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HELPING AS INTERPERSONAL INFLUENCE

Helping may be for better or for worse. What a helper says to another person inevitably influences what happens next in the relationship. We can never escape the fact that we influence our world (or that our world influences us).

Consider, for example, the following statement from the helpee in a counselling situation:

Helpee, talking about experiences on a holiday in Paris.

"I don't know. I had a good time but I didn't. I felt uncomfortable when I said something wrong. The group seemed a bit large. Before I left, I thought of telling them I could not afford it. My friends seem to be looking after me all the time. We often argued and called each other names but we are still friends, you know. Since I pick me friends, I know how they will understand me."

How would you respond to this helpee? What would you say next? What emotions and experiences would you focus on? Write your responses below:

________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________________________

Your response, whether it is silence or a question, or a reflection of feeling, influences what the helpee is likely to say, think about or do next. Out of a series of such reactions, a helpee can "develop a new self concept", "experience the world more fully", "develop new patterns of behaviour", "delve into the unconscious" or decide to terminate the relationship.

Depending on what you, as the helper do, the helpee will be influenced positively or negatively.
Inexperienced helpers are often eager to find the "right" response to a helpee. Trainers of helpers sometimes reinforce this desire to find the "perfect empathic" statement which will unlock the doors to the client's world and free the individual for more creative being. However, it is this very desire to find the "right" response which often destroys the natural functioning of the helper.

The issue is not which single response is correct but how many potential responses are helpful.

Among the many possible responses to the above statement are:

1. Could you give me a specific example of a time when you felt uncomfortable on the trip?  
   (Open question)

2. They called you names? How did you react to that?  
   (Minimal encourager/open question)

3. Right now you seem hurt and confused by the entire experience.  
   (Reflection of feeling)

4. I sense that the holiday was a mixture of things for you. Pleasure in seeing new things, tense experiences - especially in large groups, confusion about your relationship with your friends and how exploration of how you relate with your friends.  
   (Summary)

5. Sometimes I have trouble feeling comfortable in large groups.  
   (Self disclosure)

The preceeding responses are a sample of the infinite number of "leads" available to a helper. Each response leads the helpee in a different direction and may be helpful to a greater or lesser degree.

The task of micro training is to enable helpers to realise the vast array of possibilities which may be useful in expanding your understanding and awareness of the helpee's world and, in turn, influencing that world by a positive or useful direction.
THE HELPER AND HELPEE AS TEACHERS OF SKILLS

The helper is assuming a new and important role in society, that of direct teaching of helping and communication skills. The helper can work on a one-to-one basis through counseling and therapy and can be of assistance to a few people. Or the helper can teach effective communication skills to many helpees. Beyond that, the helpee who is equipped with attending and self-expression skills can resolve his or her own problems and can assist others to do the same.

The helper of the future is likely to be a teacher - but a teacher with a difference. As you move through this workshop, learn the skills and think about the potential for a new role - that of teaching people directly and immediately how they can communicate more effectively and enjoyably with others.

THE NECESSARY EMPATHIC COMPETENCIES REQUIRED BEFORE UNDERTAKING TRAINING IN BASIC INFLUENCING SKILLS

Carl Rogers has been the most effective popularizer of the concept of empathy. In his book, "On Becoming a Person", Rogers says "...to sense the client's private world as if it were your own but without losing the "as if" quality - this is empathic" (Rogers, 1961 p28).

To this classic definition, Rogers adds that the therapist is able to "understand the patient's feelings", "is never in doubt what the patient means", and "the tone of voice conveys the complete ability to share the patient's feelings".

Before a helper actively engages in influencing another person through self-disclosure, directions or confrontation, it is essential that the helper hear what the helpee has to say. Listen before you act.

The identified competencies of effective attending and listening are the foundation stones of empathy.
BEYOND PRIMARY EMPATHY AND ATTENDING TO INFLUENCE HUMAN GROWTH

The definition of empathy presented by Rogers is closely related to what Carkuff (1969) terms "interchangeable responses" or level three helping. Carkuff talks about higher level or "additive responses" which help move the helpee beyond the self to new frames of reference and encourage deeper self-exploration. Egan (1975) describes this idea more clearly when he discusses "Advanced Accurate Empathy". He states that "Clients, if they are able to understand themselves and their problems in a way that enables them to see the need for action and behavioural change, must be helped to get a more objective frame of reference than one from which they have been viewing their problems" (Egan, 1975 p68). Both Carkuff and Egan are saying clearly that the higher levels of empathy require that the helper add something of her or himself to the relationship.

Detailed examinations of Carkuff's levels 4 and 5 and Egan's advanced accurate empathy reveals that the helper is expected to be able to assist the helpee in exploring areas of human existence that have not yet been considered. As part of this experience, focus must be also on the helper's own world view and perceptions. The helper must share him or himself to assist the helpee grow.

Clearly, however, the ineffective or awkward sharing of helper experience, the giving of manipulative or ill-timed interpretations can destroy the most effective and empathic skills.

Throughout the micro training series, the "1-2-3" pattern of helping is emphasized. This simple framework is oriented toward a broad definition of empathy such as described by Carkuff and framed by Egan.

1 - 2 - 3 PATTERN

1. ATTENDING BEHAVIOUR

Before the helper does anything, listen to the helpee carefully. Make sure the helpee has been heard.

2. INFLUENCING BEHAVIOUR

After attending to the helpee it may be suitable for the helper to self-disclose, give a direction or an interpretation.

3. CHECK OUT

After an influencing skill is used, re-direct the interview toward the helpee through a question ("How does that sound?")
Empathy, at its most basic level, is attending accurately to the helpee. At its highest levels, the helper must share personal experience or interpret and add to the experience of the helpee.

Selected factors for evaluating the quality of the additive responses of interpersonal influence are stressed in this series of Influencing Skills.

Specific qualitative dimensions identified in this model are:

1. 1-2-3 pattern.
2. The need to consider cultural - environmental - contextual focus in any helping interview.
3. The importance of concreteness in helping to promote "clarity" of understanding.
4. Immediacy in interpersonal relationships, particularly the value of here and now - in this moment - responses.
5. Respect, enhancing statement about self and others.
6. The importance of the helper being genuine and congruent within him or herself and in relationship with the helpee.

In examining the helper's influence on the helpee, the major question is "does the helpee change behaviour, thoughts or actions as a result of the intervention of the helper."

One way to answer this question is to examine the verbal and non-verbal behaviour of the helpee on the same dimensions of communication skills as the helper. The troubled helpee often comes to an interview with poor attending skills. He or she may have trouble maintaining eye contact (especially on painful topics), may have inappropriate non-verbal communication and may topic-jump frequently.

