



1/1/2020

# “Listen To Me, Can We Talk”

## Biblical Counseling Handbook

[remnantofgraceoutreachministries.com](http://remnantofgraceoutreachministries.com)



**Norman O'neal, Jr.**

REMNANT OF GRACE OUTREACH MINISTRIES, INC

# Table of Contents

Christian Counselors.....2

Basic Counseling Techniques.....3 - 7

## “Appendices”

A. Counseling Through Your Bible Handbook.....8-9

B. Hope For The Heart.....10 -12

C. Counseling Skills and Techniques.....13 - 22

D. The Top Ten Basic Counseling Skills.....22 - 26

E. The Top Ten Basic Counseling Skills Flash Cards.....27

# “Listen To Me, Can We Talk?”

## Christian Counselors:

The role of Christian Counselors and why people need counseling can be answered in a three (3) word sentence. – **“They Have Problems”**.

### “They Have Problems”

**Who are “They”?** They are members of your Church. Therefore, the role of Christian Counselors in helping people with their problems is needed because, sheep need Shepherds that care, understand and desire to help them become their best and what God commanded them to be.

People need counselors:

- A. to tell them how to solve their problems.
- B. to let them talk about their problems.
- C. to help them solve their problems.

If you chose **“A”**, consider this:

Counseling needs to be more than the giving of advice. To always use a **directive approach** is to foster a dependency on you as a counselor. A person needs to learn to think on his/her own. A person needs to learn how to find God's solutions and not merely be told what God's solutions are.

**Question:** What will the counselee do if you, or another advice-giver, are not available?

**Answer:** Probably he/she will fall deeper into despair and a crisis will ensue.

If you chose **“B”**, consider this:

While talking about one's problems can be therapeutic, people need more than a release of their feelings. They need, God's perspective, to develop healthy life management skills that will enable them to deal more effectively with the problem and possibly prevent its reoccurrence in the future.

If you chose "C", consider this:

People need to resolve their problems, not just talk about them. How much more effective it is if the counselor takes on the role of a facilitator, guide, or catalyst rather than a dictator or manipulator. The best way to teach people healthy life management skills is walking them through the process of discovering God's solution rather than telling them all they need to know.

There are several questions are often asked about being Church Counselor:

1. Can anybody be a lay counselor?
2. What should be the counselor's objective?
3. What approach should be used in Christian counseling?
4. What if a counselee does not take the steps required to move forward?

Listed below are techniques that may be used during a counseling session:

### **Basic Counseling Techniques:**

There are many different techniques that counselors can use with their clients. Listed below are some of the most effective:

- **Spheres of Influence:** This assessment tool will get the individual to look at areas of their life and see which areas may be impacting and influencing them. The person's job is to figure out which systems in their life give them strength, and which ones give them stress. Some spheres of influence to consider are themselves, immediate family, friends, husband or wife, extended family, job or school, community, culture or religion, and any external influences.
- **Clarification:** A counselor should often ask their client to clarify what they are telling them to make sure they understand the situation correctly. This will help the counselor avoid any misconceptions or avoid them having to make any assumptions that could hinder their feedback.
- **Client Expectations:** When a person enters therapy, they should voice their opinions about counseling and their beliefs about treatment. In the beginning, they should be able to communicate with their counselor as to

what they expect to get out of counseling. This can help the counselor guide and direct their counseling accordingly.

