

Logos University

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Course Number:

CNS130 Introduction to Christian Counseling

Professor: Willie Lewis

5/6/21

Book Review
Of
How to Be a People Helper.
by
Gary Collins, Ph.D.

Book Review

1. Introductory Paragraph

1. Identify the title, the author, and the publisher of the book.

“How to Be a People Helper” was written by Professor Gary R. Collins a licensed clinical psychologist with a Ph.D. in clinical psychology from Purdue University. His purpose was to provide a resource to assist the lay minister in his or her attempt to help people as they look at themselves the way Jesus sees us. Collins grew up in Canada and graduated from McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario and the University of Toronto before taking a year of to study at the University of London. Collins first teaching opportunity occurred during that year as he taught courses for the University of Maryland in Germany and England.

The Book was published by Tyndale House Publishers, Inc.; on February 22, 1995.

Many lay persons have found the book to be extremely informative with clinical application and use of scripture to add greater depth to the work they are doing. The book is filled with practical exercises that can be used with both groups and individual sessions.

2. Summarize the main idea/theme of the book you are reviewing in one or two sentences.

Professor Collins make a case in his book “How to Be a People Helper” for understanding biblical caregiving.” By’ providing a definition of Christian Counseling, “as a caring relationship in which one person tries to help another deal more effectively with the stresses of life. He also highlighted the importance of Lay counselors, when said “Lay Counseling should have strategies for selecting, training, supervising, and evaluating lay Christian counselors. To guide in the establishing of lay counseling programs.

3. Write your thesis (what you think of the book).

In "How to Be a People Helper" Collins made a strong case for Lay Counseling, He said, Christian counseling has become an important treatment modality for a growing number of health care practitioners

and patients across the country in recent years. Christian Counseling was introduced during the early 1980s. Christian counseling advocates integrating religious practices and beliefs founded on religious traditions with psychotherapeutic techniques to provide an optimal approach to helping people cope with a wide range of personal problems and family issues. Collins make it clear religious are essential worker when he said, “many in the faith community feel much more comfortable to speak to the Rabbis, Priests, Pastors, Imams and other religious leaders before reaching out the their doctor or a therapist”.

1. **Body Paragraph(s)**

1. Summarize the important points of the book (This can be one or several paragraphs.)

Lay counseling or paraprofessional counseling is being reevaluated within the overall counseling landscape. And Collins through his work in “How to Be a People Helper” is making the case that is in stark contrary to what many mental health counselors may think. And while there are various models of lay counseling, the work of “How to Be a People Helper” is proving to be an effective tool in many counseling situations, and that is in “both Christian and secular Counseling. In a recent book, “*Evidence-Based Practices for Christian Counseling and Psychotherapy*”, by Everett L. Worthington and colleagues the authors summarize the state of the current research by concluding that, “Lay or paraprofessional counselors have therefore generally been found to be effective helpers.” Point out that after twenty-five years of research and practice, Dr. Joseph Matarazo made a significant statement about professional therapy. He admitted, “What I, and the majority of talking psychotherapists, accomplish in psychotherapy cannot be distinguished from what is accomplished between very good friends over coffee every morning.”

1. **Use quotes or paraphrases from the book to prove your points.**

Some of the studies regarding lay counseling has found that “lay counseling may have better outcomes than professional counseling in many situations. Collins make the point that the role of people helpers is contributing

greatly to psychological treatment in many areas where counseling service is limited. The presence of a close and dear friend who cares and is compassionate; ready and available to listen, offer and provide practical help is much more conducive toward spiritual healing and recovery than lab-tests and pills. People helping is everybody's business. Psychologists, psychiatrists, social workers, pastors, and other professionals have special expertise in this area, but in one way or another all of us have opportunities to be people helpers almost every day. Collins makes it clear the helping actions clear when he said "the helping actions is wonderful" as he looks into the patterns taught and displayed by Jesus in his earthly ministry to formulate what Christian people-helpers should do as well.

b. Evaluate (This can be one or several paragraphs.)

i. Explain the writer's purpose for writing the book. Give your opinion on whether the writer achieved her/his purpose in writing the book.

