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EGC 804



Techniques of Counselling Module 2

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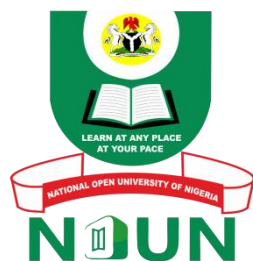
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Module 2

Unit I Counseling Procedures and Processes

1.0 Introduction

In module I of this course, you learned the meaning and principles of Counseling, Counseling approaches, meaning of Counseling methods, Counseling techniques, Counseling strategies, and different types of Counseling skills. As a follow up, it is reasoned that you should be exposed to Counseling procedures and processes properly involved in counseling relationships where what was learnt originally could be applied. An insight into what happens in every Counseling encounter reveals that certain guidelines and procedures are highly required if counseling objectives are to be realised. In this unit therefore, you will avail yourself of the opportunity to better understand what goes on in a typical Counseling encounter and the roles of both counsellors and counsees in counseling relationships.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the meaning of Counseling procedure
- explain the meaning of Counseling processes
- enumerate the stages of Counseling processes.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Meaning of Counseling Procedure

In every helping relationship like Counseling, there is always a procedural pattern that is required and followed in order to achieve a desired goal. This determines the smoothness of Counseling sessions and enables the counsellors and the counsees to know when a task is accomplished, or there is a hiccup in the process and when to terminate the relationship.

Hence, counseling procedure is a pattern of counseling clients in order to solve their problems so that they can live their lives profitably. It involves various steps and processes required and applied to achieve a Counseling goal. This is necessary since a client cannot just walk into a counsellor's office, sit down and chat with the counsellor without a definite purpose. The counsellor thus provides a line of action to help the client in solving his/her problem. The outlined plan of action is thus the Counseling procedure which starts with exchange of pleasantries between the counsellor and the client after the latter must have been ushered into a seat.

Thereafter, the client presents his /her problem from where the counsellor uses his wealth of experience to restructure, reframe or clarify the problem for better understanding. After this, the counsellor in conjunction with the client draws up Counseling goals and objectives. To achieve the goals and objectives of the Counseling relationship, the counsellor engages the client in heart to heart discussion depending on the Counseling approach adopted by the counsellor and terminates the Counseling session when the desired objectives must have been achieved or if the client is becoming apprehensive that the counsellor was not in

any way heading towards solving his problem but aggravating it. This sequence of trying to assist a client in solving his problem during a Counseling relationship is the Counseling procedure which can make or mar a relationship depending on the way it is started and handled.

3.2 Counseling Processes and Procedures

Makinde (1988) sees Counseling as a process of assisting an individual to understand himself and his world. He also describes process as that guidance that involves a series of actions or steps progressively moving towards a goal. Thus, Counseling process is a systematic or sequential approach towards helping a client in solving his problem during a Counseling relationship. For illustration, Onah (2002) sees the Counseling process of behavioural Counseling in four sequential steps in teaching a client how to solve his social, emotional and decision-related problems as the client's problem, Counseling goals, treatment methods and evaluation and follow up.

3.3 Essentials of Counseling and Counsellor's Qualities

To successfully counsel a client, there are basic and essential things that need to be put in place. According to Anagbogu (1988), these essential conditions are basically three and include:

1. That the counsellor must possess appropriate training, expertise and positive attitudes for effective Counseling. There is no doubt about this position. This is one of the reasons why you are subjected to the rigours of counseling theories as you had in EGC 802 and the various techniques and skills of Counseling as contained in this course (EGC 804). With such theoretical and practical background, you are expected to develop positive attitudes towards self and for effective Counseling. In addition, this will adequately equip and enable counsellors to face the challenges of counseling clients with varying problems.
2. The counsellor must ensure the privacy of the client. The main thrust of Counseling is confidentiality. Once the confidence of a client is secured, he/she will go to any length to discuss his/her problem which must however be obtained in a secured environment. If a client is threatened by pervasive and unfriendly environment, he/she may become afraid and will cease to divulge information necessary for effective Counseling relationships.
3. There must be good rapport between the counsellor and his/her clients. Rapport is a reoccurring term or concept in counseling which simply means cordial and warm relationship between a counsellor and his/her client(s). In essence, Counseling must provide a relationship that allows for meeting both immediate and long term needs of the counselee through mutual understanding, respect and acceptance so that interest generated along the line can be sustained (Anagbogu, 1988). As a matter of fact, the counsellor must be readily available when needed by his/her clients especially students for assistance.

With above basic essentials of counseling in place, it becomes imperative to establish that counseling procedures and processes could be initiated, sustained and concluded for the benefit of both counsellors and their clients. To achieve this however, there are three basic qualities expected of every counsellor to possess. According to Akinade, Sokan and Osarenren (2005), the first quality is acceptance of the client. It is incumbent on every professional counsellor to accept his/her client without any bias. They should be accepted

with open hands and mind in order to solve their problems. It is absolutely wrong and unprofessional for a counsellor to reject a client referred to him/her because he or she pilfers or bed wets or on the basis of religious differences. Such a client should be accepted the way he/she is irrespective of the nature of his/her problem or religious faith. The counsellor's duty is to assist the client in stopping that unacceptable behaviour so that the client can live a normal life.

Another quality of a professional counsellor is ability to understand his/her clients. Akinade, Sokan and Osarenren (2005) are of the opinion that the counsellor is expected to show a lot of understanding of his/her clients' needs and problems during any Counseling relationship. To be successful in this regard, the counsellor should show a lot of empathy. This is different from sympathy where a counsellor may display an emotional outburst because of the kind of story that the client is telling amidst tears. Empathy means strong feeling or understanding of what the client is going through as if one is equally going through the same experience.

Finally, the counsellor should demonstrate a high sense of sincerity. It serves no purpose feeding clients with wrong information on issues that bother them in order to placate them. A counsellor should endeavour to be himself/herself at any time and during any Counseling encounter. It is equally proper for a counsellor to reveal himself/herself as an individual rather than a tin god or lording authority over his/her clients in order to cover up some inadequacies. The counsellor therefore needs to be open, knowledgeable, sincere, warmth, accommodating and above all, confidential in handling his/her clients' problems during and after Counseling sessions in order to maintain his/her respect and dignity.

