
UNIT 3 COUNSELLING PROCESS: COUNSELLING INTERVIEW AND COUNSELLING RELATIONSHIP

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3.0 INTRODUCTION

In this unit we will be dealing with counseling process, counseling interview and counseling relationship. In the counseling process we will be presenting the need for counseling, how to prepare oneself for counseling, how to conduct counseling sessions and how to followup after the counseling session has ended.

Then we take up phases of counseling followed by goals of counseling in which we will present the various counseling goals such as the developmental goals, preventive goals, cognitive goals etc. Then we deal with how to start the initial counseling interview in which opening the counseling session will be discussed and what strategies of counseling the counsellor should use etc. will be mentioned. Then we deal with counseling interview process in which we start with establishing relationship to problem identification and exploration and the various methods of problem solving etc. Then we deal with different communication skills needed for interviewing and counseling the client.

3.1 OBJECTIVES

After reading this unit, you will be able to:

- Define the counseling process;
- Explain how to identify the need for counseling;
- Explain how to prepare and conduct counseling sessions;
- Elucidate the phases of counseling process;
- Present the goals of counseling;
- Explain how to conduct the initial counselling interview;
- Describe establishing counseling relationship with the client; and
- Analyse the various counseling skills needed to make effective counseling.

3.2 THE COUNSELING PROCESS

Counselling is a process in which the counselor, or therapist, helps the client understand the causes for problems and guides the person through the process of learning to make good life decisions. Initially, counselling can be a bit painful, in that one may be suddenly come face to face with certain unpleasant aspects of one's own self. However, as the person continues on with the counseling sessions, the person will discover that the sessions are easier and easier, and the client will learn to be more positive, and make better decisions. The counselor's role is to guide the client through the process and not tell what the client should do. The clients are helped to help themselves.

Let us now look at the processes in the counseling process and these are:

- Identify the need for counseling.
- Prepare for counseling.
- Conduct counseling.
- Follow up.

3.2.1 Identification of the Need for Counseling

It is important first step to identify the need for counseling. Whether the person concerned requires counseling at all and if so what is the reason for the same. Sometimes counseling may be needed by a child in the school who is unable to benefit from the teaching learning process that goes on in the school. In yet another case an adolescent facing self esteem problems or showing aggression

or extreme anger at trivial things may need counseling to overcome the anger and aggression and restore the self esteem. In certain other cases an adult who has gone through a financial crisis in business may need counseling to overcome the depression that the person is facing. In yet other cases, there may be a marital problem or divorce situation which needs to be handled through counseling. In organisations and industries, counseling may be required to motivate the employees to work better and to their full potential or in some cases to overcome the workplace violence etc. Counselling for better interpersonal relationship is very much needed in an organisation where the work and performance of employees are affected due to lack of positive interpersonal relationship amongst various levels of staff.

3.2.2 Preparation for Counselling

Successful counseling requires preparation. To prepare for counseling, the following needs to be done:

- Select a suitable place.
- Schedule the time.
- Notify the person or the client well in advance.
- Organise information.
- Outline the counseling session components.
- Plan the counseling strategy.
- Establish the right atmosphere.

As for selecting a suitable place, counseling should be carried out in an environment that minimises interruptions and is free from distracting sights and sounds.

Regarding the scheduling the time, when possible, the client should be counseled after deciding upon a mutually convenient timing. The length of time required for counseling depends on the complexity of the issue. Generally a counseling session should last less than an hour. If the client needs more time, a second session may be scheduled. Also the counsellor should select a time free from competition with other activities and consider what has been planned after the counseling session. Important events can distract a client from concentrating on the counseling.

For a counseling session to be client centered, the client must have time to prepare for it. The client should know why, where, and when the counseling will take place. Counseling following a specific event should happen as close to the event as possible. However, for performance or professional development counseling, clients may need a week or more to prepare or review specific products, such as support forms or counseling records.

Solid preparation is essential to effective counseling. The counsellor should review all pertinent information. This includes the purpose of the counseling, facts and observations about the client, identification of possible problems, main points of discussion, and the development of a plan of action. Focus on specific and objective behaviours that the client must maintain or improve as well as a plan of action with clear, obtainable goals.

