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Digital Assessment and Tracking, Life Balance, Emotional Stability, Well-Being, Spiritual Awakening, Anxiety and Depression: A Practice-Based Evidence Approach to Change in Psychotherapy

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Abstract

This article discussed the use of a digital assessment and tracking approach to life balance, emotional stability, well-being, spiritual awakening, anxiety and depression. Using Pragmatic Tracker (PT) and Blueprint (BP) 6 Friedman Scales plus outcome measures were presented to demonstrate how to administer, score, record, track and graph changes during psychotherapy session by session. 18 tables and graphs of change were shown. A case study of a distressed couple showed different trajectories of change for the husband and wife. The couple reported that tapping, the “psychological uplifter” and Friedman’s “Forgiveness Solution” book were powerful variables for change. Pragmatic Tracker (PT) and Blueprint (BP) which are both available on computer, tablet, or cell phone were compared for similarities and differences. Both Pragmatic Tracker (PT) and Blueprint (BP) present very colorful graphs of change on their websites and are HIPAA compliant.

Keywords ; Digital Tracking, Well-Being, Life Balance, Emotional Stability, Spiritual Awakening

Introduction

This article is a clinical research article based on the authors psychotherapy practice with a couple that has completed couple and individual psychotherapy with the author. This article also demonstrates how to use digital tracking to assess change while the couple is seen virtually for psychotherapy sessions. The digital tracking is done using primarily Pragmatic Tracker and to a lesser degree Blueprint. The article also shows how to use the recently published Friedman Life Balance Scale (FLBS) and Subscales, the Friedman Spiritual Awakening Scale (FSAS) and Subscales and the Friedman Mini- 5 Factor Scale or FM5FS (that includes an emotional stability subscale) first introduced in the Jan. 2018 issue of IJHC and later shortened and expanded upon in the Jan. 2020 issue of IJHC. The scales are now available free of charge at friedmanassessmentscales.com or just friedmanscales.com.

The article demonstrates how to use the FLBS and subscales, the FSAS and subscales and the Friedman Mini- 5 Factor Scale (FM5F) to track change digitally over time during psychotherapy, session by session.

In addition the article introduces the use of three other Friedman Scales (see below) that are used to digitally track changes over time: the short form of the Friedman Well-Being Scale (FWBS); the short form of the Friedman Affect Scale (FAS) and the short form of the Friedman Belief Scale (FBS).

The main factors considered are:

1. The article demonstrates the trajectories of change, session by session for the couple on the Friedman Scales in addition to a number of other well-known assessment scales of anxiety, depression and psychotherapy outcome. In previous articles these measures often indicate that dramatic changes can be demonstrated in a short time by using interventions drawn from the fields of cognitive, positive, spiritual and energy psychology. Many of these interventions can be found in the following articles and book. (Friedman, 2001; 2002; 2006, 2010; 2013; 2015a, 2015b, 2018a,b,c,d; 2019; Friedman and Toussaint, 2006) and can be summarized by the ICBEST model (integrative, cognitive, behavioral, energy and spiritual therapy) of change (Friedman, 2015a), first described in the IJHC in 2015.
2. This article also demonstrates how to create a personalized goal oriented assessment measure digitally and a measure of perceived helpfulness and benefits of psychotherapy.
3. The article shows significant changes that take place for the couple over 22 sessions via 16 graphs on a wide variety of measures that are assessed, scored, recorded, tracked and graphed via first Pragmatic Tracker (PT) and then Blueprint (BP).
4. The graphs show that on most of these measures the wife made more dramatic changes over time with one exception. This includes changes in life balance, spiritual awakening, emotional stability, anxiety, depression, anger, guilt, peace, ability to cope, clarity, outcome etc.
5. Non digitally attained measures also show changes in meaning, purpose and goals; life satisfaction; marital harmony/communication and flourishing for this couple in 2 graphs as well as what they perceived as most helpful during therapy.
6. The termination essay clearly reflects in their own words what the couple perceived as most helpful and beneficial.
7. The article also compares 2 digital assessment measures; the Pragmatic Tracker (PT) and Blueprint (BP) approaches and compares the pros/advantages and cons/disadvantages of each one.

This is all done within an integrated practice-based evidence approach to digitally tracking change during psychotherapy.

Because of the pandemic I had to make some changes to my psychotherapy practice starting in March of 2020. The biggest change was probably seeing my clients virtually using telehealth. This change led to my introducing a 2 minute quiet time/meditation/slow

deep breathing (eyes closed) exercise at the beginning of the session. During this time the client was told that we could both “release any mental/emotional chatter of the day and come into the ‘now or present moment’”. While clients were doing that I repeated silently while my eyes were closed the following prayer from A Course in Miracles. (Chapter 2, section V, paragraph 19 or just T-2.V.18:2-6)

“I am here only to be truly helpful.
I am here to represent Him Who sent me.
I do not have to worry about what to say or what to do, because He
Who sent me will direct me. I am content to be wherever He wishes,
knowing He goes there with me. I will be healed as I let Him teach me to
heal.” (I often added Her/She to He and Him)

I would then visualize the client and me surrounded by white radiant light and ask a higher power or the holy spirit to bring about the highest good for this session for the client, myself and our relationship.

Prior to the pandemic clients would fill out (in my waiting room before the psychotherapy session) a number of questionnaires that I could easily score, record and use to track change over time. However, after the pandemic began I tried to do this by emailing the scales via attachments to clients and having them return them to me on the morning of the psychotherapy sessions. This was doable but a little cumbersome. Consequently I decided to investigate the use of ‘digital tracking’ and in particular the use of Pragmatic Tracker (PT) out of England. I selected Pragmatic Tracker because it was highly recommended to me and because they offered the option of including the Friedman Scales in addition to a wide variety of other scales already in their system.

I worked with PT over a number of months to develop and adapt to their system the following 6 Friedman scales (1992, 1993, 1998, 2018, 209, 2020) : Friedman Life Balance Scale (FLBS) and subscales, the Friedman Spiritual Awakening Scale (FSAS) and subscales; the Friedman Mini- 5 Factor Scale and subscales (FM5F); the short form of the Friedman Well-Being Scale (FWBS); the short form of the Friedman Affect Scale (FAS) and the short form of the Friedman Belief Scale (FBS) and each of their subscales. (see below) I also regularly used the GAD-7 measure of anxiety (Spitzer et.al, 2006), the PHQ-9 measure of depression (Kroenke, et.al, 2001) and the Goal List. The Goal list allowed me to create a list of goals for each client that could vary from client to client or in my case were consistent from client to client: such as peace, love, happiness, well-being, self-compassion, relationships, coping, clarity and decreased guilt, anxiety, tension, worry and anger. It also allowed me to ask the client the overall helpfulness or benefit of the therapy week to week as well as how well clients were coping with the pandemic. Seven months later I learned about and started using the Blueprint digital tracking system out of Chicago as well.

Here are the three Friedman Scales

Friedman Affect Scale (Short Form)

This scale consist of a number of words and phrases that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to the word. Indicate to what extent you have felt this way during THE PAST WEEK. Use the following scale to record your answers.

Very Slightly=0 A Little Bit=1 Moderately=2

Quite a Bit=3 Extremely=4

Enthusiastic
Happy
Joyful
Strong
Proud
Confident
Focused
Concentrating
Attentive
Calm
Relaxed
Peaceful
Loving
Compassionate
Kind
Angry
Hostile
Irritable
Ashamed
Angry at self
Guilty
Sad
Downhearted
Depressed
Afraid
Scared
Nervous
Tired
Sluggish
Worn-out

The first 15 words represent positive affect (feelings)

A positive affect scale score is calculated.

The 5 subscales of 3 words each are:

Jovial (1-3)
Self-Assurance (4-6)
Attention (7-9)
Peace (10-12)
Love (13-15)

The second 15 words represent negative affect (feelings)

The 5 subscales of 3 words each are:

Hostility ((16-18)
Guilt (19-21)
Sadness (22-24)
Fear (25-27)
Fatigue (28-30)

A negative affect score is calculated. Affect Balance is calculated from the Positive and Negative Affect scores.

