

Lecture#3/May 28, 2012

Counseling Approaches: Person, Problem, Process

Instructor:

Leslie Verghese, MSW, LCSW

Licensed Psychotherapist and Pastoral Counselor

www.agapepartners.org/coaching



Counseling Approaches

- **Introduction**
- **Person**
 - Principles of Counseling
 - Basic Elements of Knowing the Person
 - Behavioral Concepts of Understanding the Person
- **Problem**
 - Problems of Living – The focus of Counseling
- **Process**
 - Counseling Tools
 - Techniques of Helping
 - Counseling Process

Introduction

- Bible is final standard of authority for the counselor
- Indwelling Power of God combined with Responsible Actions of man work together for solutions
- A Relationship of Spiritual Bonding can develop from the Counselor to Counselees, giving the Counselees the Love and Self-worth they need

Introduction

- The Past is NOT denied, but Dealt with – 1 John 1:9 (If we confess our sins.....)
- The Message of Restoration does NOT have any barriers – John 6:37 (Jesus said, “and him that comes to me.....)
- Christian Counseling ministers to the whole person; Spirit, Soul and Body (1 Thessalonians 5:23 – And the very peace of God.....)

Introduction

Secular

1. Live with Your Problem (Sin)
2. Based on the theory of Evolution
3. Aims at Edification of self
4. Encourages passing the blame/responsibility

Christian

1. Cast it off – Be set free by the blood of Jesus
2. Based on Creation. Aims on Edifying God
3. Encourages facing one's responsibility

Introduction

Goals of Christian Counseling

- Help the counselee learn who God created them to be
- Help the counselee effect change in attitude
- Help them accept God's plan for their life
- Help them deal with the problem of selfishness (recognize, confess, repent, and change)
- Help them to learn to FORGIVE

Person

All Rights Reserved, 2012, API

Five Philosophical Assumptions

1. Every Created Person has Dignity and Worth
2. Every Person is Inter-Dependent
3. Every Person has basic needs to be met for Growth and Development
4. Every Person has the Potential for Growth and Development and has the Right to the Realization of this potential
5. Society has an Obligation to help those who have not had the means to the realization of these potentials

Principles of Counseling

1- Individualization

- Each Counselee is a 'Unique' individual
- Each has a separate identity
- Counselor should not view the counselee as the part of a 'mass'

Principles of Counseling

2 - Acceptance

- Accept the 'sinner' NOT the 'sin' (*Love the sinner and hate the sin*)
- Accept with all qualities, strengths and weaknesses regardless of behavior
- Directly related to the concept of every individual has an 'innate worth' regardless of social position or behavior
- Acceptance does **NOT CONDONE** behavior but shows concern and good will to the person behind the behavior

Principles of Counseling

3: Non-Condensation

- In other words 'non-judgmental attitude'. Very similar to the principle of 'Acceptance'
- Refusal to express disapproval of the person
- Refusal to insinuate blame through cause-effect
- Refusal to pass judgement indicating that the person deserves to be punished

Principles of Counseling

4: Self Determination

- In other words Self Direction
- Help to Help 'oneself'
- Each Person has the right of 'making decisions'. They should not be forced upon
- Counselee takes the responsibility of carrying out the decision
- Exercised with an assessment of the counselee's capacity for self determination

Principles of Counseling

5: Confidentiality

- Counseling matters are not be disclosed to others without the consent of the counselee
- Exceptions:
 - When health and safety of the counselee or others in contact with the counselee is compromised
 - When law and order will be / is affected

Basic Elements of Knowing the Person - 1

- An Individual's behavior is conditioned by his/her environment and his/her life experiences
- Behavior refers to feeling, thinking, talking and doing
- Feeling and Thinking are – Covert
- Talking and Doing are - Overt

Basic Elements of Knowing the Person - 2

- For Human Growth and Development, it is essential that certain basic needs be met
- Pertain to Physical. Spiritual and Intellectual
- Deprivation of 'love' for a long period may arrest the growth

Basic Elements of Knowing the Person - 3

- Emotional Needs are Real; They cannot be MET or REMOVED by Intellectual Reasoning
- Counseling is not Rational Explanation of Situation when Counselee has an emotional need
- Example: 2 year old crying for mommy – No factual explanation will suffice until she sees mommy

Basic Elements of Knowing the Person - 4

- Behavior is purposeful and is in response to the individual's physical and emotional needs
- Sometimes we observe a person who is considered 'well behaved' suddenly expressing 'erratic' behavior. What could be the 'emotional reason' for such behavior?
- The hidden motivating factors need to be explored

Basic Elements of Knowing the Person - 5

- Other people's behavior can only be understood in terms of one's own emotional and intellectual comprehension
 - We tend to make our 'assessments'
 - We categorize and attach 'labels'
 - Leads to 'judging' and not understanding the 'person'
- Move from a point of assumption of ignorance and move towards understanding

