

Course Reflection - Module 5

For this assignment, you will answer each of the questions below. Each question should be answered in at least 1 paragraph (5 or more sentences). Use sufficient detail and personal examples.

You may type directly on this document, then save and submit it to Dropbox.

1. Looking back over the past five weeks, discuss one new thing you have learned? How will you use this information?

This may sound really silly, but I have learned that being a people helper is not some mystical club that you have to belong to in order to minister to others. I always thought that I would have to make up my own questions, formulate my own treatment plans - basically it's me and God trying to help this helpless one. When, in actuality, many wonderful, godly people have been studying people helping for many years and have produced lots and lots of materials, like the videos we have been watching and our text The Quick Reference Guide to Biblical Counseling by Drs. Clinton and Hawkins, to help someone like me be able to do this work. I'm saying that I'm really glad I don't have to reinvent the wheel - there are really good books with the information I need to grow into this task. I will certainly be acquiring some of those wonderful books and studying them to the best of my ability in the coming months and years, in hopes of acquiring "adequate training" to serve God well in my chosen area.

2. Discuss a new counseling technique you have learned and how it will be beneficial to you in your personal relationships or ministry?

Dr. Linda Mintle, in her presentation, "Marriage: Keeping the Love Alive," discussed a tool called "The Sound Relationship House" created by John and Julia Gottman. This tool offers practical ways to build and maintain sound relationships, both in marriage and in families and friendships. If I follow the steps in this "house," I will be able to keep my marriage strong, build healthier friendships and also have solid techniques to proscribe to those who are struggling in their relationships. I think maybe the most important step in the Gottman Relationship House is Managing Conflict. It suggests that we don't actually manage the conflict, but we manage our actions and emotions during conflict, because conflict is inevitable and sometimes irreconcilable. If we are able to manage ourselves during conflict, we can maintain the emotional bond while discussing the problem. This is a huge step in a much better direction than the one our culture has been dragging us down.

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3. As you think back on the past five weeks, is there a certain field or group of people you find God leading you towards?

My heart has been most recently for those I am privileged to minister to as a chaplaincy volunteer with the North Carolina Baptists on Mission Disaster Relief teams. My job has been to be with and pray with survivors as the teams tear the insides from their homes after flooding has ruined everything. After this first month of study, "Caring for People God's Way," I feel even more strongly that these people are where God is leading me to minister at this time. I realize that material loss is only one of many kinds of loss that can be experienced, according to Dr. H. Norman Wright's presentation on Grief and Loss, but at this time I feel strongly that I can and should learn more about it and how I can better help those I get to spend time with in the days following their tragedy.

4. What scripture has resonated with you most as you worked through each week?

"You make known to me the path of life; in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore." Psalm 16:11 This scripture has been with me this whole month, reminding me where my fountains are, who holds me and keeps me no matter what I'm going through. Dr. Ian Jones, in his message "The Effective People Helper" said that we should be spiritually engaged, practicing the presence of God in every counseling situation. My mind and heart need to be wholly secure in Christ before I can help anybody else, and the bond needs to be even stronger as I reach out to those who are hurting with the love and hope of the one who made them. I know that servants of Christ are always under attack, but we can remain at peace knowing that as we walk in his path, he gives us joy through it all.

5. What area will be your strength and in which area will you need to continue to improve?

Dr. Norm Wright said that in times of grief and loss, the most important things to do are "normalize and educate." To normalize means to be compassionate, learning names, situations, helping them accept feelings of loss as part of the process, making it normal. This step requires compassion

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and being a good listener. I think I am a good listener, but I have not ever gone through situations such as I have encountered in recent hurricane seasons. I don't feel like I can sympathize as readily as someone who has been there. Also, to educate, as Dr. Norm says, requires having knowledge to share; that's why I am continuing with these courses of study in Biblical Counseling. I have gained confidence already, and some knowledge. I am excited about what the Lord is going to teach me as I learn to teach others.

Due Date: Sunday of Module 5, by 11:59 p.m. (EST)