

# Emotion Focused Family Therapy Workshop

National and Provincial Research Project

Presenter: Patricia Nash



# EFFT Workshop at the Foundation

- First 2 day EFFT workshop Feb 2014
- Overall in 2014-2016 16 workshops given
- Over 120 Carers/Family members in attendance
- Three workshops outside St.John's  
(Marystown, Labrador City, Corner Brook); hope to do more
- Now a monthly program of the Foundation
- Two Facilitators ; 4 days of EFFT training each with Dr. Joanne Dolhanty and Dr. Adele Lafrance Robinson



## Core Beliefs of Emotion Focused Family Therapy

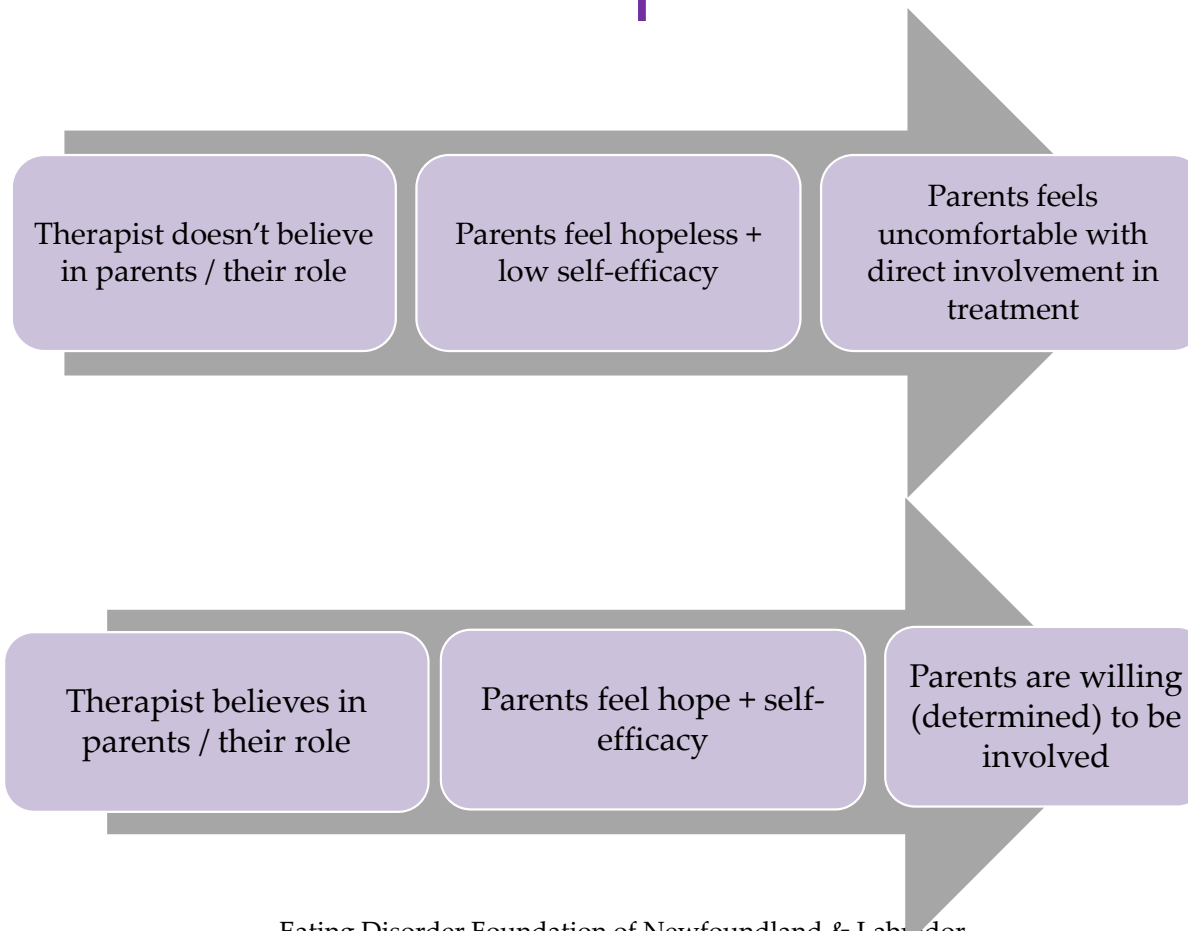
1. We believe in the extraordinary healing power of parents and caregivers
2. All children – **regardless of their age** - want their parents to help them heal – even when they try to convince us otherwise. The same is true for parents
3. Parents and caregivers need coaching and to be taught new skills. They also need for us to believe in them until they do
4. Parents and caregivers can overcome their fears that may keep them paralyzed, or stuck in unhelpful patterns of relating to their child



## Core Beliefs of Emotion Focused Family Therapy (cont)

- Therapists are not immune to the influence of emotion in their practice. They can also process these emotions in order to help the family get on track with recovery, even in the most dire of circumstances.

# Parent Empowerment





# Emotion-Focused

- Low self-efficacy with emotion / avoidance can feed the ED.
- The emotional style in the family can unintentionally maintain the illness.