Friedman Belief Scale (Short Form)

Please circle the number that indicates your own personal attitude or feelings about each statement. Please be very truthful and describe yourself as you really are, not as you would like to be.

0=Strongly Disagree

1=Moderately Disagree

2=Neutral

3= Moderately Agree

4= Strongly Agree

1. I am a victim (of the past/other people/heredity, etc.,)
2. I am inferior
3. I am a failure
4. I am weak
5. I am not in control (of my thoughts/ /feelings/ behavior)
6. I can't accept myself
7. I can't cope
8. I am nothing
9. I am worthless
10. I will always struggle in life
11. I am capable/powerful
12. I am something
13. I am important
14. I can cope
15. I am fine
16. I respect myself
17. I am good
18. I am successful
19. I am strong
20. I will (think/feel/act)

The first 10 words represent negative beliefs and the last 10 words represent positive beliefs. A Positive and Negative Belief score is calculated. A Cognitive Balance Scale score can be calculated from the Positive and Negative Belief Scale scores.

Friedman Well-Being Scale (Short Form)

Please use this list of common human traits to describe yourself as accurately as possible. Describe yourself as you see yourself at the present time, not as you wish to be in the future. Describe yourself as you are typically, as compared with other persons you know of the same gender and roughly the same age. Please choose a point along the line.

Please choose a point along the line that best represents how you're feeling at the present time. The lines consists of a series of bipolar adjectives

1. Very angry- Very calm

2. Very nervous-Very at ease
3. Very discontented-Very contented
4. Very insecure-Very secure
5. Very unstable-Very stable
1. Very shy-Very self-confident
2. Very meek-Very self-assured
3. Very joyless-Very joyful
4. Very unenthusiastic-Very enthusiastic
5. Very unhappy-Very happy

There are 4 subscales:

Emotional stability: items 1-5

Self-confidence: items 6-7

Joyfulness: items 8-9

Happiness: Item 10

The total scale score is calculated from adding up the scores on all 10 items and subscale scores are calculated from adding up the scores on the respective items above.

Although the focus of this article will be digital assessment and tracking, it is based on a couple I worked with for 5 months. They are the first set of clients I had seen using digital assessment and tracking from the beginning to the end of the therapy. Naturally their names and some of the identifying information have been changed for confidentiality purposes. I used Pragmatic Tracker for all 5 months with this couple and both Pragmatic Tracker and Blueprint for the last 2 months.

Narrative Case Study:

The couple, Jane and Alfred, were 45 and 43 years of age, married for 24 years. Alfred was an attorney at a law firm and Jane worked part time as a massage therapist. They had one child, Candace, who was 22 years old and lived with them. Candace's father was Jane's first husband who died suddenly when Candace was 2 years of age. Candace had serious emotional problems and had been diagnosed as bi-polar. She had dropped in and out of college twice and never held a job for more than 3 months. The couple entered psychotherapy following Jane's affair of 4 months with someone she met at work. Jane had also been drinking too much for the last few years. Neither Jane nor Alfred had ever sought help for their troubles before. Alfred discovered the affair quite accidentally and was blind-sided by it. He felt betrayed, angry, hurt, disappointed, confused and bitter. Jane was also confused, depressed, guilty, anxious, frustrated and very discouraged. Alfred couldn't stop ruminating over what happened and Jane couldn't stop feeling guilty and self-attacking. Despite this there was a certain amount of latent affection between the couple though marital communication was difficult and very strained. Although they didn't want a divorce the thought had entered both of their minds. Jane also had relationship problems with her troubled sister and there was a lot of tension in this relationships as well.

This was the point Jane and Alfred called me for help. I explained to them that all sessions would be virtual therapy sessions using Bluejeans, (a Verizon product that was HIPAA compliant) and that they would be expected to complete a battery of psychological tests before therapy and weekly during therapy using digital assessment

and tracking (using Pragmatic Tracker). I explained to them that they would receive a link from Pragmatic Tracker the day before the therapy session and that they would be expected to fill out a variety of psychological scales on Pragmatic Tracker by 10:00 AM the morning of the therapy session. Because of the nature of the problems I chose to see them both individually and jointly over the course of therapy.

The psychological scales took them about 10-15 minutes to complete and could be done on either a computer, tablet or cell phone. (Prior to the pandemic, clients filled out these scales in paper and pencil form before the therapy session in my waiting room. Then either the client or I would score the scales and I would record the results.) Now, however, because the scales were administered digitally, Pragmatic Tracker would instantly score, record and graph these scales and then track the changes over time on all measures. Before using Pragmatic Tracker, however, these clients took the PAI clinical inventory and the NEO-PI-3 personality inventory from a link sent to them by PAR. These inventories were administered again at the end of treatment.

Jane said: the reason for entering therapy was

“An ongoing incident (affair) occurring with someone who I met through work and became a lover for awhile. It was upsetting because I felt very bad for hurting Alfred. The challenge was to find a way to get past the hurt and guilt and to heal my relationship with Alfred and to gain his trust again. Also I was having difficulty being mindful and aware of my thoughts and feelings. I was impatient and not accepting of myself. Alfred and I had gotten distant from each other. I was trying to control everything with my husband and daughter. Her situation was also very distressing. I often drank too much to deal with these problems.”

Alfred said “What made me turn to therapy was a drunken affair my wife had with someone she had met through work. It was very disturbing. The feelings of mistrust, anger, hate and anxiety that developed was something I knew I couldn’t continue to deal with this on my own. I was going into fits of anxiety whenever she left the house. I was ruminating on the events that I heard about mostly while driving to and from work which would have me in a pretty bad mood when I would get home. It was testing my relationship with Jane after nothing like this happening after being together for 24 years. I know I care about her and I believe she cares about me so I really couldn’t imagine life without her. So we sought help from Dr. Friedman.”

The therapy sessions were structured roughly around my book the ‘Forgiveness Solution’ (2010). Jane and Alfred were asked to read 2-3 chapters a week between sessions and do the exercises. There were some modifications of the sequence of exercises in the book, however, to speed up the therapy process. In the book the Positive Pressure Point Techniques (a variation and expansion of tapping or the Emotional Freedom Techniques or EFT) are discussed and demonstrated in Chapters 9 and 10. In the therapy process with Jane and Alfred and most clients the Psychological Uplifter technique is taught at the end of session one; the Anything is Possible technique is taught at the beginning of session 2; the Releasing and Choosing technique is taught at the beginning of session 3 and the first 2 Positive Pressure Point techniques are taught at the beginning of session 4. (there are 8 levels to the Positive Pressure Point Techniques). The Positive Pressure Point Techniques consist of tapping and/or breathing on 8 major acupressure points with and without the use of positive affirmations. In each session we review the techniques taught in the previous session and apply it to the emotional issues the clients are struggling with. In session 5 I taught

Jane and Albert Positive Pressure Point Technique Level 5. In addition to the powerful use of the Positive Pressure Point Techniques Jane and Albert were taught some John Gottman and Dan Wile communication techniques; positive affirmations; various forgiveness and goal oriented guided imagery exercises; journaling; the law of attraction and a letter writing exercise. Many of these exercises were in my book the "Forgiveness Solution" (2010). In addition there were many teaching stories and forgiveness principles described in the Forgiveness Solution. Session 2 is also spent writing down specific mutually created goals and in session 3 they were taught the "2 Paths Model of Happiness and Change" using charts and diagrams. Some of the sessions were couple sessions but very often the couple chose to divide the session time so they could each have individual sessions to work on their issues.

