

# Introduction to Psychological Counselling

Being a Counsellor

Session Week 8

Abba Hailegebriel Girma, PhD

*The Ethiopian Orthodox Theological  
College Houston, Texas, USA*

# Who Should Counsel?

- Counsellors come in all shapes and sizes. Like anyone with Skills, though, some will be better at it than other.
- Much of the time, counselling is dependent not upon a range of particular skills but on the relationship develops between the two people concerned.
- By its nature, counselling calls for certain personal qualities and it is those that are discussed in this session.

# Six Main Categories of Counsellors

1. Professional counselors or psychotherapists – includes:
  - Clinical psychologists,
  - Counseling psychotherapists,
  - Counselors
  - Some psychiatrists and
  - Social workers who have taken training on appropriately accredited courses.
2. Paraprofessionals or quasi-counselors
  - Who have taken substantial training in counseling profession but the course may be not accredited yet.

# Continued ....

## 3. Helpers in working place - include

- Teaching,
- Managing,
- Supervising,
- Financial,
- Legal,
- Medical,
- Religious and
- Social work sectors.

## Continued ....

4. Voluntary counselors and helpers who have taken some kinds of training in counseling skills.
5. Support workers who involve in the section of peer helping or support networks. These groups cover areas of diversity (i.e. race, gender issues, culture and so on).
6. Informal helpers, who assist their friends, colleagues, parent.

# Personal Qualities of a Counsellor

Counsellor needs:

1. Good Attitude (i.e. **Unconditional positive regard, Sense of humor, Wisdom, Respect, Personal Warmth, Genuineness, Non-possessive, Empathy**)
2. Active Listening Skills – Listening is most important part of counselling. Counsellors are nothing if they can't listen.
3. Verbal communication Skills
4. Giving Indications

# What Counsellor Do?

- The Counsellors' main task is helping individuals who seek help through counselling.
- To some extent they can do interventions throughout their counselling practices.
- There are six types of counselling interventions
  1. Prescriptive interventions instructions, being critical or directive
  2. Informative interventions - interventions imparting new knowledge, instructing or interpreting
  3. Confronting interventions - challenging a restrictive attitude or behaviour, giving direct feedback within a caring context
  4. Cathartic interventions - seeking to release emotion in the form of weeping, laughter, trembling or anger
  5. Catalytic interventions - encouraging the patient to discover and explore his own latent thoughts and feelings
  6. Supportive interventions - offering comfort and approval, affirming the patient's intrinsic value.

# Counsellors

## Counsellors Must

- Develop their listening Skills
- Not Judge
- Pay attention
- Empathic
- Feel safe and respected
- Develop their thinking
- Know you care
- Know you are with him/her  
know he/she is not being  
judged

## Counsellors may

- Ask questions
- Develop their own thinking
- Summarize
- Hear their thought and know  
they are
- Ask the client to try new  
behaviour in the counselling  
session
- Release blocking emotion  
such as, unexpressed anger or  
sadness.



## Continued ...

### Counsellors Should not

- Argue
- Defensive
- Dwell on their own difficulties
- Withdraw
- Solve the problem for the client
- Dependant
- Give advice
- Belittle the clients' concern
- Dependant or hostile
- Withdraw or attack
- Be frustrated

# Role of the Counsellor

## Role of the counsellor (in cognitive)

- The counsellor is as a teacher and model. The counsellor is a teacher of transactional analysis and its unique language.
- The counsellor contracts with the client for the changes that they desire
- The counsellor helps the client to explore conscious thoughts, beliefs and logic for behaviours that are not in the client's best interest. The client - counsellor relationship is an equal one with the counsellor sharing insights, impressions, opinions, and feelings with the client to promote the therapeutic relationship.
- Counselling is very cognitive with an emphasis on the examination of faulty logic and empowering the client to take responsibility to change through a re-educational process.
- The counsellor encourages the client to behave "as if" the client were who they wished to be and often provides the client with "homework" assignments outside the sessions.

# Continued ....

- Each client is considered a unique relationship with the counsellor focusing on being authentic with the client and entering into a deep personal sharing relationship
- The counsellor models how to be authentic, to realize personal potential, and to make decisions with emphasis on mutuality, wholeness and growth.
- The counsellor creates an environment for the client to explore their needs in order to grow.
- The counsellor is fully with the client in the here--and--now with intense personal involvement and honesty.
- The counsellor helps the client to focus on blocking energy and to positively and adaptively use that energy.
- The counsellor also helps the clients to discern life patterns.
- Among the rules that counsellors use to help client:
  - i. The principle of the now requires the counsellor to use present tense.
  - ii. I and Thou means that the client must address the person directly rather than talk about them or to the counsellor about them.
  - iii. Making the client use I instead of referring to own experiences in the second (you) or third (it) person.
  - iv. The use of an awareness continuum that focuses on how and what rather than on why.
  - v. The counsellor has the client convert questions into statements.

# Continued ....

- Role of the Counselor (in Behavioural Counselling)
  - Roles of the behavioral counselor are varies and include being a consultant, a reinforcer, and a facilitator
  - Counselors using social learning may model the desired behavior, while respondent and operant conditioning counselors are more directive and prescriptive in their approach to the therapy goals
  - Use of tests and diagnosis varied greatly among behavioral counselors
- Counselling Goals
  - The emphasis is on the here and now of the client's experience
  - The client is encouraged to make choices based on the now as opposed to past
  - Help the client resolve the past
  - Assist the client to become congruent.
  - Help the client to reach maturity intellectually.
  - Help the client shed neuroses.

# Continued ....

- The goal of behaviorists counselors like other theories is to improve the life of the client through better adjustments to life and to achieve personal goals professionally and personally .
- Four steps in developing therapeutic goals are:
  1. Define the problem concretely specifying when, where, how and
  2. with whom the problem exists.
  3. Take a developmental history of the problem eliciting conditions surrounding the beginning of the problem and what solutions the client has tried in the past.
  4. Establish specific subgoals in small incremental steps toward the final goal.
  5. Determine the best behavioral method to be used help the client change.

# Learning Journal

Complete your Learning Journal entry from today's class.

# Next – Week 9 Session

## Values and Ethics in Counselling

# References

- Nolasco, Rolf Jr. (2011) *The Contemplative Counsellor: A Way of Being* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press)
- Tyler, L. (1969) *The Work of the Counsellor*, 3rd ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts)