



## **LEARNING NETWORK**

**Health Committee Training**

**Learning Circles**

**Basic Counselling Skills**

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Curriculum Developed by: Fundiswa Kibido

Health and Human Rights Programme  
University of Cape Town  
Department of Public Health and Family Medicine

Tel: 021 406 6429 Email:  
[Fundiswa.kibido@uct.ac.za](mailto:Fundiswa.kibido@uct.ac.za)

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Material Review: Anita Marshall  
Head of Department: Professor Leslie London

The Learning Network is a collection of 5 civil society organisations based in Cape Town:

1. The Women's Circle,
2. Ikamva Labantu,
3. Epilepsy South Africa,
4. Women on Farms Project and the
5. Cape Metro Health Forum

The Learning Network serves as the umbrella body in the Western Cape and includes 4 higher education institutions:

1. University of Cape Town (UCT)
2. University of the Western Cape (UWC)
3. Maastricht University, in the Netherlands
4. Warwick University in the UK



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## CONTENTS

	Page
1. What is counselling?	5,6
2. Different approaches to counselling	6,7
3. Exploring counselling context as CHCs	7,8
3 The role of the counsellor	9
4. Qualities of counsellor	9,13
5. Impact of messages in communication	14
6. Negative communication during counselling	14
7. The counselling format	1
8. Summary in counselling	14,15
9. Reflection in counselling	15,16
10. Listening as a Basic Counselling Skill	17,18
11. Body Language	18,19
12. The structure of the counselling encounter	19-21
13. References	22

## 1. COUNSELLING

**Learning Objectives: By the end of this session, the participants should be able to:**

1. Understand the meaning and different approaches to counselling
2. Explain the role and qualities of a counsellor
3. Distinguish between different skills needed to conduct an effective counselling
4. Understand the importance of communication in counselling
5. List the stages of counselling
6. Plan and conduct a counselling session

**Activity 1:** What is Counselling (10 minutes)

**Purpose:** To explore possible counselling situations for CHCs

**Method:** Brainstorming

**Procedure:** Divide into groups and make a diagram on when can health committee members be required to conduct counselling? Give reasons for your answer

### **Definition:**

- Counselling is the process that occurs when a client and counsellor set aside time in order to explore difficulties which may include the stressful or emotional feelings of the client. This is to help the client to see things more clearly, possibly from a different view-point.
- Counselling is a process of self-discovery and change that aims to help a client explore and unlock their feelings, ways of thinking, ways of being, changing patterns that are no longer useful and cause distress and integrating ones that are more fulfilling.
- Confronting and solving problems is a sometimes a painful process which most of us attempt to avoid.
- Avoidance results in greater pain and an inability to grow both mentally and spiritually.
- Counselling offers a safe and confidential place to explore present and past difficulties that a person may be having in his/her life.
- The task of Counselling is to give (the 'client') an opportunity to explore, discover and clarify ways of living more satisfyingly and resourcefully in a confidential and ethically protected relationship.
- Many people will, at some point in their lives, find themselves in the role of a counsellor without having a true understanding of the concept of counselling or what the role of the counsellor entails.

There is a big difference between a professional counsellor and a person who uses some

counselling skills as part of their role, for example their role as a friend or colleague. Professional Counsellors are highly trained individuals that are able to use a different range of counselling approaches. Counselling is relationship of trust with confidentiality as paramount to successful counselling.

2. **Counselling is not:**

- Giving advice.
- Being judgemental.
- Attempting to sort out the problems of the client.
- Expecting or encouraging a client to behave in a way in which the counsellor may have behaved when confronted with a similar problem in their own life.
- Getting emotionally involved with the client.
- Looking at a client's problems from your own perspective, based on your own values.

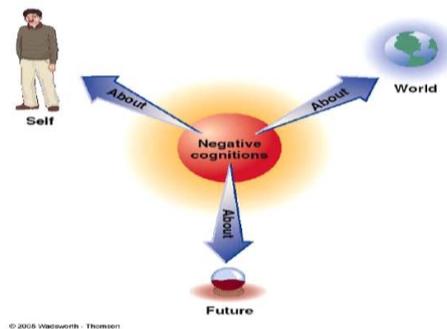
3. **Different approaches to counselling**

There is more than one approach to counselling. The majority of counsellors generally draw on one or more theories when conducting counselling. These approaches fall into five broad categories:

<p><b>Client-centred Counselling:</b> Focuses on the belief that the client - and not the counsellor - is the best expert on their own thoughts, feelings, experiences and problems. It is therefore the client who is most capable of finding the most appropriate solutions. The responsibility for working out problems rests wholly with the client.</p>	<p><b>Role of Counsellor:</b> To provide a mirror that will enable the client to see himself / herself clearly. But this mirror is not passive or mechanical, through his/her training and experience, the counsellor is able to sense the 'communication behind the communication'. Counsellor does not suggest any course of action, make recommendations, ask probing questions or try to interpret what client says</p>
<p><b>Behavioural Counselling:</b> Focuses on the assumption that the environment determines an individual's behaviour, behaviour that behaviour is 'learned' and, therefore, it can be unlearned. Unwanted behaviour is an undesired response to something or someone in a person's environment.</p>	<p><b>Role of Counsellor:</b> Uses an action-based therapy that focuses on the behaviour of the individual and aims to help client to modify unwanted behaviours. Counsellor is to identify the unwanted behaviour with a client and together they would work to change or adapt the behaviour</p>
<p><b>Humanistic counselling:</b> Every individual is unique and has capacity to make rational choices and develop to their maximum potential. This approach suggests that how we experience life events will in turn relate to how we feel about ourselves, influencing self-esteem and confidence. The approach aims for acceptance of both the negative and positive aspects of oneself.</p>	<p><b>Role of Counsellor:</b> To help clients to explore their own thoughts and feelings and to work out their own solutions to their problems. Humanistic counsellors work with the belief that it is not life events that cause problems, but how the individual experiences life. Counsellor should encourage client to learn to understand how negative responses to life events can lead to psychological discomfort</p>

**Cognitive Counselling:** Focusses on the assumption that it is dysfunctional thinking that leads to dysfunctional emotions or behaviours, and that every hard feeling a client has is the result of distorted negative thinking. By changing their thoughts, people can change how they feel and what they do. Cognitions are thoughts, beliefs, and internal images that people have about events in their lives. A common premise of all cognitive theories is that how people think largely determines how they feel and behave.

**Role of Counsellor:** To help the client to become aware of thought distortions which are causing psychological distress, and of behavioural patterns which are reinforcing it, and to correct them. The objective is not to correct every distortion in a client's entire outlook — and after all, virtually everyone distorts reality in many ways — just those which may be at the root of distress.



**Integrative or Holistic Approach to Counselling:** Many counsellors and therapists don't tie themselves to any one approach. Instead, they blend elements from different approaches and tailor their counselling according to each client's needs.

#### 4. Exploring counselling context as CHCs

##### **Activity 2:** Confidentiality (15)

**Purpose:** Participants will identify their own confidentiality issues and how to deal with them.

**Method:** Individual ( reflect of self)

**Procedure:** In the beginning of this activity, facilitator should assure the participants of absolute confidentiality, and that the information will not be shared with anybody else. Participants need to find a quiet space in the room where each person will be required to write a something that is deeply personal that they do not want to share with anybody else. Once everybody has written their stories, the facilitator will ask participants to tear up.

Facilitator will then collect the pieces. The facilitator will ask the participants how to discard the information.

**In plenary:** Participants provide feedback on which conditions they disclose their deep secrets. Facilitator writes up responses.