3.4 Stages of Counseling Procedures and Processes

The stages involved in counseling processes begin with the entry of a client into the counsellor's office with a disturbing problem. This stage is called initiation stage. Initiation for Counseling can emanate from three sources.

They include the client, the counsellor's invitation of a client and referral from a third party (Makinde, 1988). In this first step, a client may decide to visit a counsellor with a problem that is disturbing him/her which may include issues emanating from academic, social, psychological and vocational areas. It could be choice of academic subjects in line with chosen future career, boyfriend-girlfriend relationship, and emotional disturbance due to loss of a close relation or poor grades in continuous assessments due to poor study behaviour. A counsellor initiates Counseling by inviting a client whom he/she has discovered to have some disturbing problems but not able to reach the counsellor for one reason or the other.

This could be due to cultural values, ability to solve own problem, ignorance of the existence and roles of Counseling and pride among others. Finally, a third party can initiate Counseling by referring a client to a counsellor for possible solutions to an identified problem disturbing the person. For instance, a teacher can refer a student known to be a truant or who is consistently failing his class work for Counseling. A man can also take his son or daughter to a counsellor for Counseling on some disturbing issues he cannot handle as a parent.

The second stage of counseling procedure is the reception of the client by the counsellor. This is where the counsellor shows a lot of maturity and respect for the client as any mistake here can undermine the success of intending counseling process. The counsellor

receives the client into his/her office by welcoming him/her and offering him/her a seat. The counsellor can stand up to do so or move out of his seat to welcome the client (Anagbogu, 1988). With the cultural norms of the environment in relation to the pleasantries exchanged, the counsellor goes ahead to establish genuine rapport. According to Anagbogu (1988), rapport is a condition created for mutual understanding, respect and acceptance such that interest generated in the course of Counseling relationship can be sustained. This usually begins immediately after the reception of the client to ensure that the interpersonal relationship in the Counseling process is smooth, free and relaxed. To achieve a working rapport, the counsellor must put the other qualities earlier discussed (appropriate training and attitudes, confidentiality, understanding, acceptance and sincerity) into place.

Thirdly, the counsellor begins the counseling process through interview. This interview stage is when the counsellor finds out from the client what his/her problem is all about. This is called problem identification. This is followed by the definition of counseling goals where the counsellor determines the behaviour to be changed in an observable manner. In the course of the interview, the counsellor employs a combination of counseling skills to achieve his/her purpose. These skills range from listening skill to clarification, restatement, paraphrasing, verbal tracking, interpretation to focusing among other skills depending on the nature of the problem presented. The interview skill expected of the counsellor as a one-to-one relationship is made up of open-ended statements to enable clients exhaust their points without restrictions. This is the hub of counseling in any counseling process or setting.

The fourth stage is the determination of the available asset base of the client as a platform to begin the counseling process. The counsellor probes the client to find out the qualities in him/her that can enable them determine the direction of the counseling encounter in order to achieve the objectives set for the session. As the interview progresses, the counselee provides the necessary information and suggestions needed to solve his/her problem. This is why it is often said that counselees are in a better position to solve their problems during counseling relationships.

The fifth stage is the evaluation stage where, based on the successful or unsuccessful achievement of the action plan in previous stages, the two parties (counsellor and counselee) evaluate the problem situation to find out if it worked or not. If it did not work, what must have gone wrong? Is it that the strategies applied were ineffective or that the counsellor applied wrong skills during the Counseling process? This will call for further investigation by the counsellor.

The sixth stage is the termination stage. According to Akinade, Sokan and Osarenren (2005), counseling process is terminated if the counseling objectives have been achieved and they are observable. They maintain that if the counselee comes back for evaluation and the goals are not achieved, the Counseling process will have to start all over again and both parties must re-devise other strategies apart from the ones that failed them. Makinde (1988) is of the opinion that termination of counseling relationship can be done under the following conditions:

- a. After client has gained insight into his problem and has been able to cope with it or resolve it.
- b. When counsellor sees clearly that the client is using the relationship for dependency or is willing to deviate from originally outlined relationship.

- c. When client proves un-cooperative, or referred to another without the knowledge of the initial counsellor.
- d. If problem is beyond the competence of counsellor, then he should refer client to another specialist.

Termination of counseling relationship should be handled carefully so that clients do not feel abandoned but as positive process where they understand that termination is not final as they may return later. It should occur when counseling goals are achieved or there is no rapport.

The final stage is the follow-up stage. Anagbogu (1988) sees follow-up as a means of monitoring individuals with a view to obtaining regular progress reports on their performances and how satisfied they are after successful termination of counseling relationships with them. Follow-up assures continuity, consistency of counseling clients for future engagement in life activities. It is used to assess the efficacy of counseling strategies and monitoring the performance of clients on continuous basis. Some experts argue that counseling ends with the termination stage while some others believe that it extends to follow-up stage as a feedback.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What do you consider to be the last stage of a Counseling process?

4.0 Conclusion

In every Counseling relationship, there must be certain objectives that need to be achieved. To successfully achieve the set objectives, counselors usually map out their plans for a successful trip. Such a journey involves setting out some guidelines and procedures to smoothen the task. In most cases, observable and measurable Counseling objectives are achieved after a successful journey from initiation stage through reception, determination of available asset base of clients, evaluation stage, and termination stage to follow-up stage. To be competent enough to pass through the above stages successfully with clients, counsellors need to cultivate good attitudes, genuine rapport, sincerity, confidentiality, warmth, empathy not sympathy, and above all, they should be able to accept clients the way they are and demonstrate enormous spirit of unconditional understanding. They must be committed to their duties. In any counseling process, counsellors are expected to demonstrate their ability to explore and apply a number of available counseling skills in order to successfully treat their clients' problems.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you were opportune to study the meanings of counseling procedures and processes. Likewise, you were exposed to various qualities that enable counsellors to function effectively during counseling sessions. Finally, you studied the various stages of counseling processes through which counsellors solve clients' problems.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Differentiate clearly between Counseling procedure and Counseling process.
2. List and explain the first six stages of Counseling relationship.