At the beginning of the helping relationship, helpees often focus on external, sometimes irrelevant, topics rather than making self-oriented "I" statements. The troubled helpee fails to show many of the important skills of attending and influence and may appear vague as opposed to concrete, lack respect for self and/or others.

These are all measurable characteristics within the framework of the micro counselling model.

The helpee in the process of growth becomes much like the effective helper.
Beyond the immediate interview, the effectiveness of the helper's influence can be measured by the ability of the helpee to take issues, ideas or behaviours from the interview and apply them to daily life. The real test of effective helping is whether the helpee takes what is learned in the interview and applies it to his own environment.

The test of long term results of effective helping is:

DOES THE HELPEE TAKE WHAT IS LEARNED IN THE HELPING INTERVIEW AND DEMONSTRATE SKILLS OR CONCEPTS IN DAILY LIFE?
1. Attending behavior and client observation skills form the foundation of effective communication, but are not always the appropriate place to begin training.

2. The basic listening sequence of attending skills (open and closed questions, encouraging, paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, and summarization) is often found in effective interviewing, management, social work, physician diagnostic sessions, and many other settings.

FIGURE 1–1 The microskills hierarchy. Copyright 1982 Allen E. Ivey, Box 641, N. Amherst, Mass. 01059
THE BASIC LISTENING SEQUENCE AND POSITIVE ASSET SEARCH

The first thing that the helper must learn to do is listen. While INFLUENCING SKILLS TRAINING assumes that participants have some experience and training in listening skills, this chapter is a brief review.

WHAT ARE THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THOSE WHO PROVIDE HELPING?

We have all had problems in our lives which proved difficult. Perhaps we were fortunate to find significant people to help us at the time. Think of the person or persons who helped you in such situations. List their characteristics and what they did to help you.

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

THE BASIC LISTENING SEQUENCE

The client often comes into a helping session confused and disorganised. The facts of the situation are rarely presented clearly. The feelings may be hidden or they may be so strong that nothing else matters. The major task of listening is to help the client sort through the facts and feelings and to organize those facts and feelings into a meaningful pattern.

To learn about the client's problem, use the basic listening sequence.

1. **Open Questions**
   
   to obtain a general picture of the situation.

2. **Closed Questions**
   
   to obtain specifics and to focus.

3. **Minimal Encouragers**
   
   to encourage further talk and elaboration of details.
4. **Paraphrasing**
   to feedback the main facts of the situation as you have heard them.

5. **Reflection of Feeling**
   to feedback to the client the emotions underlying the situation.

6. **Summarization**
   to organise the many facts and feelings of the person and situation.
THE POSITIVE ASSET SEARCH

People grow from strength not weakness. Carl Rogers emphasized the importance of positive regard. In his work with clients and in his written work, one senses a consistent emphasis on positive assets of the client. At first, one would think that the client has no assets, no hope. But out of a dark morass of discouragement, Rogers always seems to find something positive to highlight.

The behaviourist would argue that Rogers was reinforcing positive verbal statements about the self. Regardless of definition, selective attention to positive aspects of the person and situation appear to be a growth producing dimension in most helping theories.

The positive asset search, as a skill concept, is relatively easy once you have mastered the basis listening sequence. Your task, as a counsellor, is to identify something positive in a client or situation.

You can do this through:

- open questions

  "What are some positive aspects of your marriage?"

  "Could you tell me about a specific time when things were going well?"

- other listening skills such as paraphrasing and reflecting of feelings about positive qualities and situations.

The concept is simple, the method relatively easy. The importance of positive asset search, positive regard, positive reframing and behavioural asset search, etc is undeniable. Poor counselling focusses solely on problems. Effective counselling balances problem search with a consistent emphasis on positive assets and what the client can do about his/her situation.
SELF-EXPRESSION: You as Influencer

How can you communicate to another person that you care for them? How might you express an important idea to a group? What about expressing yourself when you disagree with a friend? How do you communicate who and what you are and believe to others?

While effective and meaningful self-expression involves an infinite number of factors, they may be most easily organised around three skill clusters.

1. **Eye Contact.** If you are going to tell someone something, you will be most believable if you look at him or her. In U.S. culture, the person who looks you "square in the eye" is considered a person to be trusted, one who is sure of him or herself.

The appropriateness of eye contact should also be considered. Neither constant staring nor a glassy gaze communicates with people. Vary eye contact appropriately and show people that you are with them.

You may want to start noticing the points at which you break eye contact. Often we stop looking when we feel a topic is one where we aren't sure of ourselves or are talking about something difficult.

2. **Non-verbal Dimensions.** Note hand movements, gestures, facial expressions. Is the foot jiggling if sitting or are you rocking back and forth if standing? Is the neck loose and relaxed ... or is too tight and tense?

An effective standing posture is more often with both feet on the floor, a relaxed body, facial expressions and gestures appropriate for the situation, and a slight forward trunk lean.

The tone of the voice is also important and can communicate disinterest through "flatness", certainty through "depth", and excitement and involvement through differing tonal variations.

There is no single "right" set of non-verbals for a situation. However, given a specific culture, some non-verbals tend to be more useful and communicate more than others. Awareness of yourself and others is a beginning.

3. **Staying on the topic.** If you have something to say, say it. If you watch effective communicators, they talk about what interests them and soon others are interested in it as well. Those less sure of themselves "topic jump" and never get around to saying what they mean.
Focus on one thing at a time. And then, if you want to know how your statement was received, ask the person or group to whom you are talking if they followed what you said or if he/she agreed or disagreed with you. Whether their answer is "yes" or "no", you have useful data telling you where to go next.

Ivey (1971) describes a situation where the three concepts of self-expression were useful to him:

"...I was to make a presentation to an important audience and felt myself awkward, tense, and stumbling over my words. I thought to myself of the concepts of (self-expression). I realised I was paying so much attention to the audience that I was forgetting myself as a person. I believed in what I had to say. How could I put it across? I deliberately relaxed to put myself together (it could be observed easily by anyone in the audience) and took a deep breath. I deliberately put my thoughts in myself and started talking about what I cared about. For a short time it was awkward, but soon I forgot that I had engaged in deliberate behaviours and was "turned on" and "turning on" the audience." (p.167)

A MAJOR HOWEVER:

Effective though three simple concepts may be, it is essential that they be relevant to the context or situation in which you find yourself. Sometimes it is best to avoid eye contact. Different non-verbal gestures have different meanings to different people. Times come when it is wise to change the topic and see what someone else has to say. In addition, the descriptions here of typical U.S. cultural patterns. Subcultural groups in this country and people from other countries may find U.S. gestures too aggressive and hostile, perhaps devoid of emotion and "genuineness". What works in one situation may not work in another. For example, eye contact among some peoples is considered rude and angry.

