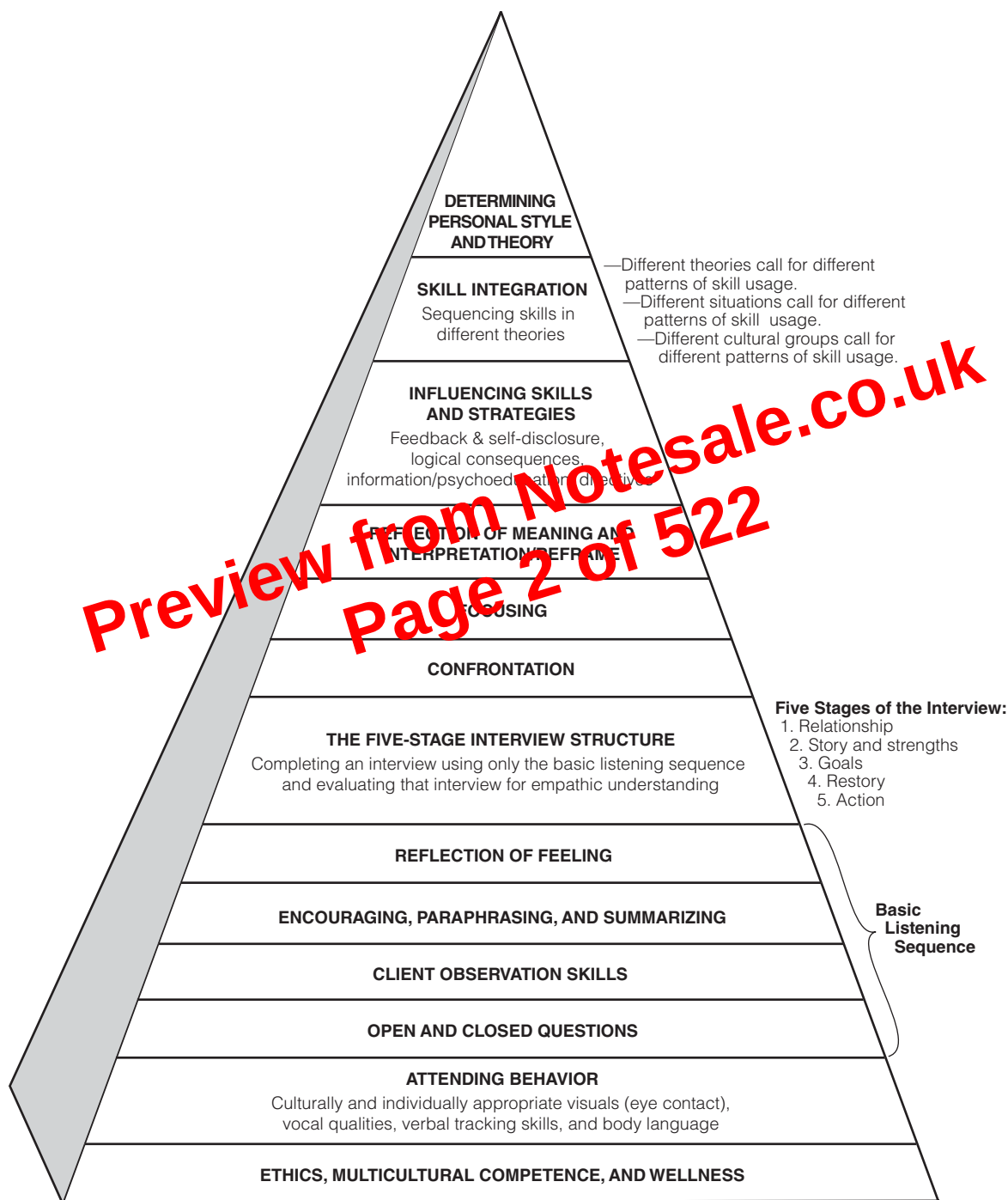


7TH EDITION

Intentional Interviewing & Counseling

Facilitating Client Development in a Multicultural Society

ALLEN E. IVEY | MARY BRADFORD IVEY | CARLOS P. ZALAQUETT



The microskills hierarchy: A pyramid for building cultural intentionality

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ABOUT THE AUTHORS



Allen E. Ivey is Distinguished University Professor (Emeritus), University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and Professor of Counseling at the University of South Florida, Tampa (courtesy appointment). He is president of Microtraining Associates, an educational publishing firm. Allen is a Diplomate in Counseling Psychology and was honored as a “Multicultural Elder” at the National Multicultural Conference and Summit. Allen is author or coauthor of more than 40 books and 200 articles and chapters, translated into 20 languages. He is the originator of the microskills approach, which is fundamental to this book.