- **Confrontation:** We do not mean the client confronting the therapist, or vice versa. The confrontation that should happen here is within the client. The client should be able to self-examine themselves during counseling. However, the speed at which they do this should be discussed between the counselor and the client.
- **Congruence:** This has to do with the counselor being genuine with their feedback and beliefs about their client's situation and progress. The more authentic, and true they are with their counseling, the more that their client and work to grow and benefit from their help.
- **Core Conditions:** This technique in counseling goes over some essential traits that the counselor needs to integrate for effective counseling, which are: positive regard, empathy, congruence or genuineness, and warmth.
- **Encouraging:** Being encouraging as a counselor for your client is an essential technique that will help facilitate confidence and respect between both parties. This technique asks that the counselor focus on the client's strengths and assets to help them see themselves in a positive light. This will help with the client's progression.
- **Engagement:** As a therapist, having a good, yet professional relationship with your client is essential. However, there are bound to be difficult moments in counseling sessions, which will require influential engagement on the counselor's behalf.
- **Focusing:** This technique involves the counselor demonstrating that they understand what their client is experiencing by using non-judgmental attention without any words. Focusing can help the counselor determine what the client needs to obtain next from their services.
- **Immediacy:** The technique of the counselor speaking openly about something that is occurring in the present moment. This helps the client learn from their real-life experiences and apply this to their reactions for other past situations.

- **Listening Skills:** With any relationship, listening skills are needed to show that the counselor understands and interprets the information that their client gives them correctly. The counselor should do this by showing attentiveness in non-verbal ways, such as: summarizing, capping, or matching the body language of their clients.
- **Open-Ended Questions:** Open ended questions encourage people in a counseling session to give more details on their discussion. Therefore, these types of questions are used as a technique by counselors to help their clients answer how, why, and what.
- **Paraphrasing:** This technique will show clients that the counselor is listening to their information and processing what they have been telling them. Paraphrasing is also good to reiterate or clarify any misinformation that might have occurred.
- **Positive Asset Search:** A positive technique used by counselors helps clients think up their positive strengths and attributes to get them into a strong mindset about themselves.
- **Reflection of Feeling:** Counselors use this technique to show their clients that they are fully aware of the feelings that their client is experiencing. They can do this by using exact words and phrases that their client is expressing to them.
- **Miracle Question:** The technique of asking a question of this sort will help the client see the world in a different way or perspective. A miracle question could be something along the lines of: "What would your world look like if a miracle occurred? What would that miracle be and how would it change things?"
- **Stages of Change:** By assessing a client's needs, a counselor can determine the changes that need to occur for their client, and when they should take place. This can be determined by what they believe to be most important.
- **Trustworthiness:** The counselor must create an environment for their client as such that their client feels that they have the capacity to trust their counselor. A therapist must be congruent, warm, empathetic, and speak with positive regard to their client.

- **Capping:** A lot of counselors use the technique of capping during their sessions. Capping involves changing a conversation's direction from emotional to cognitive if the counselor feels their client's emotions need to be calmed or regulated.
- **Working Alliance:** Creating a working alliance between a counselor and their client is essential for a successful counseling environment that will work to achieve the client's needs. This technique involves the client and therapist being active collaborators during counseling and agreeing upon goals of treatment that are necessary, as well as how to achieve those goals.
- **Proxemics:** This technique has the counselor study the spatial movements and conditions of communication that their client exhibits. By studying their clients body orientation, the counselor can determine mood, feelings, and reactions.
- **Self-Disclosure:** The counselor will make note when personal information is disclosed at certain points of therapy. This technique will help the counselor learn more about the client and use this information only to benefit them.
- **Structuring:** When the individual enters counseling, the counselor should discuss the agenda for the day with their client, the activities, and the processes that they will go through. This technique in counseling will help the client understand their counselor's train of thought into determining how this routine will work for them. Soon enough, the client will get used to the routine, and this establishes comfort and trust in counseling.
- **Hierarchy of Needs:** This technique involves the counselor assessing their client's level of needs as based on the progress that they are making. The needs that they will factor in are physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, self-esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. All these will determine if change needs to take place in counseling.

