust myself to share appropriately. I remind myself that feeling afraid doesn’t mean I need to hide or be silent. I honor my awareness with action, being kind to myself as I move forward. AHA! GEMories to the rescue!

Contact Information

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