These are some of the example:

- Confidentiality
- Trust
- Privacy
- No interruptions
- Safe environment
- Professional setting

### **The Johari window**

The Johari window was the idea of Joe Luft and Harry Ingham and is sometimes used to show our areas of knowledge and ignorance:

#### **Activity 3: Self reflection**

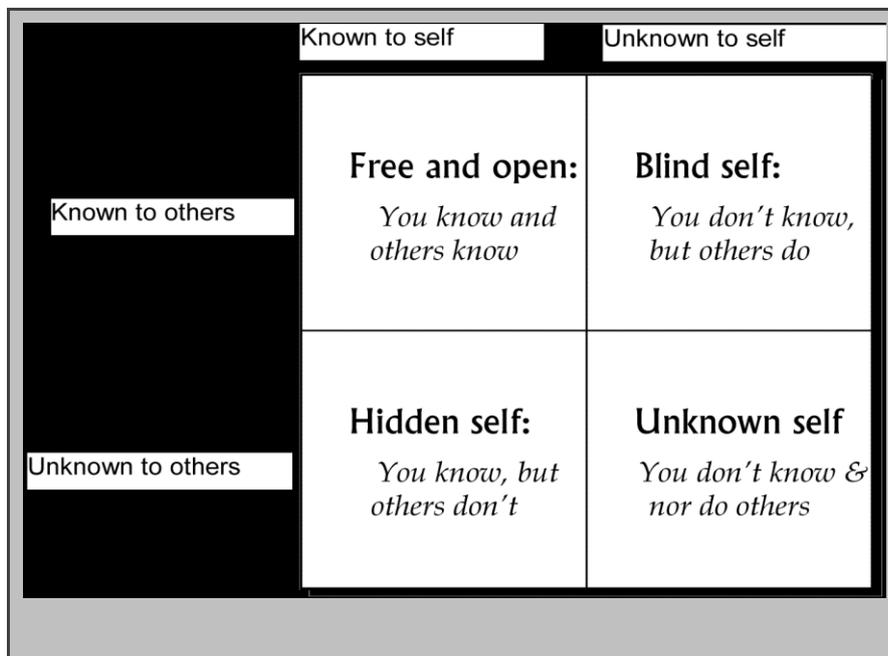
**Purpose:** Participants reflect on themselves and their areas of knowledge and ignorance.

**Method:** Divide into pairs and seat facing each other.

**Procedure:** Participants examine this diagram and reflect on yourself to see which part is the largest. They should share with a partner on how they will extend their Free and Open part.

**Please indicate in your groups:**

- What are some examples of personal issues that may influence how you interact with your clients?
- How can you prevent these issues from negatively influencing counselling sessions?



To be in a better position to help others, your the goal is to make your own 'Free and Open' part as large as possible by becoming self-aware and understanding yourself better.

## **5. THE ROLE OF THE COUNSELLOR**

First and foremost the counsellor is aware that no two people are alike. No two people understand the same language in the same way; their understanding will always be linked to their personal experience of the world. Therefore, during the counselling process, it is important that the counsellor does not try to fit clients into his/her idea of what they should be and how they should act.

The role of the counsellor is to enable the client to explore many aspects of their life and feelings, by talking openly and freely. Talking in such a way it is rarely possible with family or friends, who are likely to be emotionally involved and have opinions and biases that may be detrimental to the success of the counselling. It is important that the counsellor is not emotionally involved with the client and does not become so during counselling sessions. The counsellor neither judges, nor offers advice. The counsellor gives the client an opportunity to express difficult feelings such as anger, resentment, guilt and fear in a confidential environment.

The counsellor may encourage the client to examine parts of their lives that they may have found difficult or impossible to face before. There may be some exploration of early childhood experiences in order to throw some light on why an individual reacts or responds in certain ways in given situations. This is often followed by considering ways in which the client may change such behaviours.

Effective counselling reduces confusion, allowing the client to make effective decisions leading to positive changes in their attitude and/or behaviour. Effective counselling is not advice-giving and is not acting on someone else's behalf (these are more the roles of a life coach). The ultimate aim of counselling is to enable the client to make their own choices, reach their own decisions and to act upon them accordingly.