**Give or Receive!**





# Appendices

## “A”

### Counseling Through Your Bible Handbook

(Providing Biblical Hope and Practical Help for everyday Problems)

by June Hunt

#### **BEFORE YOU BEGIN: A Helpful Note from June**

1. **COUNSELING:** How to Give Biblical Hope with Practical Help
2. **ABORTION RECOVERY:** Healing and Restoration After an Abortion Decision
3. **ADULTERY:** The Snare of an Affair
4. **ALCOHOL AND DRUG ABUSE:** Breaking Free and Staying Free
5. **ANGER:** Facing the Fire Within
6. **ANOREXIA AND BULIMIA:** Control that Is Out of Control
7. **CHILDHOOD SEXUAL ABUSE:** The Secret Storm
8. **CODEPENDENCY:** Balancing an Unbalanced Relationship
9. **CRISIS INTERVENTION:** Caring Enough to Confront
10. **CRITICAL SPIRIT:** Changing the Heart of a Critic
11. **CULTS:** The Truth Twisters
12. **DATING:** The Delights and Dangers of Dating
13. **DECISION MAKING:** Discerning the Will of God
14. **DEPRESSION:** Walking from Darkness into the Dawn
15. **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE:** Assault on a Woman’s Worth
16. **DYSFUNCTIONAL FAMILY:** Making Peace with Your Past
17. **EVIL AND SUFFERING... WHY?** Is God Fair?
18. **FEAR:** No Longer Afraid
19. **FINANCIAL FREEDOM:** The Dollar Dilemma
20. **FORGIVENESS:** The Freedom of Letting Go
21. **GRIEF RECOVERY:** Living at Peace with Loss
22. **GUILT:** Getting Rid of Guilt for Good

- 23. HABITS:** Success in Self-Control
- 24. HOMOSEXUALITY:** A Case of Mistaken Identity
- 25. HOPE:** The Anchor for Your Soul
- 26. IDENTITY:** Do You Know Who You Really Are?
- 27. ILLNESS—CHRONIC AND TERMINAL:** God’s Peace in the Midst of Pain
- 28. LYING:** Stopping Truth Decay
- 29. MANIPULATION:** Severing the Strings of Control
- 30. MARRIAGE:** To Have and to Hold
- 31. THE OCCULT:** Demystifying the Deeds of Darkness
- 32. OVEREATING:** Freedom from Food Fixation
- 33. PARENTING:** Steps for Successful Parenting
- 34. PHOBIAS:** No Longer Terribly Afraid
- 35. PREGNANCY...UNPLANNED:** I’m Pregnant?
- 36. PREJUDICE:** Pulling Up the Roots of Pride
- 37. PREMARITAL COUNSELING:** Are You Fit to Be Tied?
- 38. RAPE RECOVERY:** Rescued and Restored
- 39. RECONCILIATION:** Restoring Broken Relationships
- 40. REJECTION:** Healing a Wounded Heart
- 41. SALVATION:** The Cornerstone of Counseling
- 42. SELF-WORTH:** Discovering Your God-given Worth
- 43. SEXUAL ADDICTION:** The Way Out of the Web
- 44. SEXUAL INTEGRITY:** Balancing Passion with Purity
- 45. SINGLENESS:** How to Be Single and Satisfied
- 46. STRESS MANAGEMENT:** Beating Burnout Before It Beats You
- 47. SUICIDE PREVENTION:** Hope When Life Seems Hopeless
- 48. VERBAL AND EMOTIONAL ABUSE:** Victory over Abuse
- 49. VICTIMIZATION:** Victory over the Victim Mentality
- 50. WORRY:** The Joy Stealer

Notes

---

**Harvest House Publishers**

# **“B”**

## **Hope For The Heart**

(Providing Biblical Hope and Practical Help for 50 everyday Problems)

by June Hunt

### **Verbal & Emotional Abuse**

Anger

Forgiveness

Reconciliation

Conflict Resolution

Manipulation

Codependency

Self-Worth

Fear

Rejection

Grief Recovery

Critical Spirit

Depression

Decision Making

Stress Management

Marriage

Premarital Counseling

Domestic Violence

Guilt

Adultery

**Free Mobile App:**

**ALPHABETICAL LISTING OF TOPICS**

Abortion  
Adoption  
Adultery  
Alcohol & Drug Abuse  
The Bible: Is It Reliable?  
Blended Family  
Boundaries  
Caregiving  
Child Evangelism  
Childhood Sexual Abuse  
Communication  
Confrontation  
Counseling  
Cults  
Dating  
Dysfunctional Family  
Evil & Suffering ... Why?  
Friendship  
Guilt  
Habits  
Holy Spirit, The  
Hope  
Homosexuality  
Identity: Who Are you?  
Jehovah's Witnesses  
Jesus: Is He God?  
Jewish Fulfillment  
Mormonism  
Occult, The  
Parenting

Perfectionism  
Pregnancy... Unplanned  
Procrastination  
Prosperity Gospel  
Purpose in Life  
Salvation  
Sexual Addiction  
Sexual Integrity  
Singleness  
Spiritual Abuse  
Spiritual Warfare  
Success through Failure  
Suicide Prevention  
Teenagers  
Trials  
Victimization  
Wife Abuse  
Worry

Read more: <http://www.hopefortheheart.org/free>

**Notes:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

“C “

## ” COUNSELING SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES”

### **10. BASIC COUNSELING SKILLS & TECHNIQUES**

#### **10.1. Benefits of Counseling**

Tackling the ups, downs, and all-around issues that come along with living a healthy life is no easy bull’s eye to hit. Every week can bring family emergencies, health problems, relationship issues, and career concerns. With all of these things that we cannot ignore how do we go about facing them head-on with strength, self-assurance, and a clear mind? If you are a counselor, or have been to a counselor before, you would know the benefits that being able to speak with someone one-on-one about your issues have to offer. There is no shame in asking for help, and there are plenty of people that are qualified professionals that are here to service your personal, career, or family needs. This summary will go over some helpful counseling techniques that, if you are a counselor, you are likely to put into play, and, if you are a patient, you can look forward to engaging in. So, get ready to open up to make the best use of counseling techniques.

First, what are the benefits of counseling? These are helpful to know whether you are a counselor or wanting to be counseled as you will see why counseling is so important. Counseling can help you...

- Feel better about yourself.
- Feel more at peace, at ease in your daily activities, more comfortable, and more secure in the world.
- Feel more successful and more joyful on a more regular basis.

- Feel more connected to others, especially those who are close to you, such as your family, spouse, or best friends.
- Reduce stress at home, in the workplace, or in relationships.
- Help with your physical health by reducing emotional worries or stressors.
- Work through your problems with a skilled and compassionate professional counselor.
- Identify the goals that you have in life, as well make new goals that you want to achieve.
- Learn new behaviors or responses to situations that can help you better achieve your goals.
- Establish healthy and efficient ways and techniques for reaching your goals.
- Understand your own thoughts, feelings, and responses.
- Understand your loved ones and your relationships with them. ☒  
Develop a safe and friendly listening ear.
- Speak with a skilled professional about your fears and perceptions of the world, and others.
- Feel safe about expressing any personal troubles or private concerns. Work towards greater self-fulfillment.

## 10.2. 24 Counseling Techniques

There are many different techniques that counselors can use with their clients. Here is a look at some of the techniques that are felt to be most effective during a counseling session:

**Spheres of Influence:** This assessment tool will get the individual to look at areas of their life and see which areas may be impacting and influencing them. The person's job is to figure out which systems in their life give them strength, and which ones give them stress. Some spheres of influence to consider are themselves, immediate family, friends,

husband or wife, extended family, job or school, community, culture or religion, and any external influences.

**Clarification:** A counselor should often ask their client to clarify what they are telling them to make sure they understand the situation correctly. This will help the counselor avoid any misconceptions or avoid them having to make any assumptions that could hinder their feedback.

