

BENCHMARK COUNSELING SKILLS TEMPLATE

	Client's Response	Counselor's Response	Better Response	Rationale
1 Time Stamp: 4:52	...Like I know she's a smart person and I know she's had a lot to deal with and I'm happy that she's happy. But I cannot wrap my head around the fact that. She is connecting with this guy who's already taken and although he, according to her, he and his wife are not doing well in their marriage. I I I don't think it's OK. Like she's not texting him anymore outside of work, which I was like, cut it out, cut it out. Stop doing that. But it kind of makes me. Nervous. Because if she can feel that with him, who's to say that someone's not	Umm, that's a lot for your cousin to go through. Oh my goodness. And I'm sure you just beat it. Sounds like you were there for her. Like, just experiencing that like. Like through like just being there for her. Like, that's a lot for even someone, like, comforting a direct person involved without, that's all. That all that to say, it's just a lot of trauma. That's that's a lot of heaviness. And I can see where the all that heaviness has really maybe drawn out some, some insecurities and yourself with with your marriage. Like, tell me more about that.	I think a better response would be to affirm and reflect the emotions of the story that Jennifer told me, as well as reflecting her concern for her cousin. I think that a better response would also entail me asking a question about her marriage, perhaps, "you say that it could happen to you too. What do you mean by that?" Then depending on where that goes, possibly asking is that was a concern she had. Or perhaps leaving it alone and coming back to that comment later, because although she did clarify that she and her husband were not having any issues, the statement did stick out to me. Over all, I think I should have avoided labeling the comment as an insecurity.	From her response, I think that I mislabeled the emotion as insecurity, and if I was to explore the comment about how infidelity could happen to her marriage too, I think it would have been done better with a different relection of emotion, followed by an open question.

	gonna do that with my husband? Or we don't have any issues, but it's like. Is that a thing like can that happen? And if that happens, is that a true possibility for someone else to connect? Like that with someone. I don't know, it just it messes me up.			
2 Time Stamp: 13:19	Yeah. I mean, she's a good person, you know. To me, it's important to. You know, have good people in your life, but I just. I don't want her to get. Hurt any more than she already has, and especially with the children. So.	Yeah. I can see your your empathy really playing out and and how in your tone of voice and in your facial expressions. Like I can, I can see that in your face. But as you're talking about her, you have used the phrase she's a good person multiple times like. Tell me about how you're using that.	I think a better response would have been to ask, "What does being a good person mean to you?"	Answering this way would eliminate the following confusion. Additionally, it might set up a theme of different views on being a good person.
3 Time Stamp:	OK, so how do I do that? Because I'm I'm	Yeah. So we we've talked about your how you	I think that a better answer would have been to address the	I had second-guessed myself and didn't know what to

19:40	like in my 40s now and I still haven't figured it out. What are techniques?	have some anxiety about like the future and in relationships and anxiety about the economy and. Umm, we talked about how maybe you can make memories with your children last week.	comment about her age, and then said something about techniques. Such as, "well, no one really has it all figured out. And plenty of people need help with coping skills, but you're ahead of the game since you're here. But we can talk about coping techniques. What do you do when you get anxious?"	say next, so I thought the safest option was to summarize to get to the point. A different response would have been one that was more present and intune with what was going on in-session.
4 Time Stamp: 22:01	I can do that.	*Had previously asked her how making a list of things she could control made her feel. I repeated myself. With that, how how do you feel about that? How would that make you feel?	I think a better response would have been to further her idea of what she had control over, such as not just her responsibilities, but also the way she responds to people in relationships. This may lead back to stability in marriage.	This response to Jennifer was me essentially repeating myself. I think that if I had delved into the list of things she could control would have been more beneficial. This would have allowed for more exploration into things she could contro, as well as more specific coping mechanisms.
5 Time Stamp: 7:07	When she first told me she was actually talking to somebody else, another man, and she went out and she had drinks and I was like, hey, that's kind of, you know, it's pretty soon,	Mm-hmm. It sounds like you are pretty close, and she's telling you all this.	I think that a better response would have been to first reflect and summarize, then respond in a way that approaches her reaction to what her cousin doing. Additionally, I think a response that reflects on the intensity of her	I think a different response would be more beneficial because she has given me a lot of information, and her emotion about how her cousin is acting is the most apparent at that moment.

