

Interview Questions- Counselor/Therapist

1. Can you tell me a little about your practice?

I work full-time in Richland School District Two with Family Intervention Services as a family therapist and coordinating services for families of students placed in the alternative program. The main goals are to decrease disciplinary concerns, prevent dropout, and increase family engagement. We often focus on working towards healing trauma and strained parent-child relationships. I work with a group private practice (Palmer Counseling and Consulting) part time. The practice has grown to about 11 clinicians now, and we provide therapy and psychological services to a wide variety of clients and their families in the Northeast Columbia area.

- How long have you been practicing? I have been practicing for the past 5 years.
 - What is the primary focus of your practice? I work with at-risk students and their families in the school district. In private practice I work with adults and children around age 12 and up.
 - Do you focus on a particular population? I work with a variety of clients, but I do a lot of trauma focused work with young and middle aged African-American women.
- ### 2. What is your theoretical orientation?
- I utilize interventions from a variety of theoretical orientations including: Cognitive Behavioral Therapy, Narrative Therapy, Emotion-Focused Family Therapy, Expressive Arts, Mindfulness, and EMDR.
- ### 3. What made you decide to become a therapist?
- I've always wanted to help young people and their families work towards their goals and independence. Also, I grew up in a household where we did not discuss emotions. As a result, I kept my thoughts and

feelings bottled inside. I hope to offer and foster the emotional safety I did not have for all clients in the therapy process.

4. What do you do outside of work that helps you maintain a healthy, well-balanced life?

Staying involved in my church community, prayer, meditation, reading, yoga, and spending time with friends and family helps keep me grounded.

5. How do you stay organized and stay on top of documentation?

My schedule has changed frequently due to COVID and fluctuation of job responsibilities, so I'm still trying to find my rhythm with staying on top of documentation. I take brief notes during sessions to remember key points, and sometimes utilize collaborative documentation to start writing the note with the client at the end of the session. I also block time in my schedule to complete documentation as needed.

6. What do you consider to be the most important traits for a therapist to have?

I believe it is very important for therapists to be caring, curious, and genuine.

7. What advice would you give an undergraduate college student seeking to enter the helping profession?

I would suggest undergraduate students seek any opportunities for learning and/or observing the therapy/helping profession process you can. The more you learn and see, the better you'll be able to decide if this career is for you, and what special populations fit right with your passion and purpose. I would also suggest seeking personal therapy to build and maintain healthy and consistent self-care/coping skills, and build awareness around what personally drives you towards the helping profession. Oftentimes it is our own difficult experiences in our families of origin

and/or traumas that drive us towards the helping profession. Ongoing awareness and healing is very important in order to be truly available and capable to support our clients the best we can.