**Client Expectations:** When a person enters therapy, they should voice their opinions about counseling and their beliefs about treatment. In the beginning, they should be able to communicate with their counselor as to what they expect to get out of counseling. This can help the counselor guide and direct their counseling accordingly. **Confrontation:** This does not mean the client confronting the therapist, or vice versa. The confrontation that should happen here is within the client. The client should be able to self-examine themselves during counseling. However, the speed at which they do this should be discussed between the counselor and the client.

**Congruence:** This has to do with the counselor being genuine with their feedback and beliefs about their client's situation and progress. The more authentic and true they are, with their counseling, the more that their client and work to grow and benefit from their help.

**Core Conditions:** This technique in counseling goes over some essential traits that the counselor needs to integrate for effective counseling, which are: positive regard, empathy, congruence or genuineness, and warmth. **Encouraging:** Being encouraging as a counselor for your client is an essential technique that will help facilitate confidence and respect between both parties. This technique asks that the counselor focus on the client's strengths and assets to help them see themselves in a positive light. This will help with the client's progression.



**Engagement:** As a therapist, having a good, yet professional relationship with your client is essential. However, there are bound to be difficult moments in counseling sessions, which will require influential engagement on the counselor's behalf.

**Focusing:** This technique involves the counselor demonstrating that they understand what their client is experiencing by using non-judgmental attention without any words. Focusing can help the counselor determine what the client needs to obtain next from their services.

**Immediacy:** This technique features the counselor speaking openly about something that is occurring in the present moment. This helps the client learn from their real-life experiences and apply this to their reactions for other past situations.

**Listening Skills:** With any relationship, listening skills are needed to show that the counselor understands and interprets the information that their client gives them correctly. The counselor should do this by showing attentiveness in non-verbal ways, such as: summarizing, capping, or matching the body language of their clients.

**Open-Ended Questions:** Open-ended questions encourage people in a counseling session to give more details on their discussion. Therefore, these types of questions are used as a technique by counselors to help their clients answer how, why, and what.

**Paraphrasing:** This technique will show clients that the counselor is listening to their information and processing what they have been telling them. Paraphrasing is also good to reiterate or clarify any misinformation that might have occurred.

**Positive Asset Search:** A positive technique used by counselors helps clients think up their positive strengths and attributes to get them into a strong mindset about themselves.

**Reflection of Feeling:** Counselors use this technique to show their clients that they are fully aware of the feelings that their client is experiencing. They can do this by using exact words and phrases that their client is expressing to them.

**Miracle Question:** The technique of asking a question of this sort will help the client see the world in a different way or perspective. A miracle question could be something along the lines of: “What would your world look like if a miracle occurred? What would that miracle be and how would it change things?”

**Stages of Change:** By assessing a client’s needs, a counselor can determine the changes that need to occur for their client, and when they should take place. This can be determined by what they believe to be most important.

**Trustworthiness:** The counselor must create an environment for their client as such that their client feels that they have the capacity to trust their counselor. A therapist must be congruent, warm, empathetic, and speak with positive regard to their client.

**Capping:** A lot of counselors use the technique of capping during their sessions. Capping involves changing a conversation’s direction from emotional to cognitive if the counselor feels their client’s emotions need to be calmed or regulated.

**Working Alliance:** Creating a working alliance between a counselor and their client is essential for a successful counseling environment that will work to achieve the client’s needs. This technique involves the client and

therapist being active collaborators during counseling and agreeing upon goals of treatment that are necessary, as well as how to achieve those goals.

**Proxemics:** This technique has the counselor study the spatial movements and conditions of communication that their client exhibits. By studying their clients' body orientation, the counselor can determine mood, feelings, and reactions.

**Self-Disclosure:** The counselor will make note when personal information is disclosed at certain points of therapy. This technique will help the counselor learn more about the client and use this information only to benefit them.