To summarise our definitions of effective self-expression:

1. Maintain eye contact naturally ... look at people when you talk to them.

2. Use a relaxed non-verbal posture with appropriate vocal tone.

3. Stay on the topic ... say what you want to say. After you have said it, check out what other people have heard.
On Silence

While silence may be defined as the absence of helper talk, silence does not mean absence of helper participation in the interview. Through non-verbal communication the helper shows interest or may force the helpee to talk in more depth; as such, silence may be as active participation in the interview as telling the helpee what to do.

Examination of your use of silence in the interview may be conducted through three routes:

(i) study of non-verbal communication;

(ii) time counts of "per cent of talk time" (the interview is designed to give the helper "airtime"); and

(iii) "response latency" which may be defined as the number of seconds between the time the helpee finishes talking and the time you start.

Beginners tend to have quick reactions; more experienced helpers are more inclined to wait.
Developing an Educational Program of Self-Directed Self-Expression

The five steps of self-directed self-expression provide a useful framework for starting interpersonal skills training with an individual. However, over a longer period of training it may be useful to develop a systematic plan for videotaping sessions.

For example, assume that a helpee has come for assistance on the general problem of "lack of self-confidence" and that the behavior worked on in the first session was vocal tone. In addition, plans have been made to generalize vocal tone to settings beyond the training situation. During the same session, however, the helpee also mentioned problems with family communication and with an overbearing boss. Other identified behaviors included poor listening skills, slouched body posture, inappropriate smiling, plus an as yet undefined "I can't talk well."

It would be useful to set up a hierarchy of planned educational change for the next few sessions which might look like the following:

- Session II: Body posture and nonverbal communication.
- Session III: Effective listening skills.
- Session IV: Use of vocal tone, effective listening skills, and nonverbal communication at home.
- Session V: Use of the above characteristics on the job.
- Session VI: Exploration of the concept "I can't talk well."

Such a program gives the helper an overview of the needs of the helpee and an overall orientation to the helpee that he or she can do something about the problem.

Needless to say, the educational plan should be reviewed and revised during each session according to the needs and interests of the helpee.

It may be noted that the above program focuses on weaknesses and developmental needs of the helpee. Although it does work sequentially on systematic generalization of learned behavior to practical settings, it does not focus on assets and strengths of the helpee. As such, Session I might be strengthened by a concrete emphasis on the pleasantness of the helpee's vocal tone. Pleasantness in this case could be operationally defined as smooth voice (not loud – that is one of the issues) with a musical quality and characterized by clear diction.

In a similar fashion, each session should include some emphasis on the strengths of the individual. In some cases, it is useful to focus entire sessions on noting strengths and how they may be used more effectively in problem situations. A training session without some emphasis on positive assets is only partially successful.
Step 1: Videotape the Situation to Be Analyzed

Self-directed self-expression is most easily presented to helpees as an opportunity to view oneself on television. Further, such self-viewing helps one identify strengths and weaknesses of communication. The helpee should be familiarized with the video equipment and encouraged to relax in any way possible. We have found that the attitude of the helper is most important here. If you are worried about the situation, the helpee will be concerned and potentially reluctant to go through the process. If you are relaxed and confident (e.g., have effective self-expression behaviors yourself), the helpee will tend to react the same way. An informal, casual, yet confident and professional attitude is appropriate.

The helpee must select a situation where she or he would like to improve her or his communication effectiveness. The situation may be real or role-played. Brainstorm with the helpee possible situations for taping. These may range from conversations with an employer to family issues such as a son coming home late from a date to dealing effectively with a welfare office. The more specific the situation, the more effective the taping. With some helpees, a direct videotaping of a conversation between the helper and helpee on an issue of mutual concern is helpful.

Videotape for three to five minutes a role-played or real situation. Use the space below to take notes on the first step of the self-directed self-expression process.
Step 2: View the Videotape, Define Behaviors

Before viewing the videotape and discussing the short segment, take time to check-out your helpee's internal reactions to the experience. Was it real? Was the experience anxiety provoking? Positive and/or negative thoughts? However, do not spend extensive time on this processing. Viewing of the videotape will prove more valuable than internal speculation. If videotape is not available, make the important distinction between general discussion and observation of specific behaviors.

View the videotape. Stop and start the tape at critical points. If the helpee notes anything either verbally or nonverbally, stop the tape. The helpee when asked may state, “I didn’t like myself at that point. I looked stupid.” “Stupid” is not observable behavior. Ask the helpee to define more precisely what he or she saw or heard that appeared stupid. Surprisingly, you will often find helpees able to define rather precise verbal and nonverbal behaviors closely related to the attending and self-expressive skills. Lack of attending may be defined as “I don’t look at people” or “I interrupt too often.” The objective of viewing the tape is to identify specific behaviors that the helpee might like to change or strengthen. The more specifically you define the behavior, the more successful your training session will be.

Many helpees focus only on the negative. Make a conscious attempt to find positive aspects of the helpee’s behavior and don’t hesitate to suggest that the helpee use these positive behaviors more often.

Define below aspects of the videotape viewing and specific behaviors that occur to you.
Step 3: Set Goals for Behavior Change

After developing a careful inventory of strengths that you and the helpee observe, list things that might be strengthened and/or changed in a repeat videotaping. Keep this list brief and introductory.

The helpee should then select one of the above behaviors as that which he or she would like to change or strengthen. Emphasize that people didn't learn all their present behaviors in a one to two hour session and one shouldn't expect to change them all in a short period of time. Self-directed self-expression works best with precise behaviors. For example, a person who comes across as "weak and insignificant" in a job interview may observe lack of eye contact or a hand gesture that is self-deprecating. Contract only for more frequent eye contact or for stronger hand movements - not both.

With some people - particularly in the advanced stages of work with videotaping in self-directed self-expression - brief training in microtraining skills such as open questions, paraphrasing, or directions may be useful. However, such training should be given only when asked for by the helpee. In self-directed self-expression, the helpee sets the goals, not the helper.

Use this space for the listing of goals and development of a possible hierarchy of items for behavior change. However, you will find that helpees who change one behavior successfully often change other behaviors as well.
Step 4: Second Videotaping: Viewing, and Observing Change

After a clear behavioral objective for change has been identified, videotape a second role-played or real situation closely allied to the first taping. In the viewing, give special attention to changes in the specific behavior. Note also possible changes in other behaviors as well.

With some helpees it is useful to count the number of instances of the specific behavior in the first session and compare this count with similar figures from the second session. Those clients who respond to a highly behavioral approach may want to set goals for the number of behaviors they wish in a specific setting.

With many helpees, it is wise to continue short practice videotape sessions to ensure learning of the behavior(s) selected. In some cases, it is appropriate to comment directly and immediately to the helpees during videotaping that they have forgotten to use the specific behavior agreed on.