## **6. QUALITIES OF THE COUNSELOR:**

### **Activity 4: Qualities of counsellor (15 minutes)**

**Purpose:** Participants get to explore and understand the qualities of a good counsellor

**Method:** Brainstorm

**Procedure:** Divide into groups of three. Make a diagram to show the qualities that you think a good counsellor should have. Why do you think these qualities are important?

- Genuineness
- Empathy,
- Unconditional positive regard

Some people possess these qualities because of their philosophy and personality. Others can develop them through awareness and practice.

## **6(a) Genuineness in Counselling**

- Genuineness refers to sincerity, this is something conveyed by means of eye contact and facial expression.
- Being real; genuine, carries along with it the importance of being one's self instead of putting on some kind of role.
- It is about reminding yourself that this 'other soul' deserves to be heard respectfully, no matter what the behaviour.
- Insincerity may be communicated when the counsellor looks away, being easily distracted, looking at his watch, yawning; showing by these behaviours that s/ he is not really interested in the client's issues.
- There may be different signals of sincerity.
- For example, in some cultures the emphasis on eye contact wouldn't be as great as in other culture.
- Eye contact can be different for men and women; women tend not to look men in the eyes, especially.

### **Activity 5: Genuineness in Counselling ( 15 minutes)**

**Purpose:** Participants get to explore conditions for the application of the quality of genuineness .

**Method:** Case Study

**Procedure:** Participants to read the following case study and answer the questions that follow

Theresa had a serious problem, for a couple of weeks she could not sleep at night, eat properly and was starting to have suicidal thoughts. She is a single mother with three children, 15, 10 and the youngest was three years old. She has been in a relationship of 15 years and her boyfriend, the father of the children had been promising to pay lobola and marry her. The wedding was scheduled to happen three months earlier, but due to unforeseen circumstances as described by her fiancée, this could not take place. The fiancée confirmed that the wedding was still going to take place, but at a later stage, she must just be patient. Since then, she has been noticing that her fiancée's behaviour had changed, he was not visiting as much as he previously was, and no reason would be provided for that. One day Theresa's cousin sister came to visit her, and during their conversation and out of concern, she asked her how does she feel that her (Theresa's) boyfriend had dumped her for another woman to the extent of marrying her? Theresa was shocked to hear of the news, they both agreed that Theresa seek advice of a professional counsellor. On arrival for the counselling session, Theresa's cousin noticed that the counsellor who was about to counsel Theresa was the same woman that her fiancée had married, but Theresa and counsellor were both not aware of that.

**Answer the following in your groups**

- **Should Theresa decide to disclose the partner's name, as a counsellor how would you react? Do you think you could still be genuine in your counselling? What will you do if you can't?**

## **6(b) Empathy in Counselling**

- Empathy is the ability to be connected to the feelings and to the emotions of the client. So if the client is feeling sad, the counsellor needs to have a sense of that sadness and be able to mirror it in voice tone and facial expression.
- It involves naming the emotions you are observing and to ask the speaker if you accurate in the perceptions.
- With empathy, a counsellor should not allow own feelings of sadness to overshadow the expression of the client's sadness.
- Empathy is conveyed in non-verbal ways such as tearing or a frown if the client's feeling is sadness. Empathy must also be genuinely felt and genuinely mirrored.
- Essentially empathy is mirroring the emotional content or the emotions of the client whether the feeling is anger, sadness, fear, or some other feeling and mostly regarded as the most therapeutic quality because it lends support to the client's pain.
- Empathy may also be conveyed verbally in the voice tone.
- An empathic reflective statement would be, "So you're feeling sad because your good friend just moved away, is that what you're feeling?"