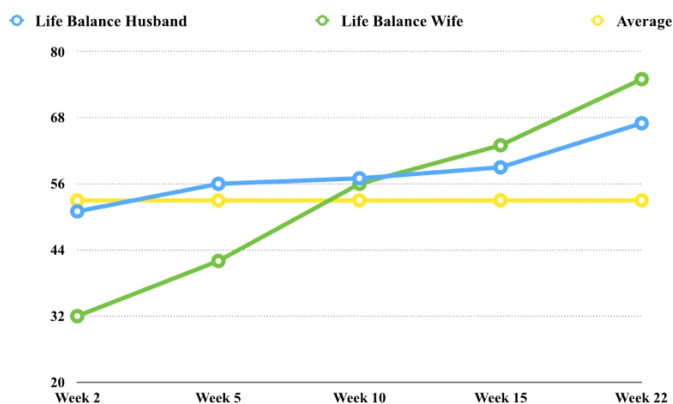
In the early sessions Jane discussed the history of her 2 marriages, the shock and grief over the sudden death of her first husband, the early 'good years' with Alfred, her marital struggles, her difficult relationship with her sister, her considerable concerns over her daughter and her marked guilt over her affair. During early sessions using the Positive Pressure Point Techniques with tapping and breathing on the 8 acupressure points she experienced intense sadness, loss and guilt about the marital/affair situation and a sense of fear, frustration, helplessness and self-judgment over her daughter's condition. Her daughter would often stay up very late at night and sleep in during the day. Alfred's main focus in the early sessions was the affair which we referred to as John Gottman as the 'regrettable incidents'. He was constantly ruminating about it and at first and couldn't let it go. He felt a lot of anger, sadness, guilt and anxiety about it. This was the focus of the Positive Pressure Point Techniques using tapping and breathing on the acupressure points and later affirmations as well. The Positive Pressure Point Techniques greatly reduced his distress as it did for Jane and almost always the SUDS (subjective units of distress level) dropped from 7, 8 or 9 to 1 for both of them when we used it. Although Jane's level of personal upset was higher than Alfred's on the individual scales of well-being and distress her change scores showed more rapid progress. This is not unusual as typically the more distressed the client is the greater and often the faster the change. Alfred, however, was more distressed overall about the marital situation and as we shall see his marital scores showed the greatest change over time.

In future sessions Jane often talked about her feelings about her distressed sister who was barely functioning and a source of conflict for Jane as well as her daughter who she constantly worried about. The issue of her daughter moving out of the house into her own apartment frequently came up and initial plans to arrange this were discussed with the daughter, her husband and me. Eventually this came about near the end of the therapy which took slightly more than 5 months. At that time the daughter had been in her new apartment not far away for a few days. In one session about 2 months into therapy she said she had an altercation with her sister, cried a lot and felt overwhelmed.

We worked a lot in that session and sessions about her daughter and Alfred on self-love and self-forgiveness. Helping her diminish and release her guilt and sadness were major themes throughout treatment which gradually and eventually worked. Alfred often expressed anger, hurt, disappointment and frustration over the 'regrettable incidents'. At first he had difficulty completely releasing the ruminating over it even in the middle sessions of therapy. He usually ruminated while driving to work. Alfred's job required a lot of responsibility and focus so he was very relieved when the ruminating let up and eliminated later in therapy. He was also delighted when his step-daughter moved into

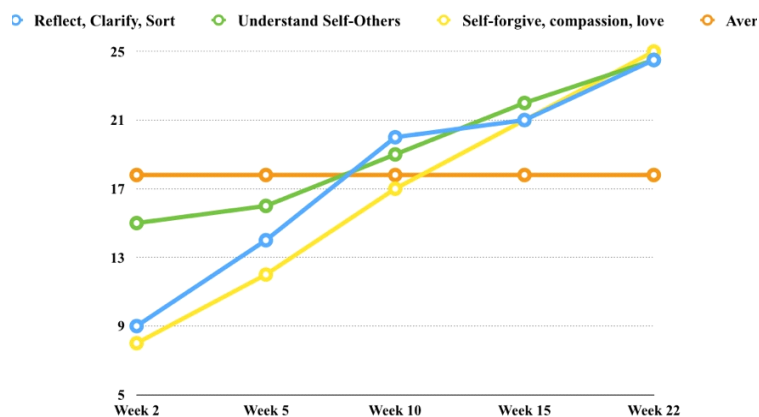
her own apartment with his and Jane's considerable help at the end of the 5 plus months of therapy.

Table 1: Changes in Total Friedman Life Balance Scale for the Wife and Husband



In Table 1 you can see the changes over 22 sessions of both the husband and wife on the Friedman Total Life Balance Scale (see friedmanscales.com for the questions). An average score is 53. The score at the second session when they had learned how to use Pragmatic Tracker (PT) was much lower for the wife (32) than for her husband (51). Generally the PT measures were given every session for all measures. However, for clarity purposes data is being presented every 5 or so sessions. By the 10th session the wife (56) and husband (53) had reached the average score of 53. By the 22nd session

Table 2: Changes in 3 Life Balance Subscales-Wife

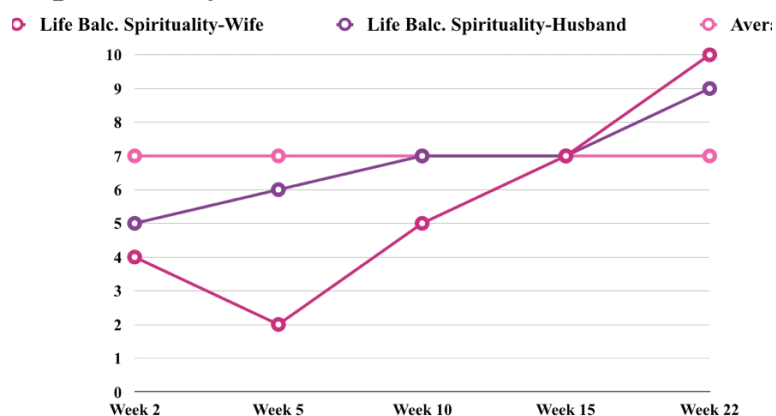


the wife showed marked changes (75) and the husband (67) moderate changes. In general as we shall see the wife showed much greater changes across all measures than her husband.

In Table 2 you can see that the average score on the 3 subscales is 18. The wife was lowest on the 'self-forgive, compassion and love' subscale (8) and the 'reflect, clarify and

sort' subscale (9) at the second session while the 'understand self and others' subscale (15) was near the average score of 18. By the 10th session all 3 scores of 17, 20 and 19 respectively were in the average range and by the 22nd session the scores of 25, 25 and 25 were at the top of the scale range. Pragmatic Tracker (PT) scores, records and presents the data and graphs session by session for all 3 subscales.

Table 3: Changes in Life Balance Spirituality Subscale for Wife and Husband



The Friedman Life Balance Scale also has a 2 item spirituality subscale. Table 3 presents the graphs of change over time for this measure for the husband and wife. The average score is 7.

The husband and wife start with somewhat low scores of 5 and 4 respectively. However, the wife actually decreases before increasing with scores of 2, 5, 7 and 10 at the 5th, 10th, 16th and 22nd session (10 is the maximum score) The husband on the other hand gradually increases with scores of 6, 7, 7, and 9. The wife actually ends up with a higher score but a different trajectory. (see friedmanscales.com for the questions.) Pragmatic Tracker (PT) records, scores, tracks and graphs the changes and it does it in pretty colors.