Mary Bradford Ivey is Vice President of Microtraining Associates and Courtesy Professor of Counseling, University of South Florida, Tampa. A former school counselor, she has served as visiting professor at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst; University of Hawai‘i; and Flinders University, South Australia. Mary is the author or coauthor of 12 books, translated into multiple languages. She is a Nationally Certified Counselor (NCC) and a licensed mental health counselor (LMHC), and she has held a certificate in school counseling. She is also known for her work in promoting and explaining development counseling in the United States and internationally. Her elementary counseling program was named one of the ten best in the nation. She is one of the first 15 honored Fellows of the American Counseling Association.



Carlos P. Zalaquett is Associate Professor and Coordinator of Mental Health Counseling in the Department of Psychological and Social Foundations at the University of South Florida. He is also the Director of the USF Successful Latina/o Student Recognition Awards Program and Executive Secretary for the United States and Canada of the Society of Interamerican Psychology. Carlos is the author or author of more than 50 scholarly publications and 4 books, including the Spanish version of *Basic Attending Skills*. He has received many awards, including the USF’s Latinos Association’s Faculty of the Year and Tampa’s Hispanic Heritage’s Man of Education Award. He is an internationally recognized expert on mental health, diversity, and education and has conducted workshops and lectures in seven countries.

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We have heard from several instructors that they would prefer a shorter version of this text, to better align with the needs of their courses. Many instructors teach the skills course at an undergraduate or early graduate level. Others are looking for an abbreviated text for use in practicum or field experience courses, where students may have limited knowledge of what actually makes the interview work. For these instructors, we have created a 300-page essentials version of this text, entitled *Essentials of Intentional Interviewing*.

Together, the comprehensive and essentials versions of this text—*Intentional Interviewing and Counseling* and *Essentials of Intentional Interviewing*—provide the flexibility to meet your teaching needs in skills training. Because they are backed by over 450 databased, research-based studies, both books have also been used with excellent results in multicultural courses and in field experience, as either the main text or a supplemental text.

FEATURES NEW TO THE SEVENTH EDITION

The 21st century brings with it many new challenges—the changing ethnic and racial demographics of society, an up-and-down economy in which many individuals suffer, technological innovations, and continuing wars, terrorism, and disasters. These and other issues make counseling ever more important and prominent in our society. The seventh edition of *Intentional Interviewing and Counseling* continues the tradition of the past but also seeks to prepare students for an unpredictable future. Former users of this book will find that the basics are the same, but we have instituted several changes that will enrich the concepts for all levels of students.

Further streamlining of a text that is research and training based. *Intentional Interviewing and Counseling* is the most thoroughly researched and classroom-tested counseling skills text available. In this latest edition, every concept and sentence has been reviewed to ensure clarity and relevance. This streamlining makes the text easier to read while ensuring that specific information is provided. Also, updated research findings are highlighted in the text.

A new “tone” for our scientific base. Throughout this edition, you will note a stronger emphasis on relationship and the working alliance. This emphasis has always been part of the listening skills, but in this edition we have given this central area much more attention. You will also find increased emphasis on the words *here and now* and *immediacy*. Counseling and neuroscience research reveals the importance of the here and now for successful and healthy living. We have added quotations to each chapter that emphasize the uniqueness and importance of thinking about each skill more broadly. “Love is listening,” the quotation by Paul Tillich on our dedication page, captures the essence of the hope and goal of this revision.

Relationship—story and strengths—goals—restory—action.¹ This is a new formulation of the popular five-stage interview structure. This language change integrates these concepts and helps students understand and utilize microskills more effectively. The model also makes it easier for students to generalize the five stages to multiple theories and practices in human relations, social work, counseling, and psychotherapy. Nonetheless, the concepts of the five-stage model are still retained within this new, more understandable, language.

¹ The terminology “relationship—story and strengths—goals—restory—action” is copyrighted © 2009 by Allen E. Ivey and is released to Cengage Learning for this seventh edition of *Intentional Interviewing and Counseling* for use throughout.

the concept of the *creative New* means that when we help empower clients to solve problems, resolve issues, and restore their lives, something *New* has been created. This concept provides more depth to the Client Change Scale and also enables us to use creativity research and practice as part of the skills course.

The Client Change Scale (CCS) represents a change of language and expansion of the Confrontation Impact Scale (CIS), so that students and professionals are aware that the measurement of change flows across all interviewing and counseling. The CCS can be used to assess client change both in the here and now of the interview and over several sessions.

TEACHING TOOLS

An expanded array of teaching aids supplement *Intentional Interviewing and Counseling*, which provide you and your students with many alternatives for instruction.

Book Companion Web site. The Companion Web site, accessed from www.cengage.com/counseling/ivey, includes chapter-by-chapter study and review resources for students, such as chapter outlines, flashcards, weblinks, quizzes, and essay questions. In addition, instructors can access and download password-protected resources such as the Instructor Resource Guide and two PowerPoint® presentations.

