CONTEXTS OF HELPING: A VERY BRIEF HISTORY

WHAT HELPING IS ABOUT

Why People Seek Help: Problem Situations and Unused Opportunities

Problem situations

Missed opportunities and unused potential

The Two Principal Goals of Helping

The importance of results

Developing a working model of maturity or full human functioning

CHALLENGES FOR THE HELPING PROFESSIONS

Philosophical challenges

The science challenge

The evidence-based practice challenge

The economics and politics challenge

The “Does helping help?” challenge

The common factors challenge

The paraprofessional helper/graduate education challenge

The positive psychology challenge

The overextension challenge: Is helping for everyone?

THE PROFESSIONAL CURRICULUM

Applied development psychology

The principles of cognitive therapy

The principles of human behaviour

Applied personality psychology

Abnormal psychology

Applied social psychology

Diversity in all its forms

Understanding specific populations

The helping professions

Personal and professional development

Religion and spirituality

Professional ethics

Helping and the law

Professionalism and multidisciplinary teamwork

MOVING FROM SMART TO WISE: MANAGING THE SHADOW SIDE OF HELPING

The Downside: The Messiness of Helping

The Upside: Common Sense and Wisdom in the Helping Professions

TEACHING TIPS

Lecture Suggestions

Power Point Slides

A resource available to instructors provides colourful and dynamic power point slides that follow the outline of the chapter and facilitate lectures that present chapter content.

Roadmap to the Professions

Students are often unaware of the possible routes to becoming a professional helper. Present the paths for becoming a psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, minister, counsellor, etc.. Most introductory students don’t know the differences in training, licensure, diagnostic techniques, treatment approaches, types of client problems, and employment possibilities in these fields. Special attention can be paid to the diverse helping roles and the differences in training. Students appreciate this information as well as opportunities to ask questions about the differences and similarities.

Client Populations Served by Helpers

This is an opportunity to present information about the great diversity in types of problems in living that are seen in helping sessions. Students are usually aware of some subsets of these client populations, but benefit greatly from understanding the great range of types of problems, intensities of problems, and difficulty levels helpers as a group may face. This lecture also provides an opportunity to present the idea that different helpers may find that some are better at working with certain kinds of problems than others. You can present some ideas about personality differences among helpers and initiate some thinking about possibilities for burnout.

Positive Psychology

This is an emerging area of psychology that resonates very well with the problem-management and opportunity development approach to helping. Students typically do not receive much of an introduction to these ideas in their psychology courses, so it makes good sense to present the basic concepts in some detail and help students get the idea that these are legitimate ideas. Examples of ways to integrate these concepts into the helping scenarios aid students in gaining some concrete ideas about how opportunity development may occur even as a result of difficult problems.

Class Discussion Topics and Activities

Student Exercises

In addition to the exercises in the Workbook that accompanies this text, you may find the following in-class activities to be of value. The workbook exercises help students personalize some of the significant learning in the chapter and give them the opportunity to practice some of the skills discussed in the text. This helps students understand the basic concepts of the text better and helps stimulate greater empathy with clients. In addition, students often find these exercises to be personally beneficial in stimulating self-insight and personal planning.

Helping Situations

Have students generate as many situations as they can think of in which professionals work to help people. List all that are mentioned on the blackboard. Have students discuss the differences in help that is needed, the important dimensions that distinguish these situations, which problems might require referral, how the shadow side of helping might effect the helper, the client. Select a few very different situations and ask students how they would apply the model discussed in the text to each of them. Or alternatively, divide students into groups of eight to ten and have each group select one type of problem and apply the model. Reconvene the groups and have each one report the outcomes of its discussion.

Effectiveness of Helping

Ask students to discuss their perceptions of whether or not they think helping is effective, for which type of problems, and how one would determine whether helping does lead to constructive change.

Why Are You Here: To Help or Be Helped?

Quite often students enrol in a counselling course to look for help with their own life issues. It is often helpful to have an icebreaker activity to determine why students are in the class. The activity is simple and can take as little as fifteen minutes or as much as a full hour. Have each student take a piece of paper and spend five minutes listing all of the reasons he or she is taking the course. Ask your students to be as creative as possible and to list as many reasons as they can think of in the five minutes. Next, have the students go through their lists and identify which of their reasons are professional/career related and which are related to personal issues. Have the students place a "C" next to all professional/career related items and a "P" next to all personal issues.

Have the students pair off or work in triads to share their reasons for wanting to take the course. You may opt to have the student groups report out to the entire class and you or a student volunteer can record reasons for being in the class on the board. It will be quite revealing to find out how many students are here for predominately professional/career reasons versus how many are here for personal issues. You may also want to collect the student responses and take them back to your office for a quick perusal to see why students are taking your class. You may opt to start your next class period by ensuring students know the direction you plan to take the course and which of their professional/career and personal issues will not be addressed in the class. Activity #2 that follows is a nice continuation of this activity.

