

UNIT 2: Assignment 3

The Role of Counselling Theory

3. Understand the importance of counselling theory

3.1 Explain the role of theory in relation to helping relationships

Student should complete a brief essay explaining the role of theory in relation to helping relationships.

Word count: 400 minimum.

Understanding counselling theories is imperative in the training, deliverance and practice of professional counselling.

Qualifying to become a counsellor requires a thorough understanding of different counselling theories: this begins at Level 2 in Counselling Skills, and becomes more in-depth as the learner progresses through the stages. Without an understanding of counselling theory, the aspiring counsellor will unlikely be able to advance to professional level. By learning about different approaches in early stages - such as person-centred, psychodynamic and cognitive behavioural - the learner will be able to evaluate their own skills and values in relation to the different approaches. Through ongoing learning and self reflection, the learner will be more informed in their decision regarding what to specialise in at Degree, Level 5 or Masters level; there are a myriad of qualifying courses available, but it is imperative that the learner understands how the course is tailored.

Understanding counselling theory is not only fundamental to the learning process, but also to professional practice. By understanding the different facets of counselling theory, the counsellor will be more effective in delivering different approaches and employing different skills. For instance, if a counsellor aspires to practice integrative therapy but is unaware of the 'eclectic' and 'confusing' consequences of not blending properly, then the client may not receive successful treatment. Likewise, if a counsellor is unaware of the effectual relationship between thoughts and behaviour as taught in Cognitive Behavioural training, then the counsellor could threaten to worsen the automatic thoughts and thus be detrimental to the client's behaviour. Within counselling theory comes an awareness of the reasons for ethical practice: without this knowledge, a counsellor not only jeopardises their own emotional health and wellbeing but also that of their clients. Likewise, it is important for the sake of client safety that the counsellor is trained in the legal implications of counselling: the limits of confidentiality and acquiring the appropriate insurance.

Dr. Barb LoFrisco also observes that counselling theory offers guidance, like a 'roadmap' (LoFrisco, 2013), to inexperienced counsellors - thus aiding them in their endeavour to find appropriate solutions with their clients. LoFrisco also recognises the usefulness of referring to the experiences of others within counselling theory when one is confronted by material from a client which might be complex and new. Within the context of counselling theory, aspiring counsellors should also endeavour to study various case studies, as this will help inform their own responses to clients within their practice.

References

LoFrisco, Dr. Barb (2013) 'Six Reasons Counselling Theory is Important' Accessed at: <https://www.mastersincounseling.org/six-reasons-counseling-theory-is-important.html> Accessed on: 12.03.18