**Structuring:** When the individual enters counseling, the counselor should discuss the agenda for the day with their client, the activities, and the processes that they will go through. This technique in counseling will help the client understand their counselor's train of thought into determining how this routine will work for them. Soon enough, the client will get used to the routine, and this establishes comfort and trust in counseling.

**Hierarchy of Needs:** This technique involves the counselor assessing their client's level of needs as based on the progress that they are making. The needs that they will factor in are physiological needs, safety needs, love and belonging needs, self-esteem needs, and self-actualization needs. All these will determine if change needs to take place in counseling.

### **10.3. Counselor Interactions with Patients**

Research is increasingly finding that the type of therapy used is not as important to outcomes as are specific counselor behaviors such as **(1) Enthusiasm, (2) Confidence, and (3) Belief in the patient's ability to**

**change.** Although there is nothing which will ensure change, it would appear that clients are more likely to achieve their goals when a good and positive relationship exists between them and their therapist. In essence, the counselor's interactions with the client are a powerful tool in the helping relationship. The following summary highlights the basic effective counseling skills useful for positive interactions with patients.

**1. Listening** – The act of listening is further delineated into the following two components.

a. **Attending** - Orienting oneself physically to the patient to indicate one is aware of the patient, and, in fact, that the client has your full, undivided attention and that you care. Methods include eye contact; nods; not moving around, being distracted, eye contact, encouraging verbalizations; mirroring body postures and language; leaning forward, etc. Researchers estimate that about 80 percent of communication takes place non-verbally.

b. **Listening/observing** - Capturing and understanding the verbal and non-verbal information communicated by that patient.

**2. Empathy** -The ability to perceive another's experience and then to communicate that perception back to the individual to clarify and amplify their own experiencing and meaning. It is not identifying with the patient or sharing similar experiences, not "I know how you feel"!

**3. Genuineness** - Ability of counselor to be freely themselves. Includes congruence between outer words/behaviors and inner feelings; non-defensiveness; non-roleplaying; and being unpretentious. For example, if the helper claims that they are comfortable helping a client explore a drug or sexual issue, but their behavior (verbally and nonverbally) shows signs of discomfort with the topic this will become an obstacle to

progress and often lead to client confusion about and mistrust of the helper.

**4. Unconditional positive regard** - An expression of caring and nurturance as well as acceptance.

- Includes conveying warmth
- Also conveying acceptance by responding to the patient's messages (verbal and non-verbal) with nonjudgmental or noncritical verbal & non-verbal reactions.
- Respect - Ability to communicate to the patient the counselor's sincere belief that every person possesses the inherent strength and capacity to make it in life, and that each person has the right to choose his own alternatives and make his own decisions.

**5. Concreteness** - Keeping communications specific and focused on facts and feelings of relevant concerns, while avoiding tangents, generalizations, abstract discussions, or talking about counselor rather than the client. This includes the following functions:

- a. Assisting client to identify and work on a specific problem from the various ones presented.
- b. Reminding the client of the task and re-describing intent and structure of the session.
- c. Using questions and suggestions to help the client clarify facts, terms, feelings, and goals.
- d. Use a here-and-now focus to emphasize process and content occurring in current session, which may of help to elucidate the problem being worked on or improving the problem-solving process.

**6. Open Questions** - A questioning process to assist the client in clarifying or exploring thoughts or feelings. Here, the counselor is not requesting

specific information and not purposively limiting the nature of the response to only a yes or no, or very brief answer.

a. Goal is to facilitate exploration – Not needed if the client is already doing this. b. Have an intention or therapeutic purpose for every question you ask. c. Avoid asking too many questions, or assuming an interrogatory role. d. Best approach is to follow a response to an open-ended question with a paraphrase or reflection which encourages the client to share more and avoids repetitive patterns of question/answer/question/answer, etc.