Setting Limits on Self-Disclosure & Confidentiality

You may find it helpful to have an activity of setting limits on self-disclosure. It is not unusual for students in a counselling course who have had horrific experiences in their lives to want to share these experiences with the class (e.g., incest, rape, drug addiction, non-sexual physical abuse, divorce, etc.). You may want to set some limits on self-disclosure early in the term.

It may be helpful to have the class agree to the types of self-disclosure and the amount of disclosure they are willing to accept as a class. It is effective to have the class form groups of three or four students and set some rules for self-disclosure. Have the groups work for fifteen to twenty minutes on setting limits on self-disclosure and then have groups record their responses on the board. Next lead a class discussion on setting limits. Of course, it is important that your own limits be included in the discussion and that based on the class discussion of limits you make some final determinations as to what is and what is not appropriate for class discussion. As well, you may wish to discuss rules on confidentiality of any disclosures made in the class.

You may wish to close this activity by having fliers from Counselling Services available and writing the telephone number of Counselling Services on the board. Those students with personal issues that go beyond the limits of the self-disclosure established by the class may seek help with their issues from Counselling Services or from other professionals.

What Is A Skilled Helper? (A Pre-Test/Post-Test) Exercise

This is a useful activity to use as a pre-test of student knowledge of: What is a Skilled Helper? You may decide to use this activity at the beginning of the term (pre-test) and then as a closing activity (post-test) at the end of the term. Keep the results of the pre-test activity and then share both the pre-test and post-test results with the students during the closing activity.

You may want to use poster paper and coloured marking pens to enhance the visual aspect of the activity. For both the initial and closing activities, have students form groups of three or four, provide each group with a sheet of poster paper (newsprint quality is inexpensive and works just fine) and several coloured markers. Ask them to write "Skilled Helper" in the center of the poster paper and then in creative and artistic ways branch off from the center and list as many qualities they can think of when it comes to being a "Skilled Helper".

Have each group post their sheet of poster paper and have a group spokesperson report to the class the essence of the group's work. This provides you and the class with a baseline understanding of what the class perceives a "Skilled Helper" to be. Make sure you collect the poster sheets and keep them available for the closing activity at the end of the term.

Repeat the activity as described above as a closing exercise and then pull out the initial activity and have the students compare their initial perceptions of a "Skilled Helper" to their current perceptions of a "Skilled Helper". This should provide both the instructor and the students with a sense of how much has been learned over the term.(Note: Inviting students to be artistic and creative with their posters creates a very rich and colourful closing activity.)

RECOMMENDED READINGS

There are several excellent books on positive psychology recommended on the Positive Psychology Center website: www.positivepsychology.org.

Aspinwall, L. G. & Staudinger, U. M. (Eds.) (2004). A psychology of human strengths. Washington, D. C.: American Psychological Association.

Bond, T. (2004) An introduction to the Ethical guidelines for counselling and psychotherapy. Counselling & Psychotherapy Research, 4 (2), 4-9.

Church, E., Pettifor, J. & Malone, J. (2006) Evolving Canadian guidelines for therapy and counselling with women. Feminism and Psychology, 16 (3), 259-271.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1990). Flow: The psychology of optimal experience. New York: Harper & Row.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1993). The evolving self: Psychology for the third millennium. New York: HarperCollins.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. (1997). Finding flow: The psychology of engagement with everyday life. New York: HarperCollins.

Government of Canada (2006) The human face of mental health and mental illness in Canada, Ottawa: Minister of Public Works and Government Services Canada.

Gupta, M (2003) A critical appraisal of evidence-based medicine: some ethical considerations. Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice, 9(2), 111-121.

Gupta, M. (2004) Evidence-based medicine: ethically obligatory or ethically suspect? Evidence-based Mental Health, 7, 96-97.

Hanson, S. L., Kerkhoff, T. R., and Bush, S. S. (2005). Health care ethics for psychologists: A casebook. Washington, D. C.: American Psychological Association.

Keyes, C. L. M. & Haidt, J. (Eds.). (2003). Flourishing: Positive psychology and the life well-lived. Washington, D. C.: American Psychological Association

Kisely, S. (2005) Mental health: the Achilles heel of evidence-based policy. Clinician in Management, 13, 23-7.

Lalande, V.M. (2004) Counselling psychology: A Canadian perspective. Counselling Psychology Quarterly, 17 (3), 273-286.

