

CHAPTER THREE

3. Process of Counseling

Counseling is a psychotherapeutic process, which has several stages through which a person can successfully achieve his goal. In the process of Counseling a counselor develops a friendly relationship and ease of communication with the client for the development of self understanding through which the client can take initiatives for future betterment.

- ***The Counseling Process***

1. Relationship Building
2. Assessment
3. Goal Setting
4. Intervention
5. Termination and Follow-Up
6. Research and Evaluation

1. Relationship Building

Establishing initial structure

Counseling has to be done in the peaceful place there should not be any kind of disturbance that can interrupt and create any chaos between client and counselor. Everyday counseling must be start at a fixed timing otherwise it could be the first flaw of the process, because time management is an integral part of counseling. The counselor should gather and organize the information about the client and outline the key components of the counseling process. That includes **planning the counseling strategy** and **self role induction**.

Rapport development

the counselor's role is more like a guide, counselor does not impose his decisions on the client he always let the client choose the best possible solution for himself from the available possibilities. In rapport development counselor does not judge his client because clients can quite the process if he thinks the counselor is criticizing or evaluating his decisions/actions. Initially or later in the process, counselor should avoid ordering, advising and arguments in the process these things kills the effectiveness of the process. It is a laying foundation for mutual trust. This include...

1. Showing unconditional acceptance
2. Informing the purpose of the relationship

3. Articulating roles of counselor and client
4. Informing ethical issues: informed consent, confidentiality and limits of confidentiality
5. Informing the limitations of the relationship
6. Possible risks and cautions
7. Fees
8. Rights and obligations
9. Referral systems and other collaborators
10. Informing the client all important
11. Information about the counseling relationship

Conditions for an Effective Counseling Relationship

Empathy → *promotes rapport and relationship*

Unconditional Positive Regard → Client as person of worth – separate from actions

Genuineness/Congruence → Genuine self in client interaction

Respect → Strength focus

Immediacy → Here and Now

Confrontation → Promotes realistic, accurate view

Concreteness → Attention on what is practical

Self disclosure → Promoting positive perception and appropriate focus in counseling relationship

2. Assessment

Identifying the problem

problem identification is the mutual effort of counselor and the client, they both work together to find out the problem that the client has been facing. Here, majority of work is done by the client. The counselor acts as a facilitator to the client. After the problem is identified, the counselor starts working to know that is it the real problem of the client or not?

Exploring self perception and behavior

To know the behavior of the client there are many tests and other source of information through which accurate results can be achieved. Cumulative Record helps to know all the basic information of the client including his family background and educational settings. Questionnaire tests can be administer according to the need of the counseling process, rating scale can be used

for the behavior of the client, case study is also a very important element for some critical and emotionally disturbed client, and counselor could also make some observations on the client's behavior during the session. Interview is the most commonly used tool for counseling. Through Autobiography counselor can get the details of personal information, Family background, Personal history, previous counseling experience & Client's current life setting etc. Assessment is:

- Systematic way to obtain information about the client's problems, concerns, strengths, resources, and needs from all relevant sources.
- Foundation for goal-setting and treatment planning and intervention.
- Gathering information to promote understanding of client's situation and perspective.
- Identifying relevant collaborative sources
- Completion of risk Assessment where appropriate
- Assessment is always an ongoing process, changing as you learn more about the client.
- What is the person complaining about?
- How, when, when, why the problem happened?
- How it affects the emotions, thoughts and behavior?
- What is the person motivated for? What does he or she want?
- What does the person do well? (Skills, hobbies, talents, resources etc)
- Exceptions/previous solutions/times when situation was better
- Best coping moments
- What are the goals?

What to consider during assessment?

- What are the patterns of the problem? How is it performed? Search for regularities of action and interaction, time, place, body behavior, etc. Get specific (so could imagine seeing/hearing the problem on a videotape)
- Scan for potentially harmful actions of clients or others in clients' lives (e.g., physical violence, drug/alcohol abuse, sexual abuse, self-mutilation, suicidal intentions/attempts, etc.) that may not be obvious or may be minimized during an initial interview.

Assessment Tools

- Non-standardized tools
- Intake forms

- Intake interview
- Standardized tests (psychological tests)

3. Goal setting

Decision making

This is the step in which gathered information about the client is evaluated to find the best solution of the client's problem. For Decision making all the relevant information is gathered and arranged according to the priority of actions. Then the effectiveness of the information used is analyzed. Appropriate Choice of decision and solution's are made according to the importance of action.

Plan of action

Plan of action is a step to achieve desired goal. To obtain the desired result the client is meant to do what is planned through the counseling session with the counselor. This step is very specific it only tells the client how to maintain and made necessary modification in his behavior. Plan of action must not be complex it should be simple and specific to achieve the goal for successful development. For example; a client should not be told to go through several steps to implement the action. All the details and other information must be discussed during the decision making step.