Optional CD-ROM package. The popular and effective CD-ROM has been updated to include a variety of learning activities and more than 30 interactive exercises. Each CD-ROM chapter includes most or all of the following: flashcards, interactive exercises, case study, video activity, weblink critique, quiz, Portfolio of Competence, client feedback form, and specific skills forms. Each feature is intended to improve students' learning and practice of the skills. Flashcards encourage rehearsal of key chapter concepts, short movie vignettes bring to life specific issues regarding the interview, and quizzes allow students to test their level of achievement. The CD-ROM helps students work through case studies, interactive exercises, and video activities, and puts all feedback forms, key training documents, and handouts right at the student's and instructor's fingertips. These updated forms are central for self-assessment and for skill practice and feedback. Students can access the Portfolio of Competence and use the reflections on personal style and the self-evaluation of chapter competencies checklist to develop a personalized portfolio that will prove invaluable in their journey to become effective helpers. Furthermore, students can e-mail their assignments directly from the CD-ROM to their instructors if requested. The completion of these assignments can be noted in course management platforms such as Blackboard.

We have endeavored to provide choices for our readers by offering the book alone (ISBN 0-495-59974-3) or the book and CD-ROM prepack (ISBN 0-495-60123-3). We are pleased that our publisher is able to offer the CD-ROM for a nominal additional fee, as we believe that the interactivity and learning potential available through this technology are invaluable.

CengageNOW (Printed Access Card ISBN 0-495-83258-8). This interactive Web site brings students into the virtual world of education. The comprehensive online learning environment offers the following important features:

▲ **eBook.** The complete textbook is available online in CengageNOW.

- ▲ *A flexible menu.* Instructors can assign online chapter readings and assignments according to their own teaching preferences. Students can move freely between chapters.
- ▲ *Pretests and posttests of textbook material for student self-evaluation.* Incorrect answers immediately indicate to students the specific pages in the text where they can find why their answer needs further consideration and should be changed.
- ▲ *Study plan.* CengageNOW offers students a personalized plan of study based on their responses to pretests. Students can use this plan to focus on specific content areas.
- ▲ *Interactive case studies.* CengageNOW offers more than 30 interactive case studies. When presented with transcripts of interviews, students respond to client statements by selecting specific interview responses. They receive immediate feedback on their choices. Professionals from around the world also present real cases. Students are asked to think through their case management plans and then can compare those plans with what the experts actually did.
- ▲ *Flashcards* are used to reinforce student learning and understanding.
- ▲ *Video clips* are used in most electronic chapters to illustrate counseling skills. Follow-up questions allow students to further reflect on their observations.
- ▲ *Weblinks.* Links to Web sites related to chapter content are used throughout this virtual learning environment. Follow-up questions allow students to further reflect on the content of these Web sites.
- ▲ *Important forms and exercises* can be downloaded. By the end of the term, each student will have completed a Portfolio of Competence that can be presented for field site placements and even for professional positions.

Instructor Resource Guide (ISBN 0-495-60332-5). Available online to adopters, the Instructor Resource Guide (IRG) includes chapter goals and objectives, suggested class procedures, additional discussion of end-of-chapter exercises, and microskills practice exercises. The IRG also includes in the appendices a chapter on developmental counseling and therapy (DCT) that many professors find useful in beginning skills courses. Students also profit from examining their theoretical/practical preferences via the inventory titled “What Is Your Preferred Style?” This informal instrument provides a framework for looking at how each student relates to clients. The IRG is available for download at the password-protected Companion Web site (www.cengage.com/counseling/ivey). To obtain the password, contact your Cengage Learning representative or call 1-800-354-9706.

eBank Test Bank and ExamView® (Windows/Macintosh, ISBN 0-495-60216-7). An electronic test bank is available upon request from your Cengage Learning representative. The Test Bank is also available in the flexible and user-friendly ExamView software, which allows instructors to create and edit tests easily and effectively.

Two sets of PowerPoint® slides. These are available on the book’s companion Web site at www.cengage.com/counseling/ivey. One set is quite detailed, covering all the concepts of each chapter. The second is abbreviated and covers the main concepts. You may download either or both sets and change and sort/reorder the slides according to your teaching preferences. You can then project them as PowerPoint presentations from your computer.

Microtraining supportive Web site. At www.emicrotraining.com, students will find interviews with leaders of the field such as Patricia Arredondo, Michael D’Andrea, Janet E. Helms,

4. *Empathy.* Empathic understanding and listening skills are intimately intertwined. Are you interested in others, can you be empathic to their concerns, can you pick up small signs of the many emotions your clients will have? Do you have an understanding of people different from yourself and can you see their perspective?
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5. *Social skills.* Relationship is central to the helping process. How effective have you been in working with others? How competent will you be in establishing rapport, trust, and confidence in the helping interview? Can you listen? Do you have the ability to empower clients through your knowledge and ideas?
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Throughout this book, and in the accompanying CD-ROM, we will provide many exercises and skill practice ideas that can serve as venues for self-exploration and a clearer definition of your own competencies. Empathy and social skills of course, are central to this book and the interviewing and counseling professions. Self-awareness, self-regulation, and motivation may be described as qualities that are vital for effective work in the helping field.