Linley, A., & Joseph, S. (Eds.). (2004.) Positive psychology in practice. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Murray, C. (2003). Human accomplishment: The pursuit of excellence in the arts and sciences, 800 B.C. to 1950. New York: HarperCollins.

Paris, J. (2000) Canadian psychiatry across 5 decades: From clinical inference to evidence-based practice. Canadian Journal of Psychiatry, 45, 34-39.

Selgelid, M.J. (2005) Universal norms and conflicting values. Developing World Bioethics, 5 (3), 267-273.

Seligman, M. E. P. (2002). Authentic happiness: Using the new positive psychology to realize your potential for lasting fulfillment. New York: Free Press.

Seligman, M. E. P., & Csikszentmihalyi, M. (Eds.). (2000). Positive psychology [Special Issue] American Psychologist, 55, (1).

Snyder, C. R., & Taylor, J. D. (2000). Hope as a common factor across psychotherapy approaches: A lesson from the dodo’s verdict. Snyder, C.R. (Ed.); et al. (2000) Handbook of hope: Theory, measures, and applications. (pp. 89 - 108). San Diego, Ca, US: Academic Press, Inc.

VIDEOS

Basic Interviewing Skills (1991, 51 min., Insight Media )

What to do and what not to do when working with clients is presented.

C.A.G.E. the Rage (2007, 23 minutes, Films for the Humanities and Sciences, www.films.com)

Calm down, Assess the situation, Gauge alternatives, and Empower yourself by choosing how to act. Students will see how to identify anger in themselves and others, understand why mismanaged anger is so destructive, discover how anger gets repressed and the illnesses that may result, and learn to release anger and express emotions in a positive way. Includes scenarios in which students model first unhealthy and then healthy behaviours, and candid interviews with experts and teens. An instructor’s guide is available online.

Coping with Stress (1998,30 min., Films for the Humanities & Sciences)

Continually high levels of stress have been linked to all of the leading causes of death in America, including heart disease, cancer, and lung ailments. This program analyzes the role of stress in day-to-day life and in overall physical and mental health. Sources of stress are identified, and techniques for managing stress are suggested. Information on how to improve personal communication—a powerful safety valve—is also provided.

Positive Psychology (two films):

 Introducing Positive Psychology: Signature Strengths, Flow, and Aging Well

 Introducing Positive Psychology: Personal Well-Being, Social Support, Health, and

Aging Well

 For information about these films, contact: jackie\_harrison@montanapbs.org or

 chris\_seifert@montanapbs.org

Rage to Revenge: The Science of Violence (2000, 53 min., Films For The Humanities And Sciences)

From road rage to homicidal rampage, what goes on in the human body when a person becomes angry? Experts Brad Bushman, Paul Ekman, and Stafford Lightman assert that the cause of human aggression lies in the physiology of violent emotions. Case histories to demonstrate the self-damaging impact of hate and the positive power of forgiveness support their conviction that a quantifiable mind/body connection exists. In addition, evidence is provided which indicates that venting—long believed to relieve anger—can actually reinforce aggressive behaviour.

WEBSITES

Codes of Ethics – see listing in this manual for Chapter 3

Counselling:

http://www.wadsworth.com/counseling\_d/special\_features/www\_links/sw\_links\_3.html#

Counselling and mental health professional associations:

American Association for Advancement of Behavior Therapy http://www.aabt.org

American Association of Marriage and Family Therapy http://www.aamft.org/

Association for Assessment in Counseling http://aac.ncat.edu/

Associations of Counselling Professionals http://www.ccacc.ca/e\_Associations.html

Association for Death Education and Counseling http://www.adec.org/

Association for Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Issues in Counseling

 http://www.aglbic.org/

Association for Humanistic Psychology http://www.ahpweb.org/

Association for Multicultural Counseling and Development http://www.bgsu.edu/colleges/edhd/programs/AMCD/

Association for Specialists in Group Work http://www.asgw.org/

Association for Transpersonal Psychology http://www.atpweb.org/

Canada Career Consortium http://www.careerccc.org/

Canadian Addiction Counsellors Certification Federation http://www.caccf.ca/

Canadian Alliance of Life Skills Coaches and Associations http://www.calsca.com/

Canadian Alliance on Mental Health and Mental Illness http://www.camInsight Mediah.ca/

Canadian Art Therapy Association http://www.catainfo.ca/

Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers http://www.cacee.com/

Canadian Association for Child and Play Therapy http://www.cacpt.com/

Canadian Association for Music Therapy http://www.musictherapy.ca/

Canadian Association of Neuro-Linguistic Programming http://www.canlp.ca/

Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education http://www.cappe.org/index.html

Canadian Association of Psychosocial Oncology http://capo.ca/eng/index.asp

Canadian Association of Rehabilitation Professionals http://www.carpnational.org/