3. Describe briefly, how an SS 2 student can be helped in the choice of his/her future career out of three confusing careers he/she presented to you.

7.0 References/Further Reading

Akinade, E. A., Sokan, B. O. & Osarenren, N. (2005). *An Introduction to Guidance and Counseling: A Basic Text for Colleges and Universities*. Yaba, Lagos: Derate Nigeria Limited.

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Unit 2 Interview Skill In Counseling

1.0 Introduction

One may wonder why interview as a counseling skill was conspicuously omitted in units 4 and 5 of module 1. It was deliberate in order to first of all take you through the tenets of counseling procedures and processes to appreciate in full, the position of interview skill in counseling. The success of every counseling process depends largely on the ability of the counsellor to extract useful information from his/her clients. There is no short cut to this except through the process of interview. It is established that counseling skills are essential ingredients of counseling techniques and it is reasoned here that no counseling skill or technique can achieve its purpose without interviewing the clients. Hence, interview skill is an important feature of counseling processes which requires elaborate discussion in order to imbibe its tenets and effectively apply it in attending to clients' problems. In this unit therefore, you are availed of the opportunity to understand the meaning and role of interview skill in counseling relationships.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the meaning of interview skill
- enumerate the goals and objectives of interview skill in Counseling relationships
- explain the characteristics of interview skill in Counseling relationships
- highlight the advantages and disadvantages of interview skill in Counseling relationships.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Meaning of Interview Skill

Interview is described by Akinade, Sokan and Osarenren (2005) as a technique that involves face-t-face or ear-to-ear (by telephone) personal interaction between an interviewer and a respondent/interviewee. They maintain that the former asks pertinent questions and the latter answers. Ezeh and Onah (2005) describe interview as a process that involves eliciting information from the respondent through verbal interaction between him and the interviewer. Interview as seen from the above descriptions is therefore the process of one person engaging another person on an interactive session from where one of them elicits information from the other person through verbal questioning. Counseling interview is thus a process whereby a counsellor engages a client in one-on-one interactive process using questions to obtain relevant information needed to solve the client's problem. Anagbogu (1988) opines that interview skill is the most important skill to facilitate communication between the counsellor and the client depending on the sincerity and involvement of the interviewer and the ability of the interviewee to respond or give required information correctly. She maintains that interviewing involves the establishment of rapport and development of good questioning technique.

In establishing rapport as a condition for good and effective interview skill, the counsellor, based on his/her competence, treatment, respect and regard for clients ensures that the

client perceives the Counseling process as warm, friendly, sincere and conducive for his psychological growth. Also, interviewing as an interpersonal relationship demands good questioning technique. During a Counseling interview, the counsellor should utilise skills on questioning technique by asking open-ended questions to awaken the expression of some feelings or emotions in clients (Anagbogu, 1988). In the same vein, counsellors should avoid leading questions, technical and outlandish terms, and questions that demand yes or no answers. In applying interview skill in Counseling, probing questions should be applied with caution so that the client will not feel threatened during the process. Interview questions during Counseling should be structured in such a way that clients can easily understand what the counsellor is asking for. This therefore calls for unambiguous questions or response to a question asked by a client in a bid to clarify something.

Interview can be structured or unstructured. It is structured if it is targeted towards restricted area. The respondent or client is restricted to particular information as he is not given the opportunity to express his view fully. It lacks versatility and flexibility. An unstructured interview on the other hand is flexible and versatile as it allows respondents to answer questions from a wide range of tangential directions without any restriction or hindrance.

In a typical Counseling process, the basic approach to interactions is through motivational interviewing skill. This involves open-ended questions earlier mentioned in this unit, affirmations, reflective listening and summaries. The open-ended questions create a forward momentum that is used to assist clients in exploring charges as they avoid yes or no and true or false responses from clients. Affirmations are rapport building statements that recognise the strengths of clients especially if they are congruent and genuine. Likewise, reflective listening is required of counsellor when they engage clients in interview sessions. Counsellors need to carefully listen to clients as they just want to be heard. Finally, practicing counsellors need the skill of summarisation to effectively communicate their interest in clients, build rapport and elicit information. These are essential features of interview skills that contribute to problem solving during Counseling sessions.

For instance, in a Counseling process, the whole scenario centres on analysis, synthesis, and diagnosis, prognosis, Counseling and follow-up. In the analysis, the counsellor uses his interview skill to collect information and data about clients to enable the counsellor make proper analysis of the problem presented. In the synthesis, the counsellor summarises and organises the data from analysis made earlier on. During diagnosis, the counsellor seeks for consistencies and patterns that will help to summarise and solve the problem at hand. From here, the counsellor can predict what might happen in future (prognosis). Having established the problem, the causes and consequences, the counsellor uses his expertise to help clients in formulation and answering questions for themselves (Counseling).

Thereafter, a follow-up is pursued to monitor the client in order to avoid reoccurrence of the original problem, chart the way forward and determine the effectiveness of Counseling. These essentials of Counseling procedures and processes are kept alive and achieved through counsellor's skill in interviewing.

3.2 Goals and Objectives of Interview Skill

Having established the immense input and the place of interview skill in Counseling, it is imperative to highlight the goals and objectives of interview skill. As identified by Anagbogu (1988), the goals and objectives of interview skill are to:

- collect necessary information about the counselee and to be in a position to satisfy the expectations of the client
- concentrate on the client's self-concept and self-perception in such a way that he can develop his potentialities
- focus attention on the client's capacity to think and solve his problems
- help students to develop the capacity to think and solve problems rationally
- stimulate intellectual exercise in thinking and problem solving.

3.3 Characteristics of Interview Skill

There is a legion of characteristic features of interview as a Counseling skill. Some of these features are as listed below.

