



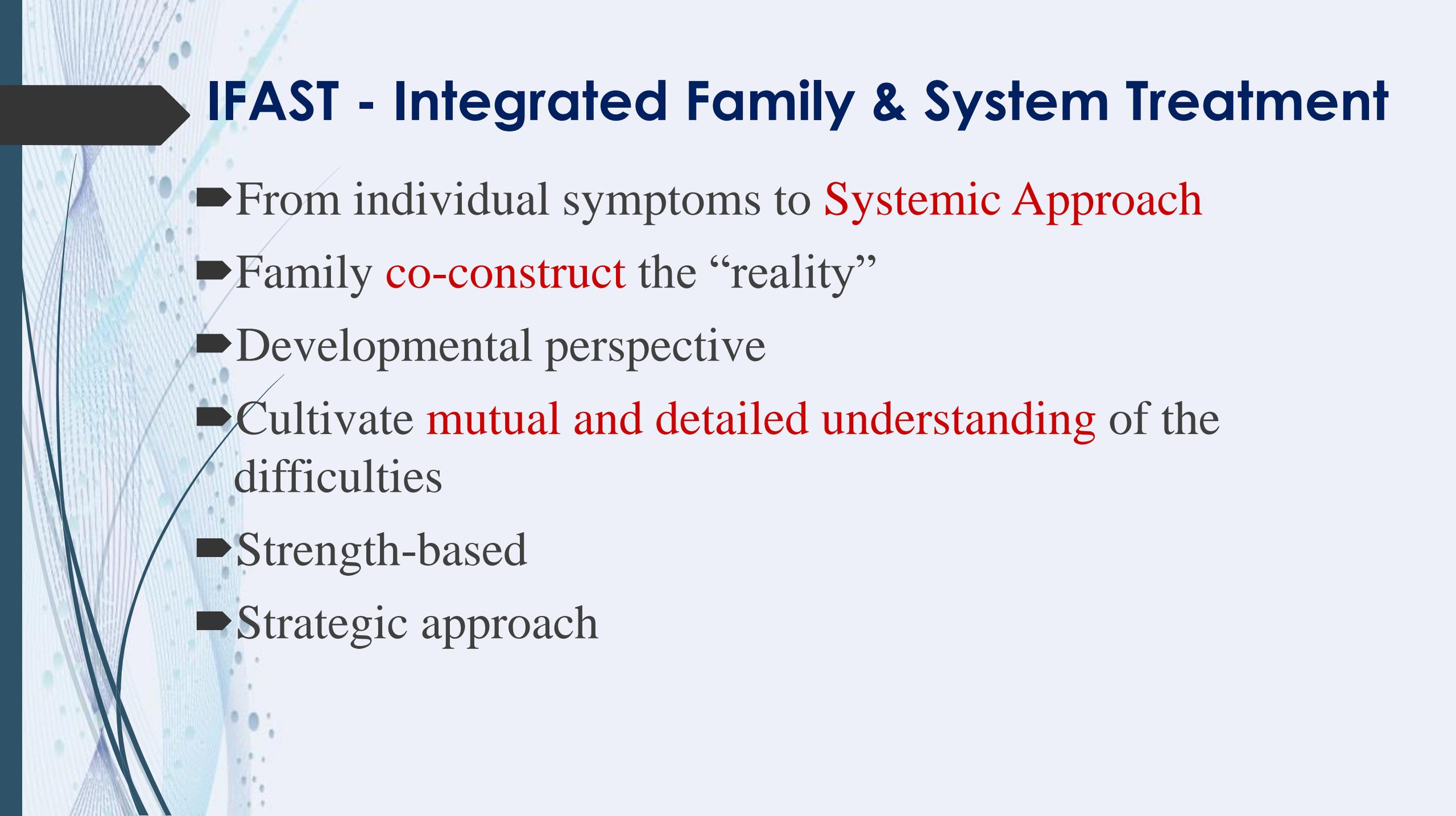
**IFAST :**

**Promoting Mental Wellness  
with Families**

**Baptist Oi Kwan Social Services**

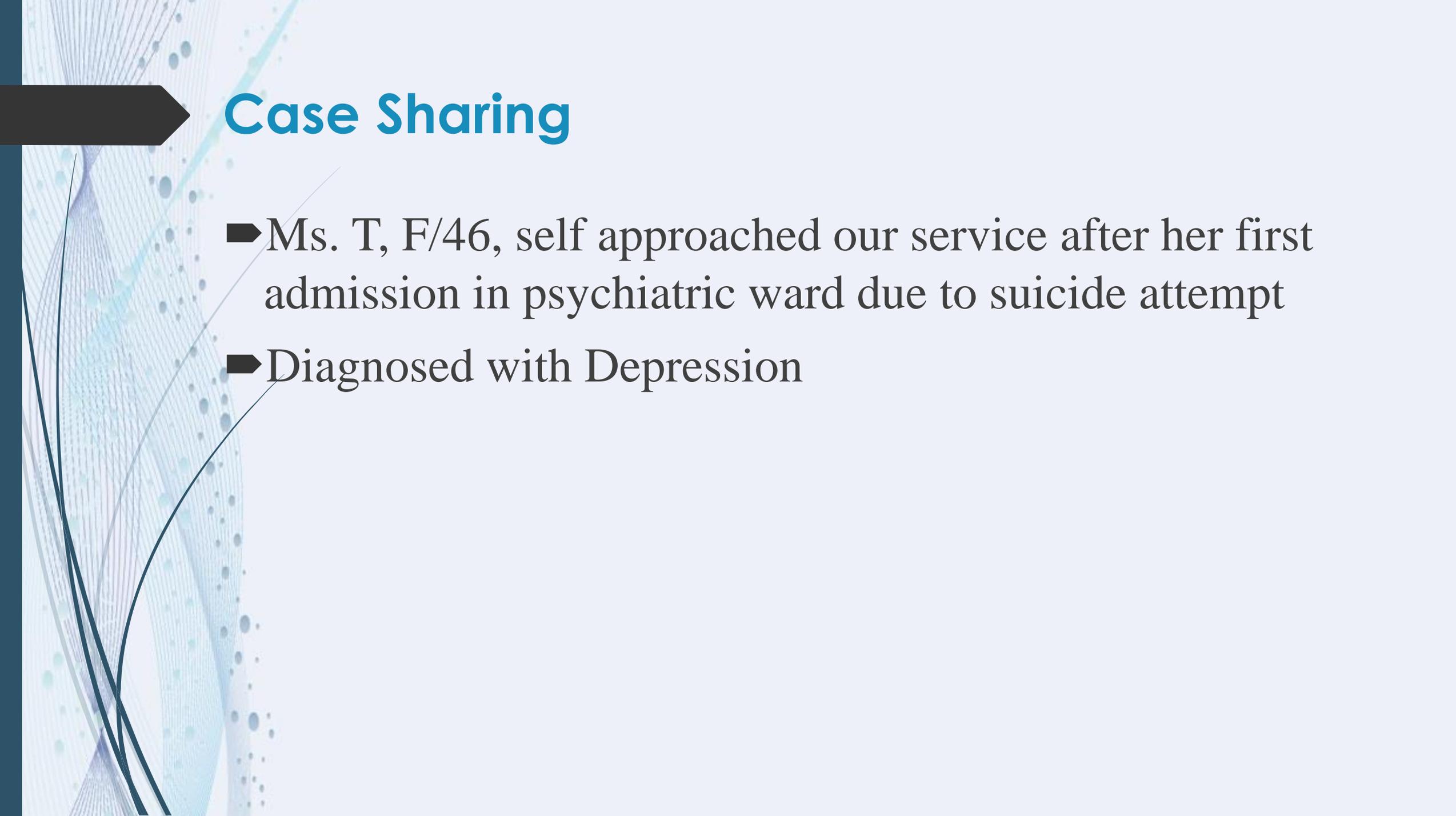
**ICCMW**

**Monica Mok**



# IFAST - Integrated Family & System Treatment

- From individual symptoms to **Systemic Approach**
- Family **co-construct** the “reality”
- Developmental perspective
- Cultivate **mutual and detailed understanding** of the difficulties
- Strength-based
- Strategic approach