It is important to outline the components of the counseling session. For this, using the information obtained, the counsellor should determine what to discuss during the counseling session. He must note what prompted the counseling, what the counsellor aims to achieve, and what the role of the counselor is. It is important to identify possible comments or questions to help the counsellor keep the counseling session client centered and help the client progress through its stages. Although the counsellor never knows what a client will say or do during counseling, a written outline helps organise the session and enhances the chance of positive results.

Many approaches to counseling exist, such as directive, nondirective, and combined approaches to counseling. The counsellor should use a strategy that suits the clients and the situation.

The counsellor must establish the right atmosphere which promotes two way communication between a counsellor and a client. Some situations make an informal atmosphere inappropriate. For example, during counseling to correct substandard performance of a subordinate, the manager who functions also as a counsellor, may direct the client subordinate to remain standing while he remains seated behind a desk. This formal atmosphere, normally used to give specific guidance, reinforces the manager's rank, position in the chain of command, and authority. But in general counseling session this is not advocated. The counsellor should sit in such a manner that he is able to observe every emotion of the client and note every gesture verbal and nonverbal that the client makes so that the same could be used in counseling and problem solving sessions.

3.2.3 Conduct of Counseling Session

While conducting the counseling session, the counsellor should be flexible. Often counseling for a specific incident occurs spontaneously as counselors encounter clients in their daily activities. Even when the counsellor has not prepared for formal counseling, he should address the four basic components of a counseling session. Their purpose is to guide effective counseling rather than mandate a series of rigid steps. Counseling sessions consist of:

- Opening the session.
- Discussing the issues.
- Developing the plan of action.
- Recording and closing the session.

Ideally, a counseling session results in a client's commitment to a plan of action. Assessment of the plan of action becomes the starting point for follow up counseling.

Open the Session: In the session opening, the counsellor should state the purpose of the session and establish a client centered setting. The best way to open a counseling session is to clearly state its purpose. For example, an appropriate purpose statement might be: "The purpose of this counseling is to discuss your personal relationship problem with your spouse and then to create a plan to enhance the relationship so that you can manage your problem without difficulty. If applicable, the counsellor can start the counseling session by reviewing the status of the previous plan of action.

Discuss the issue: The counsellor and the client should attempt to develop a mutual understanding of the issues. The counsellor can best develop this by letting the client do most of the talking. He can use active listening, respond, and question without dominating the conversation. The aim of the counsellor is to help the client better understand the subject of counseling, for example, interpersonal relationship, a problem situation and its impact on the client's daily routine.

Both the counsellor and the subordinate should provide examples or cite specific observations to reduce the perception that either is unnecessarily biased or judgmental. However, when the issue is poor interpersonal relationship, the counsellor should make clear how the interpersonal relationship is poor. The conversation, which should be two-way, then addresses what the client needs to do to improve the interpersonal relationship. It is important that the counsellor defines the issue as poor interpersonal relationship and does not allow the client to define the issue as one which cannot be set right. The counsellor should help the client consider altering the conditions under which the client may be able to improve the interpersonal relationship. .

Develop a Plan of Action: A plan of action identifies a method for achieving a desired result. It specifies what the subordinate must do to reach the goals set during the counseling session. The plan of action must be specific. It should show the client as to how to modify or maintain his behaviour. It should avoid vague intentions such as "Next month I want you to improve your communication skills with your children. The plan must use concrete and direct terms. For example, the counsellor may state that the client will appreciate his wife's cooking or any room arrangement that she has made. After coming back the next week for counseling session, the client will give a feed back to the counsellor and depending on what the feed back is the counsellor may be able to suggest certain skills that might work better.

Record and Close the Session: Although requirements to record counseling sessions vary, a counsellor always benefits by documenting the main points of a counseling session. Documentation serves as a reference to the agreed upon plan of action and the client's accomplishments, improvements, personal preferences, or problems. A complete record is made of counseling aids in making recommendations for professional development, schools, promotions, and evaluation reports.

To close the session, the counsellor should summarise its key points and ask if the client understands the plan of action. Invite the client to review the plan of action and what is expected of the counsellor. With the client, the counsellor should establish follow up measures necessary to support the successful implementation of the plan of action. These may include providing the client with resources and time, periodically assessing the plan, and following through on referrals. The counsellor must schedule any needed future meetings, even if only tentatively, before terminating the counseling session.