**7. Counselor Self-Disclosure** - The counselor shares personal feelings, experiences, or reactions to the client. Should include relevant content intended to help them. As a rule, it is better to not self-disclose unless there is a pressing clinical need which cannot be met in any other way. Remember empathy is not sharing similar experiences but conveying in a caring and understanding manner what the client is feeling and thinking

**8. Interpretation** - Any statement to the client which goes beyond what they have said or are aware of. In interpretation the counselor is providing new meaning, reason, or explanation for behaviors, thoughts, or feelings so that patient can see problems in a new way. Interpretations can help the client make connections between seemingly isolated statements of events, can point out themes or patterns, or can offer a new framework for understanding. An interpretation may be used to help a patient focus on a specific aspect of their problem or provide a goal.

**9. Information Giving and Removing Obstacles to Change** - Supplying data, opinions, facts, resources or answers to questions. Explore with client possible problems which may delay or prevent their change

process. In collaboration with the client identify possible solutions and alternatives.

“D”

## The Top Ten Basic Counseling Skills

Kevin J. Drab, M.Ed., M.A., LPC, CAC Diplomate

Research is increasingly finding that the type of therapy used is not as important to outcomes as are specific counselor behaviors such as **(1) Enthusiasm, (2) Confidence, (3) Belief in the patient’s ability to change**. Although there is nothing which will ensure change, it would appear that clients are more likely to achieve their goals when a good and positive relationship exists between them and their therapist. In essence, the counselor’s interactions with the client are a powerful tool in the helping relationship.

### 1. Listening

- a. **Attending** - orienting oneself physically to the patient (pt.) to indicate one is aware of the patient, and, in fact, that the client has your full, undivided attention and that you care. Methods include eye contact; nods; not moving around, being distracted, eye contact, encouraging verbalizations; mirroring body postures and language; leaning forward, etc. Researchers estimate that about 80 percent of communication takes place non-verbally.
- b. **Listening/observing** - capturing and understanding the verbal and nonverbal information communicated by that patient.

### Two primary sources of information:

- **CONTENT** - what is specifically said. Listen carefully for, not only what a person says, but also the words, expressions and patterns the person is using,

which may give you a deeper insight. Counselors should develop their ability to remember what was said, as well as to clarify what was said or finding out what was not said.

- **PROCESS** - all nonverbal phenomena, including how content is conveyed, themes, body language, interactions, etc. Smiling

## **2. Empathy**

The ability to perceive another's experience and then to communicate that perception back to the individual to clarify and amplify their own experiencing and meaning. It is not identifying with the patient or sharing similar experiences-- not "I know how you feel"!

Primary skills associated with the communication of empathy include:

- a. nonverbal and verbal attending
- b. paraphrasing content of client communications
- c. reflecting patient feelings and implicit messages

a. **ATTENDING** – involves our behaviors which reflect our paying full attention, in an accepting and supportive way, to the client.

b. **PARAPHRASING** - Selective focusing on the cognitive part of the message – with the client's key words and ideas being communicated back to the patient in a rephrased, and shortened form. There are four steps in effective [paraphrasing:

- I. **Listen and recall.** The entire client message to ensure you recalled it in its entirety and do not omit any significant parts.
- II. **Identify the content** part of the message by deciding what event, situation, idea, or person the client is talking about.



- III. **Rephrase**, in as concise a manner as possible, the key words and ideas the client has used to communicate their concerns in a fresh or different perspective.
- IV. **Perception check** is usually in the form of a brief question, e., “It sounds like...,” “Let me see if I understand this,” which allows the client to agree or disagree with the accuracy of your paraphrasing.

c. **REFLECTING PT'S FEELINGS** - Affective reflection in an open-ended, respectful manner of what the client is communicating verbally and nonverbally, both directly through words and nonverbal behaviors as well as reasonable inferences about what the client might be experiencing emotionally. It is important for the helper to think carefully about which words he/she chooses to communicate these feelings back to the client. The skill lies in choosing words which use different words that convey the same or similar. For example, if a poorly skilled helper reflected to the client that he/she was “very angry and depressed,” when the client had only said they were irritated by a certain event, and had felt very sad over the death of a family pet, the result could be counterproductive to the process of change.

