Tool used by clinicians to relate theory to practice. It is the lynchpin that holds theory and practice together. Can be best understood as hypotheses to be tested (Butler, 1998)

- Use theory to help make sense of what client is experiencing at that moment in time

- A psychotherapy case formulation is essentially a hypothesis about the causes, precipitants, and maintaining influences of a person’s psychological, interpersonal, and behavioural problems (Eells, 1997)

**Essential Features**

- Summarises the service user’s core problems
  - A meaningful narrative that integrates the problems and creates story with client (collaborative)

- Suggests how the service user’s difficulties may relate to one another by drawing on psychological theories and principles
  - Also allows you to think about what issues may come up in therapy, your own issues