3.2.4 Follow Up

The counseling process does not end with the counseling session. It continues through implementation of the plan of action and evaluation of results. After counseling, the counsellor must support the clients as they implement their plans

of action. Support may include teaching, coaching, or providing time and resources. The counsellor must observe and assess this process and possibly modify the plan to meet its goals. Appropriate measures after counseling include follow up counseling, making referrals, and taking corrective measures.

3.3 PHASES OF COUNSELLING PROCESS

In addition to this, there are four phases in initial stages of the counseling process and these are: (i) Assess the plan of action (ii) Making an informed assessment (iii) Establish mutually agreed upon goals and objectives and (4) Implementation of the plan. Let us take each of these and discuss.

Phase 1: Assess the Plan of Action

The purpose of counseling is to develop clients who are better able to achieve the purpose for which the counseling session started initially. During the assessment, the counsellor should review the plan of action with the client to determine if the desired results were achieved. The counsellor and the client should determine the date for this assessment during the initial counseling session. The assessment of the plan of action provides useful information for future follow up counseling sessions.

There is a natural progression that takes place within the context of the helping relationship. This process enables the counsellor and the client to build a relationship, assess the situation, set goals and come up with a plan to bring about the desired results. This progression is known as the counseling process.

Phase 2: Make an Informed Assessment

An informed assessment happens when both the counsellor and the client gather information in order to figure out what “really” is going on, so that the counsellor can assess what needs to happen next in order to change the situation for the better or build up the client’s coping skills to better deal with a problematic situation. The first step in making an assessment is to find out if change is necessary, and if it is what needs to happen for change to take place. If the counsellor has decided that change is necessary, then the next step is to figure out what needs to change. Is it a behaviour? An attitude? A situation?

A good assessment can provide an opportunity for a client to see how his/her behaviour or attitude might be contributing to an undesirable or unhealthy situation. Assessment is an ongoing process. The counsellor needs to regularly check in with the client to see how things are going. Reassessments enable the counsellor to ensure that the counsellor and the client are on the right track.

The counsellor gathers information in a number of ways: talking with the client, observing the client’s behaviour and interactions, discussions with other people who are involved in the client’s life, and reading any documented information on the client. The counsellor should keep in mind that when utilising client’s information given by some one else, he must make sure that there is no bias or assumptions.

Phase 3: Establish Mutually agreed upon Goals and Objectives

Why is it important to establish “mutually agreed” upon goals and objectives? Because if a client is in agreement with the goals then he/she is more likely to

follow through on them. When a client is actively involved in the goal setting process and is in agreement with the goals, then he/she is more inclined to take ownership of the goals, which have to be accomplished.

The counsellor must think of goals as the end result that he is trying to achieve. While goals are broad statements that identify what the counsellor wants to accomplish overall, objectives are the measurable steps that the counsellor takes to achieve the goals. For example if the counsellor has a goal that states that the client will be better able to manage her anger, one of the objectives of the counsellor might be, that the client will recognise emotional triggers that lead to angry outbursts and use positive, self-talk to calm herself down. Thus the objectives of the counsellor should always be concrete and measurable. They should also be derived from the overall goal.

Phase 4: Implementation Plan

The implementation plan is a plan that the counsellor and the client work on together. It is designed to prevent, intervene, or address unhealthy behaviours and practices. The implementation plan identifies who will perform the activities, where the activities will occur, how frequently they will occur, how they will be carried out and when they will be carried out. Implementation activities are designed to help clients rethink risky behaviour, work through problematic issues, address unhealthy lifestyle practices, learn new skills and build strengths. Implementation activities can include: counseling, crisis intervention, training and education, supportive services, concrete services and constructive use of free time.

As the counsellor can understand, each stage of the counseling process builds upon the former. As the counsellor moves through each stage, he will come to realise that it takes patience and practice to counsel the client effectively, but if the counsellor is committed to the goal he will be able to achieve and implement successfully. The counsellor may not feel completely confident in their ability as a counselor, but as he expands his knowledge base, he would gain more experience and strengthen his helping skills, and thus he will become a more effective counselor.

