



# **HUMAN FIRST, THERAPIST SECOND**

## **Authenticity as an OCD Therapist**

Katie Boyer, LMSW

Jon Hershfield, MFT

Tejal Jakatdar, PhD

Amy Mariaskin, PhD



01

02

03

04



# Katie Boyer

**Zodiac Sign:** Sagittarius

**Intro Song:** "Redesigning Women" The High Women

**Superpower:** Finding a little glitter/sparkle in every situation

**Sport of choice:** Is attending music festivals a sport?

**Dream Not-Therapist Job:**  
Touring musician

**Fun Fact:** I lived in Alaska





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# Jon Hershfield

**Zodiac Sign:** Capricorn

**Intro Song:** "Free Will" by  
Electronic

**Superpower:** I can get the sun to  
point directly at my eyeballs no  
matter where I sit outside

**Sport of choice:** I will attend a  
baseball game

**Dream Not-Therapist Job:** stay-  
at-home dad, weather critic

**Fun Fact:** I used to be an actor  
but now I'm an imposter





# Tejal Jakatdar

01

**Zodiac Sign:** Scorpio

02

**Intro Song:** "Feeling good" Nina Simone

03

**Superpower:** Meeting deadlines despite massive procrastination

04

**Sport of choice:** Football (Eagles all the way, baby!)



**Dream Not-Therapist Job:** Personal shopper



**Fun Fact:** I love the rain, especially, thunderstorms





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# Amy Mariaskin

**Zodiac Sign:** Scorpio

**Intro Song:** "Rebel Girl" Bikini Kill

**Superpower:** Determining which dog breed goes along with your personality

**Sport of choice:** Swimming

**Dream Not-Therapist Job:**  
linguist

**Fun Fact:** Former roller derby skater, referee, and announcer





# WHY AUTHENTICITY?



01

Underemphasized in training especially in CBT programs  
Developmentally appropriate for newer therapists once skills are attained

02

***Therapeutic Self Disclosure:*** verbal disclosures about life outside of therapy  
***Immediacy:*** discussion of therapeutic relationship in the here-and-now  
***Non Verbal Disclosures:*** decor, objects, clothing, presentation

03

Outcomes of Authenticity

04

- More positive appraisals of the relationship by clients
- Improved mental health functioning
- Gains in insight
- Successful resolution of therapist-client conflict



Burks & Robins, 2012, Hill, Knox, & Pinto-Coelho, 2018; Levitt, Pomerville, & Surace, 2016



# DISCLOSURE



01

Before disclosing, you may consider:

*Will it provide new information to the client?*

*Will it shift my relationship with them, perhaps making me more available?*

02

*Could it help create a positive and healthy sense of shared vulnerability?*

03

- May be about personal experiences, aspects of identity, beliefs, mental health history, the relationship with the client
- May function to reduce shame, build rapport, signal safety, encourage client disclosure

04



Metcalf, 2011



# PERSONALITY STYLE



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- Humor
- Warmth
- Irreverence
- Didacticism
- Therapist-as-expert vs client-as-expert
- Creativity
- Coaching
- Cheerleading





# STRUCTURE/FLEXIBILITY



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- Protocols/manuals
- Timelines
- Worksheets
- Formal assessment
- Adherence to one modality vs. flexibility
- In office, out of office, home visits, telehealth, etc
- Integration of supportive therapy



# IDENTITY



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- Cultural background, sexual orientation and gender, race, ethnicity, SES, religion, disability, upbringing, etc
- Language used in session (literally or with code switching)
- Invisible/visible identities



# RISKS



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Negative outcomes associated with disclosure:

- Violation of client boundaries
- Violation of therapist boundaries (e.g., answering questions instead of saying no)
- Client criticism of therapist
- Shifting focus away from client's goals
- Bad jokes



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# THANKS!

## Any questions?

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