Canadian Association for School Health http://www.safehealthyschools.org/

Canadian Association of School Psychologists http://www.cpa.ca/CASP/

Canadian Association of Social Workers www.casw-acts.ca/

Canadian Association for Suicide Prevention http://www.suicideprevention.ca/

Canadian Career Information Association http://www.ccia-acadop.ca/

Canadian Consortium for Collaborative Mental Health Care http://www.shared-care.ca/

Canadian Council of Professional Psychology Programs http://www.ccppp.ca/

Canadian Counselling Association http://www.ccacc.ca

Canadian Employee Assistance Program Association http://www.ceapa.ca/

Canadian Federation of Clinical Hypnosis http://www.clinicalhypnosis.ca/

Canadian Group Psychotherapy Association http://www.cgpa.ca/

Canadian Home Care Association http://www.cdnhomecare.ca/

Canadian Horticultural Therapy Association http://www.chta.ca/

Canadian Mental Health Association http://www.cmha.ca/bins/index.asp

Canadian Mental Health Commission http://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/

Canadian Nurses Association http://www.cna-nurses.ca/cna/

Canadian Problem Gambling Certification Board http://www.cpgcb.ca/

Canadian Professional Counsellors Association http://www.cpca-rpc.ca/

Canadian Philosophical Association http://www.acpcpa.ca/

Canadian Psychological Association http://www.cpa.ca/

Canadian Psychoanalytic Society http://www.psychoanalysis.ca/main.asp?P=214U1CCPSU1

Canadian Psychiatric Association http://ww1.cpa-apc.org:8080/

Canadian Society for Brain, Behaviour and Cognitive Science http://www.csbbcs.org/

Canadian Society for Philosophical Practice http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Forum/5914/pc-canad2.html

Canadian Society for Training and Development http://www.cstd.ca/

Canadian Traumatic Stress Network http://www.ctsn-rcst.ca/

Canadian University and College Counselling Association http://www.cacuss.ca/en/13-cucca/index.lasso

Council of Canadian Child and Youth Care Associations http://www.cyccanada.ca/

Family Mediation Canada http://www.fmc.ca/

Fédération nationale des conseillères et conseillers scolaires francophones http://www.fncsf.ca/

General Practice Psychotherapy Association http://www.gppaonline.ca/wb/

International Association for Marriage and Family Therapists http://www.iamfc.org/

Mental Health Works http://www.mentalhealthworks.ca/

National Child Traumatic Stress Network http://www.nctsnet.org/nccts/nav.do?pid=hom\_main

National Network for Mental Health http://www.nnmh.ca/

National Network for Aboriginal Mental Health Research http://www.mcgill.ca/namhr/

Ontario School Counsellors Association http://www.osca.ca/onwinLinks/index.cfm?fuseaction=Links&Category=41&PageID=1093&PageCategory=92

Professional Board of Hypnotherapy http://www.hypnosiscanada.com/

Psychosocial Rehabilitation Canada http://www.psrrpscanada.ca/

Registry of Marriage & Family Therapists in Canada follow the link on www.aamft.org

Society for the Exploration of Psychotherapy Integration http://www.cyberpsych.org/sepi/The International Society for Mental Health Online http://www.ismho.org/ Western Canada Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy Association http://www.cyberpsych.org/sepi/

 On-line Positive Psychology Exercises developed by Dr. Martin Seligman:

www.reflectivehappiness.com

From the website: Reflective Happiness provides you with the knowledge, tools, and skills needed to master the three components of happiness: 1) the Pleasant Life ; 2) the Engaged Life ; 3) the Meaningful Life . Rigorous scientific testing demonstrates that these three components of happiness can reliably be increased. Based on this research, Reflective Happiness, together with world-renowned psychologist, Dr. Martin Seligman, has created the Reflective Happiness Plan to accurately measure, improve and sustain your emotional well-being for a more fulfilling and satisfying life.

The Institute for the Study of Therapeutic Change Homepage: the latest research on "what works" in therapy is translated into principles for clinical practice on this website:

www.talkingcure.com

The Positive Psychology Center:a great source of information and resources: www.positivepsychology.org

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the role of problem situations in people’s lives. What is the role of helping professionals in working with people who are experiencing difficult problems? Describe how this analysis can help us understand the case of Martha.

2. Discuss the primary and secondary goals of the helping process.

3. Does helping help people? If yes, describe the ways in which helping helps. If not, describe the data and arguments that take the position that helping doesn’t work.

4. Discuss the importance of results in the helping process including the factors that produce effective results.

5. What is the shadow side of counselling, and how might it effect the helping process?

6. What are the characteristics of a helper’s wisdom?