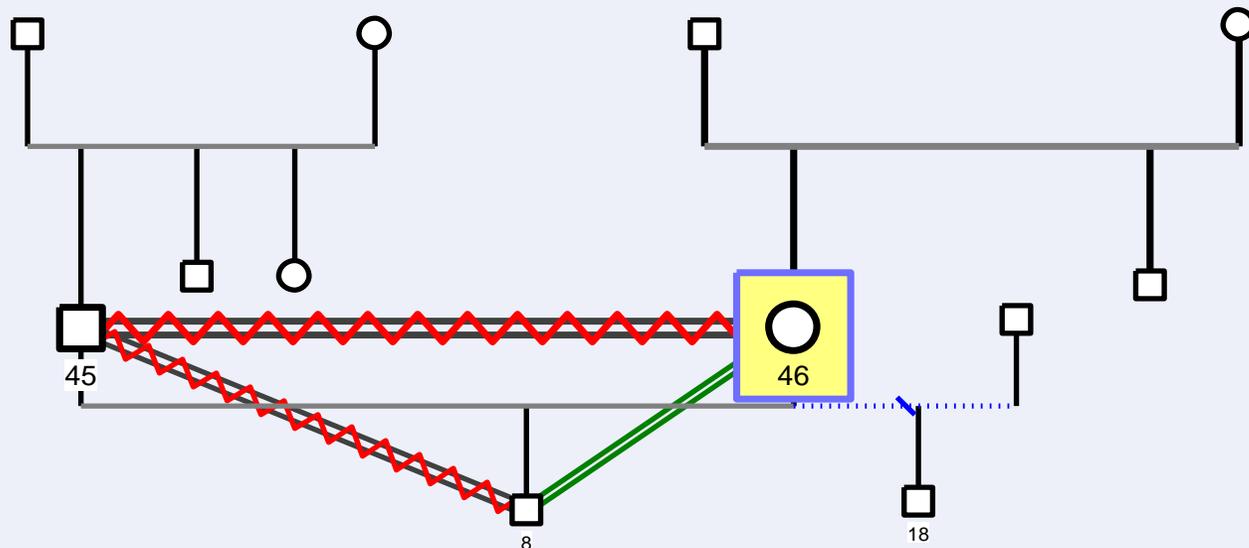


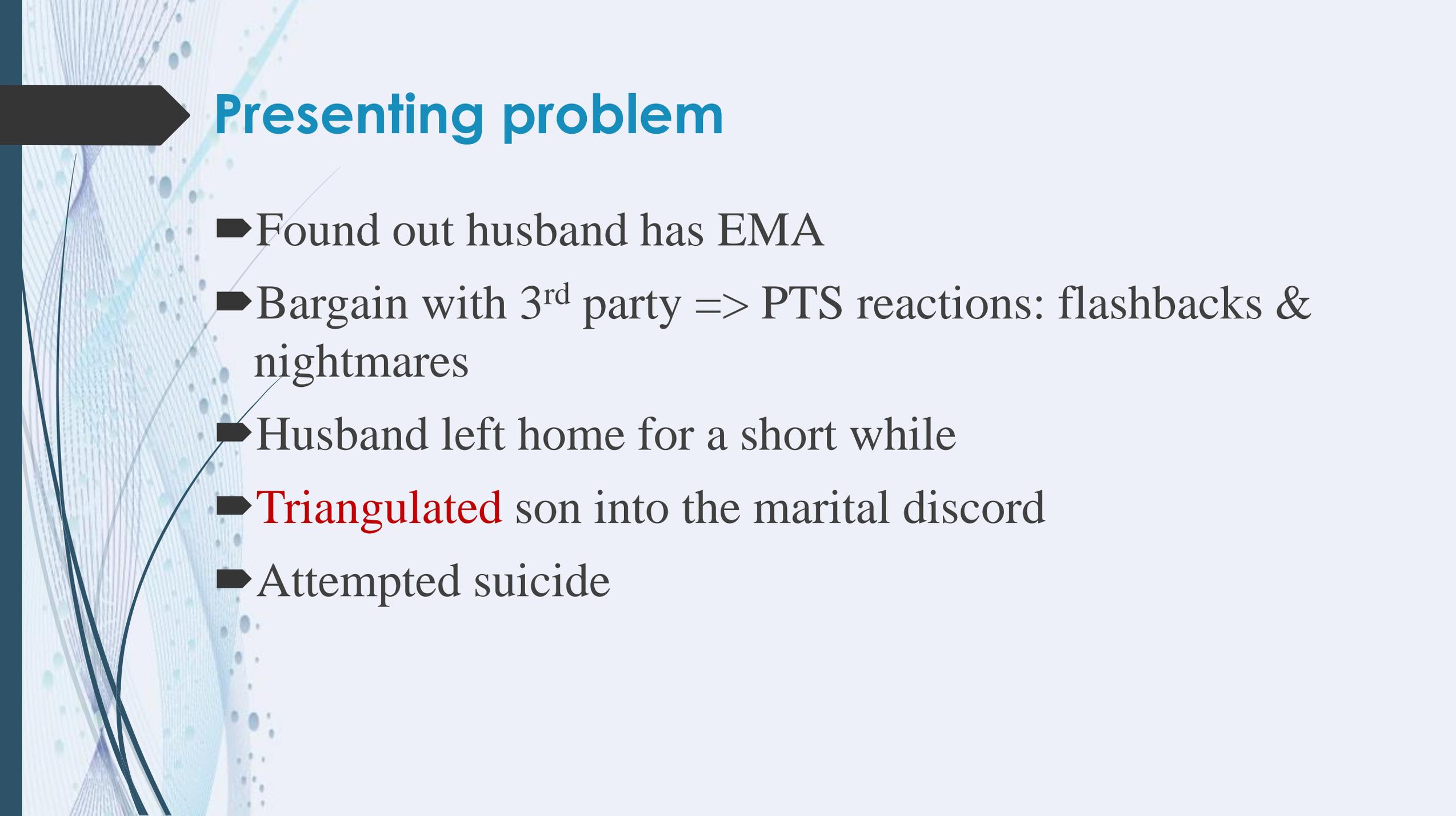
## Case Sharing

- Ms. T, F/46, self approached our service after her first admission in psychiatric ward due to suicide attempt
- Diagnosed with Depression

