

June 2018 Thoughts for the Day

6/30/18

Do you ever watch a contest without having a clear side you are rooting for? You watch because you love the competition. I feel that way about the World Cup. I don't have a lot invested in the outcome. But I do like watching the best soccer players in the world come together to compete.

6/29/18

Last week I posted something about my dad on Facebook. It had some personal information about him that I am not sure he would want said publicly. However, in the context of the bigger message I was trying to make, I believe he wouldn't mind, because there was a point in adding it, which was to punctuate the seriousness of the situation. It is tricky when people confide in you and then they pass away. I hope he wouldn't object.

6/28/18

When you think about what memories will last for you over time, it will generally be about experiences that were meaningful to you in some way. A meaningful life is one that can stand the test of time and reflection, with only a few regrets. In a world that feels crazy and out of control at times, consider increasing the amount of time you spend doing something meaningful vs. passively doing things to be entertained. It makes a difference. You'll feel better in the long run.

6/27/18

It's been over a week since my stay-cation. I have to say that that was one of the more enjoyable weeks I have had in a long time. There were no hassles at the airport, or on the interstate. There weren't hotel issues. Just great music and every night coming home to a relaxing evening and sleeping in my own bed. As fun as it is to go to new and different places, there is no place like home.

6/26/18

Professional integrity is interesting. It seems like it would be a fairly straightforward concept. But judgments can and many times are nuanced. Last week I encountered someone's written work where I disagreed strongly with how they wrote a report. I wrote a response that was challenging of that person's position and the process they used to arrive at their conclusion. Professional disagreements can be awkward and difficult, because it is hard not to personalize attacks on one's work product. At the same time, if we can take a step back and objectively take in what others are saying, we are more likely to learn and grow. Easier said than done when one's on credibility is being questioned.

6/25/18

I just finished one of the most non-traditional evaluations I have ever done. The individual is a square peg trying to fit into a round hole. This individual will always be a square peg. I am encouraging the owners of the round hole to consider expanding and squaring the hole so that it fits better for the individual. Will this happen? It's too soon to tell. One size fits all approaches aren't always the best idea. But when should the individual accommodate? And when should the system? When it comes to obvious physical disabilities the law says the system needs to bend. It's a tougher sell sometimes when it comes to mental health disabilities. Sometimes people running a system feel like they are being manipulated. And at times they probably are. But other times they aren't and the person with mental health issues is pathologized and labeled as being willfully disobedient for refusing to do something they really can't do. This current situation is a time when I stated that I believe the system should bend a little for the person with a mental health issue. A judge will get the last word on this one.

6/24/18

Gay Pride in Seattle. A lot of openly happy people. Seattle is a safe place (in general) to be LGBTQ. It would be great if our country became more open to embracing people and their

uniqueness rather than dividing us based on our differences. It is no accident I live in the Seattle area. Although, as much as Seattle is an open-minded liberal city, it has definitely become more split based on economics.

6/23/18

It's been a little too hot this week for me. But a fan and some lightweight, loose fitting clothes always help. Keep cool!

6/22/18

I have been asked to give a presentation in the fall to a group of attorneys. I am looking forward to it. I have already put together what I am going to say, so it's going to be super easy. The only thing left to decide.... What to wear?

6/21/18

Happy Solstice! I am aware of how much I love the long days this time of year. It doesn't need to be super warm and sunny. I just like that there is much more daylight.

6/20/18

The separation of young kids and their parents at the border by the current administration is morally reprehensible. You have to be one cold-hearted person (people actually - but it comes from the top) to do this to make your point regarding immigration.

6/19/18

Apple is not my favorite company right now. I bought a new laptop because my old one was dying. Most of the music I listen to is not purchased through iTunes, it's non-commercially available music. If you try to change computers that you have hosting iTunes, Apple makes it difficult to transfer this non-purchased music and sync it to one's iPhone. It seems that the easiest way to accomplish this is to recreate your library and playlists in iTunes on your new computer and then sync the phone. But you will wipe all the previously saved music and playlists from the phone when you do this. Apparently you can get third party software that will help transfer music and playlists, but I don't trust that I will do that correctly.

6/18/18

Monday - the first day back from a week's vacation. I cheated a little and didn't totally disconnect. It's easier for me to stay somewhat connected and not have an overwhelming amount of messages and things to do when I return. I'm back. And was very productive today.

6/17/18

Father's Day is different when your parent has passed away. The first years were the toughest. It does get easier over time however.

6/16/18

Starting new routines or habits can be fun and yet drudgery too. I have been learning Spanish for awhile. I was dabbling in the beginning. Now I am at 60+ consecutive days of doing Spanish homework.