Behavioral Concepts for Understanding the Person

- Fulfillment of Needs = Proper Growth and Development
 - Love and Security
 - Sense of Belonging to a Group
 - Feelings of Self Esteem
 - Opportunity for Physical and Mental Growth
 - Guidance and Direction

Temperament - Building Blocks of Life

There are three building blocks of human behavior:

1. God Created (Inborn) - Temperament
2. Man/Environment Affected (Character-Learned Behavior)
3. Self Selected (Personality – Mask)

Temperament Deals With Inclusion, Control, Affection

- **Inclusion (the Intellect)** is the need to establish and maintain a satisfactory surface relationship with people through association and socialization whereas control is achieving the same through power, and affection is establishing a deep relationship of love. Inclusion determines who is in our relationship and whether we relate better to tasks or to people.
- **Control (Will Power)** determines who maintains the power and how well we make decisions.
- **Affection (Emotions)** determines the closeness of the relationship and how many emotions we share. The expressed and responsive needs in these three areas determine the inborn temperament of a person.

Problem

All Rights Reserved, 2012, API

Problem:

Major Categories

- Related to Illnesses and Disabilities
- Due to Lack of Resources
- Parenting and School Related
- Behavior Problems
- Marital Conflicts
- Social Problems such as Addictions, Deviant Behaviors etc.

Major Factors Contributing to the Occurrence of a Problem

- Lack of Love
- Unhealthy child rearing/parenting techniques
- Over protectiveness and Over possessiveness
- Inadequate and Defective Role Modeling
- Inconsistent Leadership in Homes, Churches and Society

Major Reasons for 'Poor Performance' = PROBLEM

- Non fulfillment of Needs
- Divergent Role Expectations (*husband thinks differently of wife's role*)
- Physical or Mental illness/disability
- Lack of Material and Non-Material Resources
- Lack of Preparation for Role (parenting; spousal)
- Role Conflict (Role of job effecting role in family)

Deprivation of Needs

- Lack of Love and Security Guidance and Direction etc.. Is a major cause of problem
- Deprivation can be situational or long drawn

Personality Development

- Personality Inadequacies get people into 'problems'
- Non commitment, laziness, inability to commit to authority etc. are common by products
- Acts of Omission or Commission on the part of the parents impact the coping abilities of children as they grow up
- Their 'reality check' is not adequate, 'conscience' is ill developed and are prone to operate more on the 'pleasure principle'

Internal Processes Affecting People

- Only a 'part of the human behavior' is visible
- Thinking and Feeling (Different volitional vs. nonvolitional)
- Thinking = Indication of the Exercise of the Will
- Feeling = Experience of Emotions (usually **will** plays no part)
- Feelings aroused by 'traumatic events' may either temporarily or permanently affect 'thinking and acting'

External Processes Affecting People

- External Process impacting a person = Environment
- Physical, Human, and Socio Cultural Environments
- Physical – House, Neighborhood, Amenities etc.
- Human – People with who one interacts. Family; school, work place, church
- Socio Cultural – Comprehension of the matters of health, family; Stigma, Superstitions etc.

Distressful Life Events

- Abuse in the family
- Other traumatic events unaddressed
- Fostered Bitterness of the Past
- Growing up with a negative predisposition towards a group or a person as a result of that
- Lack of ability to cope
- Development of maladaptive behaviors

Natural Responses = Defense mechanisms

- Denial – Shutting off of Reality
- Rationalization – Finding a justifiable excuse for the actions
- Displacement – ‘The Domino Effect’
- Regression – Reverting to less mature behaviors
- Compensation – Trying to make for the ‘inability’
- Projection – Blaming others for one’s ‘feelings’
- Day Dreaming – Drifting to Fantasies of ‘pleasant experiences’

Process

All Rights Reserved, 2012, API

Process 101

- Listen to your Counselee with your EARS and your HEART
- Let God's Word speak to you. The Counselee should SEE Hoy Scriptures vs. you quoting the scriptures
- Keep your appointments and be on time
- Treat the Counselee with Dignity and Respect
- Dress Professionally
- Do NOT share your Personal Problems

Be Careful

- Do NOT Judge
- Do Not be Self Righteous (look at me!)
- Do Not be Proud
- Do Not depend on yourself than the Lord
- Do not Refuse to Release the counselee
- Do not get attracted (physically/emotionally/spiritually)
- Do not have too much compassion; Be empathetic
- Do not give advice and make decisions for them
- Do not spiritually manipulate (*"thus saith the Lord, move to Florida"*)

Process – The 3 Dimensions

- Getting Information Directly About the Counselee – Usually Verbal Communication
- Getting Indirect Information – Usually Non-Verbal Communication
- Giving Help – Usually has two parts; Interview and Relationship