- i. It is an interactive process that involves face-to-face relationships.
- ii. The counsellor is the interviewer who records responses while the client is the interviewee that supplies responses.
- iii. It can be structured or unstructured, open-ended or close-ended.
- iv. Questions vary according to the issues at hand.
- v. It is highly personalised.
- vi. It may be objective or subjective.
- vii. Interview questions are usually specific with plausible expected responses or answers.
- viii. Questions that tend to suggest answers are often avoided.
- ix. It is usually structured in simple and unambiguous statements or questions.
- x. Unstructured interview is characteristically flexible and versatile.
- xi. Structured interview is rigid and lacks versatility.
- xii. It recognises individuals as they are.
- xiii. It bestows certain attributes like listening skills, patience, fluency and sense of humour on interviewers.

Self-Assessment Exercise

What is the most viable ingredient of a counsellor's attributes that he needs to exhibit during interview sessions in a Counseling process?

3.4 Advantages of Interview Skill

Interview skill when applied effectively by a professionally trained counsellor has a lot of advantages to both counsellors and counsees. Some of these benefits include:

- i. It enables both counselors and clients to seek clarification from each other as the Counseling session progresses.
- ii. It elicits sincerity from the client especially when the questions are not the probing types.
- iii. The physical proximity between the counsellor and the client enables the former to guard against the reliability of the latter's responses.
- iv. Through non-verbal expressions during interview sessions or Counseling relationships, the counsellor can determine when the client is telling a lie.
- v. Well-structured questions in an interview session enables clients to be focused, sincere and able to remember some forgotten facts about their prevailing problems.
- vi. Records taken and kept during interview sessions by counsellors enable them to remember facts easily without confusion or misinterpretation when the records are decoded later.

- vii. The flexible nature of interview during Counseling processes enable counsellors to get in-depth information from clients with ease.
- viii. Interview is very useful when the respondents are children or people who may find it difficult to organise their responses in writing as in questionnaires (Ezeh & Onah, 2005).
- ix. It is usually conducted using simple and unambiguous statements or questions for easy interpretation and understanding.
- x. It is cost effective as it requires little and simple writing materials to conduct quite unlike questionnaires.

3.5 Disadvantages of Interview Skill

Though laudable as it is, interview skill has some shortfalls which if not handled professionally can jeopardise the success of any counseling session. Below are such handicaps of interview skill.

- i. It is time consuming and can lead to boredom which can force a client to clamour for the termination of Counseling process abruptly.
- ii. It does not give hundred percent assurances that the client is sincere in the information given.
- iii. Not many counsellors can boast of the maximum required skills for conducting interview during Counseling relationships no matter their level of training.
- iv. In most cases, it is what the counsellor wants that he will get from the clients which in some cases may not represent the actual position of the clients' problems.
- v. The emotional status of a client can adversely affect him while giving information during an interview session.
- vi. In the case of e-interview through telephone, it may be difficult for the two parties to hear each other very well due to poor network or they may not exhaust their points due to time and cost of airtime.
- vii. In a face-to-face interview session, interviewer's physical presence can adversely affect the mood of the client who might be shy in nature.

4.0 Conclusion

To assist an individual in solving his/her problem in a Counseling session or relationship requires information. Such information is not always freely given except through interview by an interviewer, the counsellor. His client who seeks solution to his problem as the interviewee responds to questions put across in order to get to the root of his problem and make a suggestion for solution. The counsellor requires training in interview skill in order to achieve this successfully. Interview skill in Counseling is an attribute acquired by a counsellor which enables him to extract useful information needed in assisting clients during Counseling relationships. In doing so, the counsellor establishes and sustains good rapport with his client in order to relax and assure him that he is in the safe hands. The counsellor's ability to ask relevant and effective questions during counseling relationships will go a long way in achieving Counseling goals.

Characteristically, a Counseling interview should be unstructured and flexible to enable clients respond to questions without restrictions. It is an interactive process that enables counsellors to obtain information from clients on face-to-face basis. If well structured, interview skill provides information that can enable clients solve their problems by themselves. Although Counseling cannot take place without initial interview, the emotional status of clients can make or mar Counseling relationships. Hence, interview skill requires

adequate knowledge of the mood of clients and the appropriate Counseling approaches that suit the problems presented for solution. Effective interview skill requires critical thinking, patience, self-assertion, quick responses to situations and reactions from clients.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you were informed that interview skill is an important attribute that a practicing counsellor should possess and display during Counseling relationships to achieve Counseling goals. Along the line too, you were availed of the opportunity to study the goals and objectives of interview skill in counseling relationships. Furthermore, the characteristics, advantages and disadvantages of interview skill were explained.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. Give a concise definition of interview skill.
2. Highlight the goals and objectives of interview skill in Counseling.
3. Enumerate five advantages of interview skill over the disadvantages in counseling relationships.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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Unit 3 Counseling Techniques

1.0 Introduction

In unit 3 of module 1, you were informed that a Counseling technique is a specific action or activity and process that a counsellor can apply to achieve the goal of a particular Counseling method or approach in a Counseling process. Levenberg and Elser (1995) assert that Counseling techniques help to assure good communication with young people during Counseling sessions. Counseling techniques entail using series of counseling skills in order to achieve Counseling goals. To engage a client in a Counseling interaction without the aid of some specific Counseling techniques is like embarking on a hunting exercise with bare hands.

As counsellors in-training therefore, it is mandatory that you are conversant with the tenets of counseling techniques which by your training should on the long run, become part and parcel of you and your responsibilities as a practicing counsellor either in the school system or in non-school settings.

This unit therefore provides you with the opportunity to understand the meaning, characteristics, purposes and usefulness of counseling techniques in Counseling profession.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of Counseling techniques
- identify the characteristics of Counseling techniques
- highlight the purposes of Counseling techniques
- discuss the uses of Counseling techniques.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Meaning of Counseling Techniques

Across culture, behaviour change does not happen in just one step. Behavioural transcendence or stable behaviour is hard or somewhat difficult to achieve in individuals in one step of treatment. At a point, one can even work with his own emotions and realise his own behaviour in a new shape. Counseling services recognise that individuals come up with varying problems that require varying approaches in order to achieve their aims. These various approaches go with various techniques to sharpen the processes. Hence, embedded in Counseling approaches are Counseling techniques.