# Background

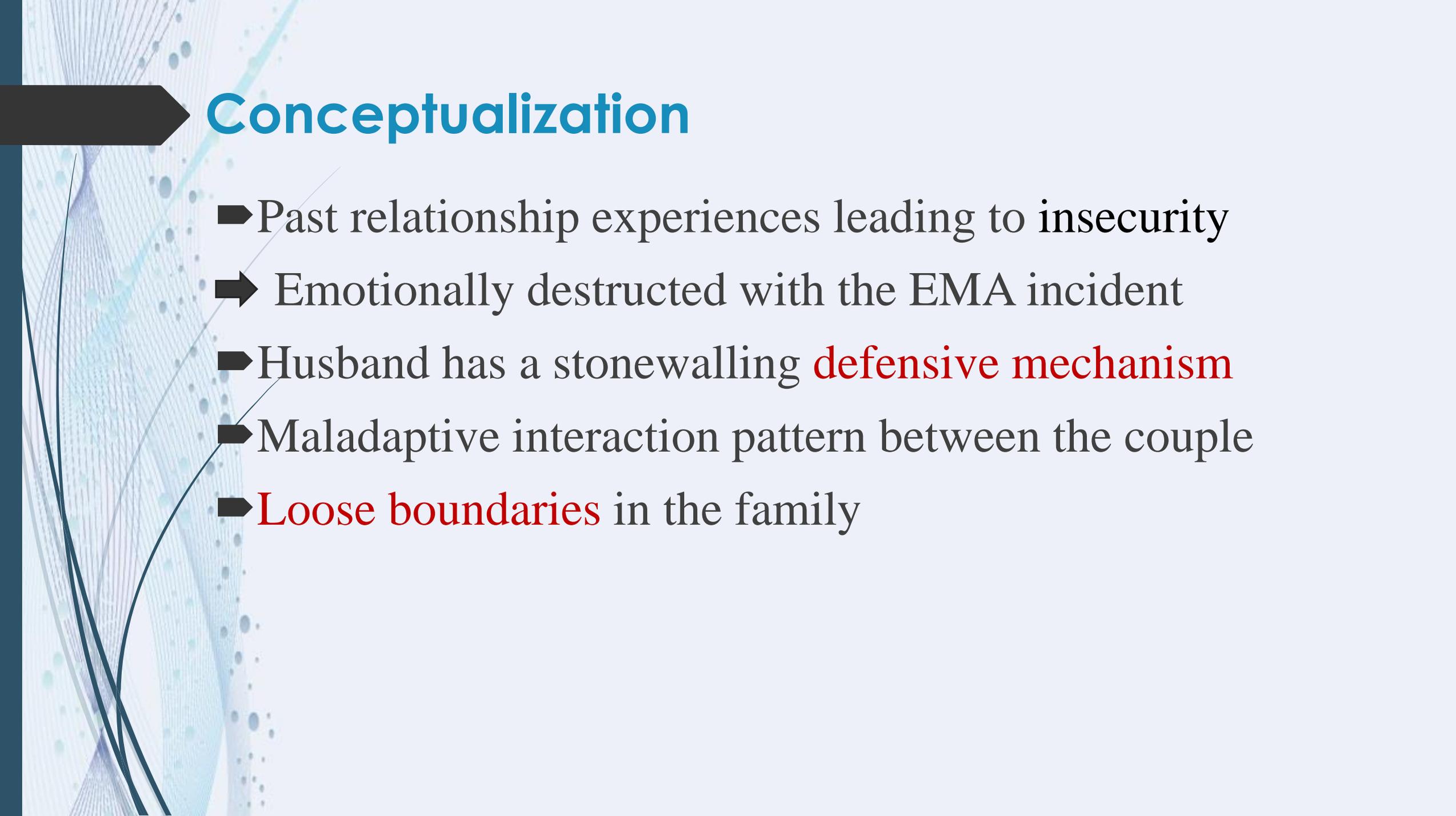
- Ms. T divorced once with a son (age 18), whom was diagnosed with ADHD
- Married again at 2006 and has a younger son (age 8) at 2<sup>nd</sup> marriage
- Described 2nd marriage as satisfactory