As the Process Begins

- Collect Pertinent Information (application; intake form)
- Set a Plan (contract; ethics)
- Collect Cues
- Never side with the counselee against the other
- Warn the counselee – things could get worse
- Pray for your counselee
- Encourage them
- Keep on Schedule

Process Tool # 1 - Listening

- Always make Eye contact
- Purposeful, Active, Attentive Listening is Crucial
- It is a consciously performed activity for the counselor
- Avoid distractions
 - formulating an answer when counselee is talking
 - Anxiety of the counselor
 - Selective Listening
 - Counselor must clear mind of pre-occupations
 - Set the counseling area to be quiet

Process Tool # 2 - Observation

- Art of noticing features about people, things, situations
 - General outward appearance of the counselee
 - Facial expression, posture, gestures etc.
 - Characteristics including emotional nuances while interacting with others
- Body-Mind relationship is manifest in the body movements which give expression to feelings (body language)

Process Tool # 3 - Interview

- The face to face conversation
- Not casual but professional, structured
- Geared towards a specific or general purpose such as:
 - Obtaining Information from or Imparting Information to
 - Studying and Assessing the Counselee's problem and related situation
 - To give Help

Process Tool # 4 - Relationship

- Counselor-Counselee Relationship
- Connected in a significant way
- Positive, Professional Relationship
- Bound by Time to specific Purposes
- It entails the tangible and concrete things as well as the intangible area of Emotions
- Expected to foster growth in the Counselee

Process Techniques - 1

- Acceptance – Making the Counselee feel 'welcome'
- Assurance – that Counselee will not be judged for the feelings
- Facilitation – Making it 'easy' for the counselee to 'vent'
- Accrediting – Making the counselee 'confident' to be an active participant in problem solving
- Encouraging – Reassuring counselees to do some things to improve the situation
- Action Oriented Support – 'getting something done' for ...
- Advocacy – 'making a request in support or on behalf of'

Process Techniques - 2

- Reflective Discussion – Discussion based on the counselee's deep thinking on the areas of life that have a bearing on the problem
- Motivation – (Advice) Has to be used carefully. Couched in suggestions, observations, questions etc..
- Clarification - Conceptually disentangling the factors of a situation to make it more comprehensible to the Counselee

Process Techniques - 2

- Modeling – Counselor learns from what the counselor says and DOES
- Role Playing – a Future event is enacted; counselor and counselee takes the various roles for teaching and learning
- Reality Orientation – When counselees ‘beat around the bush’ and have ‘unrealistic expectations’

Process Techniques - 2

- **Partialization** – Breaking situation into various aspects and focusing on that which needs immediate attention
- **Interpretation** – Explaining a counselee's behavior in terms of its 'psychological' meaning
- **Universalization** – Bringing awareness to the counselees that they are not the only ones in this situation
- **Confrontation** – When contradictions and retractions from commitments occur, confrontation brings the counselee face to face with his/her lapses

Process Tools and Techniques Summary

- The Goals are split into Three categories
 - Supportive Techniques
 - Techniques to Improve Resources
 - Material – Things, Physical Environment
 - Non-Material – Information and Knowledge
 - Techniques to Improve the Internal Processes
 - Feeling, Thinking, Attitude, Perception

Why Counseling as a Process?

- Focuses on the needs of 'Individuals' and 'Specific needs' as opposed to pulpit preaching
- Enables one to work on highly personal problems
- It is a two way communication
- It is a Process, not a lecture
- It takes time and has a depth aspect

Basis for Christian Counseling

- It is more than a bag or arsenal of techniques. It is rooted on the firm belief in Christ. It is powered and anointed by the Holy Spirit
- It is structured on biblical truths and the limitless love, acceptance and forgiveness of Jesus Christ
- It is a Unique Specialty, powerful to the pulling down of strongholds, Effective, Transforming and Highly Successful

Counseling is COMMUNICATION

- Talking is THERAPY
- Talking is THINKING
- Talking is SIFTING (good from bad)
- Talking is CLARIFYING (sharpening the focus)
- Talking is RELEASE (get rid of toxic thoughts)
- Talking is THERAPY
- This is Counseling

In Conclusion....

Galatians 6:1

“Brethren, if any person is overtaken in misconduct of any sort, you who are spiritual – who are responsive to and controlled by the spirit – should set him right and restore and reinstate him, without any sense of superiority and with all gentleness, and keeping an attentive eye on yourself, lest you should be tempted also”

CONTACT INFORMATION

- Agape Partners International
P.O. Box 550141
Waltham, MA 02452
- Phone: **781-330-0569** | **516-855-8093**
Email: counsel@agapepartners.org
Web: www.agapepartners.org
- Technical Support: support@agapepartners.org
- **717-546-4144**