Counseling techniques are activities performed during counseling relationships in pursuance of set Counseling goals. Counseling techniques facilitate the development of counseling skills that can be used to encourage and assist clients develop the concepts and processes required for achieving Counseling objectives. McLeod and McLeod (2011) are of the opinion that skills fit together to form longer sequence of interaction directed towards some specific purpose. Hence, Counseling skills are essential ingredients or components of counseling techniques.

In using some approaches or methods of Counseling, there are some peculiar techniques to be expected in such situations. For instance, a counsellor using psychoanalytic approach is amenable to techniques like interpretation and dream analysis among others while a counsellor using Krumboltz's behavioural approach can use behaviour modification and modeling techniques. In the same vein, in a situation where a cognitive approach is applied, counsellors can use guided inquiry, values clarification and cognitive restructuring techniques among others to achieve Counseling goals and objectives. Involving clients in this kind of activities or techniques implies taking them through a process that reflects change of mindsets or wrong notions and feelings already held by them. Hence, Counseling techniques are essential and integral parts of Counseling approaches often applied in achieving Counseling goals and objectives.

3.2 Characteristics of Counseling Techniques

Counseling techniques have unique feature that distinguish them from counseling skills. These characteristic features include:

1. They are structured pathways of achieving Counseling goals.
2. They are gender friendly.
3. They are flexible and user friendly.
4. They are working tools derived from counseling theories.
5. They have no cultural bias.
6. They are interconnected as elements of counseling theories.
7. They are premised on observed facts.
8. Counseling techniques are unambiguous and free from technical jargons.
9. They are professional tools.
10. They have predictive values.
11. They are observable.
12. They are logically tested facts.
13. They are activity oriented.
14. They have the potentials to enable clients remain focused during Counseling processes.
15. They are scientific and follow sequential order.

3.3 Purposes of Counseling Techniques

Counseling techniques are derived from Counseling theories and applied in Counseling relationships to serve several purposes. Some of the purposes are to:

- create a positive and friendly first impression on clients
- assist in establishing rapport with clients
- eliminate barriers to good communication such as negative attitudes, poor listening, and not allowing clients to express themselves
- provide information to both counselors and clients
- enable clients mobilise their natural resources in dealing effectively with their environment
- enable clients direct their personal growth and solve personal problems by themselves with the help of counsellors
- expose possible solutions to clients during Counseling sessions
- assure clients that their interests are protected through proper attention and engagement in activities that can solve their problems
- assist counsellors in investigating clients' problems effectively

- provide enabling environment for effective Counseling relationships
- determine the remote causes of clients' problems
- provide systematic and scientific solutions to clients' problems.

Self-Assessment Exercise

In which theory can a counsellor extract Counseling techniques that can be used to forestall youth restiveness and terrorism in Nigeria?

3.4 Usefulness of Counseling Techniques

Counseling techniques are essential working tools of professional counsellors. They are useful in the following ways:

- clients are enabled to ask questions and seek clarifications
- provide useful information for Counseling
- help to assure good communication with clients during Counseling sessions
- provide platforms to direct clients in solving their problems
- enable counsellors to investigate and solve clients' problems
- set targets for Counseling relationships.

4.0 Conclusion

Counseling is a human relationship that targets behaviour change through interactions between a professional counsellor and a vulnerable person (client). To achieve this satisfactorily, professional counsellors propounded theories that serve as reference points or blueprint in doing so. Embedded in the theories are numerous techniques called Counseling techniques which vary according to each theory. These techniques are activities carried out during Counseling sessions to realise particular Counseling goals and objectives. They are structured, flexible, logical, observable/measurable and interconnected. They assist counsellors in proffering solutions to their clients' problems.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you learned the meaning and characteristics of Counseling techniques. Also, you had the chance to learn the purposes and uses of Counseling techniques. In the next three units, you will study in details, various types of Counseling techniques which counsellors use in handling their clients' problems.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. With few examples, give a concise description of the meaning of Counseling techniques.
2. Discuss any five characteristics of Counseling techniques you studied in this unit.
3. Counseling techniques are indispensable tools in Counseling relationships. Discuss.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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Unit 4 Types of Counseling Techniques I

1.0 Introduction

Different approaches are used by different experts to assist clients in solving their problems. Likewise, different Counseling techniques derived from different approaches provide the platform for Counseling relationships. Hence there are several types of Counseling techniques based on quite a number of Counseling theories out of which a handful will be discussed in this unit.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify some types of Counseling techniques
- discuss in details, the meaning and applicability of each technique of counseling
- distinguish between any two types of Counseling techniques.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Types of Counseling Techniques

As earlier stated, there are several types of Counseling techniques based on several types of theories of Counseling that counsellors can use to assist their clients in solving their problems. Some of these techniques which will be discussed in this unit are confrontation, systematic desensitisation, assertive training, aversive conditioning, and reinforcement techniques of Counseling. Each of them is discussed based on background and application.

Confrontation technique

Confrontation is a Counseling technique that examines certain aspects of our interpersonal style which provoke constructive challenge for others to examine themselves with greater depth in order to make desirable changes in their lives (Egan, 1977). For Ivey and Ivey (2003), confrontation of discrepancies acts as a lever for the activation of human potential, increase in their ability to identify incongruent discrepancies or mixed messages in behaviour, thought, feeling or meanings. It leads to increased client participation in talks with a view to engaging in explanation of facts that can lead to resolution of conflict. Clients can examine core issues that can enable them realise their full potentials as persons or individuals. Confrontation is not a direct harsh challenge but listening to the client carefully and respectfully seeking to help them examine themselves or situations more fully (Ivey & Ivey, 2003). In using confrontation technique, the counsellor can unveil the behaviour and attitude of counselee which he may not be aware of or which he intends to deny, distort or rationalise in order to protect his ego (Onah, 2002). Questioning and summarisation can be used to confront clients during Counseling sessions.

