

PROFESSIONAL THEORETICAL APPROACH TO COUNSELING

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As a mature adult I have participated in numerous life experiences in various roles. As practicing Christian nothing compares to the role of faith servant of God and His Son Jesus. I desire to be a counselor for Christ. Therefore, I strive to humbly serve others that need me to help them help themselves led by the will of the Holy Spirit else I should fail. I enjoy helping all others regardless of any various diversity.

The population I resonate most with is pre-school age thru high school. Therefore, selecting school counseling was a perfect option for me to pursue a career. I look forward implementing the theoretical approaches I have studied and share them within the school environment. My theoretical orientation has transformed from a narrow world view to a broader more acceptable world view. My personal values and beliefs are still foundationally part of the Christian norms. Although, my professional world view is much more broaden towards diversity acceptance of all others I may serve. My personal and professional theatrical orientation currently as a counselor-in-training very much complement each other and in collaboration will help ensure that I will be able to help all students.

Human Nature and Change

What is my one theory that best resonates best currently as a counselor-in-training is a loaded question. I have two theories that I often find beneficial they are Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) and Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT). Both equally fit my own values and beliefs about human nature and change equally. Although currently my confidence level lies with Solution-Focused Brief Therapy (SFBT) regarding application during a counseling session with clients. Therefore, regarding this assignment, I will choose (SFBT) to discuss human nature

and change. I have confidence that focusing on vary actions would enhance the ability to reach solutions effectively. Additionally, redirect away from dwelling on student deficiencies.

Therefore, opening a door for the opportunity for change to happen for the student to move forward toward mental health and wellness. SFBT foundational elements that foster change are collaboration of student/counselor relationship and hope. The student's role responsibility is self-adaptability and being mindful of utilizing solution talk moving forward option other than choice of problem talk. "Solution-focused brief therapy concentrates on what is wright and what is working for people rather than dwelling on deficits, weakness, and problems" (Murphy, 2015, as cited in Cory, 2020, p. 371).

As a SFBT school counselor my role responsibility would be to guide the student to identify what is effective, what issues are not adequate, and how the change to those issues should occur regarding moving forward toward change. A foundational role in SFBT is the strong relationship between student and counselor that is honest and transparent communication. SFBT counselor's guide students to actively participate in being the agent of change regarding reaching their therapeutic goals successfully. Additionally, SFBT counselors encourage students to focus on their potential strengths and apply them where as needed. Furthermore, as a school counselor one of my responsibilities is to guide the student moving forward regardless of barriers that could negatively affect their trajectory outcome.

Personal Background

A collaboration of experiences both personal and professional have greatly influenced my theoretical orientation. Regarding my family my parents had strong work ethics and being a self-employed having also a strong resolve to ensure successful business operations is a key ethical value. We worked as a family and from a young age I learned how to respect the relationship

between working and financial gain. My grandmother lived with us and was very much the homemaker and head of the household regarding daily routines. My mother was 20 years younger than my father and full of life. I realize now that I was brought up by intergenerational household! I was blessed by the love and gifts each of these family members instilled in me. From my father always show respect of your elders and love. My mother made sure to always take time out to have enjoyment in your life no matter how brief and to be kind. My beloved grandmother comforted me when I was sick and shared the Gospel of Jesus Christ with her little white bible in hand each night before bedtime. She would read to me from passages from the bible and teach me my prayers. She taught me about forgiveness and always have hope. But all three of them loved me and instilled in me integrity to overcome all that this life throws at you, you can be an overcomer. I truly believe therefore SFBT fits me like a glove due to the values and moral compass that was instilled in are compatible with key elements in SFBT. To thrive efficiently you need to recognize any problems and not dwell on them but remain focused on resolving them and move forward successfully! Additionally, “Solution-focused school counselors employ client factors by building on exceptions and other student’s resources” (Dollarhide & Lemberger-Truelove, 2018, p. 183).

Relationship Building and Assessment

One key foundational aspect of SFBT is the strong therapeutic alliance between student and counselor relationship. I hope to aspire to achieve and establish such a collaboration with my prospective students regarding to school counseling services. I believe that a part of human nature requires that all students should feel valued and welcomed in the counseling space when in session. Therefore, change will occur, and the needs of the student will hopefully be met moving forward toward established goals. Provide the student that there is hope at the end of the

tunnel that their journey toward their goal(s) are realistic and obtainable. I will strive to offer all my student continuous support and advocacy toward their academic, social and mental health wellness. All Student(s) should be listened to and find comfort that they have been heard. I always tell my current students that what they have to say regarding their needs and wants are very important for them to self-advocate. I will respect the good choices they make and keep my biases at the door. I will create my counseling sessions in a space my students feel safe and free of undue judgment. I will honor students' autonomy and foster their going healthy independence as a productive individual out in the world. A school counseling program service should be a comforting place within the educational realm where all students are challenged to do their very best. School counseling services are there to offer ongoing support every day the students are in attendance without fail. I know that as a school counselor I maybe the only accountable advocate that student get to talk to and support them. It is my honor to serve them all the best that I can with the resources I have.

