

MFT 691: MFT PRACTICUM
Process Paper

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Preparing for an internship was nerve-racking at the beginning for me. I did the work at school, the pre-requisites, I continue to observe at our clinical observation with different professors/therapists. I have kept up with reading our textbooks which taught us the skills and theories that can be used throughout our practice. I have seen videos showing different styles and formats of theories in therapeutic settings. All this helped prepare me for the internship process, and yet still my stomach gets queasy. When my advisor advised me to take *Practicum* this semester so I can start preparation for internship I got scared. I told myself I was not ready, who said I can do this? I questioned God and if He was sure this is what He had called me to. What if I do more harm than good for those I'm supposed to be helping? Those were my fears/doubts.

During our practicum class, I realized I was not alone with doubts. I had other classmates expressed these doubts and as I reassured them privately, and our professor did so in the class, I find that I too was being reassured. I remember one morning during my private prayer and meditation session, I said, Father, I'm not sure I can do this, I heard in my spirit many positive affirmations that brought peace to my mind. This peace lasted a few weeks before I returned to doubting again because something else came up which caused me to doubt. I remember Dr. Wells told me in one of my journals feedback to trust God through this process, and as I move forward as a therapist. This is sound advice because as a future Christian counselor attending a Christian school, and doing a faith-based program we know that we were called to this field. We know from personal experience that God is with us, and as Dr. Wells and our other professor repeatedly tell us, private pray is essential before entering the therapeutic sessions. When that's done we are assured of the Holy Spirit's presence, guidance, and protection during our session with the client.

As I prepare my resume for my internship, this process becomes real to me and I'm excited today. I have not acquired an internship position or site as yet, but I'm more confident in myself, because of what I learned through our practicum class. This confidence came from knowing and hearing that we can do this, and by relying on the Holy Spirit. Speaking to and listening to my classmates, who are doing their internship helped assure me that when I get started it will become natural, and having the site supervisor together with our professors to help and guide us is very encouraging.

In our textbook "*Skills for Effective Counseling, a faith - Based integration*" by Elisabeth A., et al. (2016), it states that "*counseling is not about convincing but about listening and facilitating growth*". This is a powerful statement for me because it takes the pressure off me wanting to fix others. Also in clinical observation, I see Dr. Mercurio demonstrating what we are learning in our weekly session. Being an attentive listener, being empathic, connecting with the counselee, all these tips we learn will help along with the Holy Spirit and a good supervisor. I have assured myself that at first, it will seem strange because it's something new, but trusting the God in me will help. I know Nyack has equipped me and given me sound tools for this ministry that God has called me to. All I'm responsible for is the first step and God will do the rest as I embark upon this journey. I recall in another of our textbooks, the therapist wrote about a client whom the Holy Spirit told him to just listen to. No homework, or advice, to just listen. He stated this went on for months until the client moved out of state. One day God will have the therapist whom he thought he did not help, run into him at a conference and to be told by the client how much the therapist helped him and his marriage by just listening. The above statement about listening and this therapist's story helped build my confidence and remind me that obedience to the Holy Spirit is essential in our profession.

Does this mean I won't get nervous and scared? Yes, I will, but I will recall that I am not doing this by myself, God is with me/us. The next step for me is to send out my resume to the different sites and pray that I can obtain an internship early in 2021. I am excited now, yet I keep telling myself I am human and will make mistakes and yes that's part of the growing and learning process. I'm equipped and anointed for this helping profession, first by God and then by Nyack College.

Last week an Internship site contacted me and asked if I'm available for an interview the day after thanksgiving. I am in Texas and communicated this to the speaker, to which she asked how long I am out of town for. I replied two weeks and then gave two weeks' notice to my employers and booked my flight to New York. I feel ready and excited as I get closer to the finish line. Will this site hire me? I don't know but what I do know is that God has a site just right for me and that makes me excited.