### **6(b) (i) Let's look at the following common pitfalls to see how empathy can be blocked by inappropriate responses of the counsellor.**

**Directing/ leading:** "I don't think you ought to spend so much time talking about it".

**Judging / evaluating:** "Your attitude towards your facility staff is very hostile."

**Moralising:** "You really must put your family's welfare first, you know."

**Labelling:** "You are in denial, that's all."

**Humouring:** "You're worrying too much; everything will turn out all right."

**Rejecting feelings:** "You must not be depressed about this."

**Being over-concerned:** "Oh, I really am most terribly sorry, are you going to be fine"

**Being impatient:** "Look, can you just get to the point, we've already dealt with that?"

**Ridiculing:** "Don't be so naive— times have changed, you should also know that."

**Directing:** "You need to see your doctor and do what he tells you."

**Threatening:** "If you don't tell your partner about your infidelity, then I will."

**Interrogating:** "You've told me about your current husband, now tell me about your relationship with your first husband."

**Encouraging dependence:** "If you run into any troubles, do not hesitate to phone me"

### **6(c) The unconditional Positive Regard in counselling.**

Mr May is a 49 year old man and a very known business person in the community. Besides his business interests, he is also known as a violent man who does not think twice in making his enemies disappear. Mr May has had many enemies in the community because of this behaviour and the way he handles people that do not agree with him. He has been in and out of prison for killing people, but would be released before completing his sentence for good behaviour.

Recently, Mr May was arrested for kidnapping and raping a 13 year old boy, his sentencing is still pending. Meanwhile, the community wants to take the law into their own hands with regards to his behaviour. They had tried several times to burn down Mr May's businesses, but in all the occasions the police came to his rescue.

Mr May feel that the community is unfair for burning his business, as he is prepared to stand trial and that he wants the law to take its own course. He is seeking professional help as he feels he is in the verge of killing more people because 'these people makes him very angry'.

What is unconditional, how does it show itself during the counselling?

Read the following case study and as a group and answer the following question.

- Do you see Mr May as having intrinsic value apart from his behaviour?
- Do you see Mr May's behaviour as having an understandable story behind it?
- Would you go on counselling Mr May and still give him unconditional positive regard?
- If you can't continue counselling Mr May, what are you going to say to him?

#### **Unconditional positive regard implies:**

- A particular mental attitude: that the client's problems and feelings are of the greatest importance.
- The counsellor has to regard the client's behaviour, no matter how self-destructive or even destructive of others it may be, as having a story behind it that allows it to make sense that makes it understandable even though the client is responsible for choosing it.
- With unconditional positive regard the belief is that a people will make choices that are best for them if they are aware of all the possible choices.
- If a counsellor has this ability to convey unconditional positive regard, it is going to be possible for counsellor to sincerely validate my client, to bring all my best ability and expertise to the session, to listen and focus on the client, to accept the client's pace and process of recovery.
- As a counsellor you and you see must his behaviour as having an understandable story behind it. And that will allow counsellors to be able to remain in a helping position with our client.

**Activity 6: Unconditional Positive Regard (15 minutes)**

**Purpose:** Participants to learn about their strength and weaknesses in counselling situations

**Method:** Group Discussion

**Procedure:** In groups: There may be some types of people, such as Mr May, that you would not be able to maintain an unconditional positive regard for, discuss in your group and list some of these types of clients?

**Some of the examples may be:**

- Murderers
- Serial killers,
- Drug lords
- Child abusers
- Gangsters
- Child traffickers

**Activity 7: Referral (10 minutes)**

**Purpose:** Participants learn about their limitations and when to refer clients

**Method:** Group Discussions

**Procedure:** Divide into groups of two: Participants to discuss and report on what can they do if they cannot maintain an unconditional positive regard for a client.

**Some of the responses might be:**

- Have the client seek someone else
- Not sure what to do
- Refer to sister in charge
- Consult the committee in general

**Procedure:**

Make a referral and own it as your problem that you don't have the skills to help him.

**Here are some of the examples one can use to refer client for professional counselling or intervention.**

Say to the client, "I don't feel that I have the skills that you need to get the help that you need".