3.4 GOALS OF COUNSELLING

The counseling process is a very specific step by step process. There are important steps that must be adhered to if one wants to maximise positive outcomes in the client's therapy treatment of resolving various psychological, social, emotional and developmental issues. The counseling process has some major goals through which the entire treatment and positive outcomes the treatment rests on. Verbal and non verbal cues of ones body language play an important role in the counselors counseling process to bring out the best solutions for client issues and for the clients comfort level to be established for a positive and healthy counselor client helping relationship.

The goals of counseling are:

3.4.1 Developmental Goals

These are goals wherein the clients are assisted in meeting or advancing their anticipated growth and potential development (that is socially, personally, emotionally, cognitively, physical wellness and so on).

3.4.2 Preventive Goals

Prevention is a goal in which the counselor helps the client avoid some undesired outcomes.

3.4.3 Enhancement Goals

If the client possesses special skills and abilities, enhancement means they can be identified and/or further developed through assistance of a counselor.

3.4.4 Remedial Goals

Remediation involves assisting a client to overcome and/or treat an undesirable development.

3.4.5 Exploratory Goals

Exploration represents goals appropriate to the examining of options, testing of skills, and trying of different and new activities, environments, relationships and so on.

3.4.6 Reinforcement Goals

Reinforcement is used when clients need help in recognising that what they are doing, thinking or feeling is right and okay.

3.4.7 Cognitive Goals

Cognition involves acquiring the basic foundations of learning and cognitive skills.

3.4.8 Physiological Goals

Physiology involves acquiring the basic understandings and habits for good health.

3.4.9 Psychological Goals

Psychology helps in developing good social interaction skills, learning emotional control, developing a positive self concept, and so on.

Hackney and Cormier (1996), talk about 3 goals that are important for the counseling process.

- 1) Goals serve as a motivational function in the counseling process.
- 2) The goals can also have educational function in counseling, in that they can help clients acquire and learn new responses and behaviours and
- 3) The goals can also meet an evaluative function in the counseling whereby the clients goals help the counselor to choose and evaluate various counseling strategies appropriate to the client's goals.

3.5 INITIAL COUNSELING INTERVIEW

3.5.1 Opening the Counseling Session

There is no doubt that the initial interview puts maximum demands upon the counselor's skill, knowledge, and abilities. How the initial interview is structured

and developed will have a strong influence upon the subsequent developments and outcomes of a counseling relationship. Errors made in the first session are usually much more costly than those made after a good working relationship has been established. If the initial interview has developed toward goals as outlined herein, then the counselee will find he has been able to express and explore some of life's difficulties which have been bothersome or disturbing to him. He is likely to feel some progress has been made. The counselor should recognize that a major counseling goal has been achieved when, at the end of the initial interview, he feels he has established a helping or working relationship with the counselee.

3.5.2 Counseling Interview: Strategies

The counseling interview is a very common type of communication situation. In fact, we are all called upon to offer advice to others on a daily basis. These suggestions identify some of the skills necessary for effective counseling interviews:

- The counsellor performs the counseling role whenever called upon to offer advice on emotional, financial, academic, or personal problems. These situations are very important since they directly influence sensitive aspects of others' lives.
- Effective counseling skills begin with a thoughtful self analysis including an assessment of counsellor's own feelings and communication skills. Based upon this analysis, the counsellor must be realistic about his own counseling skills and not try to solve every problem encountered .
- The counsellor must also carefully consider the background of the client so that the counsellor's advice can meet that person's needs.
- Based on the counsellor's analysis of own skills as well as the needs of the other person, the counsellor must decide whether to use the directive or nondirective approach. The directive approach is best when it is necessary for the counsellor to control the interview situation and the nondirective approach is best when the interviewee would best control the situation.
- Although the structure of the interview can vary, four stages are typically followed. First, the counsellor should establish rapport and create a helpful climate. Second, he should thoroughly assess the crisis/problem faced by the client. Third, the counsellor should probe more deeply into the client's feelings. Finally, the counsellor should come to some decision and offer potential solutions.
- A conductive interview climate must allow for trust, openness, and rapport between the client and the counsellor. The counsellor must also be an effective listener to truly understand the feelings of the client. When appropriate, the counsellor must ask probing questions to gather more information.
- The counsellor should use a client centered approach and provide either highly directive or highly nondirective responses. Highly nondirective responses encourage the interviewee to continue analysing and communicating ideas. Highly directive responses provide the interviewee with directives and ultimatums. These forms of responses are two ends of a continuum, and can be thought of as extremes.

