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PSY 444: Psychotherapy (OA)
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Week One Essay Questions One through Four

Question 1:

I think that the Overview of Contemporary Counseling Methods section is informing. Before reading these methods, I had no idea of which methods exist in counseling. I knew that there are methods and strategies but I did not know their names nor their definitions. The Author shared 11 therapeutic methods and placed the in their respective categories. It was overwhelming to learn about all 11 methods but I know it will pay off in the long run. It would help if the Author kept things simple. For example, just share the six major theoretical categories theoretical m models of counseling fall into. They include: humanistic, cognitive, behavioral, psychoanalytic, constructionist and systemic. Then he could have shared one example for each. Nevertheless, I understand why he shared the 11 he did because they are commonly known in the field of psychotherapy. I had to do outside research to fully understand these approaches. The website I used is called positivepsychology.com.

The first two he mentions are Psychoanalytical therapy and Adlerian therapy which fall in the Psychodynamic Approach. The first explores how the unconscious mind influences thoughts, feelings and behavior. It is known as the "talking cure." It can help with different psychological conditions such as, anxiety, self-esteem issues, sexual problems, identity problems and the like. The therapist would help the client to analyze, confront and heal from the past to live a better present and tomorrow. The method is known as the growth model focuses on setting goals and is humanistic. The next category is Experimental and Relationship- Oriented

Therapies. The methods are: Existential therapy, Person- entered therapy, and Gestalt therapy. The first on taking responsibility in shaping one's life. The second is basically giving the client freedom to direct themselves without the therapist's intervention. The third helps clients become more aware of what they are experiencing at present. These approaches show that emotion is the route to change. I do believe emotions impact people and if people can understand and control their emotions, they will solve most of their problems.

The next category is Cognitive behavioral approaches. The methods are: Behavior therapy and Cognitive behavior therapy, and Choice theory/reality theory. They are insight and action based. They help to restore self-defeating assumptions and develop new patterns of acting. I think this method grabs my attention the most because I can relate with it. However, I think it skips the psychoanalytic part where one can find where these self-defeating assumptions string from. Although this is true, I know that these methods can be used collectively.

The next category is Systems and Postmodern Approaches. They are: Feministic therapy, Postmodern approaches, and Family System. The first deals with how one has been affected by systems and their environment. The next deals with truth being relative. The third is deals with family as being the key to changing the individual's understanding. The methods I agree with the most would be a mixture of cognitive, relationship oriented and psychoanalytic because the get to the root of issues. I think I most disagree with Postmodern approaches because I don't believe there I no absolute truth. However, certain techniques used in this method can be helpful. Such as, this method helps clients to get out of their pit.

Question 2:

I think Stan is struggling or why else would h come for therapy and counseling. His difficulty in getting along with people may be something from his past. Stan seems to have social pressure and anxiety. Stan drinks a lot so that he can not feel anxious, or think negative thoughts. Stan struggles with low self-esteem and has self-defeating assumptions. I believe Stan is willing to make some changes in his behavior, thoughts, and life. I think I would counsel Stan using a mixture of the Psychoanalytic approach to learn what happened in his pass that affects his personality today. I would use the Cognitive Behavioral approach and Existential therapy. I believe it is very important for Stan to deal with his fear of socializing, low self-esteem and self-defeating thoughts. I believe if I were to tackle these things with him first, they would solve his behavioral issues which includes his alcohol addiction and suicidal thoughts.

The spiritual issues I see Stan struggling with are identity loss, inner demons tormenting his mind. I learned that in Psychotherapy, spiritual struggles can define as: supernatural struggles which I lists a few above, intrapsychic struggle which is internal conflicts with oneself and interpersonal struggles which is tension with other people. I think Stan is facing all three. As a counselor that is Christian, if Stan agrees, I would begin to introduce him to the Word of God and what is says about his being, his soul, his mess, his need and the solution which is Jesus Christ.

Question 3:

I think Gwen is overworking herself. I think that her past is influencing her more now. I think she needs self-care. She cares for everyone else but forgets herself. Maybe she thinks that the world cannot function with her. I think she is experiencing some grief too but that was from

her past from her parents divorce. Gwen is exhausted and has reached her wits end. Being the oldest she may feel like she must do everything because she is being looked up to. I think Gwen has a lot of hurt stored up inside that needs to be released. I might counsel her by first getting to know her background using the Psychoanalytical approach. I would address her difficulty sleeping, anxiety and depression. I would use the Existential approach and a from of creative therapy to giver Gwen a healthy outlet. I think the spiritual issues she is dealing with is worry. She is needs to receive God's peace and stop trying to control things that is meant for God.

Question 4:

Self-Inventory of Major Concerns as a Beginning Counselor

Much of Chapter 2 in our textbook (which we will read next week) deals with common concerns facing beginning counselors. The following questionnaire is built from the statements often overheard in supervision sessions with counselor interns (and often from experienced professionals in training workshops).

Apply each statement to yourself, and determine to what degree this is a concern you face as you think about beginning to counsel others.

Use the following scale:

1 = This is rarely a concern of mine.

2 = This is a concern I sometimes have.

3 = This matter concerns me quite often.

4 = This issue almost always concerns me.

1___ 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.

2___ 2. I fear that I will be so concerned about being appropriate that I will forget to be myself.

1___ 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.

1___ 4. I think that I should be pretty near perfect, and that if I blunder I could really mess up my client.

3___ 5. I wonder about how honest I should be with a client.

1___ 6. I will feel threatened during moments of silence, thinking that I am expected to do or say something.