Table 4: Changes in Total Friedman Spiritual Awakening Scale for Wife and Husband

The Friedman Spiritual Awakening Scale has 18 questions and 6 subscales (see friedmanscales.com for the questions) An average total score is 55. On this measure the wife starts extremely low at 16 and steadily increases to 40 at the 10th session. Then her scores increase dramatically to 73 at the 15th and 22nd sessions well above the average score of 55. The husband on this measure starts close to the average with a score of 53 and gradually increases (56, 58, 68, 67) over the course of therapy. By the end of t

Table 4: Changes in Total Friedman Spiritual Awakening Scale for Wife and Husband

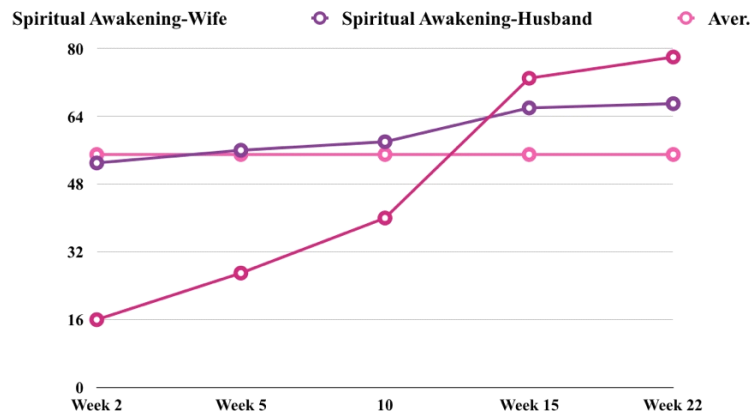


Table 5 demonstrates changes made by the wife for 3 of the 6 subscales of the Friedman Spiritual Awakening Scale. She was extremely low at session 2 on the Higher Power/Inspired Action and Spirituality subscales (score of 1 on both) and steadily increased to a score of 11 and 12 respectively. (9 is the average). She started higher on the True Nature subscale (4) but increased consistently to a maximum score of 15 at the 22nd session. Each scale and subscale has it's own trajectory of change and it differs for different people.

Table 5: Changes in 3 Spiritual Awakening Subscales-Wife

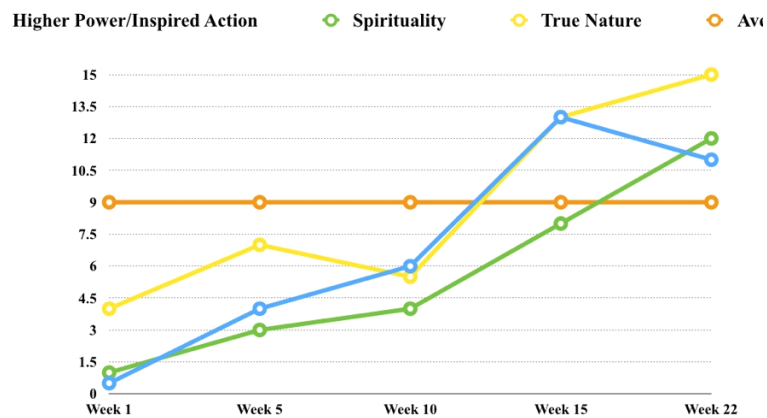
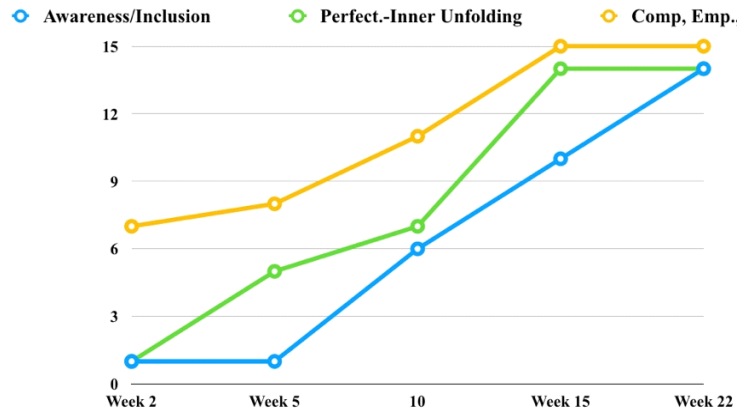


Table 6 demonstrates changes made by the wife for 3 more of the 6 subscales of the Friedman Spiritual Awakening Scale.

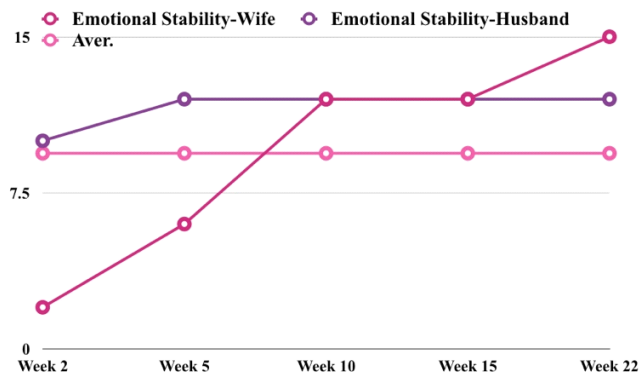
You can see that she was extremely low (1) on the Awareness/Inclusion and Perfection/Inner Unfolding subscales at the second session. She made no progress on

Table 6: Changes in 3 More Spiritual Awakening Subscales-Wife



the Awareness/Inclusion subscale at session 5 but increased to a score of 5 on the Perfection/Inner Unfolding subscale. Then she steadily increased on both subscales until she ended with scores of 14 on both (15 is maximum). However, on the Compassion, Empathy, Love subscale she started with a score of 7 before steadily increasing to a score of 15 at the 22nd session. As usual PT again records, scores, tracks and graphs the changes.

Table 7: Change in Friedman Mini Five Factor Emotional Stability Subscale for Wife and Husband



The Friedman Mini Five Factor (FM5F) Emotional Stability Subscale is one of 5 subscales of the FM5F. The wife once again starts very low with a score of 2 at the second session while the husband starts with a score of 10 (9.4 is average). While the husband increases mildly over the course of therapy ending with a score of 12 the wife increases steadily and dramatically (6,12,12, 15). PT again records, scores, tracks and graphs the changes not only for emotional stability but for all the 5 factors of extraversion, openness, agreeableness and conscientiousness. It does it instantly once the client completes the questionnaire via computer, tablet or cellphone.

**Table 8: Changes in Mini 5 Factor
Extroversion, Openness, Agreeableness,
and Conscientiousness Subscales-Wife**

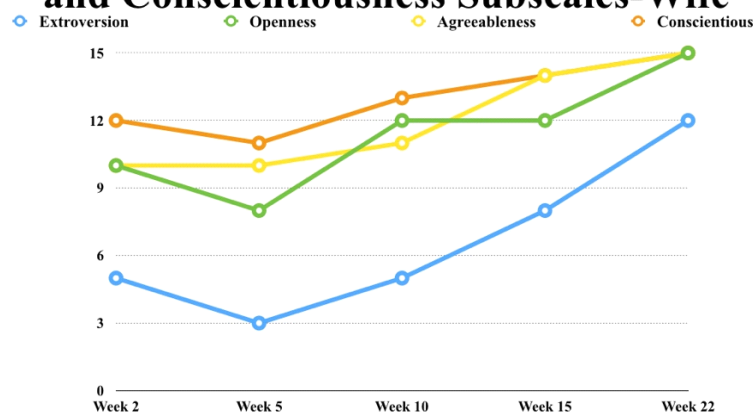
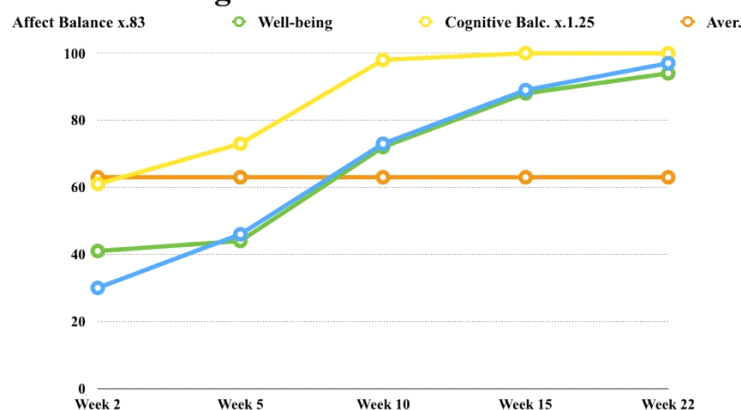


Table 8 demonstrates the changes for the wife in the other 4 FM5F subscales. The wife is quite low at the 2nd session on extroversion (5) and fairly high on conscientiousness (12).

