

Clinical Reframe Worksheet

Strength as a Clinical Variable: Practical Tools for Addressing Culturally Compelled Coping in Black Women

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What the coping looks like in the encounter	What it might actually mean clinically	Examples to open the door to more discussion	Your notes / additional questions
<i>"I'm fine."</i>	Masking distress; depression screening warranted	<i>"When you say you're fine, I want to make sure I'm hearing you right. What does a typical day look like for you right now?"</i>	
<i>Missed follow-ups</i>	Self-deprioritization, not nonadherence	<i>"I noticed I hadn't seen you in a while. I just want to understand what gets in the way of you coming in."</i>	
<i>"I don't need help."</i>	Resistance to vulnerability	<i>"What would it mean for you to accept some support right now?"</i>	
<i>Reports no pain / minimizes pain</i>	Chronic pain undertreated; cultural stoicism at work	<i>"If you weren't trying to push through it, how would you describe what you're feeling?"</i>	
<i>"I just need to get through this."</i>	Acute decompensation possible; allostatic load elevated	<i>"What happens after you get through it? When is the last time you had space to take care of yourself?"</i>	
<i>"I'll be fine, I always am."</i>	Self-silencing as a coping pattern; depression/anxiety possible	<i>"How are you actually doing today?"</i>	

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<i>Declines mental health referral</i>	Difficulty help-seeking; cultural stigma around mental illness	<i>"I understand this may feel like an unnecessary referral. What makes you feel apprehensive about mental health professionals?"</i>	
<i>Reports no appetite changes or sleep issues despite elevated stress</i>	Dysregulated eating and sleep disturbance linked to SWS endorsement; underreported	<i>"A lot of people dealing with these levels of stress usually find their sleep or eating shifts without them even noticing. Has anything like that been happening?"</i>	
<i>"I just need to lose weight, I know."</i>	Weight management barriers: ego depletion, caregiving load, emotional eating	<i>"What does the day look like for you Does it seem hard to find the time to "be healthy"?"</i>	
<i>"I don't want to worry my family."</i>	Emotional inhibition protecting others at cost to self; social isolation risk	<i>"It sounds like you're carrying a lot alone. Is there anyone in your life you feel you can be honest with about how you're doing?"</i>	
<i>Has not filled prescription / stopped medication</i>	Self-care deprioritized; competing caregiving demands consuming time and resources	<i>"Help me understand what gets in the way of filling the medication. Is it time, cost, or something else?"</i>	
<i>Works through illness; didn't call out sick</i>	John Henryism activation; high-effort coping masking acute decline	<i>"What makes it difficult for you to take a day of rest?"</i>	