3___ 7. It will be difficult for me to deal with demanding clients.

2-3___ 8. I will feel helpless with clients who are not committed to working or with 31 involuntary clients.

1___ 9. I will probably demand instant results as a way of avoiding getting discouraged.

3___ 10. I have an expectation that I should be able to help every client.

3___ 11. I anticipate I will worry a lot about whether I am intervening appropriately.

1___ 12. I worry that I might over-identify with certain clients to the extent that I will take their problems on as my own.

3___ 13. I think that I might be inclined to give too much advice.

2___ 14. I can see myself trying to persuade clients to value what I value.

3___ 15. I have trouble in deciding how much responsibility is mine and how much is my client's.

2___ 16. I have real doubts about my ability to help someone who is in a crisis.

1___ 17. I worry that I lack the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of clients from diverse cultures.

2___ 18. A concern of mine is that I will get burned out.

1___ 19. I am concerned about giving everything I have and then not getting any appreciation in return.

4___ 20. I wonder if I can do what I believe is important as a counselor and still work within the system.

The questionnaire above makes me more aware of what I fear and do not fear going into the counseling field. I think my scores are common for many people pursuing a degree in counseling. I think my biggest worry is if I am proving the type of therapy my clients would need. I need to understand that I can't force my clients to drink water, I can only bring them to the water and help them see how beneficial it would be from them to drink it. A stubborn client

would probably cause me to become discouraged but I know it is not them but the spirit behind them so I would forget about how I feel and meet their needs to save them. I want to help everyone; I have to learn that I can't help everyone and that I may not be the right therapist for everyone. I need to be mindful and careful not to make the client's burden my own. Since I am compassionate, I would tend to do this but I must keep in my I have to be strong to help them be strong. I want the Holy Spirit to lead my and I am the type of person to stand against the tide. I need to know going in that I need to be professional but spiritual. If God tells me to do something that may go against the system, I would do it with caution because I do not want to lose my license. I know God is not a God of confusion but of order so I trust His directions.

Part 2:

6. A woman struggling over an abortion decision

This case involves Melinda, a 25-year-old Latina who says she wants to have an abortion. She has been married for three years, already has two children, and says: "We had to get married because I was pregnant. We didn't have money then. The second kid was not planned either. But now we really can't afford another child." Her husband is a policeman going to law school at night. She works as a housekeeper and plans to return to school once her husband finishes his studies and it is "her turn." He should graduate in another year, at which time she is scheduled to enroll in classes at the community college. Having another baby at this time would seriously hamper those arrangements in addition to imposing the previously mentioned financial burden. But the client reports: "I go to call the clinic, and I just can't seem to talk. I hang up the minute they answer. I just can't seem to make the appointment for the abortion, let alone have one. I was never much of a Catholic, and I always thought you should be able to get an abortion if you wanted one. What's wrong with me? And what am I going to do? I don't exactly have a lot of time."

• With the information given here, what do you see as the major value issues that need to be explored?

I think of why she wants to have an abortion. The answer seems to be financial issues and her aspirations. As a Christian I automatically say abortion is wrong. I stick to that but I also want her to come to that truth herself.

• How much emphasis would you place on factors such as what is stopping her from making the call? On her ambivalence between wanting to have the abortion and not wanting it?

I would emphasis that there is a reason she can't make the call. Part of her wants the child. Her conscience is bothering her but as a Christian I see that as God helping her to go the better way. She may feel she has no other options.

• If she asked you for your advice, what do you think you would tell her? If you gave her this advice, what might your advice tell you about yourself?

I would tell her to write the pros and cons of having the child. I would tell her look how far she has come with her other two children. I would give her other resources that would help her keep the child and do what she loves. Life is always better. My advice tells me I want her to value life like I do but I need to understand she is not the same person as me. I would also ask her to consider praying since I think she has a faith background. I think I would advise her see if there is an option to do school online. I would advise her to breathe. I would advise her to think things through and work together with her husband so that if she has the baby and ends u going to school, her and her husband can alternate in who stays with the children. I would ask her if she would consider extra help in carrying for the children like, a family member she can leave them with or a church member etc. I would assure her that there is always help and a way where there seems to be no way. I would pray with her.

7. Values pertaining to a client who is intolerant of others

Charles is a 75 year-old white male who was encouraged by his daughter to seek counseling after his wife of many years filed for divorce. His daughter felt that Charles could benefit from the support of a counselor and gain some insight into his behaviors that caused friction in his marriage. Shortly after meeting you (his new counselor), Charles begins to share his sexist and racist views about people, including his neighbors and ex-wife's friends. He seems oblivious to the possibility that these behaviors may have contributed to his wife's decision to divorce him.

• How would you approach this case?

Wow, this is hard. I would use some a cognitive type of therapy with him but that would be after I use the psychoanalytic because I want to understand his past. Maybe he does what he does

because he saw his parents or guardian do it. Maybe it is a mask he uses because he does not feel good about himself.

• How would you react to Charles's intolerant and discriminatory views?

I would let him speak and ask why does he say such things. I would be sad but also sad for him because he may have hurt from his past interactions. I think his situation is deeper.

• How would your own feelings and values impact your ability to work with Charles therapeutically?

I believe everyone is important because God created us all. I believe no matter what race, ethnicity we are in, we are to be loved, valued, and understood. We all need to be respected. With that being said, I do not think my feelings and value would impact my ability to work with Charles. I think maybe I would need to be in the situation to know how I would react but my focus won't be on me. If he agreed to come for therapy that shows me he knows he needs help with something. I am here to help him not to be judgmental.