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Unit 1 Essays

1. Reading the section titled “overview of contemporary counseling methods”, I was surprised at how many different types of methods there are which in a way is great because we have the help to give to others that need it. Psychoanalytic therapy is used to deal with the person's unconscious mind, and they focus more on a person's first six years of life to help figure out the person's personality later in life. I think this therapy is useful because usually the way that we act is determined in our early life and childhood. Adlerian therapy is a quick approach that focuses on finding meaning and goals to help create a purposeful life for someone. I believe that this approach is also very helpful and can really help someone with their mindset. Existential therapy focuses more on the person receiving theory than on their symptoms. It also focuses a lot on freedom, self determination, and responsibility. For this therapy I feel mixed on how I feel because I feel like it's important to focus on the person but it's also just as important to focus on their symptoms and feelings. Person-centered therapy is focused on giving a person responsibility and to create self esteem while working through their problems. This is a great therapy because it gives the person a sense of purpose despite what they are going through. Gestalt therapy focuses on increasing a person's awareness, freedom, and self-direction. It also focuses more on the persons present rather than their past. This one I do not necessarily agree with because although the present is very important, I believe

the past is extremely important and plays a huge role in the present. Behavior therapy focuses on a person's behavior and how to solve them. I think this type of therapy is great because it teaches you why you behave in a certain way. Cognitive behavior therapy focuses on lowering symptoms of different mental health conditions and also coping with trauma. I think this therapy is great and it definitely helps and it gets straight to the deep stuff that needs fixing. Choice theory/reality therapy focuses on a person assuming responsibility in the present. I also believe that this therapy is great because it helps someone learn internal control. Feminist therapy focuses on women's identity, self-concept, goals, emotions, etc. This therapy I also feel mixed feelings about because I think it's good for people who want something specific for women and want that support, however I don't feel like it is extremely necessary. Postmodern approaches focus on the person becoming an expert in their own life. This therapy I want to learn more about because to be honest I do not necessarily understand this approach. Lastly family systems therapy focuses on working with the family to help change the person. This therapy I agree with 100% because I believe that the family plays a huge role on a person's development and is definitely helpful to work on.

2. Just reading the first couple of sentences of the introduction of Stan, I can see that the only reason why he is reaching out for help is because the judge determined that he needed help. If he was not convicted of driving under the influence who knows if he would actually go and look for help. In the introduction it even explains that he recognizes and admits that he does have problems however he does not believe he is addicted to alcohol. In my opinion this shows that he does not have self awareness or at least in the major problem that he has. In the first information that he provides to the

counselor, he explains that he always had a hard time getting along with others and also that he does not know how to get close to people. In my head I think instantly about Stan's childhood and past experiences that could have formed the reason why he cannot get along or close with others. He then admits that this could be the reason why he drinks so much and also says that he drinks too much because he is scared when it comes to socializing. When I hear this I learn that drinking is Stan's coping mechanism when it comes to socializing with other people. In the Introduction it does not explain yet on how he feels socializing with other people after he drinks. Even though it doesn't explain just yet, I would assume that he feels a lot less pressure, or "dumb" as he described, less overwhelming, etc. this is probably the only way that he would be able to socialize with others is by drinking. After reading all this introduction I would definitely focus on his childhood and past experiences, his present with socializing with others, and of course focus on the real issue which is his drinking.

3. Reading the background information on the case of Gwen we can see that she has fibromyalgia, difficulty sleeping, anxiety, and depression. Automatically in compassion with Stan, Gwen seems a lot more self aware and knows exactly what she has and is going through. Gwen explains that with her job she is feeling stress, isolation, and having time management difficulties. Again she lays out exactly what she is feeling which I see that she is a very self aware person. In the background it also gives some information on her family background and it definitely helps to see if maybe certain things in her past could maybe affect the way she is feeling now. Later on it says that Gwen is the only one in her job that is of color and is the only one who speaks up about issues of diversity and racial equality in her job. Because of this Gwen feels very isolated and tired. From

everything that Gwen has discussed and explained about her situation I can see that she is physically, mentally, and emotionally burnt out. I kind of sense like a “cry for help” from Gwen and counseling seems like a last resort type of thing for Gwen.

4. Self- inventory of major concerns as a beginning counselor

- 2___ 1. I am concerned that my anxiety will keep me immobilized, and that I will be very passive as a counselor, lest I make mistakes.
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- 4___ 2. I fear that I will be so concerned about being appropriate that I will forget to be myself.
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- 4___ 3. I might say too much about myself, and in doing so I will burden the client and also take the focus off of him or her and put it on myself.
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- 3___ 4. I think that I should be pretty near perfect, and that if I blunder I could really mess up my client.
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- 3___ 5. I wonder about how honest I should be with a client.
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- 3___ 6. I will feel threatened during moments of silence, thinking that I am expected to do or say something.
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- 2___ 7. It will be difficult for me to deal with demanding clients.
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- 2___ 8. I will feel helpless with clients who are not committed to working or with 31 involuntary clients.
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- 1___ 9. I will probably demand instant results as a way of avoiding getting discouraged.
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- 4___ 10. I have an expectation that I should be able to help every client.
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- 4___ 11. I anticipate I will worry a lot about whether I am intervening appropriately.
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- 2___ 12. I worry that I might over-identify with certain clients to the extent that I will take their problems on as my own.
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- 2___ 13. I think that I might be inclined to give too much advice.
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- 3___ 14. I can see myself trying to persuade clients to value what I value.
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- 4___ 15. I have trouble in deciding how much responsibility is mine and how much is my client's.
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- 4___ 16. I have real doubts about my ability to help someone who is in a crisis.
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- 3___ 17. I worry that I lack the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of clients from diverse cultures.

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- 3___ 18. A concern of mine is that I will get burned out.
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- 4___ 19. I am concerned about giving everything I have and then not getting any appreciation in return.
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- 4___ 20. I wonder if I can do what I believe is important as a counselor and still work within the system.

For the majority of the questions I picked the number 4 which means that it is an issue that almost always concerns me. This is actually something that I have been having a lot in my mind recently and unfortunately I have been doubting myself and my abilities to become a counselor. I am glad that we had the opportunity to answer these questions because it just physically shows me exactly what I need to work on. I know I will never be a perfect counselor but I can try my best to improve each day. After answering these questions, I will also work on my fears, worries, and concerns more often about becoming a counselor. One thing I definitely need to work on is my confidence and I need to stop doubting myself.