Use this space for behavioral counts, observations of trainer behavior as they relate to helpee behavior, and for development of additional behaviors slated for change.
Step 5: Generalization of Learned Behavior

Assuming that the helpee has demonstrated ability to modify behavior in specific ways, it is important that plans be made to generalize the new concepts of self-expression beyond the laboratory. A role-played situation or a brief exchange on videotape is not real-life despite the power of this training format. Specific attempts to take behavior out of the training session to the world at large are essential.

The framework of the do-use-teach contract is one approach. The helpee could complete the following contract and report back to the helper the degree of success:

I agree to use _______________________________ (Name of specific identified behavior) with _______________________________ (Name of individual or group) under the following specific conditions: _______________________________.

I will report back my observations and experiences.

Supplementing this type of contract can be analysis of the effect of the behavior on the individual or group. For example, if the helpee desired to improve questioning skills, the helpee should be encouraged to note the effectiveness of these skills on those to whom he or she talks.
List the behaviors which you or a helpee might want to change:

List the behaviors which you or the helpee see as assets:

Describe the situations where you might wish to apply these behaviors more effectively (the more specific, the more helpful):

Order these data into a systematic educational program for use over a period of weeks.
1 - 2 - 3 PATTERN

1. ATTENDING BEHAVIOUR

BEFORE THE HELPER DOES ANYTHING, LISTEN TO THE HELPEE CAREFULLY. MAKE SURE THE HELPEE HAS BEEN HEARD.

2. INFLUENCING BEHAVIOUR

AFTER ATTENDING TO THE HELPEE IT MAY BE SUITABLE FOR THE HELPER TO SELF DISCLOSE, GIVE A DIRECTION OR AN INTERPRETATION.

3. CHECK OUT:

AFTER AN INFLUENCING SKILL IS USED, RE-DIRECT THE INTERVIEW TOWARD THE HELPEE THROUGH A QUESTION ("HOW DOES THAT SOUND?")
FOCUS DIRECTING CONVERSATIONAL FLOW AND PROBLEM ASSESSMENT

People tend to talk about what other people talk about. This session seeks to define the concept of focus and illustrate its power in counselling. Focussing is also a useful technique for assessing problems (and assets) of the client.

Selective attention of specific words of the client helps determine what the helpee will talk about next. Similarly, the model you, as counsellor, provide helps determine how open the helpee will be.

FOCUS ANALYSIS

Imagine you are talking to a client and he/she says:

"I'm really uptight about the situation at work. I don't see eye to eye with my boss. If I do what he wants, it would be inefficient and unethical but if I refuse he could make things very uncomfortable."

When anyone talks to someone else it is assumed that the conversation topics follow somewhat logically. The concepts of listening stress this fact and its importance. A complete change of topic in response to the above statement (e.g. "Do you think it will rain?" or "I went swimming yesterday.") breaks the conversational flow.

Focussing your comments, whether self-expressive or attending, to something related to what the other has just said is helpful in maintaining conversational "flow" and keep talk moving smoothly.

An analysis of any client statement would indicate many directions one could go. It would be possible to focus on the client's feelings, focus on others (boss), focus on problem (work), focus on your own thoughts about the issue(s), focus on your relationship with the client or focus on the broader situational context (professional ethics). For a full understanding of the problem all foci could be helpful.

The focus of your response or your comment heavily determines what the person you are talking with is likely to do next.

A major influence in human communication is the focus of your sentence.
Six clusters of focus useful in analysing conversations:

1. *Client focus*
2. *Helper focus*
3. *Other individual focus*
4. *Mutual or group focus*
5. *Problem or topic focus*

Focus can be *mixed.* In fact, our conversations contain a wide mixture of foci and topics in any sentence.

**FOCUS AND PROBLEM ASSESSMENT**

A logical extension of the focus concept is to elementary client assessment.

Example:

Client: "*Five years to retirement. We didn't plan well enough. Our money is going due to inflation. What can we do?*"

In the example above, you need to assess:

1. The client - who is he/she and how does he/she feel?
2. Yourself/Counsellor - what is your part? What are your parallel experiences, successes, blind spots?
3. Other - what about absent spouse? Are there family members who are the key people involved?
4. Mutual or "we" relationship - what is your relationship with client? Is the cultural group such that a "we" focus may be more appropriate?
5. The problem - what is the problem? What are some current assets?
6. The cultural/environmental/context - should you be talking about the issues of age or inflation in society? What are the crucial situational variables involved?
SELF-ASSESSMENT AND FOLLOW-UP

1. The ability of the interviewer to focus the session on many different areas offers you considerable possibility for controlling and managing the session. This control can be used to help clients be sure they explore many broad issues relating to their concerns. At the same time, the question of control raises important professional and ethical issues interviewing practice. Important among these is who should be responsible for direction of the interview. Some argue that focusing makes implicit issues explicit and frees the interviewer to help the client even more. Others argue that any form of control in the interview should be avoided. What is your position on this important issue?
CONFRONTATION

- is an extension of Advanced Empathy.

- goals of confrontation are to help client explore areas of feeling, experiences and behaviour that he's so far been reluctant to explore.

Confront positives about client too!
If counsellor confronts responsibly, client will learn to confront himself.

What should we confront?

1. Discrepancies -
   . between what we think and feel,
   . between what we say and do,
   . between our view and other's view of us,
   . between what we are and wish to be.

2. Distortions -
   . the way we perceive the world is often an indication of our needs, hang-ups, fears, etc. Help client see beyond himself.
   e.g. client may be overly suspicious of everyone due to several bad experiences.

3. Games, tricks and smoke screens -
   e.g. of counsellor being "hooked" into playing client's game - "You're so good to me (but don't ask me to change)"
   Client gives counsellor gifts, compliments, etc.

4. Evasions -
   e.g. client blames others for things that go wrong or claims they don't have the resources for a particular action program.
   Counsellor can help client through this by enabling her to see both sides, by making client more concrete "What've you tried?" (and therefore less evasive).
   Confrontation should help client move from a defensive position but shouldn't make client feel defenseless.

5. Behaviour values -
   Can challenge value conflict in client's life. Don't challenge values directly - too threatening unless they're self or other destructive values. Can challenge client to establish value priorities.
Manner of confronting

Confrontation should (i) be an invitation to employ unused strengths and resources,
         (ii) increase probability of client achieving his goals,
         (iii) increase client's self-understanding and action,
         (iv) be an invitation to explore client's behaviour not a punitive accusation.

How?

1. In spirit of Advanced Empathy which is often a form of confrontation in itself.

2. Tentatively
   add qualifications e.g. "I'm wondering..." "Have I got it right?"
   and leave room for client to add stuff and elaborate.

Non-accusatory

if it's too strong, client will have to use his energy to recover from the blow instead of to assimilate and work with the confrontation.

