Patience with Patients

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The longer I live, the more I read, the more patiently I think, and the more anxiously I inquire, the less I seem to know...Do justly. Love mercy. Walk humbly [with your God]. This is enough.
Really? We have to have patience??
Objectives

• Discuss challenges to delivering quality care
  o External factors
  o Personal challenges

• Focus on key counseling skills

• Build on that foundation that we were given

• Refresh the counseling spirit
What gets in your way?

• Discussion:
  o 3-4 Examples of barriers you face to doing your best work
Common Barriers

• External
  o Administrative concerns: Budget, Staffing,

• Internal
  o Transference and Counter transference
“I am not what has happened to me. I am what I choose to become.”

-Carl Jung
Patient Behaviors

- Lack of trust in general
- What is at stake for the patient?
- Reactions to Withdrawal
- Personality disorders – Maladaptive relationships
- Anxiety
  - Generalized
  - Based on lack of understanding
- Other Mental Health disorders
Key factors in counseling

- Research shows the type of therapy used is not as important as are the specific counselor behaviors: Enthusiasm, Confidence, and Belief in the patient’s ability to change.
- Clients are more likely to achieve their goals when a good and positive relationship exists between them and their therapist.
- The counselor’s interactions with the client are a powerful tool in the helping relationship.

- The Top Ten Basic Counseling Skills
- Kevin J. Drab, M.Ed., M.A., LPC, CAC Diplomate
Listening

• Listening is an active experience
  o It is the ability to accurately receive and interpret messages
  o The listener should be as involved as the speaker

• Listening is not same as hearing
  o Hearing simply refers to the sounds that you hear where listening requires focus.
  o Listening requires paying attention not only to the story, but how it is told through the use of language, voice, and body
I’m sorry... what?

• The human mind is notoriously bad at remembering.
• Research suggests that we remember only 25%-50% of what is being said to us.
  o Safe to say you will only remember about an hour of what we talk about here.
• Tuning out
What to do?

• Why do we listen
  o To get information
  o To understand
  o To learn
  o For enjoyment

• Remember key facts and ideas

• Listen with your mind and body
  o Active listening involves not only verbal listening skills but non-verbal listening skills
10 Principles of listening

• Stop talking—you can’t listen if you are talking
  o Studies have shown that talking raises blood pressure and attentive listening can bring it down.

• Relax—prepare yourself to listen, clear your mind of distracting thoughts like “what am I going to have for lunch” or “is it going to rain today”; focus

• Ease the client—make eye contact, nod or use other gestures to encourage them to talk, help them to feel safe to talk
10 Principles, cont.

• Show empathy-work to understand the client; keep an open mind to their views and opinions
• Have patience-don’t interrupt or try to finish their sentences; let them talk in their own time...don’t rush them; don’t start to think about what your reply is going to be before you have heard the whole message
• Remove distractions-put your work down, don’t fidget, end one conversation before you start another with someone else
10 Principles, cont.

- Avoid personal prejudice—don’t argue or criticize the client or become irritated by how they are speaking. Focus on what is being said.
- Listen to tone—a speaker will use both tone and volume to keep an audience attentive. This can help you understand the emphasis of what is being said.
10 Principles, done at last

• Listen for ideas not just words—one of the most difficult things to do is to piece together bits of information to reveal the whole idea

• Ask questions—when it’s your turn to speak ask questions to verify you heard the ideas completely

• Number 11-STOP TALKING!
KEEP CALM AND THANK YOU FOR LISTENING
Like a vacation tour guide

• You want direction if you don’t know WHERE to go next
  o You might not have the energy or confidence to lead

• You want to go where YOU want to go
  o You may become annoyed
  o Subvert the plan
  o Go in an opposite direction

• Your style and flexibility matter

  • Ashton M. “My Way or Yours.” Drug and Alcohol Findings 2006 p. 22-29
Directive style

- Works well with non-resistant client
- Resolved ambivalence
- Recognize the harm in their use
- Do not hold reservations for use
- Often demands conformity to a set world view
- AA has a directive/instructive approach
- Cognitive Behavioral also has a directive approach

- Ashton M. “My Way or Yours.” Drug and Alcohol Findings 2006 p. 22-29
Nondirective style

- Introduced by Carl Rogers
- Suits clients characterized by anger and resentment
- Patients are their own best experts
- Patients feel valued, listened to and understood
- Takes time for processing

Ashton M. “My Way or Yours.” Drug and Alcohol Findings 2006 p. 22-29
Regardless of Style

- Patients ALWAYS have the power to decide for themselves what they will do
- The patient’s values will steer their decisions and course of their recovery
- We only impact a short period of time in their lives directly
The Role of the Counselor

- Recognizing the unique relationship we have
- No Quid Pro Quo
- It’s not personal
- The power of objectivity
- The ability to respond rationally and not reactively
- Principles before personalities
Empathy

- Empathy is a skill
- Defined as understanding another's perception, feelings, experience
- Empathy is seeing with the eyes of another, listening with the ears of another and feeling with the heart of another
Empathy is not...

- Sympathy
- Identifying with the client
- Sharing a similar experience
- “I know how you feel”
- Painting silver linings
Empathy skills

- Verbal and non-verbal attending
- Paraphrasing
- Reflecting
- Being non-judgemental
- Self-awareness and vulnerability
Benefits of Empathy

• Better understand the needs of your client
• Have less trouble dealing with interpersonal conflicts
• Will learn to better motivate others
• Will have an easier time dealing with negativity of others if you understand their motivations and fears
Detachment is not that you should own nothing. But that nothing should own you.

Ali ibn abi Talib
Mindfulness
Using Mindfulness

• Assists in being Present with the patient
• Brings your Attention in Focus on the session
• Aids in being non-judgmental
• Promotes Empathetic responses
• Recognizes changes in patient responses and allows for flexibility in approach
Warmth and Genuineness

• Warmth
  o Caring, respect, acceptance
  o Communicating interest and concern while recognizing their right to make their own decisions
  o Does not mean you agree with everything they say
  o Unconditional positive regard

• Genuineness
  o You mean what you say
  o You are honest
  o True to your word
  o Be yourself....be human
Dignity and Respect

• Dignity-the quality or state of being worthy, honored, or esteemed; a sign or token of respect

• Respect-an act of giving particular attention; high or special regard; expressions of regard or courtesy
  o Everyone has the right to choose their own paths and make their own decisions
Encouraging and Accepting

• Believe in the client
• Accept them for who they are
• Responding with nonjudgmental or noncritical verbal and nonverbal reactions
• Encourage them to make their own decisions
• Accept the decisions they make….while you use your skills to show them alternatives to decisions they make you know are unhealthy.
• Hope
Non-verbal skills

• 2/3 of communication is non-verbal!
• Research has shown that clients often rank non-verbal factors, such as nonverbal gestures and body language, as the most important factor in building a counseling alliance.
• Much of our non-verbal communication is automatic...unconscious
• Learn to listen with your eyes
What’s involved

• Body language
  o Postures
  o Gestures
  o Facial expressions

• Eye contact
  o Direct or indirect

• Use of voice
  o Rate of speech
  o Tone/volume
  o Modulation-pauses

• Use of Space
  o Open vs closed
  o Your kinesphere

• Appearance
  o Dress how you want to be addressed
Non-verbals
(gestures, posture, facial expressions, etc.) 55%

Vocal Elements
(pitch, tone, rate, volume, intonation, rhythm) 38%

Words - Content 7%

Dr. Albert Mehrabian
In conclusion…

• Remember counseling is the detail
• It’s the little things we do that can have the biggest impact on the client-counselor relationship
• Be aware of yourself and your client