We need to be able to regard the client's behaviour in terms of behaviours, rather than in moral terms.

So we need to be aware of the range of judgmental terms to be left out of the counselling relationship and left out of our counselling vocabulary.

There is a point where you choose not to be judgmental. I may feel judgmental but a client doesn't have to know that. I can choose not to express it; I can filter that out. The choice of leaving your stuff behind and going there without your stuff so it doesn't get in the way of your work with the client.

## 7. The Impact of Message during Communication

Verbal 7%	Meta-verbal 38%	Non-verbal 55%
Involves the actual words spoken. The language that we use is vitally important in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• maintaining an effective counselling environment</li><li>• creating a positive counselling experience</li><li>• fostering self-esteem of client</li></ul>	Is the way we say the words. It is used to express the mood, temperament and feeling of the person sending the message. It is vital that we modulate the tone and pitch of our voice to keep clients interested.	Reinforces the message by using body language. This includes gestures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• facial expressions</li><li>• eye contact; • posture</li><li>• space • dress</li><li>• appearance</li><li>• timing; • distance</li><li>• position</li></ul>

## 8. Negative communication during counselling

The counselling process is both a verbal and a nonverbal communication process.

To be an effective counsellor, one must be effective in communication skills.

A person with negative verbal communication skills is not pleasant to have a conversation with.

They may speak too loudly or too softly, and not pay attention to the other person. The content of their conversation may be selfish, pretentious or dishonest.

People with negative verbal communication skills are not good listeners and may be impatient or interrupt others during conversation.

Negative Communication could include the following example:

- Keeping the client wait
- Rushing or being in a hurry to end the session
- Coming late
- Answering calls

## 9. Counselling formats

Many different types of counselling are available in a range of formats. For example, counselling can take place:

- Face-to-face
- Individually or in a group
- Over the phone
- By email

## 10. Summary

- A collection of two or more paraphrases or reflections that condenses the client's

- messages or the session
- Covers more material
- Covers a longer period of client’s discussion

**Example- Client, a young girl**

➤ **At the beginning of the session:**

“I don’t understand why my parents can’t live together anymore. I’m not blaming anybody, but it just feels very confusing to me.” [Said in a low, soft voice with lowered, moist eyes]

➤ **Near the middle of the same session:**

“I wish they could keep it together. I guess I feel like they can’t because they fight about me so much. Maybe I’m the reason they don’t want to live together anymore.”

Counsellor’s perspective	Client’s perspective
<b>Recall key content and affect messages</b> Key content: Wants parents to stay together Key affect: Feels sad, upset, responsible	Will pour out a mixture of facts and feelings in an apparently incoherent order e.g.
<b>Identify patterns or themes</b>	Agrees to repeat and clarifies his position and accept clarification
<b>Use an appropriate sentence stem and verbalize the summary.</b>	The client is provided with a structured way of coming to terms with his or her own feelings
<b>Assess the effectiveness of summary</b>	Understands the links between facts

**Purposes of a Summary**

- To tie together multiple elements of client messages
- To identify a common theme or pattern
- To interrupt excessive rambling
- To start a session
- To end a session
- To pace a session
- To review progress
- To serve as a transition when changing topics

**11. Reflection**

Reflection is the echoing back of the last few words that the client has spoken.

e.g. Client: We moved to Cape Town at the beginning of last year but none of us really settled down. My wife never did like living in such a large city. I also found it difficult to get a job....

Counsellor: You found it difficult to get a job...

Client: Well, it was difficult to start with, anyway. I suppose I didn’t really try hard enough ...

Counsellor: You didn’t really try hard enough...

In counselling, the purpose of reflection is always this:

- To clarify the meaning, to develop the relationship and
- To explore the client's issues.

It is not for the counsellor's benefit (though she will benefit), and the appropriate reflection are not the same as they might be in a conversation between two friends or lovers or others sharing an intimate relationship.