Her scores even drop on extroversion at session 5 to a 3 and then steadily increase (5, 8 and 12). Her scores on openness and agreeableness start at 10 and increase to a 15 by the 22nd session. On conscientiousness she moves from a score of 12 to 15 by the 22nd session.

**Table 9: Changes in Total Friedman Affect
Balance, Well-Being and
Cognitive Balance Scales-Wife**



The Friedman Cognitive Balance and Affect Balance Scores are calculated from the Friedman Belief Scale (short form) and the Friedman Affect Scale (short form). The Negative Affect Scale score is generally subtracted from the Positive Affect Scale score to get the Affect Balance Scale score and the Negative Belief Scale score is subtracted from the Positive Belief Scale score to get the Cognitive Balance Scale score. In order to put the 3 measures on the same frame of reference as the Friedman Well-Being Scale

(short form) the Affect Balance Scale was multiplied by .83 and the Cognitive Balance scale by 1.25. Generally over the years Cognitive-Affective Balance has been one of the best measures of change in psychotherapy along with measures of well-being and life balance.

Table 9 shows for the wife that her Affect Balance score was extremely low (30) and her Well-Being score (41) was quite low at the second session (63 out of 100 is average). Her Cognitive Balance Score of 61 was in the average range. Over the course of therapy her Affect Balance score increased dramatically (46, 73, 89 and 97) during the 5th, 10th, 15th and 22nd session. Her Well-Being score also increased substantially (44, 72, 88 , 91) during the 5th, 10th, 15th and 22nd session. Even her Cognitive Balance Score went up from 61 to 100 from the second to the 22nd therapy session. As usual Pragmatic Tracker records, scores, tracks and graphs these changes session by session with colorful graphs available as well as the numbers.

Table 10: Changes in Positive and Negative Affect and Beliefs-Wife

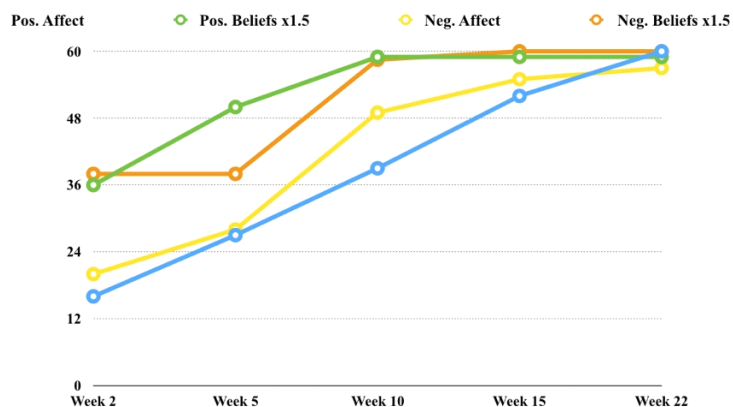


Table 10 clarifies the rate of change in Positive and Negative Affect and Beliefs separately for the wife. Since the Friedman Affect Scale (short form) has more items than the Friedman Belief Scale (short form) the Belief Scale data was multiplied by 1.5 to use the same frame of reference. Table 10 indicates that the Positive (16) and Negative Affect (20) Scores for the wife started much lower than the Positive (36) and Negative (38) Belief Scores. However, there was a rapid rise in the Positive and Negative Affect Scores until they reached or approached the maximum score of 60 at the 22nd session. The Positive and Negative Belief Scores also increased substantially until they reached or approached the maximum score (59 and 60 respectively) at the 22nd session. Pragmatic Tracker calculates all these scores instantly session by session. In fact it will show you the scores for each of the affect words and belief words/phrases for each session. This can be very useful clinically before each therapy session. Even a small change in these scores often indicates something significant has occurred during the week in either the positive or negative direction.

Table 11: Changes in Perceived Benefits and Helpfulness of Therapy-Wife and Husband

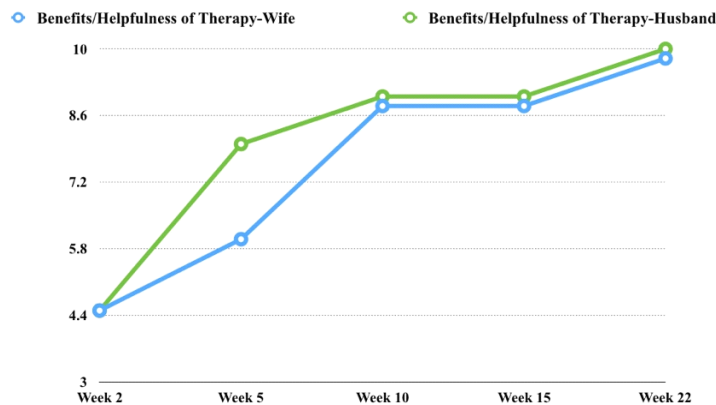


Table 11 allows the therapist to see how much progress is being reported by the wife and husband session by therapy session. This question was created on the Goal List section of Pragmatic Tracker. The Table shows that the couple both gave a mild rating of 4.5 at the second session for the Perceived Benefits and Helpfulness of Therapy. Then the husband increased his score substantially to 8 of 10 by the 5th therapy session while the wife increased only mildly to 6. By the 10th therapy session both the husband and wife had rated the Perceived Benefits and Helpfulness of Therapy as a 9 and then by the 22nd session a 10 of 10. I consider this one of the most important measures of change. If this score isn't increasing steadily something needs to be discussed with the client(s) and/or a change needs to be made in the relationship or interventions used. Many clients give a 9 or 10 on this measure before the 10th therapy session. On rare occasions a referral might need to be made or therapy terminated if these numbers aren't sufficiently high enough.

Table 12: Changes in Positive and Negative Affect -Wife and Husband

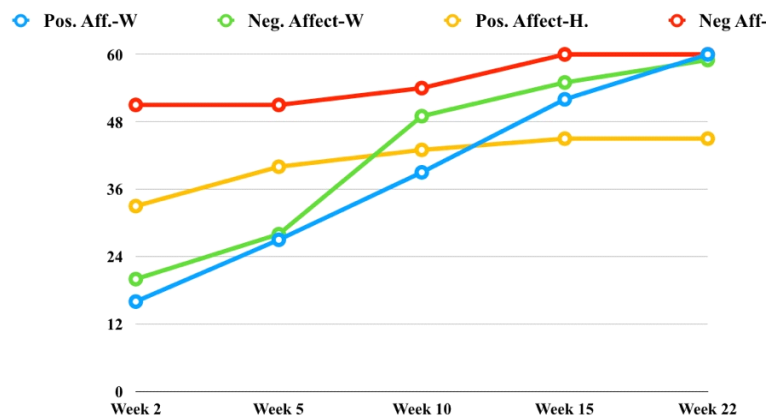
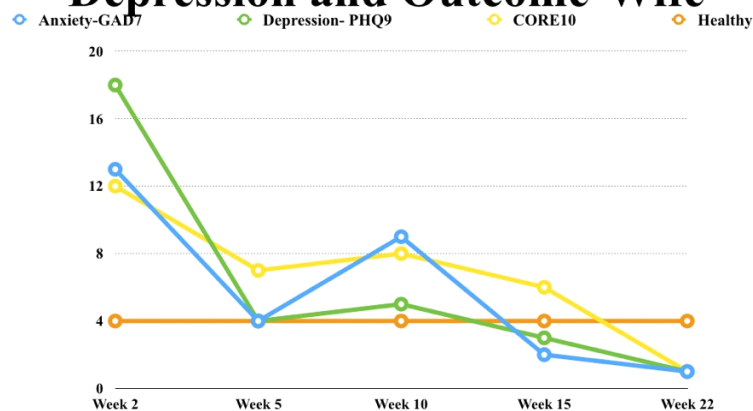


Table 12 indicates that both the positive and negative affect scores for the wife (16 and 20) were much lower than the same scores for the husband (33 and 51) at the second

session. The husband's negative affect score was much higher than his positive affect score at the second session. (with PT the higher the score on negative affect the lower the negative affect). By the 10th therapy session the wife's positive and negative affect score had risen markedly especially her negative affect score (49 of 60) The husbands scores had also improved but much more slowly. At the 22nd session all scores had increased to 59 or 60 of 60 except the husband's negative affect score was at 45. This score for the husband was much below his wife's score of 59. Pragmatic Tracker can and does calculate these data and graphs session by session. This includes the specific affect words being used as well. This allows the clinician to see how much progress is being made in the client's negative and positive affect (feelings) week to week and on each particular affect (feeling) as well if desired.