- After effective closure of the interview, the counsellor should carefully evaluate the interview so that he can further refine his skills.

3.6 COUNSELING INTERVIEW PROCESS

The counseling process is usually specified by a sequence of interactions or steps. The counseling process is concerned with relationship establishment, followed by a method to identify the client's problem and patterns of exploration, leading to planning for a solution to a problem and radiation and concluding with action and termination. A brief description of each of these stages is provided in the following subsections.

3.6.1 Establish Relationship

Counseling is a relationship. It is further defined as a helping relationship. It therefore, follows that if it is to be a relationship that is helpful, the counselor must take the initiative in the initial interview to establish a climate built on trust, mutual respect,, free and open communication, and understanding in general of what the counseling process involves.

Though the responsibility shifts increasingly to the client, at this stage the responsibility for the counseling process rests on the counselor primarily. The counselor uses techniques designed to relieve tension, anxiety, stress and open up communication. Both the counselor's attitude and verbal communications are significant to the development of a satisfactory relationship. All the counselors' verbal communication skills are brought into play. These include attentive listening, understanding and feeling with the client. The quality of the counselor client relationship influences the counseling process outcomes.

The various factors that are important in the establishment of this counselor client relationship are positive regard, respect, accurate empathy and genuineness. These conditions imply the counselor's openness, that is an ability to understand and feel with the client, as well as a valuing of the client. The counselor client relationship serves not only to increase the opportunity for clients to attain their goals but also to be a potential model of a good interpersonal relationship, one that clients can use to improve the quality of their other relationships outside the therapy setting.

Counselors must keep in mind that the purpose of a counseling relationship is to meet as much as possible the clients needs and not the counselor's needs. The counseling process within this relationship seeks to assist the client in assuming the responsibilities for his or her problem and its solution. This will be facilitated by the counselor's communication skills, the ability to identify and reflect client's feelings, and the ability to identify and gain insights into the clients concerns and needs.

Establishing a relationship with the client must be achieved early in the counseling process, in as much as this will often determine whether or not the client will continue. The initial counseling process has a goal and so has the client a goal. Let us see what these are.

The goals of the initial counseling process are as follows:

- 1) Establish a comfortable and positive relationship.
- 2) Explain the counseling process and mutual responsibilities to the client.
- 3) Facilitate communications.
- 4) Identify and verify the clients concerns that brought her or him to seek counseling assistance.
- 5) Plan, with the client, to obtain assessment data needed to proceed with the counseling process.

Understand the counseling process and his or her responsibilities in this process.

Share and amplify reasons for seeking counseling.

Cooperate in the assessment of both the problem and self.

3.6.2 Problem Identification and Exploration

Once an adequate relationship has been established, clients will be more receptive to the in depth discussion and exploration of their concerns. At this stage, clients must assume more responsibility because it is their problem, and therefore, it is their responsibility to communicate the details of the problem to the counselor and respond to any questions the counselor may have in order to maximise counselors assistance and help.

During this phase, the counselor continues to exhibit attending behaviour and may place particular emphasis on such communication skills as paraphrasing, clarifying doubts, perception, checking or giving feedback. The counselor may question the client, but questions are stated in such a way as to help the client to continue exploring client's problem area. Questions that can embarrass clients are avoided. Throughout this phase the counsellor has to be very conscious about knowing the cultural difference and culturally specific behaviours and responses.

Here, the counsellor seeks to distinguish between the surface problems and the problems that are deeper and more complex. The counsellor tries to identify that the problem stated initially is the actual problem or that there could be another more important underlying issue that needs to be attended to and dealt with to the client. This may be a time for information gathering. The more usable information the counselor has, the greater are the prospects of accurate assessment of the clients needs.