### **10(a) Guidelines for appropriate reflection**

**Be as simple and accurate as possible:**

**Use minimal prompts:** To repeat a little of what the speaker has said, often from her last few words. This can have a dual effect: it shows that you are listening, and it can encourage the client to continue and develop what he or she is saying

#### **A verbal response to client emotion**

**Example**

**Client:** "So many things are going on in my life right now: I have started my new job, my husband is away, and my son's ill. I find myself running around trying to take care of everything. I'm not sure I can take it anymore."

**Counsellor:** "You're feeling pretty overwhelmed by all the things that are going on right now."

#### **Purposes of a Reflection**

- ◆ Helps clients:
  - ✓ Feel understood
  - ✓ Express more feelings
  - ✓ Manage feelings
  - ✓ Discriminate among various feelings

#### **Steps in Reflection**

- a. Listen closely and observe behaviour**
  - ✓ Watch nonverbal behaviour
  - ✓ Verbally reflect the feelings back to the client
- b. Identify the feeling category**
  - ✓ Identify the intensity
  - ✓ Match the feeling and intensity of a word
  - ✓ Feed back to the client
  - ✓ Add content using the form
    - a. "You feel, because". Check for accuracy

## 12. Listening as a Basic Counselling Skill

### **Activity 8: Listening (10 minutes)**

**Purpose:** Participants learn how to listen without interruptions

**Method:** Pairs

**Procedure:** Group into pairs and each one takes turn to listen to each other without interruptions. Each person gets 5 minutes to talk while the other listen without interrupting. Report in plenary on how you felt.

### **The art of listening:**

In trying to communicate with others, we should always:

#### **Watch our motives.**

- If under the guise of seeking understanding our real intent is to thrust our own ideas down their throats, our motive is impure, and hence wrong.
- We should always sincerely attempt to understand others, setting aside momentarily our own viewpoints to identify with the other person's thinking.
- We have to do this if we are to communicate successfully with others.

#### **Always keep your mind open.**

- When someone says something that is foreign to your own particular personality or way of thinking, do not be close-minded or permit your prejudices to influence your understanding.
- Listen calmly, willingly, and respectfully. In this way you may learn something valuable from others whose views and background are different from your own.

#### **Set your intention:**

- Listen very closely, and keep that intention in place.



- Attend to the speaker, which means position him or herself to indicate to the speaker that the speaker is the centre of the listener's attention.
- Sometimes during counselling, there will be times when the attention drifts. Reset your intention and come back to the session. Your client, the speaker, who is

watching you intently, will see your attention shift. You may need to say something about being struck by the client's (your speaker) comment, and following it out of the session, and ask them to repeat it.

The next important part of listening is to capture the verbal and nonverbal communication of the speaker.

### **11(a) The skill of silence and understanding in counselling**

In normal conversation we don't usually leave long silences between our contributions. Indeed, some people are so keen to say their piece that they interrupt or else finish the other person's sentence for them.

Don't be afraid of silence in such a case— the client will be using it productively.

It will only be proper for you to say something if you are certain that the client has finished his or her statement.

If you are not certain, wait a little longer just to be on the safe side.

### **13. Body language**

If you are counselling face to face, then you have a much wider range of potential information at your disposal. These are some of the body language one should look at:

#### **Proximity:**

How close is the client sitting to you? Was it his or her choice or yours? Are you comfortable with this distance? Is he or she?

#### **Body posture:**

Is he or she leaning towards you, or away from you? Is his or her body turned towards you, or trying to face away? Does this suggest that he or she is eager to share with you, or is there some reluctance?

#### **Muscle tone:**

Is client relaxed and open or sitting stiffly, displaying tension, or maybe he or she's slouching in the seat—tired perhaps, or maybe bored?

#### **Facial expression:**

The proportions of the impact of a message in a face-to-face encounter are 55% facial expressions, 38% non-verbal aspects of speech, and only 7% for the words themselves! So what is the client's face saying as he or she speaks? Is he or she displaying anger, or disgust, or contempt? Does his or her facial expression reinforce words, or does it contradict them?

