ALLIANCE GRADUATE SCHOOL
OF COUNSELING
NYACK COLLEGE

Case Presentation

Megan Petersen
Nyack College Counseling Center

GCN 792 NB/NLS:
Counseling Internship II
Fanita Henderson,
LMHC, NCC, CCMHC,
Adjunct Professor

November 3, 2021

Client Demographics

- First Name: Kate
- Gender: Female
- Ethnicity: Korean American
- Language: English
- Marital Status: Single
- # of Children: 0
- Age: 26

Presenting Problem

- Required 5 Counseling Sessions for Seminary Course
- Process Grief Journal for Course
- Relational Issues with Roommate
- Reported history of depression, anxiety, & bulimia nervosa

Psychiatric History

- First time in counseling
- In counseling for one month
- No previous formal diagnosis
- Client self-reported history: depression, anxiety, bulimia nervosa
- Currently meets criteria for:
  - Phase of Life Problem
  - Seasonal Affective Disorder
  - Possible Adjustment Disorder with Mixed Depressed/Anxious Mood
- No current or previous suicidal or homicidal ideation
- No previous suicide attempts

Spiritual History

- Client is a believer
- Full-time Youth Pastor at a church
- Reported "relationship with Jesus is growing" & faith is "climbing"
- Relationship with mother negatively impacted relationship with God during teen years
- Client believes "tremendous healing" has taken place in relationship with mother
- Client often brings up spirituality & faith in sessions

Cultural, Family, & Social History

- Traditional Korean upbringing
- High expectations for academic success
- History of verbal/physical abuse on maternal side (not discussed in family)
- Mother/grandmother have strained relationship - mirrored in client's relationship with mother
- Client has had difficulty adjusting to new situations
- Close with small group from church
- Possible Anxious Attachment
- Fears of abandonment by friends (Grief Journal)

Ego Strengths & Weaknesses

- Strengths
  - Empathetic
  - Hospitable
  - Peacemaker
  - Generous
  - Kind
- Weaknesses
  - People-pleasing
  - Lack of self-confidence, self-efficacy
  - Difficulty asserting needs
  - Conflict avoidant
  - Difficulty asking for help

Theoretical Framework

- Person-Centered
  - Unconditional Positive Regard
  - Valued, worthy of dignity, respect
- Cognitive Behavioral
  - Identifying cognitive distortions
  - Cognitive Reframing
- Dialectical Behavioral Therapy
  - DEAR MAN
  - Radical Acceptance
- Spirituality/Christian perspective

Transference & Countertransference

- Transference
  - Looking for teacher/spiritual leader
  - Possibly older sister/friend
  - Asked many questions, sought advice initially

- Countertransference
  - Mother has history of panic attacks/anxiety
  - Struggled with people-pleasing, conflict
  - Could over-identify, make assumptions about client

Counseling Goals

1. Process grief over loss of friendship (grief journal)
2. Process what is happening with the members of her youth group
3. Develop a healthier relationship with her roommate

Advocacy & Social Justice Concerns

- Women of color in ministerial leadership
- Marginalization in the church, greater society
- Rise in hatred toward Asian American Pacific Islanders

Progress to Date

- Processed grief journal, loss of childhood friendship
- Identified conflict avoidance & anxious attachment in friendships
- Connected relationship with mother to family she supports/identifies with in her church
- Currently identifying issues in relationship with roommate
- Incorporating communication strategies (DBT/CBT)

Consultation Questions

1. How can I engage Kate in further exploring the familial relationship pattern on her maternal side & its impact on her other relationships?
2. What are some suggestions to help her develop assertiveness in relationship with her roommate?