6/15/18

Some days doing this can be more of a slog than a blog. Feeling unmotivated and uninspired to write.

6/14/18

Spent many days this week waiting for others to complete their parts of projects. It's been annoying, but what can you do? The answer is find something else to do that needs to be done. It's tough when you have a deadline and someone else can be the deciding factor regarding whether you get something done. But in the meantime there is always something else to get done. I am doing some spring cleaning for now which feels good.

6/13/18

Probably one of the most well known and respected books on group psychotherapy is by Irvin Yalom. It is called "The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy". If you are interested in knowing more about the power of group therapy, you should read this book. Yalom is also one of the main writers regarding Existential Psychotherapy. It is also a great read as well. That book is called "Existential Psychotherapy."

6/12/18

My father and mother were both avid group psychotherapists when they were actively providing psychotherapy to clients. I learned a lot from both of them. One of the things that is vital when it comes to providing group therapy is being secure within oneself. Because as much as the clients are interacting with each other, they are also interacting with you as the group leader(s). I am a proponent of groups being run by co therapists. This is because everyone has an off day, and group depends on at least one leader being on point. Although when group is at the transforming stage it runs itself. But that doesn't happen by accident. That requires a lot of up-front work by the group co-therapists.

6/11/18

Group process is an amazing thing in therapy. People bring their relationship issues into group. They cannot help but do it. Most people are predictable in group settings. A well run group can help people recognize their maladaptive ways of interacting with others and improve on them in a healthy and safe place. This week our group moved from norming into transforming. And for many of the clients in group this was their first safe and positive group experience of this nature.

6/10/18

We started a new group at work. The group development process is interesting. Group development tends to follow this pattern: Forming, Storming, Norming, Transforming. There is the honeymoon phase when everyone first gets together. Then there is some storming as people test the waters to see what is and isn't safe to say or do in group. Then groups tend to create their norms that are the unwritten rules of the group that people are expected to follow. When a group is established with its own norms, then the transforming can occur. That is when people get new and different interpersonal experiences. And that is the power of change that a well-run group can offer.

6/9/18

This coming week I am taking a stay-cation. I am going to 5 concerts in 7 days. That's my idea of a vacation. No work and a lot of live music.

6/8/18

In DBT skills training we just completed the Distress Tolerance module. One concept that I like to highlight is the notion of being Willful vs. Willing. Being Willful is stubbornly sticking to ones guns because you feel right, entitled, or you simply want something to be a certain way. Being Willing is being open to try new and different ways to do things. It's deemphasizing who is right and who is wrong, and focusing on your goal and doing things that are more effective in getting you what you want. This is a difficult skill to learn and use. It can take a lot of practice to succeed at it. But if we focused less on who is right and who is wrong, and worked more diligently to accomplish our goals, everyone would be much happier.

6/7/18

I was talking to an attorney who was trying to track down some records from decades ago. In the grand scheme of things I was telling her that realistically the records will only marginally help, and if they are negative could seriously hurt her case. I encouraged her to drop her quest to find them. More isn't always better.

6/6/18

In an effort not to succumb to planned obsolescence, I am trying to continue using my vacuum cleaner in spite of it requiring actual bags. Apparently most new vacuums are bag-less which is a good thing. As a result most stores don't carry bags anymore. Or if they do they only have a few

types. I found a vacuum cleaner store that sold me bags for my specific model. They were \$6 a pop though. After I run through this stockpile of bags, I may give in and get a new vacuum.

6/5/18

Similar to parents in relation to their children, it can be tough as a therapist to not get caught up in the successes and failures of our clients. This is when having colleagues remind us to take a step back is super useful. In the helping professions it can be tough not to share in the excitement when clients succeed or worry when they are struggling or make a big mistake. There is a fine line between joining with a client and being overly involved.

6/4/18

I was doing some late spring cleaning. It feels good to declutter and deep clean. I like a clean house even though I am terrible at keeping it neat and clean.

6/3/18

I let myself get behind in doing this. Playing catch up. I've been distracted by life.

6/2/18

Some of the neighborhood clean up people like to get an early start in my neck of the woods. But 645-7a.m. is too early. I get that they want to start before there is a lot of people on the sidewalks, but even so.... Last weekend they started pressure washing the building across the street at 730a.m. on Saturday.

6/1/18

I met up with a friend I had't seen in-person for awhile. It was so good to see her and catch up. She was very shrewd in negotiating a raise for herself. Certainly this is easier to do when you are in demand. Even so there is a balance between asking and expecting. It appears she found the right balance.