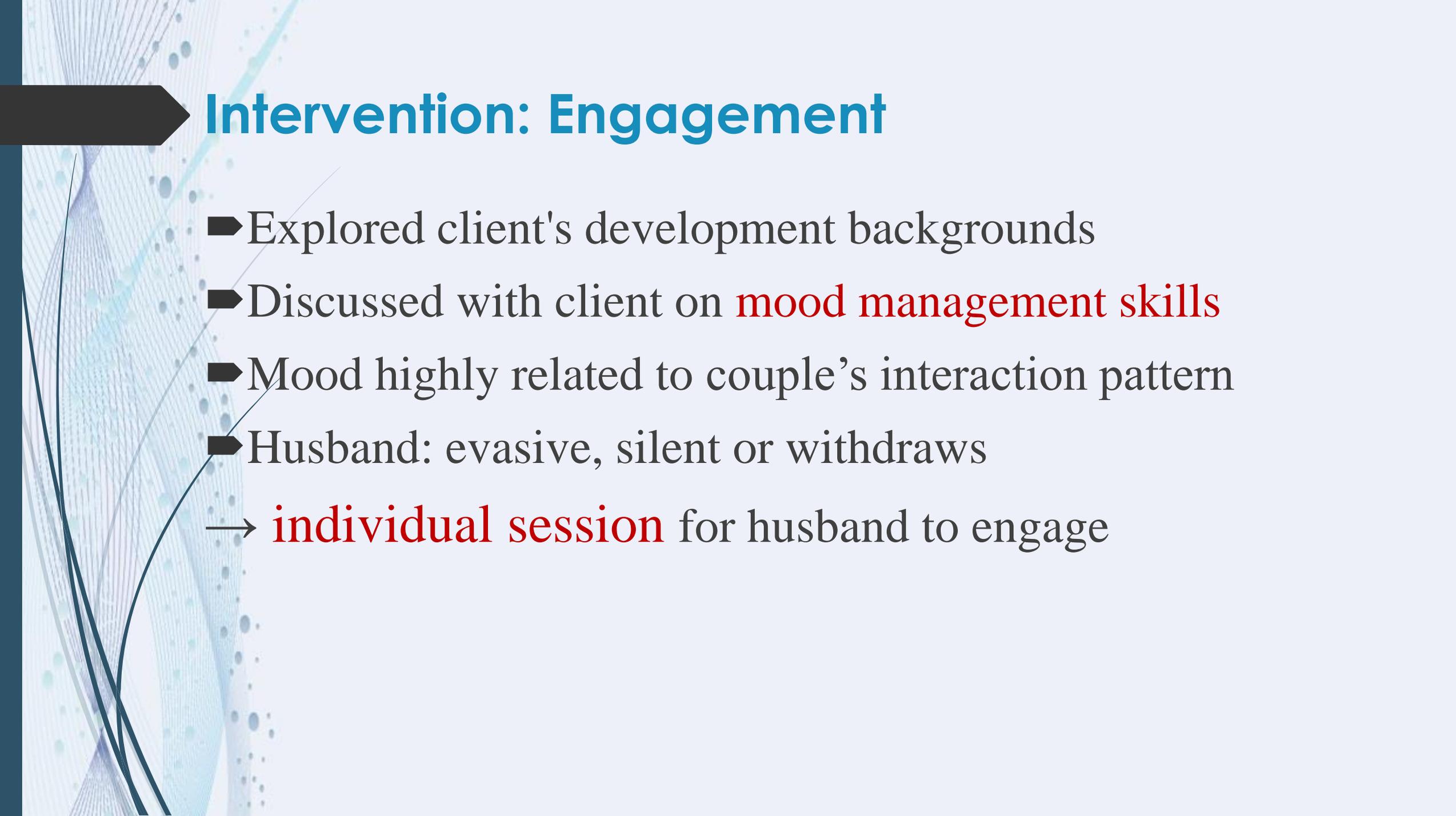
## Presenting problem

- Found out husband has EMA
- Bargain with 3<sup>rd</sup> party => PTS reactions: flashbacks & nightmares
- Husband left home for a short while
- **Triangulated** son into the marital discord
- Attempted suicide