# Four Modules:

We ask family members to:

1. Become their loved ones' **behaviour coach** (via the support of refeeding / interruption of symptoms)
2. Become their loved ones' **emotion coach** (via the support of processing of emotion)
3. Support their loved one to **heal wounds** (via relationship repair)
4. **Work through own fears** or emotional “blocks” (that may interfere with 1,2 and 3)



## The Foundation has been part of a National Research Study into the value of EFFT

- National research study conducted from Feb – June 2014
- 8 sites across Canada (hospital, community, private practice)



# National EFFT Carer/Family Participants

147 participants/carers in total from 8 National sites:

- 124 parents of children with ED
  - 85 mothers
  - 39 fathers
- 6 step-parents
- 1 guardian
- 3 relatives
- 9 spouses/partners

# EFFT Workshop: Hope for Caregivers

The loved one's of the Caregivers may have been:

- (A) NOT open to any treatment
- (B) taking steps towards treatment
- (C) fully engaged in treatment

**EFFT greatly benefits caregivers no matter where the loved one may be on their journey with an ED.**

# Procedure for the National Research

- Measurement interval:
  - Pre- and post-group questionnaires given to all Carer participants
  - Given before Day 1
  - And after end of workshop on Day 2



## Results from National Study into the value of EFFT have been very positive

- Significant increase in carer self-confidence with regard to recovery coaching
- Shift in attitude with regard to carers' role as emotion coach
- Significant decrease with re: to fears that could interfere with their engagement in the tasks of recovery (including self-blame)

## Results from National Study into the value of EFFT have been very positive

- Behavioral changes reported after only 1 day of treatment; as well as intentions for change in the future
- Anecdotal reports from clinicians indicate that for many carers, the EFFT group is leading to very positive changes in treatment
- EFFT skills gives families much needed HOPE by letting them feel so much more equipped to do some of the hard work necessary to help their loved one

# Hope for Caregivers

Overwhelming positive response from caregivers in all settings and across the lifespan

- EFFT gives carers valuable tools to assist in being an important part of the “Treatment Team”
- Carers feel less hopeless; less frustrated; less anxiety and fear
- Caregivers are given concrete tools to use with their loved one’s suffering from an ED; something specific they could now “do”

## Hope for Caregivers (cont)

- Working through blocks, lifts guilt and shame, and helps caregivers work through their own fears in a safe and empowering setting
- Group-based EFFT may offer a viable solution to carers with regard to supporting their child's recovery. Carers:
  - felt more knowledgeable about how to take a primary role in their child's recovery
  - felt better equipped with practical strategies
  - felt more confident in using their own instincts

# EFFT- Provincial Research Project

- Ethically approved provincial program since fall of 2014
- 75 carers participated in the provincial research
- Pre and Post questionnaires
- Six month follow-up questionnaire completed by about 35 carers
- Analysis now being completed on this data



# Hope for Caregivers

Comments from Caregivers who attended the EFFT  
Workshop given by the Foundation

- *“I wanted to thank you again for the training last week. I have such a different outlook now”*
- *“I have and will continue to use these useful tools every day.”*
- *“I will now try to hold back on being “the fixer” and help my daughter through trying to find her own solutions rather than give her the answers”*

## Hope for Caregivers (cont)

- *“The workshop was very worthwhile for me. I certainly feel this will allow me to start a dialogue with my daughter and to be more responsive to her emotions”*
- *“We both walked away feeling that we are better equipped to help---, and we learned so much from the workshop”*
- *“Workshop was great, tried a few of the strategies over the past few days; the apology opened the door to some good conversation with my daughter”*

## Hope for Caregivers (cont)

Quote from a Carer (Dad) 10 months after doing the EFFT Workshop

*“My daughter is doing extremely well and I can only attribute that success to the ED Foundation and the EFFT workshop. As I have told you on many occasions, the workshop (and our ability to relate, understand, and empathize) coupled with her determination was the turning point in my daughter’s recovery.”*

# EFFT Workshop Follow-up for Carers

- As a follow-up to the EFFT workshops families/carers are invited to join a New Program at the Foundation: “EFFT Refresher Group”
- This program is a response to carer requests for more EFFT
- Carers/Families meet 4-6 wks to discuss EFFT tools and their success in using the tools or their challenges with blocks

# Research Publication on EFFT National Study - 2016

- Article : "The Influence of Carer Fear and Self-Blame when Supporting a Loved One with an Eating Disorder"

Published in: **Eating Disorders: The Journal of Treatment and Prevention**

# Research Publication on EFFT National Study - 2016

- A shortened version of the article will also be published in a book titled:

**Innovations in Family Therapy for Eating Disorders: Novel Treatment Developments, Patient Insights, and the Role of Carers. (late 2016)**

# Research Publication/Analysis on EFFT Provincial Study – ongoing in 2016

- Working now with a Student (Sydney Waring) of Dr. Jacqueline Carter now (Honors Thesis) on the six month follow-up questionnaire from carers.
- Examine data to see if significant changes were made in caregiver self-efficacy and their belief in EFFT not only immediately after the workshop but Six Months afterwards.
- Assess whether caregivers who have difficulties with emotion regulation have as many gains from the workshops as those who do not.



# Thank You

- Please help spread the word about the EFFT workshop and its benefits to carers.