"Everyone faces problems, and it is likely that we can help people more than we realize". Collins helps readers become more sensitive to the needs of others around them. How to Be a People Helper, encourage the service of lay counselors who have become effective in a particular area because of their own life experiences. Romans 12:3-8 admonishes all of us to use our spiritual gifts in ways that blesses others in our local church. With many congregants battling marital struggles, severe depression, needing career guidance after a difficult period in life. Lay Counseling can be the most cost effective and easy way to get the help the need. Additionally, Lay counselors can be matched with those of similar life experiences. Because they tend to limit themselves to areas of life experience. They can specialize their training and service in the area of their passion with great success. When someone has developed a life skill in wise financial management, they can help others in the church who are struggling with their finances. When a brother or a sister has developed self-control in the area of moral purity, he/she will be

effective in helping other men/women struggling to mature in moral purity overcome their pitfalls!

ii. Criticize/praise the book.

I loved the book, but with one downside, is that it is an older book, having been published in 1995. The age of this book shows up especially in the chapter on the use of the telephone. Still, however, I find the book to be helpful and relevant enough that I believe it will be well received among the population. Collins also provide a critical and systematic overview of the relevant literature and a comprehensive Guide on Lay counseling and how this approach can be used to provide the timely and essential interventions that can help people better cope with personal and family problems.

c. Explain to your audience if you thought the book was entertaining or boring, has good characters or unrealistic characters, has thorough information or inadequate information.

The book provides a critical and systematic review of the relevant information in Christian Counseling: It is a comprehensive Guide to the origin of Christian counseling and trends and how approach the work of a People Helper. The Book can be useful to students, pastors and trained clinician provide timely and essential interventions to people of faith that can help better cope with personal and family problems while keeping their faith in tack. According to Collins "Counseling attempts to provide encouragement and guidance for those who are facing losses, major decisions, or disappointments. Counseling can stimulate personality growth and development." He also presented realistic expectations to the reader and persons interested in helping members of their local church.

- i. Use quotes or paraphrases from the book to prove your points.
Collins cautions anyone, pastors, students, lay worker, etc. going into the Helping services the importance of not to be quick to interrupt by either asking questions that could

have been asked after clients complete their sharing, giving advice, preaching or arguing. He said "it is imperative that helpers do not get carried away by personal motives, such as curiosity and personal needs. I strongly feel that the listening section that Collins teaches is simply an excellent first step for helpers. I would highly recommend this book to general public and to emerging leaders.

1. Remind the reader of your thesis (whether or not you thought the book was good).

In preparation, one needs to remind himself or herself that it is critical to make a serious effort to listen. For me and others who have a hard time listening, this reminder is necessary. Passive learning involves concentration, evaluating while listening, but being careful not to jump to conclusion without complete information.

Simultaneous listening and evaluation involve paying attention to gestures, tones and repeating themes. Active listening includes responding in such as way, through gestures or words, that encourage clients to share more that would eventually help

formulating plan of actions. In addition, it is important not to be quick to interrupt by either asking questions that could have been asked after clients complete their sharing, or giving advice, or preaching or arguing.

2. Conclusion

1. Review the main points of your argument.

There are several points that Collins have advocated for in a people helper, and I consider to be important and useful. First, helpers need to prepare themselves with and their qualifications, not only spiritual, but also academic, and having great character. Second, what is it that constitutes people-helping? In this regard, listening is specifically something not only I, but also I believe many have plenty to learn from. The epistle of James says everyone must be quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to anger. This scripture is most fundamental principle of Christian counseling, and when it is implemented people are help with their internal struggles. The listening section that Collins teaches is simply excellent. Another reason why the section that deals with the helping actions is wonderful because Collins looks to the pattern taught and displayed by Jesus in his earthly ministry to formulate what Christian people-helpers should do as well