SFBT utilize initial client intake interviews and various assessments tools to help diagnosis. After a diagnosis established the therapist will develop a treatment plan including various interventions to achieve indivual goals. A SFBT technique may include a session discussion regarding the counselor utilizing the miracle question posed to the student. The student is challenged to reply offering their problem-solving thoughts to the given scenario question. This technique assists the student in the initial counseling session to discover the problem issue. Additionally, the counselor takes a consultative stance and assists the client in a collaborative effort to explore problems and solutions and to clarify goals (Corey, 2020, p. 368). It is imperative that the student develop realistic and attainable goals for themselves and there will be a measure of success toward desired outcome of counseling treatment plan. Once the

client has experienced significant success it is the hope that they will continue achieving valued outcomes regarding lasting change.

According to Corey (2020), a limitation to SFBT is that some counselors may become fanatical regarding the techniques of SFBT.

I find this a true assessment regarding the learning curve to feel confident implementing SFBT into practice in a counseling session as a counselor-in-training. I myself have had a few bumps along the way towards developing a level of confidence applying SFBT in certain areas of practice with students. As a novice school counselor-in-training SFBT tends to be a challenging in-depth process. Additionally, Implementation of a client-directed theory such as SFBT into school counseling demands a considerable change to the perceptions and views of traditional counseling approaches (Dollard & Lemberger-Truelove, 2018, p. 204).

Ethical and Biblical Principles

According to the ASCA (2016) *Code of Ethics* details that school counselors are to respect all students and their families, regarding culture, religion and values while avoiding imposition of the school counselor's beliefs and values. Furthermore, if a school counselor encounters a situation regarding an ethical dilemma the *ASCA* Ethical Standards should be applicable measure. School counselors are to remain respectful of students and families' traditional norms. As a school counselor I must be mindful not to impose any biases toward my student(s) and abstain from any of my beliefs systems which I live by personally. I will be ever mindful of the value of a student(s) right to confidentiality and the parental rights regarding counseling minors. Limitations to confidentiality include if a student self-reports self-harm or that of others and disclosure of abuse of someone from a vulnerable population such as the elderly and or person(s) with a disability. A breach of counseling confidentiality could occur by

legal request by the court. Regarding breach of confidentiality the counselor should inform the student prior and incorporate them in the process when applicable to help reduce the chance of trust lost in the counselor/client relationship.

My personal theoretical orientation collaborates with my Christian practicing norms as a believer in the Gospel of Jesus Christ Savior
 and Lord. Jesus asked us to love one another as He has first loved us. Jesus is the one true Counselor; I am but a servant who wishes to use the gifts and talents that he has given me to help my neighbor. Attempt to be non-judgmental of all who are in need and who He has given me to counsel. To show Mercy and teach forgiveness as to be forgiven. As a school counselor I will strive to instill hope in my students and families that may be in crisis. Guide all students under my care to share what Jesus has promised, “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the Lord, “Plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” Jeremiah 29:11. In today’s environment things can appear to be very ominous its suppose to happen according to Revelation but fear not remember God is on the throne and is in complete control! He inspired the Bible to prepare us not to scare us. Those who believe in Word of God and share it with others are doing His work. I know that the school environment has boundaries regarding sharing the Word of God but, I have much success opening a discussion asking the student what or if they participate in a religious or spiritual practice? This opens the welcoming door to the topic regarding the students’ beliefs if any. I just wait for the reply and then let them know that if at any time I welcome discussion regarding their personal religious and or spiritual interest regardless of type of faith.

Conclusion

As a current school counselor-in-training I have had the opportunity to gain knowledge regarding the many theoretical approaches available to utilize within the role of school counselor. Regarding my theoretical orientation that best resonates with me both personally and professionally is the application of SFBT. Solution-Focused Brief Therapy targets the student's current issues and goals rather than staying stuck in past experiences. This can be a heavy load of baggage for students to carry and harmful over time. SFBT focus is to motivate the student to keep moving forward toward change by recognizing the current issues that are enabling them to reach their desired goals. Additionally, SFBT is compatible with my religious practices regarding my values, morals, and beliefs in Christianity.

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