N.B.: confrontation is for client, not to prove yourself right!!

3. With care
   (i) Involvement - if you find yourself standing off from client you're not confronting with care.
   (ii) Motivation - to help client not to vent frustrations, get back at client, put him in his place, score, etc.
   (iii) Relationship between counsellor and client. Must establish real rapport first. It grows organically from the helping process and is based on care and respect.
   (iv) State of client - judge present ability of client to assimilate, i.e. if confused, disorganised, very emotional, not good idea to confront.

4. Successive Approximation
   . a gradual confrontation
   . he has to make it his own or it won't last
   . break client's undesirable behaviour down into smaller concrete units
   . take easiest behaviour to change first.
The effective helper meets and copes with situations directly and forthrightly. The ability to express oneself clearly – to "say what you mean and mean what you say." is central to any helping relationship. Confrontation – the accurate pointing out of discrepancies in an individual – is basic to self-directed self-expression and many other helping skills.

Confrontation is usually defined as a challenge and is often discussed as a conflict. A dictionary definition of confrontation is "to stand in the face of," "to face in hostility...to oppose." Given this definition, it may be seen that many self-disclosure statements could be classified as confrontations. E.g., "I am going to stop you" is an expression of content; or "I am outraged by that" is an expression of feeling. Clearly confrontations of this nature can either help or hurt. The effectiveness of these statements will depend on the context, the individual, and the specific timing of the intervention.

For purposes of this training manual, however, confrontation will be defined more narrowly as the pointing out of discrepancies between or among attitudes, thoughts, or behaviors. In a confrontation individuals are faced directly with the fact that they may be saying other than that which they mean, or doing other than that which they say.

The advantage of this definition is that it is clear and has been demonstrated to have considerable value in helping oneself or another person look at a situation more realistically and accurately. The definition of confrontation focuses heavily on the fact that people are not always congruent and consistent.

Helper confrontations ("you") might include:
- "You say constantly that you are going to get up on time and get to work, but never do."
- "You find yourself having mixed reactions to what I say. One side wants to agree, the other to fight and disagree."
- "You keep saying you love your wife, but you constantly bicker and argue."
- "Your words say you are comfortable talking about sex, but your lack of eye contact always comes when we talk about the topic."

Self-focused confrontations ("I") used by the helper or helpee might include:
- "I say I want to help myself stop smoking, but I just keep on."
- "I think I intend to study, but I never start."

Dual-focused confrontations ("you" and "I") might include:
- "Right now, you seem to be saying that our relationship has been good, but my experience – in this moment – is that we simply aren’t communicating."
- "You say that I understand you, but I feel puzzled and am not so sure that I do. Let’s explore that some more."

The definition of confrontation presented above stresses the following factors:

1. A confrontation focuses on discrepancies between or among attitudes, thoughts, or behaviors.
2. A confrontation focuses on objective data. The more factual and observable a confrontation of discrepancies, the more helpful it may be. Confrontations are most effective when non-evaluative.
3. Confrontations may be focused on self, the helpee, or any other of the several dimensions of "focus."
4. Any verbal statement may be scored as containing or not containing a confrontation.
5. Finally, a confrontation is not a blunt statement of opinion or emotion which disagrees with someone else. These are expression of content or expression of feeling statements.
The objective nature of a confrontation — used appropriately with suitable timing — can be most helpful in aiding a client examine oneself or in helping people of varying opinions examine their differences.

Determining whether or not a confrontation is helpful is very much an individual matter. Confrontations used inappropriately may be destructive, at other times neutral. A positive confrontation leads to further self-examination of the discrepancies and possible resolution of varying trends. The issue of deciding whether or not a confrontation is helpful is complicated by the fact that the helper, the helpee, and an external “expert” may all view the same confrontation differently.

A possible goal is to work with helpees so that they notice and describe their own discrepancies, thus confronting themselves.

As a first step toward measuring the quality of a confrontation, we would suggest scoring a confrontation as “positive,” “neutral,” or “negative” (“+,” “0,” or “–”). Individual differences in ratings provide helpful data for discussion and more thorough understanding of confrontation and its effects. Further references and an alternative view of confrontation may be found in Berenson and Mitchell (1974) or Carkhuff (1969).

Confrontation Exercises

Video vignette number 7 provides an interchange which provides the opportunity for a confrontation.

**Helper:** Al, how are things going with Betty?

**Helpee:** Well, things are going very well. I, you know, I don’t mind the fact, the fact that she’s gone all the time anymore. I think it’s okay that she goes out and works evenings at the office. That, that, yeah, that’s okay. I mean, it’s really, it’s really fine. The kids and I went out and saw a movie last night. Ah... and it was a good movie. So, it was okay. Yeah, I think things are going well. (All said in a flat monotone.)

Non-confrontations from the helper might include:

- Sounds like things are going better for you. (Paraphrase)
- What you say sounds phoney to me. (Self-disclosure)
- I’ve had similar situations where things were hard at the beginning and later got better. For example... (Self-disclosure)

Confrontations might include:

- Al, you say that things are better, but your voice and expression suggest that perhaps it isn’t there yet. (Paraphrase plus reflection of feeling)
- At this moment, I hear you saying that things are better, yet my experience with you is different. It reminds me...
Central to any confrontation is the pointing out of discrepancies. Confrontation is not disagreeing with the helpee. Many people think of a challenge such as "What you say sounds phoney to me" as a confrontation. While the statement may be based on discrepancies in the helpee's behavior, it does not point out clearly to the helpee what the discrepancies in behavior are. A confrontation must point out discrepancies clearly and precisely.

Following are some helpee statements. Make confrontive and non-confrontive responses to each.

1. Helpee: I'm making plenty of money. $2.10 an hour. Only problem is that I seem to spend it faster than I make it. For my age, that's good money. I think I know what I'm doing and can take care of it.

   Non-confrontive statement
   
   Confrontive statement
   
2. Helpee: My parents are getting along well. Oh, they argue now and then, but basically about minor things. They are really neat people, they never pressure me. I feel terribly guilty about not being able to get a job which they approve of.

   Non-confrontive statement
   
   Confrontive statement
   
3. Helpee: (in angry voice with fists clenched) My wife and I never argue, we get along very well. The problem is my job; my boss doesn't understand me.

   Non-confrontive statement
   
   Confrontive statement
   
4. Helpee: Drinking is no problem for me. I never drink before lunch.

   Non-confrontive statement
   
   Confrontive statement
DIRECTIVES

We communicate to influence and affect with intent. Directive giving is the clearest example of some helpers' desire to influence others.

Effective directives:

- of prime importance,

that what you want to happen is clear and understandable to others.

Effective directives can result in effective and immediate change:

- directives play a significant part in the therapeutic process,

- the way directives are given can be as important as the directives themselves.