The information is gathered under three headings: the time dimension, the feeling dimension and cognitive dimension are as follows:

- i) **The time dimension:** This includes the clients past experiences, especially those which he or she may view as influencing experiences of their lives.
- ii) **The feeling dimension:** This includes the emotions and feelings of the client towards himself and herself, as well as significant others, including groups, attitudes, values, and self concept.
- iii) **The cognitive dimension:** This includes how the client solves problems, the coping styles that she or he employs, the rationality used in making daily decisions and the clients capacity and readiness for learning.

The goals of this stage are for counselors to seek and integrate as much information as possible from the client. The counselor also shares these perceptions with the client. A goal of this stage is for both the counselor and the client to perceive the problem and its resolution. One of the counselor's goals during this stage is to help the client develop a self understanding that recognises the need for dealing with the need for change and action. Problem solving is used to promote client understanding of action plans for resolving problems.

Steps or stages of problem identification and exploration are as follows:

- 1) Defining the problem as to what is the issue clearly.
- 2) Exploring the problem by gathering necessary information and then exploring various alternatives in finding solution to the problem.
- 3) Integrating the information that has been gathered from the client and then summarising it and putting it down clearly for the possible course of action to be taken in resolving the problem.

3.6.3 Plan for Problem Solving

Once the counselor has determined that all relevant information regarding the client's concern is available and understood, and once the client has accepted the need for doing something about a specific problem, the time is ripe for developing a plan to solve or remediate the concern of the client. Here, effective goal setting becomes the vital part of the counseling activity. Mistakes in goal setting can lead to nonproductive counseling procedures and clients loss of confidence in the counseling process. In this stage there are some sequential steps in viewing the processes involved.

- 1) Define the problem
- 2) Identify and list all possible solutions
- 3) Explore the consequences of the suggested solutions.
- 4) Prioritize the solutions on the basis of priority needs.

In the further development of this plan, the counselor recognises that the client will frequently not arrive at basic insights, implications, or probabilities as fast as the counselor will. However, most counselors will agree that it is better to guide the client toward realising these understandings by himself or herself, rather than just telling the client outright. To facilitate the clients understanding, the counselor may use techniques of repetition, mild confrontation, interpretation, information and obviously encouragement.

3.6.4 Solution Application and Termination

In this final stage, the responsibilities are clear cut. The client has the responsibility for applying the determined solution, and the counselor has a responsibility to encourage the client's acting on his or her determined problem solution. During the time that the client is actively encouraged in applying the problem solution, the counselor will often maintain contact as a source of follow up, support and encouragement. The client may also need the counselor's assistance in the event things do not go according to plan. Once it has been determined that the counselor and client have dealt with the client's issue to the extent possible and practical, the process should be terminated.

The termination is primarily the counselor's responsibility, although the client can terminate the sessions any time they like. The counselor usually gives some sort of an indication that the next interview should just about wrap it up and may conclude by summarising the main points of the counseling process. Usually, the counselor leaves the door open for the client's possible return in the event additional assistance is needed. Since counseling is a learning process, the counselor hopes that the client has not only learned to deal with this particular problem, but has also learned problem solving skills that will decrease the probability of the clients need for further counseling in the future.

3.7 COUNSELING SKILLS

The skills required in counseling are very important for a good counseling process to happen and these have to be reinforced both by practice and research. The counselor acquires these through learning and practice.

3.7.1 Communication Skills

Verbal communication skills: Effective Speaking as a mean of communication, effective speaking plays a vital role in people's lives. Though everybody speaks everyday and is able to express ideas, thoughts, or requests, not everybody can do it well. Some people are difficult to follow, some explain their thoughts in a complicated manner, and some are simply boring to listen to. Avoid these mistakes.

- Use plain and simple words unless the audience is specialised in the subject area.
- Use complete simple sentences for the message to be easier to comprehend.
- Do not speak too fast. It is difficult to comprehend information if much of it is presented in a short period of time.
- Make pauses. Pauses between sentences and ideas will give a listener some space to think the words over, to understand the message.
- Structure and connect ideas. Major points should be presented in a logical manner. Otherwise it is difficult to follow the speaker. So, make sure that each next thought expressed expands on the subject and on the previous point.
- Support ideas not only with words, but with intonation and nonverbal means of communication as well. Proper intonation can stress certain ideas you want to draw attention to. Nonverbal means of communication, such as gestures and facial expression, establish a closer connection with the audience, and enhance the message being communicated.

