

CC-11 (Counselling Psychology) Unit 1; SEM III

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Definition of Counselling

Counselling is a learning-oriented process, which occurs usually in an interactive relationship, with the aim of helping a person learn more about the self, and to use such understanding to enable the person to become an effective member of society.

In 1945, the educational dictionary makers, Good, defined counselling as the “ individualized and personalized assistance with personal, educational, vocational problems, in which all pertinent facts are studied and analyzed, and a solution is sought, often with the assistance of specialists, school and community resources, and personal interviews in which the counselee is taught to make his own decision” (1945)

Wrenn (1951) “Counselling is a dynamic and purposeful relationship between two people in which procedures varies with the nature of the student’s need, but in which there is always mutual participation by the counselor and the student with the focus upon self- clarification and self-determination by the students.

Pepinsky & Pepinsky (1954) Counselling is a process involving an interaction b/w a counselor and a client in a private setting, with the purpose

of helping “the client change his behavior so that he may obtain a satisfactory resolution of his needs”.

Pepinsky and Pepinsky (1954) defined the relationship “as a hypothetical construct to designate the inferred character of the observable interaction between the two individuals”.

English and English (1958) Counselling is “a relationship in which one person endeavors to help another to understand and solve his adjustment problems. The area of adjustment is often indicated: educational counselling, vocational counselling, social counselling, etc.”- Counselling is a two way process.

Rogers (1961) defines the helping relationship as one “in which at least one of the parties has the intent of promoting the growth, the development, maturity, improved functioning, and improved coping with life of the other”.

Shertzer and Stone (1971) have described the helping relationship as “the endeavor, by interaction with another person to contribute in a facilitating positive way to his improvement”.

Good (1973) - Counselling is “a relationship in which one person or more persons with a problem or persons attempting to help them reach their goals.

The British Association for Counselling (BAC), now the BACP, may have been the first professional association to adopt a definition of professional counselling.

In 1986 it published the following definition: Counselling is the skilled and principled use of relationship to facilitate self- knowledge, emotional acceptance and growth and the optimal development of personal resources. The overall aim is to provide an opportunity to work towards living more satisfyingly and resourcefully. Counselling relationships will vary according to need but may be concerned with developmental issues, addressing and resolving specific problems, making decisions, coping with crisis, developing personal insights and knowledge, working through feelings of inner conflict or improving relationships with others. The counsellor’s role

is to facilitate the clients work in ways that respect the client's values, personal resources and capacity for self-determination.

In 1993, Feltharn and Dryden included the following definition of counseling in their specialized Dictionary of Counselling:

Counselling is a principled relationship characterized by the application of one or more psychological theories and a recognized set of communication skills, modified by experience, intuition and other interpersonal factors, to clients' intimate concerns, problems or aspirations. Its predominant ethos is one of facilitation rather than of advice-giving or coercion. It may be of very brief or long duration, take place in an organizational or private practice setting and may or may not overlap with practical, medical and other matters of personal welfare. It is both a distinctive activity undertaken by people agreeing to occupy the roles of counselor and client and it is an emergent profession.... It is a service sought by people in distress or in some degree of confusion who wish to discuss and resolve these in a relationship which is more disciplined and confidential than friendship, and perhaps less stigmatizing than helping relationships offered in traditional medical or psychiatric settings.

Feitham, C. and Dryden, W. (1993) Dictionary of Counselling. London, Whurr

In 1997 the Governing Council of the American Counselling Association (ACA) accepted the following definition of professional counselling:

"Counseling is the application of mental health, psychological or human development principles, through cognitive, affective, behavioral or systemic interventions, strategies that address wellness, personal growth, or career development, as well as pathology." The definition also includes these additional attributes:

- Counseling deals with wellness, personal growth, career, and pathological concerns. In other words, counselors work in areas that involve relationships (Casey, 1996). These areas include intra- and interpersonal concerns related to finding meaning and adjustment in such settings as schools, families, and careers.

- Counseling is conducted with persons who are considered to be functioning well and those who are having more serious problems. Counseling meets the needs of a wide spectrum of people. Clients seen by counselors have developmental or situational concerns that require help in regard to adjustment or remediation. Their problems often require short-term intervention, but occasionally treatment may be extended to encompass disorders included in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (1994) of the American Psychiatric Association.

- Counseling is theory based. Counselors draw from a number of theoretical approaches, including those that are cognitive, affective, behavioral, and systemic. These theories may be applied to individuals, groups, and families.

- Counseling is a process that maybe developmental or intervening. Counselors focus on their clients' goals. Thus, counseling involves both choice and change. In some cases, "counseling is a rehearsal for action" (Casey, 1996)