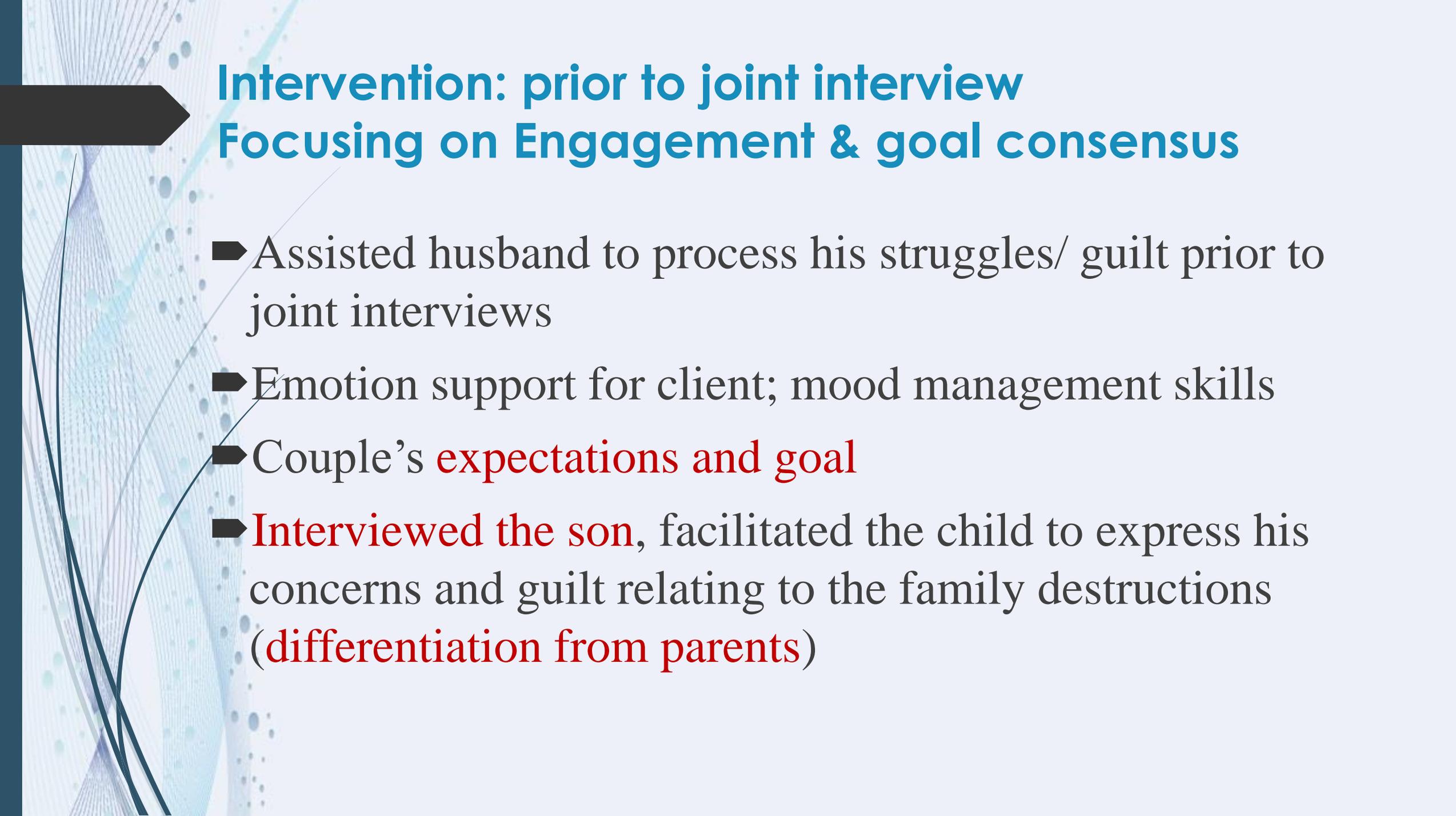
## Conceptualization

- Past relationship experiences leading to insecurity
- Emotionally destructed with the EMA incident
- Husband has a stonewalling **defensive mechanism**
- Maladaptive interaction pattern between the couple
- **Loose boundaries** in the family



## Intervention: Engagement

- Explored client's development backgrounds
