



The Termination Checklist

Principle	Strategy	Completed/Plan?
Prepare Explicitly for Termination	Discuss what went well in therapy, consider what the ending will be like, and remind patients when the therapy will conclude.	
Process Feelings of Client and Therapist	Exploring the client's feelings about the treatment relationship, including the sense of loss about ending the sessions as well as both positive and negative reactions to the therapy and the relationship.	
Reflect on Client Gains	Emphasize positive gains made, assess improvements, help the client understand the changes, and saying goodbye.	
Express Pride in Client's Progress and Mutual Relationship	Attribute gains to client's effort, taking pride in the new skills achieved, acknowledging satisfaction in working together, and expressing some of the therapist's feelings about ending the therapeutic relationship.	
Discuss Client's Future Functioning and Coping	Process risks for relapse, thinking about the future, and opening the door to possible return to therapy if needed. Discuss the client's development in therapy of new skills, capacities and tools for dealing with future stressors.	
Help Client to Use New Skills Beyond Therapy	Discuss plans for continuing to practice in the "real world" new behaviors and understandings acquired in therapy. Emphasize that the client will continue to learn to master new problems as they apply what they learned.	
Frame Personal Development as Unfinished	Normalizing the idea that problems are a natural part of life and the expectation that more will be learned by the patient up ahead. It may also result in discussing resources that may be helpful with unresolved future problems	
Anticipate Post-Therapy Growth and Generalization	Point out that the treatment achievements are likely to carryover to symptom reduction and better functioning in other areas of life	

Source: Norcross, J., Zimmerman, B., Greenberg, R., & Swift, J. (2017). Do all therapists do that when saying goodbye? *Psychotherapy*, 54, 66-75.