

Assignment 3

Developing A Relationship Using Counselling Skills

3.1 Analyse strategies for responding to individuals in a helping relationship

Students should complete an essay analysing strategies for responding to individuals in a helping relationship.

Word count: 400 minimum.

In the broad scope of therapeutic help, there is a myriad of strategies available to learn by professional carers for the benefit of clients - for example: psychoanalysis, jungian analysis, person centred therapy, cognitive behavioural therapy, occupational therapy, art therapy, integrative healing, holistic therapy and hypnosis. For the sake of professional integrity, the counsellor should consider the appropriateness of a strategy dependent upon the client's individual needs, concerns and objectives. It cannot be assumed that one strategy will be of homogenous use to all, and thus all counsellors must consider the unique individuality of each client during the counselling process (BACP, 2016).

According to Rory Lees-Oakes and Ken Kelly of the *Counselling Tutor*, evidence demonstrates that the success of any counselling strategy is determined by the quality of the relationship between counsellor and client (Lees-Oakes, 2018). To create this trusting relationship, there are a range of skills and qualities integral to all strategic approaches which should be exploited by the counsellor such as: unconditional positive regard, congruence, empathy, genuineness, integrity, active listening, open questions and using silence to encourage client's reflection. Carl Rogers, who was a central figure in the development of humanistic counselling - valued these skills and qualities as inherent to the person-centred strategy; since his work, the BACP values these as strategically necessary for the success of any counselling approach (BACP, 2016).

Kelly places emphasis, not only on empathy as a quality of counsellors, but on 'idiosyncratic empathy' (Lees-Oakes, 2016) as a means of responding and relating to individuals in a helping relationship. During his discussion of the strategies employed to develop trust, he makes a distinction between 'rescuing' the client and making the client feel understood. Kelly suggests the latter should be the most important strategic focus when responding to clients during counselling.

A counsellor's strategic decision should be informed by a broad understanding different counselling theories: this ensures that the client receives the most suitable help. The counsellor must be self-motivated in ongoing learning - continually updating their skills and knowledge (BACP, 2016). There are three fundamentally different counselling approaches which may inform the strategy decided: psychoanalysis, person-centred and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). Each strategy bears more relevance after considering the individual's needs. For instance, if the client is struggling with repressed thoughts or transference, psychoanalytical strategies may have most relevance. Alternatively, if the individual's issues appear to stem from low self esteem, it may be more successful to adopt a person-centred strategy: empowering the client to lead the sessions, whilst the counsellor takes a facilitating role. If the client's thoughts or behaviours seem to be emerging from anxieties ('vicious cycles' which self-perpetuate negative thoughts and behaviours) then it is possible that CBT may be the most appropriate strategy when addressing the client's concerns.

References

BACP (2016) 'BACP, Ethical Framework'. Available at: <https://www.bacp.co.uk/events-and-resources/ethics-and-standards/ethical-framework-for-the-counselling-professions/> Accessed: 15/02/18

Lees-Oakes, Rory and Kelly, Ken (04.03.2016) Podcast: '005 – PD Groups – Critiques of Carl Rogers – Idiosyncratic Empathy – Counselling Placements' Available at: <https://counsellingtutor.com/005-pd-group-critique-of-carl-rogers-idiosyncratic-empathy-counselling-placements/> Accessed on: 17.02.18

Lees-Oakes, Rory and Kelly, Ken (27.01.2018) Podcast: '066 – Is All Counselling Person-Centred? – Boundaries in Counselling – When Clients Change the Topic' Available at: <https://counsellingtutor.com/066-is-all-counselling-person-centred-boundaries-in-counselling/> Accessed on: 17.02.18