3.7.2 Communication for Effective Counselling

Effective communication is also facilitated by knowing what not to do. George and Chritiani (1995) list these barriers to communication:

- 1) Giving advice
- 2) Offering solutions

- 3) Moralising and preaching
- 4) Analysing and diagnosing
- 5) Judging or criticising
- 6) Praising and agreeing: giving positive evaluations
- 7) Reassuring

The effectiveness of counseling is determined by the effectiveness of counselor client communication. From the counselor's standpoint, communication is primarily designed to influence and motivate the client.

3.7.3 Non Verbal Communication Skills

We all are judged by our first impressions. People react to us just on how we look physically. This is a type of non-verbal communication. We receive information non verbally first and foremost. This means one does not have to use language to communicate. Non verbal communication skills are just as important as verbal communication. When we transmit information to a person, the important things is to note how we say something is also transmitted in addition to what was said to them. In fact a lot of times the receiver interprets what we have said to them by how we have said it and not the words themselves. If our non verbal communication skills are less than adequate, then there is more of a chance that the person who receives the information will misinterpret what was said.

Non verbal communication skills include a common system of symbols, signs and gestures. Even the way we dress conveys non verbal communication. People make conclusions and assumptions by the way they perceive our clothing. That is where the term dress for success has come into being. People think if you wear suits, you look the part of the business world. This is true but not necessarily correct.

Non verbal communication skills give expression to our messages that we are transmitting to be received as a communication. Virtually anything that we can communicate and receive with the senses is a form of non verbal communication. Non verbal communication involves what we call body language, which includes things like facial expressions, hand gestures, tone and pitch of voice, smell, essentially anything non verbal.

Scientific studies have shown that verbal communication is 7% of a verbal communicative transmission. The other 93% is attributed to non verbal and symbolic communication also called listening skills. Listening is the most complicated and hard part of the communication process. Many people are not good listeners. Just because one does not have a hearing problem does not mean he is listening. Listening is a skill that is also acquired. When one listens they have to hear the emotion in the words and read between the lines of the words to get the full meaning of a transmission that is received.

Listening consists of 5 key elements. Hearing, attending, understanding, responding and remembering are all components of effective listening. The actual process of hearing is a physiological process when sound waves hit the eardrum at a certain frequency. Attending is a filtering process. It includes filtering in and filtering out certain messages. Understanding happens when we interpret the

message with our capabilities. Responding is acknowledging the message with the appropriate response such as eye contact or gesture. Remembering means we can recall the message given to us. All these are factors in non verbal communication skills as well.

In order to be proficient with our nonverbal communication skills we must remember we are what we look like and what we do as well as what we say. Our body language must match our words so the listener can receive our message correctly. If we do not match in our non verbal communication with our verbal communication that there is sure to be misunderstanding between ourselves and the one we are communicating to. In fact this is the reason most people do not understand one another because the words do not match the body.

3.8 LET US SUM UP

In conclusion this section on the counseling process, we are aware of our frequent reference to the client's problem and we remind our readers that problems are not always based on perceived inadequacies or failures requiring remediation and restorative therapy. Clients can have equally pressing needs resulting from concerns for developing their human potential-for working and strengthening on their strengths and in the counseling process the emphasis is on development, growth, or enhancement rather than remediation.

3.9 UNIT END QUESTIONS

- 1) What are some examples of formal and informal counseling interview situations?
- 2) What should you consider when conducting a thorough self analysis?
- 3) What should you consider when analysing the interviewee in a counseling interview?
- 4) Why is it important to perform analyses of yourself and the interviewee prior to conducting the interview?
- 5) What are the directive and nondirective approaches to interviewing?
- 6) What are the affective and cognitive phases and what happens during each?
- 7) What type of setting should you select to create an appropriate climate and tone?
- 8) What are some strategies for the opening of the counseling interview?
- 9) Discuss the importance of listening, observing, and questioning in the counseling interview.
- 10) What does it mean to say that one should use a client-centered approach in the counseling interview?
- 11) What are the differences between highly directive, directive, nondirective, and highly nondirective approaches to responding?
- 12) What are some issues you should consider when evaluating the interview?

3.10 SUGGESTED READINGS

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