PRACTICE LEADS TO MASTERY AND COMPETENCE

All of us can get better, no matter how good we think we are. The many skills and concepts of this book will be mastered to full competence only if you work actively with them. Role-plays in class or workshops followed by audiotape or videotape practice will help you develop expertise and mastery of skills. Practice will also be vital in your development of personal self-understanding and emotional intelligence.

You can “practice” by going through a skill once and saying to yourself, “That was easy.” Or you can really practice by aiming to see if you can get specific and predictable results in the session as a result of your skills. Many students find that several practice sessions are useful with as much feedback as possible. Feedback has been called the “breakfast of champions.” For example, you can practice the skill in a situation in which a friend tells you a positive story that he or she is eager to share. More challenging practice follow-ups might include role-plays in which you work with a variety of difficult issues that you might face—clients who are less verbal, people who are hostile and aggressive, and those with complex concerns.

If you are motivated, you will find that several alternative practice sessions increase your skills, confidence, and competence. Practice will determine where you stand in terms of your abilities, skills, and expertise. Four levels of competence are identified in each chapter in this book:

- ▲ *Level 1: Identification and classification.* Elementary competence and mastery occur when you can identify and classify interviewing behavior. You can observe others’ behavior on audiotape or videotape and know what they are doing. A quiz or an examination measures your ability to understand.
- ▲ *Level 2: Basic competence.* This involves being able to perform the skills in an interview, most often a practice role-play. You may, for example, demonstrate in an audiotaped or

Relationship

No one wants to tell a story to someone who is not interested or who is not warm and welcoming. Unless you can develop rapport and trust with your client, expect little to happen. The relationship in every interview will be different and will test your social skills and understanding. Basic to this is being your own natural self and your openness to others and to differences of all types. Your attending and empathic listening skills are key to understanding and will play a part throughout all sessions.

Another term for relationship is *working alliance*, which in turn is based on what is now called the *common factors approach*. It is consistently estimated that 30% of successful counseling and therapy outcome is due to relationship or common factors consisting of caring, empathy, acceptance, affirmation, and encouragement (Hubble, Duncan, & Miller, 1999, p. 9). Your ability to listen and be with the client is the starting point for the interview.

Story and Strengths

The listening skills described in Section I are basic to learning how clients make sense of their world—the stories clients tell us about their lives, their problems, challenges, and issues. Let us help them tell their stories in their own way. Attending and observation skills are critical, while encouraging, paraphrasing, reflection of feeling, and summarization will help fill out the story. Regardless of the theory used, these listening skills are central, but different counseling systems and theories may draw out different aspects of stories that lead in varying directions.

The listening and observational skills of Chapter 3 through integrative Chapter 8 will be key in drawing out clients' difficulties, concerns, and issues and clients' strengths to solve these problems. At times, counseling and interviewing can spiral down into a depressing repetition of negative stories—and even whining and complaining. Seek out and listen for times when clients have succeeded in overcoming obstacles. Listen for and be “curious about their competencies—the heroic stories that reflect their part in surmounting obstacles, initiating action, and maintaining positive change” (Duncan, Miller, & Sparks, 2004, p. 53).

Goals

If you don't know where you are going, you may end up somewhere else. Too many interviews wander and never have a focus. Once you have heard the story, and you and the client see the need for a new and more effective story, how would you and the client like the story to develop? What is an appropriate ending? If the client does not have a goal in mind, the new story may be irrelevant. This area is considered so important in brief counseling that counselors often start the interview right here—“What do you want to happen today as a result of our conversation?”

Restory

If you understand client stories, strengths, and goals, you are prepared to help clients restory—generate new ways to talk about themselves. One important strategy for restorying is provided in Chapter 8, in which you will demonstrate your ability to conduct a full interview using only listening skills. Many times effective listening is sufficient to provide clients with the strength and power to develop their own new narratives.

Moreover, you will find that physicians and nurses, managers in business settings, peer counselors, and many others have adopted this skills training format as part of their profession and/or training. The original microskills format presented here has been translated into over 20 languages and used in many varied settings, such as by AIDS and refugee counselors in Africa and Sri Lanka; top-line managers in Sweden, Germany, and Japan; helpers working with trauma survivors from floods and hurricanes; and Aboriginal social workers in Australia and Inuits in the Canadian Arctic. The system works and is constantly changing and growing.

This first chapter frames the entire book. It will help you to study the following key points as these are the things we particularly want you to remember.

The first competency practice exercise in this chapter asks you to examine yourself and identify your strengths as a helper. But, in the middle of all this, *you* are the person who counts, and we hope that you will develop your counseling skills based on your natural expertise and social skills. Good luck!