Table 13: Changes in Anxiety, Depression and Outcome-Wife



There are many scales you can select from the Pragmatic Tracker menu. I chose in addition to the 6 Friedman Scales to use a measure of anxiety, the GAD-7, a measure of depression, the PHQ-9 and 2 well-known outcome measures, the CORE10 and ORS. These measures are short and well validated. Table 13 tracks digitally 3 of these measures for the wife. Generally a score of 4 or below is considered in the healthy range. As you can see the scores at session 2 were 18 and 13 respectively for depression (PHQ-9) and anxiety (GAD-7) indicating a moderately high level of depression and anxiety.

The CORE10 Outcome measure (Barwick, et al., 2013) of 12 was mildly to moderately elevated. Lower scores are better. By the 5th session anxiety and depression had reached 4 but went up again a little bit by the 10th session. By the 15th and certainly by the 22nd session they were in the healthy range below 4. The CORE10 measure decreased more gradually but like the anxiety and depression measure was at a 1 by the 22nd session. As in previous examples Pragmatic Tracker calculates all these scores instantly session by session,

Table 14: Changes in Anxiety, Anger and Guilt-Wife

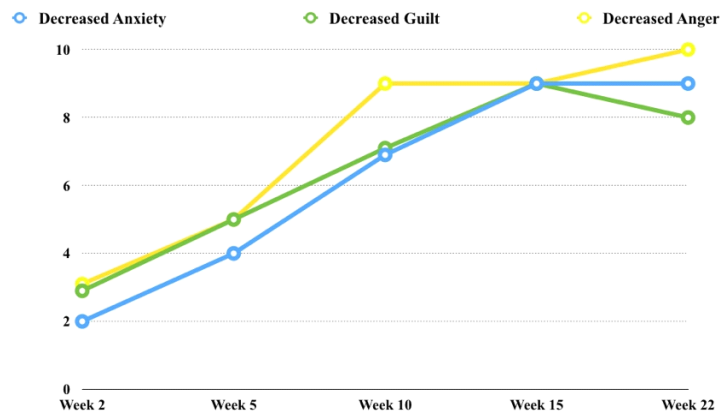


Table 14 is drawn from the Goal List that can be created on Pragmatic Tracker using drop down menu's. Individual goals can be set for each client or a standard set of goals across clients. There appears to be no limit to the number of goals selected for this measure. Table 14 thus shows decreases in anxiety, anger and guilt for the wife (one item each) on a 10 point scale. The wife started with very low scores of 2, 3 and 3 respectively on these 3 measures, By the 10th session they had increased to 7, 7 and 9 showing substantial improvement. At the 22nd session the scores were 9, 9 and 8 respectively for decreases in anxiety, anger and guilt. The maximum score was 10. Pragmatic Tracker calculates these measures instantly.

Table 15: Changes in Peace, Clarity, Self-Compassion & Ability to Cope-Wife

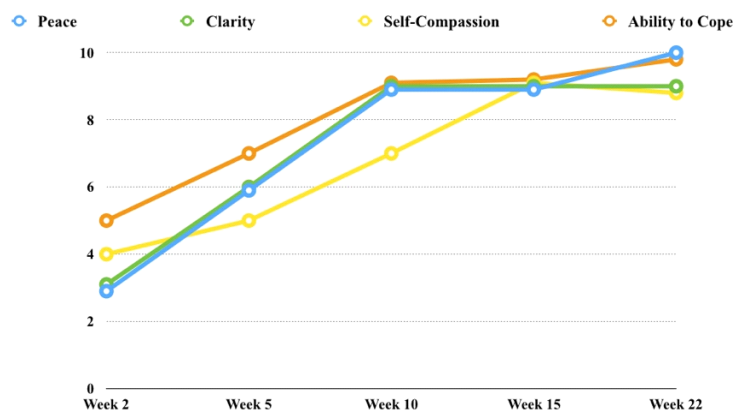
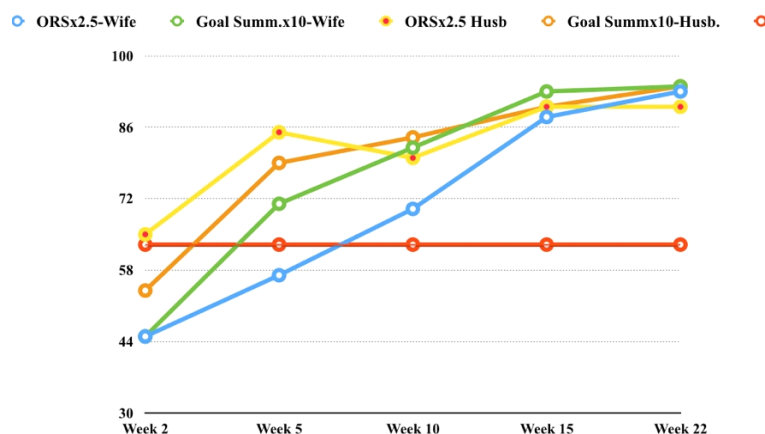


Table 15 is also drawn from the Goal List that can be created on Pragmatic Tracker using drop down menus. Each item is scored on a 10 point scale. As you can see the wife scored low to moderately low at the 2nd session with scores of 3, 3, 4 and 5 out of 10 on peace, clarity, self-compassion and the ability to cope. By the 10th therapy session her scores were 9, 9, 7 and 9 respectively. And by the 22nd session her scores were 10,

9, 9, and 9 respectively on peace, clarity, self-compassion and the ability to cope. Again Pragmatic Tracker calculates this data as soon as the client completes filling out the scales.

**Table 16: Outcome Measures:
ORS and Goal Summary-
Wife and Husband**



In Table 16 ORS stands for the Outcome Rating Scale (Miller et al., 2003) The ORS score has been multiplied by 2.5 so it has the same frame of reference as the Goal Summary Score based on a 100 point scale. The Goal Summary is a measure calculated by Pragmatic Tracker across all the goals the therapist has listed for the client. A score of 63 is about average for these 2 measures. The scores for both the husband and wife are shown in the graphs. As you can see the wife has the lowest scores (45) on both the ORSx2.5 and Goal Summary measures at the 2nd session. The husband has higher scores of 65 and 54 with 65 being in the average range on the ORSx2.5 at the 2nd session

There is substantial improvement on these measures by the 5th therapy session with 3 of them being above or well above average. In fact all measures except the wife's ORSx2.5 score of 57 is above the 63 average. By the 15th session these outcome measures are all in the 80's (88, 93, 90 and 90) and by the 22nd therapy session the scores are all in the 90's out of 100 (93, 94, 90 and 94) This indicates that dramatic positive changes were reported by both the husband and wife over the course of therapy. Generally the wife showed the greater changes, however, across almost all measures of change.

Once again Pragmatic Tracker and Blueprint record, track and graph these changes session by session even though they are presented here every 5 to 7 sessions for clarity purposes. I want to emphasize that the number of measures selected for assessment and tracking is up to the therapist. I selected many measures for clinical research purposes. The average therapist would probably select just a few of these measures.