  - Discussed with client on **mood management skills**
  - Mood highly related to couple's interaction pattern
  - Husband: evasive, silent or withdraws
- **individual session** for husband to engage



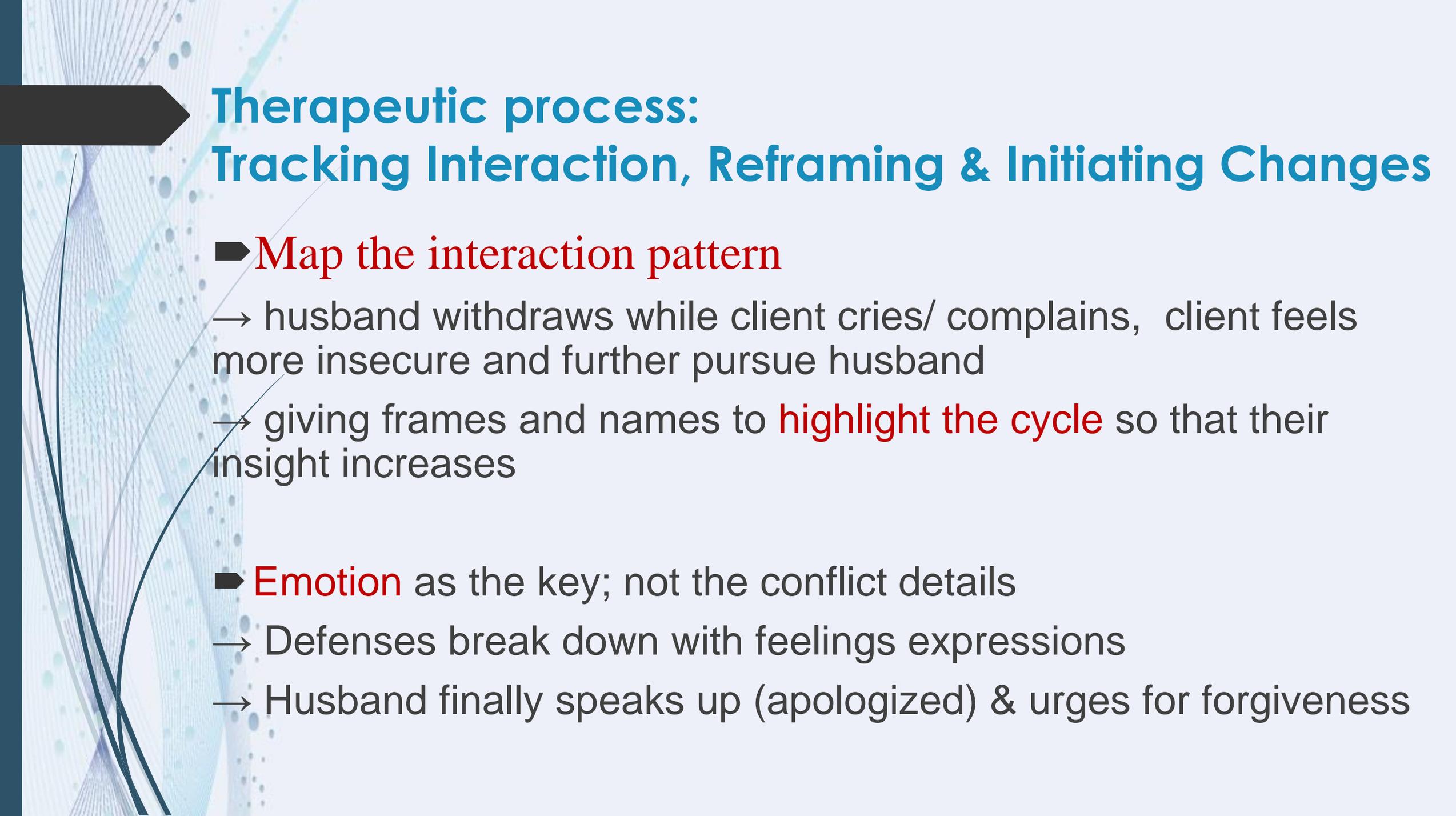
## Intervention: prior to joint interview Focusing on Engagement & goal consensus