Key points of Chapter 1 are presented below.

■ KEY POINTS

Interviewing, counseling, and psychotherapy

These are interrelated processes that sometimes overlap. Interviewing may be considered the more basic and is often associated with information gathering and providing necessary data to help clients resolve issues. Coaching operates from a strategic framework and helps plan for immediate and long-term change. Counseling focuses on normal developmental concerns, whereas psychotherapy emphasizes treatment of more deep-seated issues.

Microskills

Microskills are the single communication skill units of the interview (for example, questions, reflection of feelings). They are taught one at a time to ensure mastery of basic interviewing competencies.

Microskills hierarchy

The hierarchy organizes microskills into a systematic framework for the eventual integration of skills into the interview in a natural fashion. The microskills rest on a foundation of ethics, multicultural competence, and wellness. The attending and listening skills are followed by confrontation, focusing influencing skills, and eventual skill integration.

Microskills teaching model

Five steps are used to teach the single skills of interviewing: (1) *warm up* to the skill; (2) *view* the skill in action; (3) *read and learn* about broader uses of the skill; (4) *practice*; and (5) *generalize* learning from the interview to daily life. The model is useful to teach social skills to clients in the interview.

Relationship—story and strengths—goals—restory—action

Our first task is to help clients tell their stories. To facilitate development, we need to draw out narratives of their personal assets. With a positive foundation, clients may learn to write new stories with the possibility of new actions. James Lanier reminds us that language stressing a problem or disorder may get in the way of effective interviewing and counseling.

Intentionality

Achieving intentionality is the major goal of this book and a central goal of the cultural intentionality interviewing process itself. Intentionality is acting with a sense of capability and deciding from among a range of alternative actions. The intentional individual has more than one action, thought, or behavior to choose from in responding to life situations.

(continued)

and openness about these issues facilitate working toward a balance of power in helping sessions. For example, if you are a male counseling a woman, you might say, “How does it feel, being a woman, to talk about this issue with me?” If your client or you are uncomfortable, it is wise to discuss this issue further. Referral may be necessary at times.

Dual relationships—having more than one relationship with a client—can cause problems. If the client is a classmate or friend, you are engaged in a dual relationship in your practice session. This situation may occur if you work in a small town and counsel a member of your church or school community. Dual relationships can become a complex issue in the helping profession, and you will want to examine this issue in more detail in the ethical codes.

Social Justice and Advocacy

Is the problem, concern, or challenge “in the client,” “caused by the environment,” or is some balance of the two? Counseling and psychotherapy focus on the individual, but it is also critical to consider the client’s social context. Too many interviewers, counselors, and therapists fail to consider external issues that may be the real “cause” of the client’s problem. For example, some therapists might see Kendra’s issue with the harassing boss differently. Some therapists might say, “That is often part of a job—you just have to live with it.” Other therapists might ask how she dresses and if she engages in any provocative behavior. These negative approaches are called “blaming the victim.” They potentially lead Kendra to feel guilt and think that she has been doing something “wrong.” Harassment is harassment! Our task is to support the client.

Is the interview ever completed when the session is over? The National Association of Social Workers (1999) ethical code suggests that awareness of the environment and action beyond the interview may be critical if the client is ever going to resolve problems. The social justice approach demands action from you to prevent problems by acting as an advocate for your client. When appropriate and with the client’s consent, you work to examine potential barriers and obstacles that prevent the growth and development of your client at an individual, group, or societal level.

Ethical Principle: Social workers challenge social injustice. Social workers pursue social change, particularly with and on behalf of vulnerable and oppressed individuals and groups of people. Social workers’ social change efforts are focused primarily on issues of poverty, unemployment, discrimination, and other forms of social injustice. These activities seek to promote sensitivity to and knowledge about oppression and cultural and ethnic diversity. Social workers strive to ensure access to needed information, services, and resources; equality of opportunity; and meaningful participation in decision making for all people.

As Kendra talks about the unwelcome advances her boss is making toward her at work, the issue of oppression of women has arisen and should be named as such. The social justice perspective requires that you help her understand that the problem is not her fault, and you can support her in efforts to change the working environment. At a broader level, you can work outside the interview to promote higher standards in nursing home care.

This book is about skills and strategies for human change. At the same time, we need to remember that our clients live in relationship to the world. The microskill of focusing stresses that we need to be aware of the cultural/environmental/social context of our clients (Chapter 10).

Multicultural Practice

The American Psychological Association's Multicultural Guidelines begin with this statement: "All individuals exist in social, political, historical, and economic contexts and psychologists are increasingly called upon to understand the influences of these contexts on individuals' behavior" (APA, 2003, p. 377). Multicultural counseling competencies have been developed to provide specifics for culturally sensitive helping (Roysircar, Arredondo, Fuertes, Ponterotto, & Toporek, 2003; Sue et al., 1998). This section reviews some of the most important of these practice guidelines for the beginning professional and you are urged to consult the ACA and other resources for more details and information. Box 2-4 presents a summary of the competencies. For a more complete discussion of the multicultural competencies, please visit <http://www.counseling.org/Resources>.