Hence, the counsellor should be skilled in restating, clarification, interpretation, questioning/interview, listening, explanation, assertion and feedback. Egan (1977) is of the opinion that in applying confrontation as a Counseling technique, counsellors should confront in a spirit of accurate understanding; should be tentative as opposed to dogmatic, though, not apologetic; be concrete in describing specific behaviour; and should confront only when they earn the right to do so. This is a good technique in treating delinquency;

encouraging honesty among dishonest clients; bringing about awareness of self-contradictions especially among those who are self-righteous but engrossed in irrational thoughts and feelings. This is in line with the Rational Emotive Therapy of Albert Ellis which opines that maladjustment is a product irrational thoughts and behaviours.

Systematic desensitization

This is a behavioural technique of Counseling aimed at resolving issues emanating from clients' contact with environmental or societal influence like peer influence, anxiety or phobia. According to Onah (2002), this technique is used to assist individuals who have debilitating anxiety or phobia over some events and situations to overcome such problems in the presence of the stimuli that provoke them. Akinade, Sokan and Osarenren (2005) maintain that desensitization is used to treat un-adaptive avoidance behaviour from behavioural point of view where anxiety reactions or other behavioural inhibitions result from formerly inappropriate stimuli that have acquired the capacity to elicit high intensity emotional reactions. Systematic desensitization involves instructional plan with intentional and purposeful sequence from simple to complex in order to gradually effect behaviour change or mood. It is applicable in handling learning difficulty like test anxiety where learning begins with simple concept rather than with more difficult concepts.

In the application of systematic desensitization in assisting clients how to solve their problems, counsellors begin their treatment by relaxing them or teaching them to relax themselves. The counsellor and his client further categorise the stimuli or anxiety-provoking situations responsible for the client's problem into hierarchy of difficulty. According to Onah (2005), the real process of systematic desensitization begins after categorisation of stimuli by asking the client to develop a mental picture of the anxiety provoking scene while in a relaxed mood from one stage to another higher level. As the client pictures the stimulus at each stage in a relaxed form, he is gradually overcoming the situations and as it progresses, he will be free from his problem. The success story of systematic desensitization as a Counseling technique depends largely on the ability of a client to visualise a scene vividly. A Counseling using this technique is expected to apply relaxation, interpretation and explanation skills to work on the mindsets of clients. He should also be engrossed in systematic planning of events, time management and patience.

Assertive training

This technique is the acquisition of the skill of assertive discipline which refers to a clear, firm, friendly response to clients' behaviour disorder. Onah (2002) asserts that assertive training technique is an exercise that enables clients to achieve assertive behavior through the process of identification of problem areas, formulation of assertive statements in line with the identified problems, statement rehearsal by clients and prompt reinforcement of clients' efforts. This technique is appropriate for the treatment of shyness, inability to demand for one's rights and privileges, inability to express one's emotions, and inability to express one's opinion (Onah, 2002). Depending on the nature of the problem, statements formulated for the clients to rehearse should be in line with the tone and emotional expression of the cause of the identified problem. For instance, demand for one's right should be expressed in firm and authoritative statements. Training in such capacity will enable clients achieve assertive behaviour which to a large extent, is what an individual needs in order to boost positive interpersonal relationships with people of all category especially among his peers. A person with appropriate assertive behaviour can easily mix with people. This could be achieved through counseling skills like patience, explanation, love, empathy, attention and assignment. Assertive training is thus an appropriate technique to

enhance self-awareness, self-concept and interpersonal relationships. It involves cognitive process of teaching clients how to be themselves at any situation without necessarily relying on somebody to solve problems they can solve on their own or wasting away resources in ignorance or out of weakness.

Averseness conditioning

Habitual life is part and parcel of human beings. Some individuals are engrossed in one form of habit or the order which for some time has affected their inner wellbeing. Such behaviour can be handled using aversive conditioning. This Counseling technique is based on the principle that an individual sensitised to the dangers of an undesirable habit will develop aversion to it and will subsequently reduce or stop the behaviour (Onah, 2002). As a technique that eliminates or reduces the frequency of habits that are pleasurable but undesirable, it is focused on behaviour change through the introduction of aversive stimulus. Shukla (2005) defines aversive stimulus as a condition that a person tries to avoid or escape. Thus, aversive conditioning is the process of learning desirable behaviour through the association of aversive stimulus with an undesirable behaviour. It is one of the techniques of behavioural Counseling theory which targets to unlearn learned behaviours in the environment.

Like in systematic desensitization, clients are required in aversive conditioning to imagine scenes vividly in their mind, the consequences of involving themselves in the undesirable behaviour vis-à-vis the conditioned stimulus that the counsellor has introduced. Onah (2002) posits that in aversive conditioning, clients are first made to relax and imagine (with their eyes closed) their involvement in undesirable behaviours, followed by the introduction of aversive stimulus to counter their imaginations. He cited the case of a client with sexual promiscuity who was introduced into the risk of contracting a deadly sexually transmitted disease during his period of relaxation. Another example is the case of rape where a culprit is brought to the counsellor for Counseling. The law of the land stipulates life jail for a rapist. The counsellor will first of all relax the client by telling him to close his eyes and imagine vividly in his mind how his involvement in rape with a girl occurred and the consequences therein. Thereafter, the counsellor tells him that as one engages in illicit sex with another person even without raping her can lead to contraction of diseases and jail sentence as an additional punishment for raping. With these aversive stimuli, the client is likely to atone for his sins and make a u-turn from that type of undesirable behaviour. A counsellor using this technique will apply Counseling skills like interpretation, clarification, patience, active listening and empathy among others.