- Assisted husband to process his struggles/ guilt prior to joint interviews
- Emotion support for client; mood management skills
- Couple's **expectations and goal**
- **Interviewed the son**, facilitated the child to express his concerns and guilt relating to the family destructions (**differentiation from parents**)



## Couple session: Goal consensus & frames

- Began with goal consensus and validation
- Reaffirmed the couple's **motivation** to repair the marital discord, highlighted the impact on son's emotions (as *motivator*)
- Provided a safe platform to express their feelings
- Helped them to understand each others' struggles & feelings in the process



# Therapeutic process: Tracking Interaction, Reframing & Initiating Changes

## ➤ Map the interaction pattern

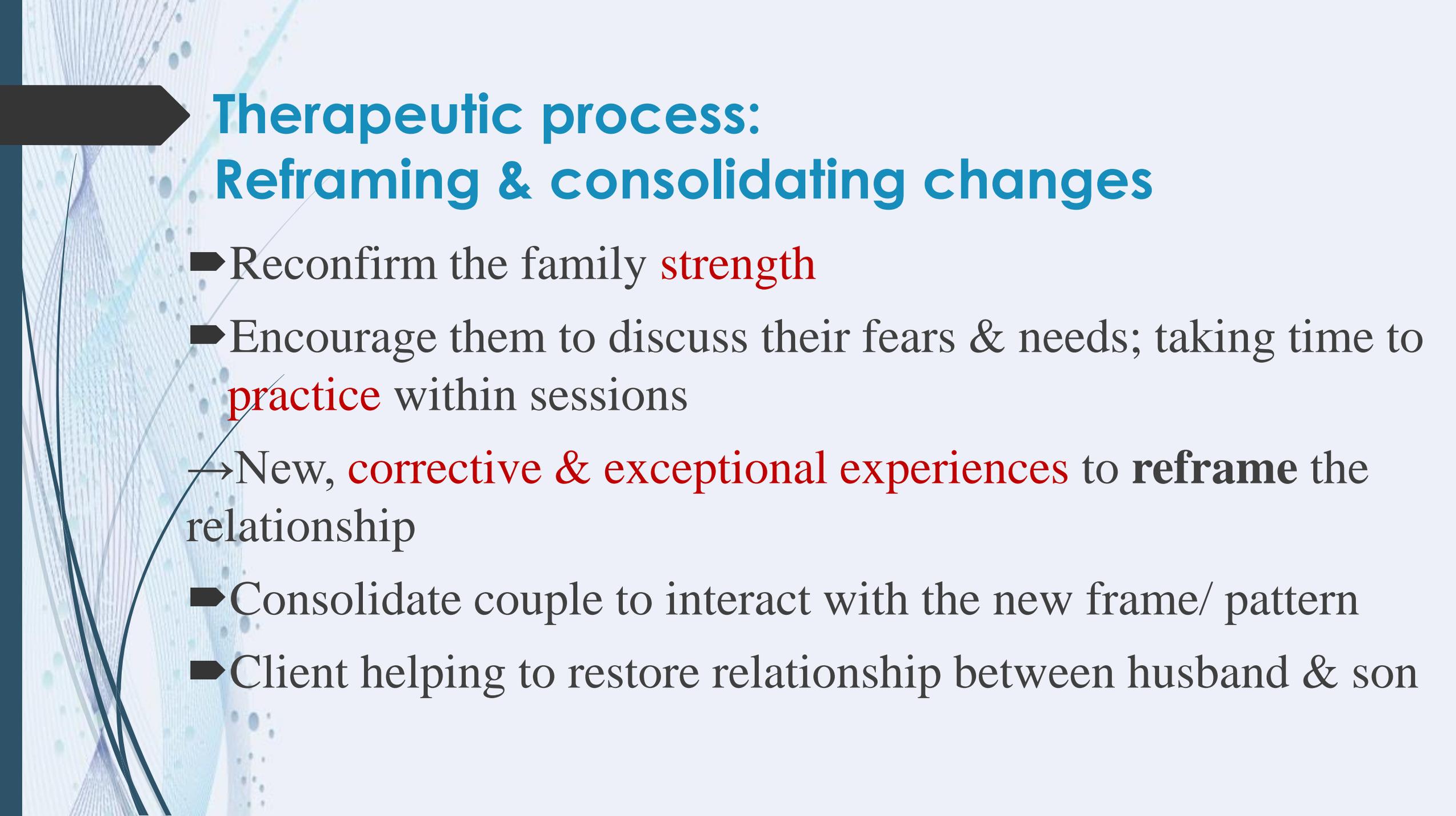
→ husband withdraws while client cries/ complains, client feels more insecure and further pursue husband