Expect the issue of multicultural competence to become increasingly important to your professional helping career. For example, cultural competency training is now required for medical licensure in New Jersey, while at least four other states have pending legislation with similar bills (Adams, 2005).

In this section, the words "multiculturalism" and "diversity" are defined broadly to include race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, language, spiritual orientation, age, physical ability/disability, socioeconomic status, geographical location, and other factors. The multicultural competencies talk about awareness, knowledge, and skills. They ask you to become aware that specific issues exist, to learn about them, and to develop skills that can be used with clients. Given that each client, as a cultural being, has a life experience different from everyone else's, you face a lifetime of multicultural learning.

Awareness of Your Own Assumptions, Values, and Biases

Awareness of yourself as a cultural being is vital as a beginning. Unless you have this awareness, you will have difficulty developing awareness of others. You need to understand your own cultural background and the differences that may exist between you and people from different cultures. You will be constantly learning about other cultures and thus developing new skills. An important skill is recognizing your limitations and the need in certain cases for referral.

Privilege is related to power as discussed in the preceding section. Privilege is power given to people through cultural assumptions and stereotypes. The concept of White privilege was originated by McIntosh (1998) when she pointed out that White people enjoy certain benefits simply by the color of their skin. She spoke of the "invisibility of Whiteness," commenting that White European Americans tend to be unaware of their color or the advantages that come to them because of it. Five examples of White privilege are presented below, and you can use your computer search function to access the complete list (keywords: White, privilege, McIntosh):

- ▲ If I should need to move, I can be pretty sure of renting or purchasing housing in an area that I can afford and in which I would want to live.
- ▲ I can go shopping alone most of the time, pretty well assured that I will not be followed or harassed.
- ▲ Whether I use checks, credit cards, or cash, I can count on my skin color not to work against the appearance of financial reliability.
- ▲ I can do well in a challenging situation without being called a credit to my race.

- ▲ I am never asked to speak for all the people of my racial group.
- ▲ I can choose blemish cover or bandages in flesh color and have them more or less match my skin.

McIntosh's concepts have been extended to privileges enjoyed by men, the benefits of middle-class economic status, and descriptions of many other groups who hold less power and privilege in our society. Here are five examples from a male privilege checklist (Deutsch, 2002):

- ▲ My odds of being hired for a job, when competing against female applicants, are probably skewed in my favor. The more prestigious the job, the larger the odds are skewed.
- ▲ I can be confident that my co-workers won't think I got my job because of my sex even though that might be true.
- ▲ If I am never promoted, it's not because of my sex.
- ▲ The odds of my encountering sexual harassment on the job are so low as to be negligible.
- ▲ I am not taught to fear walking alone after dark in average public spaces.

Following are five example items from the middle-class privilege list (Liu, Pickett, & Ivey, 2007):

- ▲ I can be assured that I have adequate housing for my family and myself. I have the resources to make choices regarding my medical care.
- ▲ I can buy only what I need to live, but also what I want.
- ▲ When politicians speak of the middle class, I know they are referring to me.
- ▲ If my child runs into a problem in school, I feel that my concerns as a parent will be heard.
- ▲ I have enough financial reserves that I can handle a major car problem without a large financial crisis.

Whites, males, heterosexuals, upper- and middle-class people, and others who enjoy power and privilege all have the additional privilege of not being aware of their privilege. The physically able see their capacities as “normal” with little awareness that most of them are “temporarily able” until old age or a trauma occurs. When Christians are the dominant religion, as in the United States and much of the Western world, they often are not aware of the privileges that exist for them. Similarly, when other religions are the majority in other parts of the world, they also may be unaware of their privilege and power.

The interviewer is in a power situation and thus enjoys some privileges that the client does not have; for example, counselors and therapists often can decide whether they want to work with a particular client. Clients, in turn, are often expected to work with the person they are referred to. With little knowledge, clients are in a “one down” position and can be subject to abuses of power.

You as the interviewer also face some challenges. If you are of White European descent, male, middle class, and heterosexual, and the client is female, working class, and of a different race from you, she is less likely to trust you and thus establishing rapport may be more difficult. Your task is to improve your awareness, knowledge, and skills about who you are if you are to work with clients different from you.