Insert Table 17 about here.

Table 17: Satisfaction with Life and Marital Harmony/Communication-Wife and Husband

There were 4 scales that I wasn't able to use Pragmatic Tracker or Blueprint for. These 4 scales were given prior to therapy via email attachment and again at the end of therapy.

**Table 17: Satisfaction with Life and Marital Harmony/Communication-
Wife and Husband**

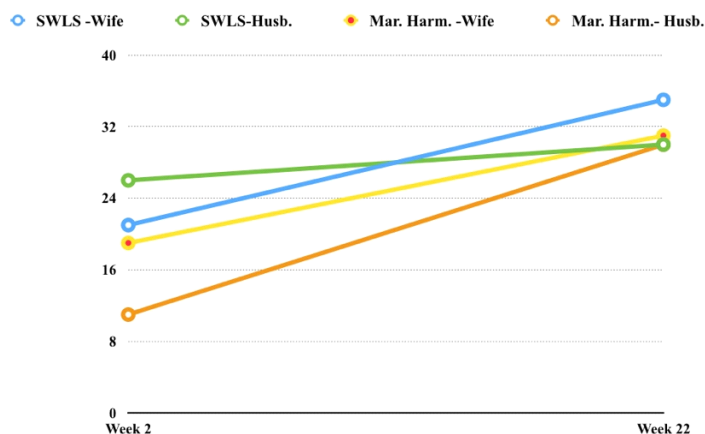


Table 17 shows the changes for the husband and wife on 2 of these scales. The Friedman Marital Harmony scale (2004) was divided by 3 so it would have the same frame of reference as the Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS, Diener, et al., 1985). As you can see the wife started with a lower SWLS score of 21 (25 is average) and then increased to 35 (the maximum score) by the 22nd session. The husband started with a higher score of 26 and increased to 30 by the 22nd session. On the Marital Harmony/Communication measure the husband started with a very low score (11) and increased to a high score of 30. The wife's score of 19 was low and increased to 31 at the end of therapy. This was the only scale measure that the husband started lower than the wife and increased more over time.

**Table 18: Meaning, Purpose and Goals and Flourishing:
Wife and Husband**

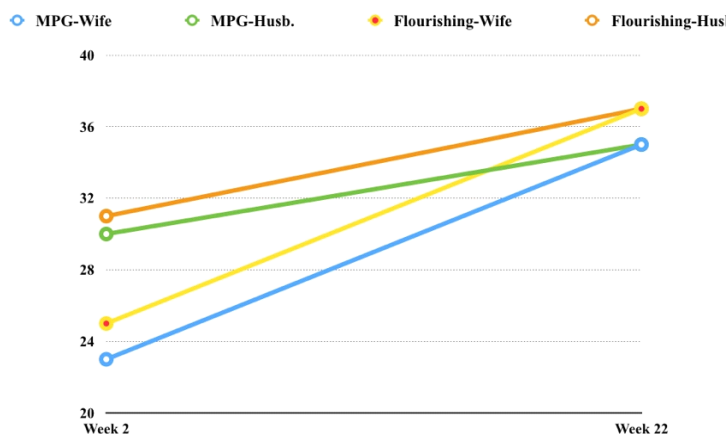


Table 18 shows that the wife started with a low score (23) on the Friedman Meaning, Purpose and Goals measure (2004) and the Diener et al. (2010) Flourishing measure

(25) at the beginning of therapy and increased substantially to 35 and 37 respectively by the end of therapy. (the Flourishing measure is adjusted to be on the same frame of reference as the Meaning, Purpose and Goals scale) The husband starts much higher on both scales (30 and 31 respectively) and increases, like his wife, to the top of the scale ranges (35 and 37) at the end of therapy.

At the end of therapy both the husband and wife had mostly very high scores on all 4 scales: Satisfaction with Life, Marital Harmony/Communication, Meaning, Purpose and Goals and Flourishing.

There are 3 other forms of feedback I use at the end of therapy as part of the termination process: the Goal Attainment Ratings, the Termination Essay and the Benefits of Therapy Scale. It is important to note that the 22 year old daughter with a history of mental health problems was able to move out of the couple's home and into an apartment of her own for the first time near the end of therapy. Both the husband and wife who supported the move were extremely pleased with this change.

Jane's Goals and Ratings from 1 to 10 from Pre to Post Therapy
(on a 10 point scale)

- Participate and improve marriage: 3 to 10
- Improve relationship with daughter: 2 to 9
- Greatly enhance happiness, peace, joy, patience: 2 to 9
- Greatly decrease depression, anxiety, guilt, shame: 1 to 9
- Greatly increase self-compassion: 1 to 9
- 6. Greatly increase forgiveness of self: 1 to 10

Overall the Goal Attainment Summary Score changed from 1.7 to 9.3 out of 10.

Alfred's Goals and Ratings from 1 to 10 from Pre to Post Therapy

1. Greatly decrease emotional upset over the affair: 1 to 10
2. Be more patient at home : 3 to 10
 - Enhance relationship with Jane: 3 to 10
 - Improve communication with Jane: 3 to 10
 - Be more diligent at work: 1 to 5
 - Greatly increase forgiveness of others, esp.ly Jane: 1 to 8
 - Greatly decrease ruminating over the affair: 1 to 10
 - Greatly increase overall peace and happiness: 3 to 10
 - Decrease any negative emotions such as any guilt, anger, sadness, anxiety 1 to 10

Overall the Goal Attainment Summary Score changed from 1.9 to 9.2 out of 10 (on a 10 point scale)

Jane and Alfred's Comments at Termination

Regarding the question, What did you find most helpful, beneficial and meaningful during the course of therapy that helped you change, shift and improve in a positive way.

Jane: "The most helpful thing was the tapping techniques and the therapy sessions with guided tapping to learn the process and work on forgiving myself. The forgiveness book

(Forgiveness Solution by Dr. Friedman) helped me to look at forgiveness in a different way and to reinforce what we were learning. Reading the "Law of Attraction" (2010) book by Michael Losier really helped me to better understand how to control my thoughts and to manifest peaceful thoughts and feelings. Taking time to learn and use the tapping techniques really helped me feel more calm and self-compassionate. I'm able to be more aware and stay in the present moment and not dwell on past problems and mistakes."

Alfred: "The most beneficial thing I took away from therapy was learning to calm myself down and to shift how I looked at the situation that was eating away at me with the tapping and psychological/emotional uplifters. My ruminating has completely gone away. I look at the many good things Jane and I have done together and accomplished. We can't change the past, we can only move forward with this new positive learning experience.

With many discussions between Jane and I during the course of marital therapy sessions and between sessions we have really grown closer. As Dr. Friedman puts it we are beginning our 2nd marriage with each other. We have really teamed up for our future, business wise and with our relationship. We have been able to set goals which we have begun checking off."

Another way to evaluate what clients received from therapy is via the Friedman Benefits of Therapy Scale (2018). This scale tailored for my practice has 10 questions. Clients can rate these items after 3 or more sessions of therapy. The couple rated them at the end of therapy. The wife's scores are to the left of the question.

Friedman Benefits of Therapy Scale

On a scale from 0 to 5 how much does/did (if completed) each item benefit you during therapy. 0 = not at all; 1 = rarely; 2 = a little bit; 3 = somewhat; 4 = a lot; 5 = a great deal

- 5 1. Overall very helpful and beneficial to me.
- 5 2. Have someone to talk to and have someone who listens to me.
- 5 3. Learn breathing and relaxation techniques.
- 4 4. Learn and use daily or frequent positive affirmations or affirmations.
- 2 5. Learn and use guided imagery techniques
- 5 6. Learn and use the psychological lifter.
- 5 7. Learn and use tapping techniques
- 4 8. Learn and use mindfulness or meditation techniques
- 5 9. Learn and use the law of attraction
- 4 10. Overall benefit from the Forgiveness Solution Book

The husband had all 5's to the 10 questions except for question 5 and 8 which he gave a 4.