Reinforcement technique

Shukla (2005) defines reinforcement as an act of providing rewards so as to obtain a desired behaviour. This is another behavioural technique of Counseling designed to teach clients that their unique interaction between them and the environment is responsible for their maladaptive living. It is something or a stimulus that strengthens or increases the probability of a specific response. Onah (2002) sees reinforcement as an operant conditioning technique which is used to increase the rate of occurrence of a desirable behaviour. For instance, telling your partner how good he/she looks when dressed up to go out increases the probability that the same response of dressing well will be repeated. Also, telling your son “kudos” or “well done, my boy” when he presents a good result will ginger him to do better in the next examination. This could also be achieved through the presentation of physical items to reward a desired behaviour or response. For example, increasing your daughter’s pocket money when she comes top in her terminal examination is reinforcing

because she likes to get extra money which will make her to strive to do better in other examinations.

Basically, there are four types of reinforcement. They are:

- i. **Positive reinforcement:** This entails adding something in order to increase a response like in the two examples cited above. Adding praise will also increase the chances of your son to do better in his studies. Hence, praise and rewards are all positive reinforcements.
- ii. **Negative reinforcement:** This involves withdrawal of a negative stimulus in order to increase a response. For example, seizing a football from your son who likes to play his ball instead of reading his books in order to his assignment and giving him the ball each time he does his assignment. Another example is seizing a cellular phone from your daughter who does not like washing dishes but gets it each time she does that. The elimination of these stimuli is reinforcing and will likely increase the chances that the boy will always read his books and do his assignment in order to have access to his ball while the girl too will always wash dishes in order to have access to her cellular phone.
- iii. **Punishment:** This is the addition of aversive stimulus to something in order to decrease behaviour. For example, flogging a child each time he/she fails to do his/her assignment. To avoid being flogged, he/she will always endeavour to do his/her assignment since flogging is not palatable to him/her.
- iv. **Extinction:** Extinction is the withdrawal of a stimulus to decrease a response. That is, removal of something in order to decrease behaviour. For instance, hiding away your cigarette from your room to reduce the rate at which your son smokes is extinction.

It is important to remark that positive reinforcement is the most effective of the four types of reinforcement in changing behaviour. This is because adding a positive stimulus to increase a response allows both parties to focus on the positive aspect of the desired behaviour. Punishment works if only it is applied immediately the negative behaviour is observed. It results to extinction if not applied consistently. Also, punishment on the positive side can produce submissiveness and obedience but on the negative side, it will lead to anger, resentment, confusion, rebellion, revenge or withdrawal in children depending on how and when it is applied. It is equally advisable to understand the schedule of reinforcement in order to achieve desired results. Counsellors need to handle or recommend reinforcement with a lot of caution. Counseling skills to be applied when using reinforcement technique include clarification, interpretation, reflection, empathy and logical consequence.

Self-Assessment Exercise

Match assertive training and aversive conditioning techniques of Counseling against behavioural and cognitive Counseling approaches.

4.0 Conclusion

There are various types of counseling techniques which include confrontation, systematic desensitization, assertive training, aversive conditioning and reinforcement among others. Each technique as discussed has different Counseling skills that are required to ensure that the goals and objectives of Counseling relationships are achieved. It is important to remark

that no single technique or skill of Counseling i.e. perfectly better than the rest. Both the application and efficacy of any one or a combination of them depend largely on the nature of Counseling problem, Counseling goals and objectives and the competency of the counsellor.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you learned some types of Counseling and their application in Counseling relationships.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. List and explain any four techniques of Counseling.
2. Distinguish clearly between confrontation and aversive conditioning as Counseling techniques of Counseling.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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Unit 5 Types of Counseling Techniques II

1.0 Introduction

In the preceding unit, you were opportune to acquire the knowledge and skills for using some Counseling techniques in counseling relationships. Such techniques already learnt include confrontation, systematic desensitization, assertive training, aversive conditioning and reinforcement. It is however necessary here to further let you understand that there are still some other Counseling techniques that can be used to effect counseling relationships effectively. Some of these techniques are therefore presented in this unit in addition to the ones already given to you in unit 4 of this module.

2.0 Objectives

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify more techniques of Counseling such as behaviour contract, modeling and role play, cognitive restructuring and self-control
- describe each technique of Counseling
- distinguish between any two of the Counseling techniques.

3.0 Main Content

3.1 Types of Counseling Techniques

In continuation of our discussion on types of Counseling techniques, behaviour contract, modeling and role play, cognitive restructuring and self-control techniques are discussed as follows:

Behaviour contract: Behaviour contract is a technique that involves a pre-arranged contractual and deliberate use of reinforcement to elicit a desirable behaviour (Onah, 2002). It is a Counseling technique of Krumboltz and Thoreson's behavioural counseling theory. It involves an arrangement between two or more persons specifying what each person will do for a stated period of time. Hence, behaviour contract is a plausible Counseling technique in which a counsellor and his client can go into in order to elicit right or desirable behaviour from the client. For instance, a student whose grade in Geography is always below average but likes the subject and playing football to the extent that he is a member of the school team can go into behaviour contract with the school counsellor. The terms of agreement may read that each time the student scores above average in Geography quiz, he will be allowed to play with his team mates but benched each time he scores below average. In this agreement, the reinforcement is the student's wish to play football which was contracted out in order to raise and sustain a better grade in Geography. In the same vein, a behaviour contract may be signed between a child and his parents, students and their teachers or between two siblings or among peers where each person is expected to play a definite role based on the terms of the contract. The counsellor using this technique is liable to utilising explanation, trust, reliability, patience, engagement, encouragement and mutual respect skills to handle his clients' problems in order to achieve desirable behaviour from them.

Modeling technique and role play: Modeling technique of Counseling is a process whereby a counsellor assists his clients to modify their behaviours and acquire new skills in interpersonal relationships. According to Shukla (2005), modeling is a demonstration of how to do a task so that the learner can copy the model. Anagbogu (1988) opines that modeling is a type of learning that is acquired by imitating another person's behaviour. According to her, it is used to acquire new behaviours to increase or decrease well established behaviour already learned but seldom demonstrated. Onah(2002) sees modeling as an observational learning mode where human behaviour can be learned by observing how a model exhibits certain behaviour and reproducing same. Modeling is therefore another social learning technique of Counseling that involves rearranging environmental conditions based on observable conditioning skills. In specific terms, the counsellor can provide real life or symbolic models to demonstrate in sequential steps, the specific behaviours to be learned (Anagbogu, 1988). Whatever the counsellor brings as model should be meaningful to the clients and above all, prestigious, attractive, rewarding, powerful and worthy of imitation.