- C** Chronological/lifespan challenges. Children, adolescents, young adults, mature adults, and older persons all face different issues and problems. Where are you in the developmental lifespan?
- T** Trauma. It is estimated that 90% or more of the population experiences serious trauma(s) in their lives. Trauma underlies the issues faced by many of your clients. War, flood, rape, and assault are powerful examples, but divorce, loss of a parent, or being raised in an alcoholic family are more common sources of trauma. The constant repetition of racist, sexist, and heterosexist acts and comments can also be traumatic. What is your experience with life trauma?
- F** Family background. We learn culture in our families. The old model of two parents with two children is challenged by the reality of single parents, gay families, and varying family structures. How has your life experience been influenced by your family history (both your immediate family and your intergenerational history)?
- U** Unique physical characteristics. Become aware of disabilities, special challenges, and false cultural standards of beauty. Help clients think about themselves as physical beings and the importance of nutrition and exercise. How well do you understand the importance of the body in the interview, and how will you work with others different from you?
- L** Location of residence and language differences. Whether in the United States, Great Britain, Canada, or Australia, there are marked differences between the south and north, the east and west, urban and rural. Remember that a person who is bilingual is advantaged and more skilled, not disadvantaged. What languages do you know, and what is your attitude toward those who use a different language from you?

As you can see, all of us are multicultural beings (D'Andrea & Daniels, 2001), and all interviewing, counseling, and psychotherapy is multicultural. Broaden your definition of diversity beyond race and ethnicity to include the other factors in the RESPECTFUL model. All your sessions will involve intersecting and interacting identities. As you can see, becoming multiculturally competent is a lifetime endeavor that will enhance your interviewing skills.

DEVELOPING APPROPRIATE INTERVENTION STRATEGIES AND TECHNIQUES

The multicultural movement in counseling grew out of the dissatisfaction of minorities, women, gays/lesbians, people with disabilities, and other groups who felt that traditional counseling and psychotherapy were not working effectively for them. A classic study found that 50% of minority clients did not return to counseling after the first session (cited in Sue & Sue, 2008). A general theory of multicultural counseling and therapy (MCT) has been developed to address this problem (Sue, Ivey, & Pedersen, 1996). Feminist therapy is an example of a culturally specific approach to new ways of working with women.

Over time, you will want to expand your knowledge and skills in learning traditional theory and strategies as well as embracing newer methods. Counseling and therapy theory is now being adapted to show how to use existing traditional theory in a culturally respectful manner (Ivey, D'Andrea, Ivey, & Simek-Morgan, 2007). It is particularly important that you become aware of the history of cultural bias in assessment and testing instruments and the impact of discrimination on clients.

<i>RESPECTFUL Dimension</i>	<i>What are your multicultural identities on these dimensions?</i>	<i>Do you have privilege and implicit power because of your identity(ies) within this dimension?</i>
R Religion/spirituality		
E Economic/class background		
S Sexual identity		
P Personal style and education		
E Ethnic/racial identity		
C Chronological/lifespan challenges		
T Trauma experience		
F Family background		
U Unique physical characteristics		
L Location of residence and language; differences/capabilities		

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As you review the above, what are your thoughts about your multiple identities and your implicit power or lack of power?

Exercise 3: Personal Wellness Assessment

Review the Sweeney-Myers Wellness Model contextual issues on pages 50–55. What strengths and resources do you find in your context and in your own personal wellness?

Strengths and resources from your context:

<i>Local</i>	<i>Institutional</i>	<i>Global (World Events)</i>
Family	Education	Politics
Neighborhood	Religion	Culture
Community	Government	Global Events
	Business/Industry	Environment
	Media	

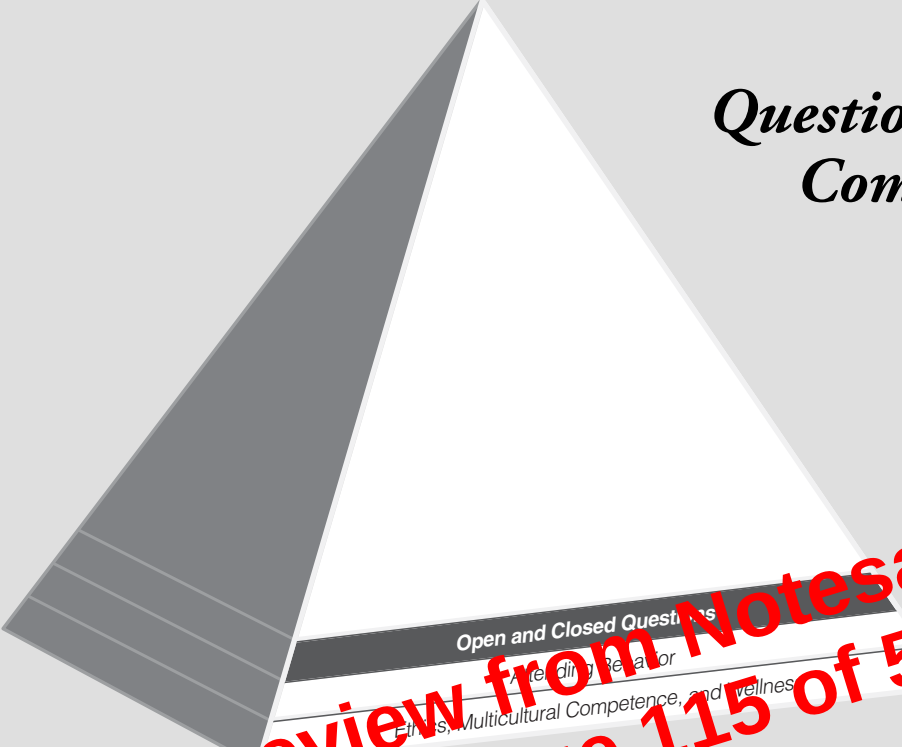
Review the individual personal strengths of pages 52–53. Then review your own strengths and resources.