It is obvious from their answers that many factors contributed to their progress in therapy. Not included in this short standard questionnaire was the benefit of the marital communication sessions.

Comparing Pragmatic Tracker (PT) and Blueprint (BP)

For Pragmatic Tracker go to www.pragmatictracker.com

Pragmatic Tracker describes itself as a tracking tool for evidence based outcomes, for mental health professionals, researchers and therapists.

For Blueprint go to www.blueprint-health.com

Blueprint describes itself as a digital tracker that allows the clinician, researchers and mental health professionals to track patient progress and make measurement-informed decisions.

Pragmatic Tracker (PT) and Blueprint (BP) have certain similarities and certain differences. Each one has unique advantages and disadvantages in my experience. (As of this writing I have experience with PT for 9 months and BP for 2 months) Both PT and BP allow the client to take a wide variety of scales and have them assessed, scored, recorded, tracked and graphed. BP also has a mobile app feature that clients seem to like. Clients report to me that BP is a little easier to use and a little less time consuming, i.e., a little more user friendly. However, PT records data for the clinician in a somewhat more useful fashion. It has a summary table, for example, that shows quickly all the major scores for all the sessions that can be quickly seen at one glance. PT tracker also allows for a personalized Problem Checklist and a Goal Checklist with drop down menus. I tended not to use the Problem Checklist though other clinicians might like to use it. The Goal Checklist I found very useful. PT also calculates a summary score every session (1 to 10) summarizing where the client is across all goals and problems. If these numbers aren't improving steadily, progress is not being made in therapy.

On the other hand BP has a symptom tracking measure which I didn't use and over 20 worksheets that might be useful for some clients. I rarely used it as my clients filled out the worksheets in my book the Forgiveness Solution. One worksheet of interest is called the ACT Values Daily Diary. Most worksheets seem to be of a CBT, ACT or DBT variety. BP does have Lifestyle correlates as well such as mood, energy, sleep quality and social engagement which I occasionally used with 1 or 2 clients. PT also has a summary sheet across clients that allows the clinician to see their overall caseload effectiveness. As of this writing I had 12 cases that were improved, 3 slightly improved, and none not improved. PT also can create a scatterchart. Along with the scatterchart the following statistics are automatically calculated by PT about one's caseload: Cohen's D, Glass's Delta and Hedge's G across a number of measures and the first and last score for any measure across all clients.

PT has 2 well-known outcome measures (CORE10 and ORS) that are valuable but not currently available on BP. BP has many other measures some of which PT doesn't have including their Blueprint Diagnostic Screener (BPDS). The BPDS screener quickly assesses for psychological distress in a number of diagnostic areas and then redirects the questions to other scales that assess that area in more depth. All clients typically receive the BPDS at the beginning of therapy. BP also has the CSI a relationship measure I recently discovered while PT doesn't have a marriage or relationship measure. They both have alliance measures. I just started using the WAI, the alliance therapy measure from BP. Overall they both have over 50 measures to select from. Both PT and BP allow the clinician to preprogram in advance the dates to send scales to clients. I have not always found them as reliable as I would like them to be.

Both PT and BP currently allow for the administration assessment, scoring and tracking of the Friedman Life Balance, Spiritual Awakening, Mini 5 Factor, Affect and Belief

Scales. PT also allows for the administration assessment, scoring and tracking of the Friedman Well-Being scale as well. Both PT and BP allow for the administration, assessment, scoring and tracking of the GAD-7 and PHQ-9 scales of anxiety and depression. The Goal Checklist in PT allows the clinician (if desired) to see how helpful or beneficial the therapy sessions have been not only for a single client but across all clients. For example at the moment my average score on helpful/beneficial is 9.4 out of 10 across all clients. Naturally in the early stages of therapy the scores are lower. It is very valuable to monitor this measure to see how effective therapy is for each client and across your whole caseload.

I found the customer service representative at BP very thoughtful and helpful. The technician representatives she referred questions to and who worked on the Friedman Scales for use on BP were generally very slow to respond to feedback. The customer service and technician representative at PT was the same person and co-founder and owner of PT. He was both very helpful, knowledgeable and very responsive when working on the Friedman Scales for use on PT; and for that matter on any question. This information about PT and BP may or may not apply to clinicians in general not working on the development of scales.

PT requires the use of a code to access their site and BP doesn't. PT requires a code name for each client while BP uses the client's name. Both are considered HIPAA compliant. PT is less expensive than BP. PT lets a prospective purchaser have 1 week to try PT out. BP doesn't have a free trial period. However BP has a slightly more expensive month by month payment option which PT doesn't have. BP did offer to refund my money if I was dissatisfied after a month of service. This fee information may change and also may vary with case size and other factors. The payment system for PT though was a bit cumbersome and awkward for an American as they are in England while the payment system was straightforward for BP which is located in Chicago, Illinois, USA.

Summary

This article discussed the use of a digital assessment and tracking approach (DATA) for therapists to use in their practice. It could, of course, be used by anyone wanting to track change on various assessment measures. The 2 systems I shared were the Pragmatic Tracker (PT) system out of England and the Blueprint (BP) system out of Chicago, Illinois. They both offer the possibility of using over 50 scales to track change session by session including 5 Friedman Scales (Friedman Life Balance Scale (FLBS); Friedman Spiritual Awakening Scale (FSAS); Friedman Mini- 5 Factor Scale (FM5FS); Friedman Affect Scale (FAS)-short form and the Friedman Belief Scale-short form. Pragmatic Tracker (PT) can also track the Friedman Well-Being Scale (FWBS)-short form. The first 3 of these scales can be found free at friedmanscales.com. The last 3 scales were presented in this article. A measure of affective and cognitive balance can be calculated from 2 of these scales as well.

In this article a distressed couple was presented who came to psychotherapy following an affair. Many changes in the couple, using 18 graphs, were presented to demonstrate how to administer, score, record, track and graph changes using Pragmatic Tracker (PT) and Blueprint (BP). In addition to the Friedman Scales, anxiety and depression scales were used (GAD-7 and PHQ-9) as well as a number of outcome measures (ORS, CORE10 and the GOAL SUMMARY). The Goal list on Pragmatic Tracker (PT) also

allowed the tracking of measures of peace, love, happiness, coping, self-compassion etc, as well as how helpful and beneficial the client's perceived the therapy sessions. The digital tracking was done session by session though the data was presented every 5 to 7 sessions for clarity purposes. Data was often presented for the husband and wife to demonstrate the differences in rate of change of each of them. Subscales changes were also shown to indicate that the client's often made more or faster changes on some subscales than others.

To further clarify the changes made during psychotherapy, parts of the client's termination essay regarding the helpfulness of therapy and goal attainment changes were also shown; as well the results of the Friedman Benefits of Therapy questionnaire indicating the variety of interventions that contributed to change. The 'tapping', emotional/psychological uplifter' and the "Forgiveness Solution" book seemed to carry the greatest weight in the change formula though many variables contributed as well.

Pragmatic Tracker (PT) and Blueprint (BP) which were the 2 digital assessment and tracking approach (DATA) systems presented in the article were compared for similarities and differences across a number of variables. Since this was a clinical research study more scales were used than the average clinician would typically utilize. Most clinicians would select just a few measures. The full range of digitally administered measures could be taken by clients on their computer, tablet, or cell phone. Blueprint (BP) also allowed the client to take the scales on a mobile app. Typically, using all the measures I used, client's could complete them in 10-15 minutes a week with little or no difficulty. Pragmatic Tracker (PT) also has a feature that allows the clinician to see their overall progress across all client's and a series of scatter grams and statistics measuring how much change has taken place across their entire caseload. Both Pragmatic Tracker (PT) and Blueprint (BP) present very colorful graphs of change and tables on their websites and both are HIPAA compliant.

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