Marshall McLuhan has stated "the media is the message". Effective direction giving means not only clear directives but you, as counsellors, communicating that your message is worth receiving.

What is your present ability to give directives?

Select a topic and give someone else or a small group directions.

Note below your feelings about giving directives and add to this feedback from those to whom you gave directives.

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

__________________________________________________________

DIRECTIVES: PUTTING YOUR IDEAS ACROSS

Three dimensions of effective directive giving:

- appropriate verbal and non-verbal behaviour to support the directive,
- concrete and clear directives,
- checking out with your client whether or not the directive was heard.

As a first step, directives should be defined. Some examples of directives in a counselling session include:

"Sit back in your chair, close your eyes, relax."

"Repeat what you just said."

"After you leave here, count the number of times you find yourself putting yourself down to others."

"Have your right hand talk to your left hand."

"I want you to take a test."

"Concreteness" in direction giving refers to clear verbal specificity. The more clear the statement the more likely the directive will be heard.

Compare:

"You try that again" vs "The first time you were looking at your hands. Say it again and look at me this time."

"Don't do that" vs "One of our agreed upon rules in this group is to talk one at a time. OK, let's start with Sue."

"Tell me more" vs "You just said you had a scarey dream, then you wandered off to a discussion of dreams in general. Give me some specific things that happened in the dream that frightened you."

When a series of directives must be given, it is more effective to give them one at a time breaking them down step by step.

CHECKING OUT

Always ask your client to re-state the direction or ask if your directives were understood. Allow sufficient time to make sure your ideas were followed. Specific examples of check-out include:

"Could you tell me what I just said?"

"Are the directions clear?"
SELF DISCLOSURE

Self disclosure is "talking about oneself or sharing personal experiences, emotions, attitudes with another". The careful use of self disclosure in helping sessions can facilitate client growth and exploration.

Two important issues in relation to self disclosure are:

1. Effective listening skills must precede self disclosure. Unless you have indicated to the helpee that you have heard him or her thoroughly, self disclosure may be inappropriate.

   First, listen to your client. Second, use self disclosure appropriately. Third, check out with the client how the self disclosure was received.

2. Many professional schools of helping consider self disclosure unprofessional. Thus, self disclosure needs to be viewed carefully from both theoretical and practical points of view.

Self disclosure is not an easy skill for many counsellors. Disclosing one's feelings of anger, fear, love or joy is not always in a person's make-up. Some find it easier to express negative emotions, others can express only positive feelings and thoughts. One of the tasks in learning this skill is to examine your personal style of self disclosure and to consider whether or not you wish to develop this skill as part of your helping style.

Another task is to learn to share your self with a helpee in an appropriate way. Some helpers become so excited about self disclosure as a valid helping skill that they talk about themselves and fail to attend to the client. Providing self disclosures that help the client look more deeply into him or herself is not easy. Yet when well done, self disclosure can set in motion a mutual or reciprocal relationship that creates an interaction that rejuvenates.

EXERCISE

What would you be willing to self disclose?

Expressing your feelings and thoughts demands that you have something you are willing to talk about.

An introductory name game provides a variety of topics of differing levels of depth which it would be appropriate to look at.
CATEGORY 1

Favourites. Write your favourites for each of the following:

1. Your favourite water place ___________________________________________
2. Your favourite breakfast _____________________________________________
3. Your favourite way to spend Saturday night ____________________________

The second area is places. Places where things important happen to us. Complete the following:

1. A place where you experienced a "miracle" or something special __________

2. A place where you came close to death ______

3. A place where you experienced love ______

People are important to us. Put the names, interests or symbols of:

1. Someone who is nourishing and giving to you __________________________

2. Someone who has caused you anguish ______

3. Someone with whom you have unfinished business ______________________

4. Someone with whom you are tied closely ______________________________

We often look at ourselves too harshly. It is time to start valuing what we are and what we believe. List three things about yourself you like and value:

1. _______________________________________________
2. _______________________________________________
3. _______________________________________________
PRACTISING SELF DISCLOSURE

Select a topic you would like to talk about. Spend a few minutes talking about it with someone. Make notes on the following:

1. What were your feelings when you started to share something of yourself? ____________________________________________________________________________

2. How did the other person respond? Did they share similar or related experiences? Did they listen to you? ____________________________________________________________________________

3. Complete the following sentence stem: From this experience I learned ____________________________________________________________________________

THE IMPORTANCE OF ATTENDING DURING SELF DISCLOSURE

Sharing oneself with others can be a constructive and facilitative experience, but an essential requirement is that someone listens to what you say.

Nothing will stop you talking about yourself faster than someone interrupting, disagreeing, criticizing -- or worse -- ignoring you. If you are to share, someone must attend and attend carefully.

The same, of course, holds when someone is sharing him or herself with you.

EXPRESSION OF FEELING, EXPRESSION OF CONTENT, AND SUMMARISATION

Three microcounselling skills which are part of self disclosure, are also important skills in their own right.

I. EXPRESSION OF FEELING

An expression of feeling is defined by any statement in which the helpee expresses emotionally laden words.

An expression of feeling should be compared to a reflection of feeling (an attending skill). Both emphasize emotionally laden words but in the reflection of feeling, the focus is
almost invariably on the client and the client's emotional experience.

EXAMPLE

CLIENT (REFLECTION OF FEELING): "It seems to me right now that you are terribly upset, worried and confused about what's happening."

HELPER (EXPRESSION OF FEELING): "I sense in myself similar feelings of hurt and frustration."

II. EXPRESSION OF CONTENT

Any statement which focusses on facts, ideas or information with minimal emphasis on emotional experience is classified as expression of content. The giving of advice, opinions, suggestions and reassurance all represent expressions of content.

EXAMPLE

CLIENT: "Right now things are terrible. My wife won't speak to me, I think I want to leave, but I'm afraid to be alone. I'm just confused."

HELPER: "I can understand that. Sounds like you need to take some time and think it over. One need not rush into decisions."

(Expression of content - Advice)

OR

"That's tough, but you will be able to overcome the problem."

(Expression of content - Reassurance)

OR

"First, you could leave right now. Second, you could, etc....".

(Expression of content - Suggestion)

OR

"Sounds to me that the home situation is difficult. Many people in your situation have experienced the same things."

(Expression of content - Sharing Information)

A wide array of possibilities for helping exist using the skill of expression of content. "Sharing information" is the most common expression of content type and represents the main style of daily conversations we encounter. Any of the above types of expression of content may be useful in a counselling interview. If used excessively, they may tend to deny the client's world and allow little chance for exploration of emotion.
If you were to listen to a single day's conversations, you would tend to find most human interaction tends to focus on expression of content. While this may be necessary, it also results in people who are relatively unaware of emotional experience, and who find it difficult to share their inner world with others.

