

# Introduction to Psychological Counselling

Introduction to Counselling Skills

Session Week 7

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# Aim and Learning Outcomes – Week 7 Session

## Aim of lecture

- Consider the most helpful attitudes to adopt
- Consider the process of therapeutic communication
- Apply fundamental skills:
  - Attending and listening
  - Questioning

## Learning Outcomes

From this presentation, student will be given information to:

- Utilize skills of challenging and confronting
- Explain the purpose of immediacy and self disclosure
- Practice counselling skills

# Introduction

During this Session you can:

- Discover what is meant by “counselling skills”, what they’re used for and why their use is not the same as counselling.
- Get a sense of what happens on a counselling skills.
- Find out how this counselling skill might benefit.

# Counselling Skills

## Core Conditions In Counselling

- Empathy
- Congruence
- Unconditional positive regard
- Non-verbal communication
  - and self-awareness
  - and counselling
  - and counselling skills practice:
- Observation skills
- Active listening
  - What is ‘Active Listening’? Skills practice: Active Listening and Observation skills.
    - How you feel about playing Charades?
    - How you feel about doing Role Plays?
    - How you feel about Presenting in counselling session?
- Written communication skills

## Continued ....

### Non-verbal communication

- What strategies do you use to deduce what another person is trying to communicate?
- What modes / ways / methods / pathways can a person communicate information about him/her self to you, apart from actual words.
- When you meet someone for the first time (a client, or someone who is coming to you for help), what might you look for in any written correspondence, telephone conversation or first meeting that communicates information about them?
- What do you communicate non-verbally? Remember – your client is observing you too!

# Empathy – Congruence -Unconditional positive regard

## Empathy

**“Empathy is the ability to accurately perceive the internal frame of reference of another with accuracy...” Rogers (1957)**

- Trying to see the world from the other person’s perspective.
- Trying to understand their world, their meanings.
- Imagining how it must be.
- Communicating this back to the client.

## Congruence

- This means being open to ones own feelings as much as possible. It means being real, being concrete, honest, with no facades, not hiding behind being the ‘expert’.

## Unconditional positive regard

- This means being non-judgmental, being warm and accepting.
- One must be able to accept the other person as a fellow human being.
- One should not have pre-conceived ideas about the other person
- One should not be judgemental.

# Active Listening

- Cluster of skills used to increase the accuracy of our understanding
- Includes: Attending, Silence, Paraphrasing, and Summarizing
- Although we often think of someone being a “good listener” as a personality trait, these are *skills that can be taught*
- Listening is a complex process
  - What is said
  - How it is said
  - What isn't said
  - Contradictions between verbal and nonverbal
  - Emotional reaction
  - Incongruity
  - Not easy or automatic

# The Main Counselling Skills - Lists

1. **Preparation** of yourselves and the setting before beginning.  
Establishment of appropriate framework so speaker knows what is on offer.
2. **Attention to your body language**
  - (SOLER: Seating, Open Posture, Trunk lean, Eye contact, Relax – avoid tense mannerisms)
3. **Observation** (of the speaker's body language and tone of voice and general style of interaction) in relation to what they are saying.
4. **Listening with concentration** to the content of the narrative (the activities, thoughts and feelings described by the speaker). Focus on the whole picture rather than memorising every detail.
5. **Accepting silence** at times. Reflecting silence sometimes.
6. **Thinking** about what you are hearing and observing and putting it together in your mind. May want to think about the process (the way the person tells the story). May want to think about your own reactions.

## Continued ...

7. **Responding by Reflecting, paraphrasing, clarifying.** These are all terms which get used slightly differently by different authors. Basically the idea behind them is that you need to get across the idea that you are listening and trying to understand/experience what the other person means. Repeating a version in your own words of what the speaker has said or done, and checking to see that you have get it right helps the speaker feel that they are getting through to you. (In person-centred terms, you are aiming to respond from a position of empathic experiencing of the other person's frame of reference; the responding should not be a mechanical parroting.)
8. **Appropriate questioning.** Try to avoid questions at start of a session if you want to reduce the appearance of being an “expert” with power to “cure”. Always ask yourself why you are asking this question. It should always be for the benefit of the speaker, not for your own curiosity, not as an indirect way of giving advice, not to break silence and not to rescue speaker from uncomfortable thought. Closed, multiple, and “why” questions are generally less welcome. May be helpful to ask a question to help person explore further something that has been hinted at or stated in a very general way, or to help decide which of various issues to focus on at first

## Continued ....

9. **Summarising.** A combination of the various types of responding but over a larger amount of content. Often useful as a preliminary to help the speaker identify a focus.
10. **Focusing.** Helping speaker to identify and stick to issue/area they want to attend to now.
11. **Challenging.** Could be helping person be specific rather than vague when they are describing their situation and feelings. Could be trying to tune up or tune down level of speaker's involvement in feelings so that they can become aware of feelings, or alternatively calm the feelings sufficiently to think about them. Could include offering an alternative viewpoint for speaker's consideration. Generally ways of inviting person to explore further.
12. **Immediacy.** Making use of what's happening in relationship between speaker and listener at that moment. Related to an aspect of person-centred "congruence".
13. **Action planning.** Helping speaker think about exactly what want. Helping speaker decide what action to take. Considering obstacles and how to meet them
14. **Ending.** Clarity about time frame. Clarity about future meetings. Clarity about referrals if relevant. Awareness of loss.

# Learning Journal

Complete your Learning Journal entry from today's class.

# Next – Week 8 Session

- Being a Counsellor

# References

- Aldridge, Sally and Rigby, Sally (2001) *BACP Counselling Skills in Context*, London: Hodder and Stoughton is a useful concise summary of skills.
- Egan, Gerald *The Skilled Helper* (various editions – eighth the most recent) a very detailed model giving specific skills for helping people solve problems.
- Frankland, Alan and Sanders, Pete (1995), *Next Steps in Counselling*. Ross-on-Wye: PCCS Books. Aimed at certificate level courses.
- Hough, Margaret (2006) *Counselling Skills and Theory*, 2nd (Leicester: Willis)