### 3. **Genuineness**

Ability of counselor to be freely themselves. Includes congruence between outer words/behaviors and inner feelings; non-defensiveness; non-roleplaying and being unpretentious. For example, if the helper claims that they are comfortable helping a client explore a drug or sexual issue, but their behavior (verbally and nonverbally) shows signs of discomfort with the topic this will become an obstacle to progress and often lead to client confusion about and mistrust of the helper.

### 4. **Unconditional positive regard**

An expression of caring and nurturance as well as acceptance.

- Includes conveying warmth through:

- Also conveying acceptance by responding to the patient's messages (verbal and nonverbal) with nonjudgmental or noncritical verbal & nonverbal reactions.
- **Respect** - ability to communicate to the patient the counselor's sincere belief that every person possesses the inherent strength and capacity to make it in life, and that each person has the right to choose his own alternatives and make his own decisions.

## 5. Concreteness

Keeping communications specific -- focused on facts and feelings of relevant concerns, while avoiding tangents, generalizations, abstract discussions, or talking about counselor rather than the client.

Includes the following functions:

- a. Assisting client to identify and work on a specific problem from the various ones presented.
- b. Reminding the client of the task and re-describing intent and structure of the session.
- c. Using questions and suggestions to help the client clarify facts, terms, feelings, and goals.
- d. Use a here-and-now focus to emphasize process and content occurring in current session, which may help to elucidate the problem being worked on or improving the problem-solving process.

6. Open Questions -- A questioning process to assist the client in clarifying or exploring thoughts or feelings. Counselor is not requesting specific information and not purposefully limiting the nature of the response to only a yes or no, or very brief answer.

- a. Goal is to facilitate exploration – not needed if the client is already doing this.
- b. Have an intention or therapeutic purpose for every question you ask.
- c. Avoid asking too many questions, or assuming an interrogatory role.

- d. Best approach is to follow a response to an open-ended question with a paraphrase or reflection which encourages the client to share more and avoids repetitive patterns of question/answer/question/answer, etc.

## **8. Counselor Self-Disclosure**

The counselor shares personal feelings, experiences, or reactions to the client. Should include relevant content intended to help them. As a rule, it is better to not self-disclose unless there is a pressing clinical need which cannot be met in any other way. Remember empathy is not sharing similar experiences but conveying in a caring and understanding manner what the client is feeling and thinking

## **9. Interpretation**

Any statement to the client which goes beyond what they have said or are aware of. In interpretation the counselor is providing new meaning, reason, or explanation for behaviors, thoughts, or feelings so that patient can see problems in a new way. Interpretations can help the client make connections between seemingly isolated statements of events, can point out themes or patterns, or can offer a new framework for understanding. An interpretation may be used to help a patient focus on a specific aspect of their problem or provide a goal.

- Keep interpretations short, concrete (see concreteness), and deliver them tentatively and with empathy.
- Use interpretations sparingly and do not assume a patient's rejection of your insight means they are resistant or that you are right.

## **10. Information Giving and Removing Obstacles to Change**

Supplying data, opinions, facts, resources or answers to questions. Explore with client possible problems which may delay or prevent their change process. In collaboration with the client identify possible solutions and alternatives.

**“E”**

## **The Top Ten Basic Counseling Skills Flash Cards**

<https://quizlet.com/148117398/the-top-ten-basic-counseling-skills-flash-cards/?x=1jqt>

[https://aheppp.memberclicks.net/assets/2016ConferencePresentations/counseling%20101%20%20capstick\\_brav.pdf](https://aheppp.memberclicks.net/assets/2016ConferencePresentations/counseling%20101%20%20capstick_brav.pdf)