III. SUMMARISATION

The central purpose of summarisation is to put your expressions of content and feelings together in a comprehensive form.

In effect, summarisations are similar to expressions of feeling and expressions of content, except that the time period covered is larger and involves a broader range of issues. The time period for summaries could be as short as five minutes or could be as long as a full interview. Such summaries have potential value to help you organise your thoughts ... and they have potential value to the client as they can see "where you are coming from" more clearly.

Summarisation, as a self expression skill, should be differentiated from summarisation as an attending skill. The difference is on focus and on who initiates the information.

Summarisation (attending) focusses on what the helpee has said. Summarisation (self expression) focusses on what the helper has said.

EXAMPLE OF SUMMARISATION (SELF EXPRESSION)

To a client suffering from examination anxiety:

"What I've been saying is that relaxation is one route toward coping with your tension related to exams. I think I mentioned that many people suffer similar problems, but have overcome them through deliberate relaxation. I also said that the instructions I gave you would require practice and deliberate effort on your part to use them. What are some of your reactions to the programme?"
SELF DISCLOSURE

Four key aspects of self disclosure are:

1. Use of pronouns representing the self, such as "I", "me", "myself".

If you are going to engage in self disclosure, use the personal pronouns "I", "me", "my". If you are talking about yourself, talk about yourself. Consider the following:

"Some people have trouble with their parents."
"They cause a lot of grief with their manipulations."
"Friends are good for lots of people."
"Rain is a good thing."

Real self disclosure demands a focus on "I". If the first statement were rewritten with a focus on self it might be:

"I am having troubles with my parents."

Rewrite the last three statements from an "I" reference.

2. Use expressions of personal feelings and personal content but with awareness that feeling responses personalise the session.

The ability to express one's emotions facilitates and strengthens human relationships. Microtraining has two basic skills - expression of feeling and expression of content - which help clarify this area and are best taught in relation to each other. The basic difference between an expression of content and an expression of feeling is whether or not affective or emotional words can be found in the statement.

For example (affective words italicized):

"I went to the movies yesterday. I saw a Western."

"Wow! What a grubby movie! Poor acting, lousy plot. I was bored to death!"

or
"My parents are in the hardware business. They've been married twenty years."

"My parents are good people. They try hard. I like the way they get along with each other. But their pressure on me hurts and is getting me down and depressed."

The first example in each above are expression of content, the latter are expression of feeling. Expression of content is useful in expressing "reality" or even your attitudes and opinions. However, expression of content does not give away any indication of how important an idea or person is to you. The expression of your feelings via affective words helps others sense "where you are coming from".

Non-verbal expressions of touching, appropriate movements in the face or body also express emotion. A straight, rigid posture under heavy emotional strain communicates emotion as well.

Take one of the following topics and write expressions of emotion and of feeling which you might use. Women's liberation, gay liberation, Black power, sexuality, aggression, power.

Exp. content ____________________________________________
Exp. feeling ____________________________________________
Exp. content ____________________________________________
Exp. feeling ____________________________________________

3. Consider the tense of your self disclosure. Present tense responses tend to be the most powerful but past and future may be relevant as well.

What is the time frame of the self disclosure? Are you talking from the distant or recent past, the present, "here and now - in this moment", or the future? Generally speaking, the more immediate the statement, the more powerful the self disclosure. People who talk solely in the past or in the future can avoid dealing with the most concrete and important issues.

Consider a person talking about a sales job:

Past: "I've been a salesperson for a long time. I've done well, gotten consistent raises. I've always liked the work."

Recent past: "But lately, I've been having trouble getting new sales. People seem to be barking at me."
Here and now - in this moment: "Right now I'm wondering how I can pull out of it. Look, my hands are shaking!"

Future: "What should I do next? In a few years, I will be at retirement age. What would another job look like?"

Or, a helper talking to a helpee about marriage difficulties:

Past: "You've said that your parents didn't approve of your marriage. Could you tell me why?"

Recent past: "Over the past few weeks, you have come across to me more clearly as a person. I've liked the way you seem to be able to tackle your concerns.

Here and now - in this moment: "As I see you this minute, I sense your hurt and fear. Right now, I want you to know that I really care what happens."

Future: "I can imagine the difficulties you anticipate in the future."

Immediacy of verbal expression is basically an exercise in past, present and future tense. The more recent or immediate the conversation, the more powerful the experience. It must be stressed that past or future experiences can be brought into the moment and re-experienced. Talking about one's parents and their marriage and its effects on an individual can be related to present emotional experiences.

 Meaningful self disclosure can occur at all levels of immediacy. Psychoanalytic approaches, for example, stress the past and its relation to the present. A behavioural approach to helping may stress the future and develop here and now means to reach that future. Existential-phenomenological conceptions tend to stress here and now - in this moment - interactions.

To experience more fully the concepts of immediacy, complete the following giving personal statements from a variety of time frames. Use "I" statements and expression of content or feelings. After completing this, have someone else go over your statements and score them for the three dimensions of self disclosure.

1. Your feelings about work.

   Past

   Recent past

   Here and now - in this moment

   Future
2. Your feelings about your childhood.
   Past
   Recent past
   Here and now
   Future

3. Your ideas about government.
   Past
   Recent past
   Here and now
   Future

4. Your feelings about being a helper of others.
   Past
   Recent past
   Here and now
   Future

5. Your thoughts and feelings about a problem you currently have.
   Past
   Recent past
   Here and now
   Future

4. Relate self disclosure responses to the statements of the client. Try to maintain parallelism.

The fourth dimension of the skill of self disclosure is the degree of parallelism. Self disclosures of the helper should relate to what the client has said. Self disclosures too far away from the client's experience tend to block the client from further exploration of concerns. On the other hand, self disclosures related to the client's world may facilitate the relationship and personal growth.
The first parallel response in each of the examples above attempts to present here and now – in this moment – responses and the second relates to past experience of the helpee. Parallel self disclosure responses are easier to produce in the present tense. Both the helper and the helpee are there to share, experience and interpret a present tense self disclosure.
LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

Our actions produce consequences for us and for others.

The skill of logical consequences is concerned with helping clients anticipate what will happen as a result of their present course of action.

ACTIONS AND CONSEQUENCES

What are the likely consequences of ignoring the need for healthy eating habits?

Many clients come to the counselling situation with the connection between actions and consequences lost.

Think of specific situations where you and/or others have lost the connection between action and results.

Record some situations.

Spend some time thinking about how actions and consequences become separated.

LOGICAL CONSEQUENCES

The process of learning in our culture is heavily based on the consequences of actions.

Client actions planned for the future are likely to have consequences for the client's life.

