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Unit 2 Essays - The Counselor and Ethical Issues

1. The phrase, “the authentic therapist” conveys to me a counselor who is down-to-earth, understanding and not solely focused upon being professional with the client. He/she is willing to divulge suitable personal information about themselves that may assist in their client’s therapeutic process. I have learned that in human relationships transparency is infectious. So, if I, the therapist, am open and honest, chances are the client will be too.

2. Appropriate, helpful self-disclosure in counseling is an opportunity for the counselor to give short, meaningful, similar stories that would be beneficial to the client. Here are two scenarios:

- Kai is worried sick about a possible promotion at work. The counselor tells him briefly about a similar situation and how he handled the wait.
- Raffi feels lost because his marriage is over and is terrified when he thinks about continuing life alone. The therapist tells him how he pulled through his divorce and has decided to make the most of his singleness by traveling every chance he gets.

Inappropriate disclosure is considered counseling malpractice. It can be excessive, private information a counselor shares about himself that becomes burdensome to the client, as though roles were switched and the person seeking therapy is the therapist. Or it can be sharing

information with the client that allows him access to non-professional Facebook or Instagram pages.

3. Therapists should be required to undergo their own personal therapy before they become practitioners, indeed! They need to know what it feels like to be in their clients' shoes. Corey (2011) states that new counselors can learn what therapeutic methods are more effective than others, hone in on better communication skills and even release the stress that can come with being a caring, sensitive mental health worker. His, or her, approach to therapy becomes less professional and more personal.

4. I believe that a good relationship between a therapist and his client is important to successful therapeutic outcomes. If the counselor is attentive, engaging and personable, it makes each encounter with his/her client more and more comfortable. Trust is built, too, so the client is willing to share freely. Corey (2011) lists a good sense of humor on the therapist's part as an endearing quality. Clients come with loads of emotional baggage and a good joke can lighten the atmosphere. The Bible refers to laughter as "good medicine" (Proverbs 17: 22). An article I read online about psychology and laughter said that humor brings closeness in human relationships (Gibson, 2016).

5. I am not sure if I would be able to show neutrality to clients who support abortion, homosexuality and same sex marriages. I love all people, but it would be an awkward experience for both client and therapist, since my views against these topics are strong and they contradict my belief system.

Also, I may have a tough time letting go of the difficulties my clients share with me. I am always ready to listen, since I have been emotionally scarred by loved ones who were too busy to

lend a listening ear when I needed it the most. But, long after I have ended the listening encounter with someone, I carry their troubles with me, thinking about what I could have said or done better to help.

8. I would definitely want a therapist who shares my faith in God and the power of prayer. These qualities would help to initiate some level of comfortability, since they are of the utmost importance in my life. Expertise in psychotherapy would be important, too. I would also prefer an older woman from the Caribbean who could identify with the culture and trend of thought. It is one thing to learn about culture, but another to experience it firsthand. I left my country over 30 years ago, but I still exercise the ways of an average Trinidadian woman. The respect level would automatically be there because of the age difference. And I would appreciate a good sense of humor and warm personality, too. I believe that a good laugh always lightens the mood and a warm personality is always inviting.

9. While this ability will come with lots of practice, it is very important for a practitioner to develop his or her own counseling style. It sets them apart from other counselors and allows them to blend different techniques that are best suited for their clientele. Life is about learning as you go and methods become effective through advice from supervisors and trial and error.

12. A sense of humor can lighten the mood, bring the client and therapist closer, and create a relaxed environment. Therapy does not have to be solemn. But humor can be considered inappropriate when it is used to disguise anxiety or an evasion from confronting tough issues in therapy.

References

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Gibson, J. M. (2016, October 5). *A Good Sense of Humor is a Sign of Psychological Health*. Quartz. <https://qz.com/768622/a-good-sense-of-humor-is-a-sign-of-psychological-health/>