→ giving frames and names to **highlight the cycle** so that their insight increases

## ➤ Emotion as the key; not the conflict details

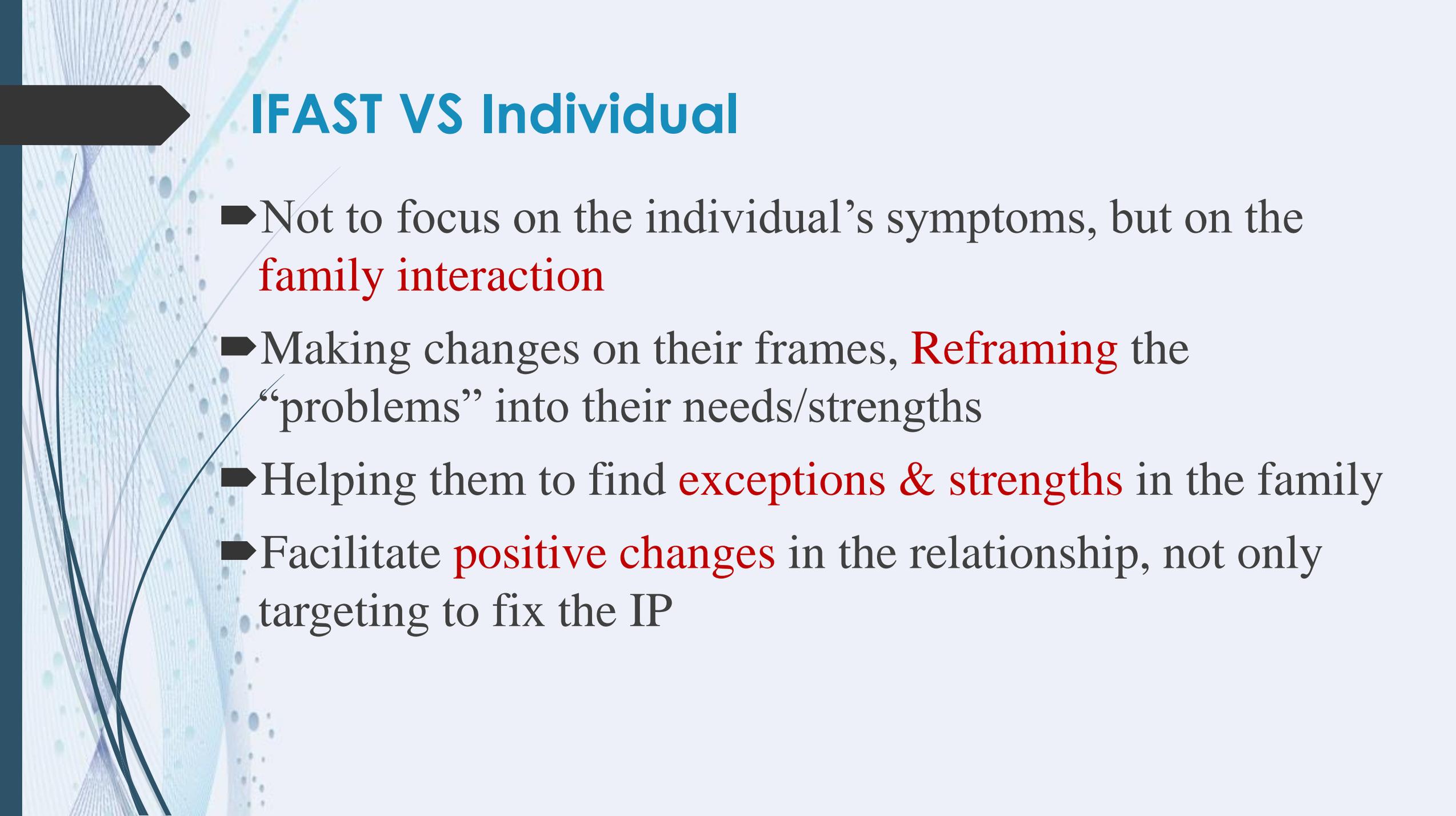
→ Defenses break down with feelings expressions

→ Husband finally speaks up (apologized) & urges for forgiveness



## Therapeutic process: Reframing & consolidating changes

- Reconfirm the family **strength**
- Encourage them to discuss their fears & needs; taking time to **practice** within sessions
- New, **corrective & exceptional experiences** to **reframe** the relationship
- Consolidate couple to interact with the new frame/ pattern
- Client helping to restore relationship between husband & son



## IFAST VS Individual

- Not to focus on the individual's symptoms, but on the **family interaction**
- Making changes on their frames, **Reframing** the “problems” into their needs/strengths
- Helping them to find **exceptions & strengths** in the family
- Facilitate **positive changes** in the relationship, not only targeting to fix the IP



THANK YOU!