For example:

Changing a job for one that offers more salary - may disrupt family life through a move which may, in turn, cause other problems. Alternatively, the same move
may bring positive consequences.

Making client's aware of likely consequences of their behaviours, if done sparingly and carefully, may be helpful in counselling.

1. **WARNINGS** - are forms of logical consequences. Warnings inform the client of the negative possibilities involved in a decision or action and the consequences that may result.

   Warning tends to:
   - reduce risk taking,
   - produce conformity,
   - centre on the anticipation of punishment.

2. **ENCOURAGING RISK TAKING AND ATTEMPTING NEW TASKS** - a more positive form of logical consequences.

   - centre on anticipation of reward,
   - use techniques such as asking the client to imagine the positive consequences of rewards of a new behaviour (e.g. being assertive).

Logical consequence may, at first, seem to be a type of coercion or moralizing. Yet it is a rare human behaviour that does not have both benefits and costs, and it is the counsellor's task to help the client sort these out while working towards a decision.

In providing a logical consequence response:

1. Through the basic listening sequence, make sure that you understand the situation and the way the client understands it.

2. As a client moves toward a decision, encourage thinking about positive and negative possibilities in the decision. This is often done by questioning.

3. Provide the client with data on both positive and negative consequences of the decision or action. If he or she thinks only in negative terms, help the client think of positives. If he or she is thinking only in positives, prompt thinking of negatives.
4. As appropriate to the situation, provide the client with a summary of positive and negative consequences in a nonjudgmental manner. With many people this step is not needed; they will have made their own judgment and decision already.

5. Let the client decide what action to take in counseling situations. In teaching or management, you may have to decide at times and actually enforce the consequences.

Logical consequences can be used:

- to help people sort through issues more completely,
- in ranking alternatives when a complex decision is needed.
INTERPRETATION/REFRAMING

Interpretation is defined as the act of reframing or re-defining "reality" (feelings, attitudes, behaviour, situations) from a new point of view.

There are multiple numbers of interpretations possible to describe any one person, group, organisation or culture. The more interpretations available, the freer the counsellor is to be of assistance and more opportunity for "understanding" to develop.

INTERPRETATION AND CREATIVITY

The roots of interpretation lie in creativity, the ability to make something new from what already exists. Creativity demands being able to see things from a new and different perspective; being able to assemble existing pieces into new wholes and being able to take things apart and reconstruct a new picture.

Creativity training can help you prepare for interpretation and develop readiness and ability to see the alternative points of view necessary for interpretation.

INTERPRETATION - A MORE PRECISE DEFINITION

1. Reframing and the concept of frame of reference.

Interpretations vary with the world view and frame of reference of the person presenting the reframing.

2. The "depth" of an interpretation.

Interpretations can be divided into surface and depth interpretations.

(a) Surface Interpretation - names obvious features of the immediate situation.

(b) Depth Interpretation - usually relies on a theoretical construct which is often unseen and abstract.

Ivey (1971) comments:

Interpretation has traditionally been viewed as a mystical activity in which the counsellor reaches into the depths of the clients personality and provides ... a new insight. However, when one conceives of interpretation as merely a new frame of reference, the concept of depth becomes less
formidable. Viewed in this light the depth of a given interpretation refers to the magnitude of the discrepancy between the frame of reference from which the client is operating and the frame of reference supplied by the counsellor.

Any new or different frame of reference might be acceptable and potentially helpful but it must be timed appropriately and be reasonably congruent with the present status of the client.

3. Interpretation as related to other skills.

- Interpretation is concerned with presenting alternative frames of reference from which to view situations, problems or issues.
- Attending skills such as paraphrasing or reflection of feeling focus on hearing another person accurately.
- Self-disclosure skills focus helping client and counsellor share experiences.

The value of the interpretation is gauged by the person's reaction to this new, possibly more functional, frame of reference.

INTERPRETATION/REFRAMING

The objective in practicing interpretation will be to enable a client to reframe/reinterpret the situation.

This new frame of reference may:

- enable client with new behaviour and actions,
- or the client may simply think differently about it and live with it more comfortably even though no objective change occurs.

Techniques for using interpretation:

1. Identify general situation.
2. Search for repeating pattern.
3. What to do with a pattern once discovered.
5. Once a pattern has been identified and reframed it may be helpful to develop specific actions and contracts to change behaviour.
INTEGRATION OF SKILLS

The beginning counsellor searches for the "right" response. This search for the "correct" thing to say often results in an awkward, uncomfortable style, disruptive to the interview.

Experienced counsellors seldom think of "correct responses:. The skills have been integrated into a smooth natural style.

To achieve your own natural style, it is important to integrate the skills in your own way.

ADDITIONAL MICROSKILL LEADS

The microskills hierarchy presents three additional skills not given major emphasis in either Basic Attending Skills or Basic Influencing Skills. They are defined below briefly.

Reflection of meaning is an especially useful skill which can change the entire tone of an interview. Once you have mastered the basic listening sequence, it is a relatively easy skill to learn.

When learning reflection of meaning, you must first have data from the client which relates to meaning and value issues. This is obtained primarily through careful listening or questioning which stresses the importance of the key words "meaning", "value", and "sense". For example, let us assume a client has discussed issues of difficulty in dealing with a divorce or death. After feelings, you can then explore meaning.

"What sense do you make of this?"
"What meaning does that hold for you?"
"What values does that represent?"
"Why is that important to you?"
"What purpose in life does that represent?"

Reflection of meaning looks much like a paraphrase or reflection of feeling with the exception that the words "You mean ..." or "You value ..." are used. The tone and level of the interview becomes deeper and more meaningful as value issues are discussed. Confrontation...
skills are particularly helpful as many counselling and interviewing sessions involve value conflicts. "On one hand you value ..., but on the other ...".

Advice/information/instruction/explanation may be best classified together as "other" skills, for there are many ways in which we provide data for others (praise, suggestions, reprimands, etc). These skills have not been stressed in Basic Influencing Skills as they are closely related and would tend to overbalance the important skills of interpretation, self-disclosure, and others presented here.

This is not to deny the value of these skills. Many effective counselling methods use advice and instruction to help clients change and grow. Overused, these skills can drive a client away. Used sparingly with effective timing, they can promote change as effectively as any other skill.

Basic to effective use of these skills are the same dimensions related to the influencing skills here:

1) timing and appropriateness of the intervention to fit unique client needs;

2) concreteness and specificity in presenting the data;

3) checking-out carefully to ensure that your information was heard.

The influencing summary often appears at the end of the interview when you have worked with a client and want to ensure that what you have said is remembered. The skill involves simply restating your own key points from the session. In actuality, most summaries near the end of the interview involve both attending and influencing summarisations. The distinction between the two is that the attending summary is from the frame of reference of the client and the influencing summary from the frame of reference of the helper.
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