	like, that's really close to. You, you know, having this other thing happen, you know? Are you sure you're ready for this? Ohh, it's fabulous. And so she does it. And I was like, I'm telling you, like, you need to give yourself some time, but in the same sense she was having, like, she was in therapy. So I also would like to think that the therapist might. You know, she's telling her everything, she said. So if therapist had a problem with it, they would probably say, hey, don't do that. So she's getting permission. So she's going out, and then she's like, yeah, he's just we don't have, you know, we're just good friends,		emotions that are directed towards her cousin's actions.	
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which I'm like, OK, cool. But then she calls me back, like 3 weeks later saying. I have this. Amazing. I'm just absolutely in love with this man and we have this connection that I have never experienced in my life. And I'm like, huh? And then she's like, yeah, he's married. And I'm like, huh? So. She was the what I communicated to her was. It is not your place to be texting this man. Oh, well, he texted my kids on the first day of school. Why? Why? Why is he doing this? Like that's not OK. So that was my communication with her is not OK. You do not do that. Umm. So when I talk			
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	to her today she was like ohh fabulous. And I was like. So how's the guy thing? Oh, we're still just, we are so connected. But she did specifically say while I'm not talking to him outside of the workplace, cause we figure that's probably not smart. And that's not OK. But she says it's not OK to communicate via text or call, but it's OK to connect with him like soul to soul. I don't know. I don't get it.			
Any additional thoughts not captured above? What will you take away from this assignment? I think that a lot of what I was missing in the counselling sessions was that I should have said more, or different things at different times. Additionally, I really wanted to get to a specific point of her seeing that her cousin's life is separate from her own, but I wasn't sure how to get there. I really appreciated this assignment, as it made me look really hard at what I was saying, why I was saying it, and what would have been a better option to say.				

BENCHMARK FINAL SKILLS COMPETENCY SCALE (SCS) PARTICIPATION TEMPLATE

This is a scale to assess counseling skills. Please rate yourself numerically (0-10) using the following 15 skills items from "Advanced" to "Not Present".

Advanced	Proficient	Developing	Not Present
10 - 9	9-7	7-0	0

Basic Skills

	Advanced	Proficient	Developing	Not Present
Eye Contact and Attending Skills	10			
Verbal Tone and Minimal Encouragers	9			
Facial Expression and Gestures		9		
Empathy		8		
Being Non-Judgmental/ Unconditional Positive Regard		8		
Active Listening		9		
Open-Ended Questions		7		
Reflection (Feelings, Meaning, Content)		8		
Paraphrasing		7		
Summarizing		7		
Challenging/Confrontation			6	
Immediacy		8		
Self-Disclosure			6	
Goal Setting		8		
Wrapping up the Session		7		

Please add additional thoughts to explain your rationale for giving yourself the points you chose above.

First, I would like to address the rating of 6 that I gave myself for self-disclosure and challenging/confrontation. I am very aware that I often miss opportunities to challenge a client compassionately. Sometimes I see the challenge, and sometimes I realize it later; either way, it is not something I do naturally or effortlessly, and my skills in this area need work. The same can be said for self-disclosure. I do not self-disclose easily, or in a way that is minimal but comforting. It is something I need to improve upon. For the skills I rated myself a 7 in, I feel as though I do these skills okay, but needing improvement. I especially need work with my open questions. For the ones I gave a an 8 in, I think I do them well, but I either need to increase the quantity (as I miss opportunities), or I need to better the quality. For the ones I gave myself a 9 in, I feel very confident with these skills, and I do them well; however, I think there could be some improvement there. For example, I may portray active listening to a client, but discipling my brain to remain actively listening and not wander could still use some improving. For eye contact and attending skills, I think I do well with that, even with being online.

Benchmark Live Supervision Participation Weblink

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