#### **Gaze:**

Eye contact is important too. Do not expect him or her to meet your eyes much while client is speaking, but notice if he or she seems to avoid looking at you altogether. If so, what is client finding difficult? Is it because of what client is saying, or is this the way he or she always behaves? Does client look at you a lot—challenging you, perhaps? If so, can you remain calm under that gaze and try to see if there are any other clues to client's mood?

**Gestures:**

Does the client use his or her hands and body a lot? If so, how is he or she using them? Is client relaxed and free in his or her motions, or is there stiffness? Does there seem to be a correspondence between his or her gestures and what he or she is saying?

**Clothes and general appearance:**

Has client taken trouble over his or her appearance? How does your impression of him or her relate to what client says about himself or herself?

**14. The structure of the counselling encounter****Three main stages**

**Note that the Beginning stage would often determine whether a person will return for more sessions or not.**

**Summary of the beginning stage:**

- Put client at ease and build trust
- Motivation for seeking help
- Client's perception of the problem
- Duration of the problem
- Previous ways of coping
- Relevant past history
- Find how the client would like the problem solved or managed
- Clarify what the client expects from counselling
- Describe the help the counsellor can realistically give
- Give realistic hope for change or assistance
- State the counsellors commitment to work with the client and elicit theirs also
- Assure client of confidentiality and state any limits to confidentiality.

**From this stage, the counsellor gathers, among others, the following information:**

- Nature of the incident
- Names an, dates and contact details
- Any possible witnesses
- Clarify follow up
- Ask the client if there is anything left out

**Skills Used**

- Active listening
- Conversation openers
- Establishing rapport
- Building empathy

**The middle (information gathering / understanding stage)**

The goal of the middle stage is to:

- Gather information to understand the client and his/her problem better and help him/her to do so also.
- Discover coping abilities and vulnerabilities
- Support the continuing expression and discussion of feelings
- Help the client move towards acceptance and control.

### **The End (action and resolution) stage**

After building trust and clarifying the problem and the client's strength and vulnerabilities the counsellor should encourage and support the client to do the following:

- Rethink the problem in ways that provide solutions e.g. consider different options
- Work out a plan of action that will lead to a solution or change. The plan should consider the client's values, strength, weakness and willingness to execute the plan.
- Carry out the plan – No solution or change can occur unless this is done so
- Encourage, admonish, lovingly insist on accountability
- Give homework
- Identify others who can help
- Follow up
- Evaluate the counselling help in terms of changes in behaviour or solutions to problems. Evaluation involves documenting baseline behaviours and problems so change can be measured.
- It is not always that a counsellor can help clients solve problems or change behaviour.
- Sometimes they just need someone to care e.g. psychotic clients. To do so
- Listen

**Counselling should never be abruptly terminated; rather, it should follow a series of formal stages, letting the client down gradually...**

### **The stages of termination are as follows:**

- Evaluate readiness for termination;
- Provide advance notice of termination;
- Discuss readiness for termination;
- Emphasise the client's role in effecting change;
- Give instructions for maintenance of adaptive functioning;
- Discuss follow-up sessions; and
- Stress 'open doors'.

**Results of counselling: Using counselling skills effectively can enable you to help an individual to:**

- Have insight and understanding of oneself, with greater self-awareness.
- Change one's beliefs and mental models.

- Have increased acceptance and appreciation of oneself.
- Have increased emotional intelligence.
- Increase ability to control oneself and one's urges.
- Develop skills and abilities that require self-management.
- Improve motivation towards actions that are good for one's self.
- Understand of others and why they act as they do.
- Increase appreciation and care for others.
- Improve in relationships with others.
- Change of relationship with family, friends and others.
- Make amends for past negative actions.
- Make a decision
- Adapt to change
- Solve a problem
- Come to terms with an event
- Regain their self esteem
- Accurately identify the cause of a problem
- Understand their feelings or emotions

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