

## El rt reassurance

T. So, do you think you're a good mother?

Pt. I think I'm a better mother than my mother, and I think I'm a better mother than my stepmother.

T. But do you think you're a good mother?

***The therapist cannot tolerate the patient's depression and hopelessness and is trying to build up the patient's self-esteem by convincing her that she has value as a mother. Persuasion and encouragement come across as unempathic and are contraindicated in DDP.***

Pt. Mmhm [quietly]

T. Well that's worth something. You know, if you're worth something, your feelings are worth something.

Pt. [Stares silently]

T. I understand your anger. I appreciate it; I think that it's completely valid; I'd be upset.

***Since encouragement is not working to boost the patient's mood, the therapist tries validation. In so doing the therapist is putting words in the patient's mouth since she never stated she was angry. The therapist then tells the patient that her anger is justified, which is another contraindicated intervention of DDP.***

Pt. But my husband wont and it will turn into a war. And I just don't feel like fighting.

T. Does it have to be a war? Couldn't it be anger without hostility...understanding?

***The therapist next tries to problem-solve the patient's marital relationship, instead of helping the patient explore the central thematic question, "Do I have a right to be angry?" Since the patient is in Stage IV and the treatment will soon end, the therapist is experiencing an urgent need to make everything better before termination.***

Pt. No, because I'll say something and he'll take it out of context and overreact and think that I'm accusing him. Which just makes him feel that he's not good enough and he's not doing the best job he could be doing.

T. Is that your intention?

***As the patient is not responding positively to encouragement, validation, and problem-solving, the therapist then starts to blame the patient.***

Pt. No!

T. Do you take your anger out on him?

Pt. Yes. Sometimes I do.

T. So he reacts that way. So maybe there's some component of you getting so angry at yourself and at him that makes it blow up all the worse.

Pt. Could be.

T. So maybe if you weren't so angry at yourself.

Pt. But I'm unhappy with myself. I'm never going to be happy with myself. That's just not something that's going to happen.