Modeling can also be used through the learning process where the clients take on the role of other individuals in order to develop particular behaviours and to meet some specific learning objectives. This is a role-play strategy to enable clients gain insight into their own behaviour, that of the persons involved, learn how to behave differently, and to practice the new behaviour displayed by the models in order to internalise it. According to Onah (2002), to achieve this role-play skill so as to demonstrate modeling technique of Counseling, roles are assigned to significant others while the counselee assumes his usual behaviour in relating with the significant person in his life. Thereafter, roles are acted, roles are reversed and new behaviour is thus decided and acquired in which the counsellor models the new behaviour for the client to observe and reproduce. The counsellor using modeling technique of Counseling to change undesirable behaviour to a desirable behaviour needs to be truthful, willing to assist, calm, evaluative, tolerant, and dependable. The counsellor can as well use reinforcement to enable clients acquire new behaviour from their models.

Cognitive restructuring technique: Cognitive behaviour is the ability to display a mental process of understanding in a pattern that elicits sound reasoning (Ukwueze, 2010). Cognitive technique of Counseling is a problem-focused psychotherapy that improves psychosocial functioning of people. It is a self-directing approach that enables individuals to critically examine their behaviours in line with approved behaviours in their society. Behaviours are acquired, internalised and sustained by individuals mainly through social interaction in their society. Hence, internalised behaviour can be unlearned through cognitive restructuring technique of Counseling. Nduka-Ozo (2005) sees cognitive restructuring as a rational emotive therapeutic approach that restructures irrational behaviours through didactic approach. This involves the application of real teaching via philosophical discussions and advice-giving processes to replace old ideas with new modes of logical thinking in order to function well and fit into the main stream of life. Counsellors using cognitive restructuring technique of Counseling should emphasise and encourage clients to imbibe the culture of self-control, self-analysis, self-instruction, self-monitoring and self-reinforcement. This technique also encompasses confrontation ability or skill in form of shock treatment to elicit positive changes from clients. In addition, cognitive restructuring is a veritable tool that controls the excesses of an individual's behaviour by teaching him/her to modify undesirable behaviours. Thus, cognitive restructuring involves encoding and decoding of rational and irrational thoughts respectively through the skills of firmness, attention, caring, analysis, explanation and assertion. For illustration, a client who feels that he should commit suicide because no girl among his mates has agreed to be his girlfriend needs cognitive restructuring. He should be made to understand that it is illogical to think

that everybody must be loved by everybody. That his illogical thoughts and feelings need to be restructured to enable him realise that perhaps he had not talked to the right person that loves him either among his mates or outside the school environment. He needs teaching and explanations to change his mind and come to terms with his world.

Self-control technique: Gnagey (1975) sees self-control as a situation where a student exerts self-control when he obeys the classroom rules in the absence of anyone to reward or punish him. Onah (2002) sees self-control as a method of assisting individuals to assume control of their behaviour instead of being controlled from outside. He maintains that self-control techniques are classified as cognitive methods since clients learn the methods and processes involved in perceiving some aspects of their behaviour as undesirable and wish to modify them. Hence, self-control technique of Counseling is an individual effort taught to clients on how to manage and direct their thoughts and actions towards desirable behaviours in the absence of an external person that can influence them to do so. Self-control technique is an effective technique of Counseling which enables clients to do whatever they want to do with caution.

According to Mahoney and Thoresen (1972), self-control is a technology that can be learned through careful description of some behaviour that one wishes to increase or decrease; identification of the stimuli that precede it and the consequences that follow it; and changing of some of the antecedent stimuli and /or consequences. They are of the opinion that counsellors and teachers can effectively impart self-control on students through self-observation, environmental planning and behavioural programming. In the self-observation, desirable behaviours can often be increased merely by counting and recording them while in environmental planning, it involves making changes in one's own surroundings by altering the stimuli which seem to trigger behaviour and the rewards or punishments which follow it. Environmental programming entails self-reward and self-punishment. For instance, some students on checking their semester results and found that they did well in the semester examinations often reward themselves by going to a restaurant to demand for and eat or drink their favourites.

Counsellors can therefore engage their clients in the process of using behaviour modification principles to inculcate self-control in order to change their undesirable actions. According to Gnagey (1972), the following steps may be taken to achieve self-control in their clients:

- describe the misbehaviour clearly so that the student knows exactly what he has been doing
- ask the student to count the times he breaks the rule and note what happens just before and right after he misbehaves
- help the student change the stimuli which come just before the misbehavior or punish him/her immediately after he misbehaves
- ask the student to count and record the times he/she does the preferred action and reward him/her immediately afterward
- by explaining the principles and using many illustrations, help students learn this general sequence for other situations calling for self-control.

4.0 Conclusion

There are various types of counseling techniques as discussed in this unit which include behaviour contract, modeling and role play, cognitive restructuring and self-control

techniques among others. Each technique as discussed has different Counseling skills that are required to ensure that the goals and objectives of Counseling relationships are achieved. It is important to remark that no single technique or skill of counseling is perfectly better than the rest. Both the application and efficacy of any one or a combination of them depend largely on the nature of Counseling problem, Counseling goals and objectives and the competency of the counsellor. The last batch of types of counseling techniques will be discussed in the next unit.

5.0 Summary

In this unit, you had the opportunity to learn more types of Counseling techniques in addition to the ones described earlier in Unit 4 of this module. These Counseling techniques are behaviour contract, modeling, cognitive restructuring and self-control techniques.

6.0 Self-Assessment Exercise

1. List any four Counseling techniques you have studied and briefly explain any two of them.
2. Differentiate clearly between
 - a. Behaviour contract and modeling techniques of Counseling.
 - b. Cognitive restructuring and self-control techniques of Counseling.
3. Explain five ways through which a school counsellor can teach his students self-control as a principle of behaviour modification.

7.0 References/Further Reading

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