- The client articulates where they want their counseling journey to take them
- Client role as one of *driving the bus*
- Enhances sense of ownership and motivation
- Well identified goals help to create a roadmap and means to evaluate
- Goals may change, evolve as counseling progresses

Goal functions

- Define desired outcomes
- Give direction to the counseling process
- Specify what can and cannot be accomplished in counseling
- Motivate client
- Evaluate effectiveness of counseling
- Measure client progress

Reasons of setting counseling goal

- To change an unwanted or unwelcome behavior

- To better cope
- To make and implement decisions
- To enhance relationships
- To help client's journey of growth toward achieving potential

Qualities of well formed counseling goals

- Saliency to the Client/Collaborative
- Small
- Concrete, Specific, and Behavioral
- The Presence Rather Than the Absence of Something
- A Beginning Rather Than an End
- Realistic and Achievable Within the Context of the Client's Life
- Perceived as Involving "Hard Work"

4. Counseling Intervention

- Intervention begins as soon as goals are established
- Planning for how to achieve established goals
- Action...directed in accordance with the identified models and techniques
- Collaboratively established plan
- Educational that client is offered information regarding options, and advantages/disadvantages for each

Characteristics of a good intervention plan

- Is clearly defined and reachable
- Able to be adapted with time
- Positive and action-oriented focus
- Essential to an effective plan...is client's motivation and willingness to follow it

Categories of Counseling Interventions

- Affective
- Cognitive
- Behavioral
- Interpersonal/Systemic/Psycho educational

5. Termination and Follow up

Termination is a process by itself and needs

- Collaboration with client in identifying a date in advance –
- Preparation for termination begins long before
- smooth and step-by step process
- Role to review progress, create closure in client counselor relationship and plan for future
- Think of this as a means of empowering client
- Open door/plan for possibility of future need
- Termination considered not just at end of successful relationship, but also is considered when it seems counseling is not being helpful

Follow up

- Evaluating the outcomes of the counseling and the status of change in the behavior of the client
- The process of counseling is a continuous process; it does not end with the counseling session, it proceeds with the implementation of the plan of action and evaluation of results. After the counseling process, counselor should encourage the clients as he implements on the action that is planned in the counseling session. Counselor should make observation on the actions of the client and make some changes if necessary to make the plan successful through which client can achieve his goals.

Stages of termination & follow up

- **Pre-contemplation** - *"I really don't want to change."*
- **Contemplation**- *"I'll consider it."*
- **Preparation/Determination**- *"I'm making a plan for it."*
- **Action**- *"I'm doing it, but not regularly."*
- **Maintenance**- *"I'm doing it."*
- **Termination**- *"I have no desire to go back to my own ways."*
- **Relapse**- returning back to the original status
- Another intervention plan/ referral to other professionals or systems are required

Indicators of Counseling Success

- Clients “own” their problems and solutions
- Clients develop more useful insight into problems and issues
- Clients acquire new responses to old issues
- Clients learn to develop more effective relationships

3.2. Termination

The Termination Stage is the final stage of the counseling process, but it is as important as the initial stage of counseling. The counselor discusses the whole process of termination with his client. If the solution is found then the process is terminated, but it depends on the counselee' if he is satisfied with the whole process he can stop or proceed it further. The client can consult his counselor anytime he wants.

3.2.1. Function of Termination

Termination is the end of the professional relationship with the client when the session goals have been met. A formal termination serves three functions:

- ▲ Counseling is finished and it is time for the client to face their life challenges.
- ▲ Changes which have taken place have generalized into the normal behavior of the client.
- ▲ The client has matured and thinks and acts more effectively and independently.

3.2.2. Timing of termination

There is no one answer when termination is to take place. Questions you may wish to ask yourself concerning termination include:

- ▲ Have clients achieved behavioral, cognitive, or affective goals?
- ▲ Can clients concretely show where they have made progress in what they wanted to accomplish?
- ▲ Is the counseling relationship helpful?
- ▲ Has the context of the initial counseling arrangements changed?

3.2.3. Issues of termination

3.2.4. Resistances to termination

Clients & Counselors may not want counseling to end. In many cases this may be the result of feelings about the loss and grief or insecurities of losing the relationship. For clients, this is something to process. For counselors, this is an issue for supervision.

3.2.5. Pre-matured termination

Many clients may end counseling before all goals are completed. This can be seen by not making appointments, resisting new appointments, etc... It is a good idea to try and schedule a termination/review session with the client so closure may take place. At this time a referral may

be in order.

3.2.6. Counselors Initiative termination

At times, counselors have to end counseling prematurely. Whatever the reason for the termination, a summary session is in order and referrals are made, if appropriate, to another counselor.

3.2.8 .Follow-up and referral

At times, a counselor needs to make a referral. When this is done, specific issues need to be addressed with the client:

- ▲ Reason for the referral.
- ▲ Note specific behaviors or actions which brought the need for a referral.
- ▲ Have the names of several other counselors ready for referral.
- ▲ You cannot follow up with the new counselor to see if the client followed through (Confidentiality issue).
- ▲ At times, a follow-up may be scheduled for various reasons including evaluation, research, or checking-in with client.
- ▲ Follow-ups need to be scheduled so as to not take the responsibility of change away from the client.

6. Research/Evaluation

- Research is a systematic investigation of an answer/s to a question, hypothesis,
- Evaluation may involve research
- Counselors can evaluate research to measure what changes brought through the counseling relationship
- Research one way of evaluation
- Counselors can conduct research on different issues to develop their profession