

Jungbum Seo

CD702: Working with People

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03/02/2023

Triads Paper

My triads members are Chase and Jasmine. Our triads meeting was extended after the class ended, and we decided to meet every two weeks on Saturday morning, and the session went around 2 hours each time. However, we have yet to decide to stop the meeting. The meeting was helpful to us not only in practicing the counseling skills we learned for our future ministry but also in helping ourselves in this moment of our lives based on a relationship built on trust and empathy for each other.

At the beginning of the class triads, we take turns being the speaker, listener, and observer. However, after a few sessions, we stop taking a turn being an observer. And the setting for our triads became one speaker with two listeners because it became not a format of practicing counseling skills as a part of the class but a relationship in which we open our hearts to each other and share our more profound stories with sincerity and empathy.

During the triads in class, we shared each other's brief life stories, wounds, and events that greatly impacted our lives. Also, we have understood each other's daily perspectives and thoughts through the process. In the extra triads, we share some issues and difficulties we have been experiencing recently. Because of the times we opened up and shared in the beginning, we have come to build a relationship where we can honestly talk about our current situation more comfortably. And praying for each other in the meeting is a privilege of being Christian. I realize

that even if I have many Christian friends around me, there are few people with whom I can talk and share my deepest feelings. Therefore, the triads meeting became one of my safe places to open myself up and share my inner self honestly.

If I need to give my triads members a "grade." I will provide an 'A' for both of them. Jasmine was an excellent listener and could observe many things accurately and well analyzed. She cares about the issues, problems, or our wounds. The empathy she has shown is an excellent gift as a counselor, and there is no doubt that she will comfort and help many other people who will work with her in the future. Chase is also a great listener. Chase has demonstrated an excellent ability to listen and remember what the other person is saying, then guide the conversation to keep going with essential questions that speakers to open up more deeply and comfortably. Both are very good at verbal encouragement and never being judgmental or trying to give advice and lesson. They listen carefully, be curious about the speaker's words, and try to get the correct information without disturbing the speaker. However, we got more casual in the conversation in the extended session. We may feel this meeting is no longer a counseling session but a safe place to open ourselves to Christian friends.

I experienced that sharing similar experiences like the loss of family members or marriage issues builds stronger bonds than simply saying comfort words. That's why I realized that even if I had regrets or sad and painful experiences, they could be a tool to help the other person in counseling. I could thank God that I may have some of those experiences even though it is still painful.

I've learned through these sessions that speaking and listening alone can be a powerful recovery tool. I rarely discuss my deepest wound and regret with my friend or family, except for my wife. However, I shared my story through the sessions and speaking to others relieved me.

Even if there is no comfort, empathy, or advice, having someone who I can trust to listen to me itself is healing. The recovery process will be faster if the listener shows comfort and empathy. I learned that becoming a good listener is one of the essential parts of being a successful counselor, and counseling is not the process of resolving problems but helping the speaker to face the issue in a safe place.

I thought the main purpose of counseling was to analyze the other person well, find out the problems that the person himself could not find, and solve the problem. However, as I realized the importance of listening, my thoughts changed significantly. In the future ministry, if I kept the previous review regarding the counseling, I would fail a lot to help others or may even hurt them more in opposition to my intention. Therefore, I am so glad to take this course and experience the practice through the triads. Even if I am weak in empathy and compassion and have strong analytical and logical thinking, I can become a better counselor if I truly worry and listen to the other person's heart. Counseling is not the process of analyzing the other to find the problem to resolve it but providing a safe and trusted place to speak and help and encourage the speaker to face the issue and be with the person as we are doing through the triad meetings.