<i>Essential</i>	<i>Social</i>	<i>Coping</i>	<i>Creative</i>	<i>Physical</i>
Spirituality	Friendship	Leisure	Thinking	Exercise
Gender identity	Love	Stress management	Emotions	Nutrition
Cultural identity		Self-worth	Control	
Self-care		Realistic beliefs	Work	
			Positive humor	

Positive Example

Interviewer and Client Conversation	Process Comments
1. <i>Allen:</i> Hi, Azara. Nice to see you.	Allen stands up, smiles, faces the client directly, and shakes hands.
2. <i>Azara:</i> Thank you, nice to see you too.	She sits down and smiles in return, but appears tense.
3. <i>Allen:</i> Thanks for coming in.	The counselor likes to honor the client's willingness to come to the session. It is a small attempt to equalize the power relationship that exists in counseling.
4. <i>Azara:</i> Thanks. I'm hopeful that you can help me.	Azara relaxes a little.
5. <i>Allen:</i> Azara, I've been looking at your file, and I see that you'd like to talk about a problem on the job. Is that right?	Allen has reviewed the forms she completed before entering counseling. He briefly mentions what appears to be her main concern. He maintains direct eye contact and does not refer to the file at that moment.
6. <i>Azara:</i> Yes, that's right.	Her mouth is a little tense, and she sits back.
7. <i>Allen:</i> Before we start, there are a couple of things I'd like to talk about. One of them is that anything that goes on in here is confidential, and I'm videotaping this particular interview because I do get some supervision. So is it okay to make a tape? If you feel any time you want to turn the tape off, I will turn it off—is that okay? And if it makes you uncomfortable—and some people it can—we'll turn it off. If you wish, later I can give you the tape to take home and watch. Would you sign this so I can tape?	The reason Allen mentioned his awareness of Azara's issue early is that he wants to help her become aware that he is interested and knows a little about what is troubling her. But he also knows that he needs to structure the interview and give some basic information to the client. Each agency or counseling office will have different sets of information that they give the client, but this presentation is fairly typical.
8. <i>Azara:</i> Okay.	She signs the permission form and sits back.
9. <i>Allen:</i> Another issue as we start is that everything is confidential, and it's not to be shared, except in a situation where you hurt somebody or indicate problems where you might hurt yourself or others. I think we need to share that as well. And then another thing as we start is that, hey, I'm a White male, you're from Puerto Rico, and a woman. What are your thoughts about working with me?	The rules of confidentiality need to be shared. But it is important to maintain a warm, supportive voice. The issue of multicultural difference most often needs to be explored early in the session. This can include race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, ability/disability, and other factors of cultural difference. Allen maintains direct eye contact, a warm vocal tone, and attentive body language. Azara is clearly middle-class, but some traditional Latina/o clients, particularly those who are poor, may be uncomfortable with a lot of direct eye contact.

(continued)



CHAPTER 4

Questions: Opening Communication

How you ask questions is very important in establishing a basis for effective communication. Effective questions open the door to knowledge and understanding. The art of questioning lies in knowing which questions to ask when. Address your first question to yourself: if you could press a magic button and get every piece of information you want, what would you want to know? The answer will immediately help you compose the right questions.

— Robert Heller and Tim Hindle

How can questions help you and your clients?

Chapter Goals

This chapter describes how questions can be used to enhance the interview and draw out the client's story. Two types of questions, open and closed, will be discussed. Open questions elicit more information and give the client more room to respond. Closed questions will elicit shorter responses and provide information and specifics.

The chapter also focuses on developing awareness that, like attending behavior, questions can encourage or discourage client talk. With questions, however, the interviewer generally takes the lead. The client is often talking within the interviewer's frame of reference. Questions potentially can take the client away from self-direction.

Competency Objectives

Awareness, knowledge, and skill in questioning will enable you to

- ▲ Elicit additional specifics relating to the client's world and enrich his or her story.

work. The employment counselor, the social worker conducting an assessment interview, and the high school guidance counselor helping a student work on college admissions all need to use questions. Many in the increasingly influential coaching movement believe that questions are the most important helping skill.

This chapter focuses on two key styles of questioning—open and closed questions:

Open questions are those that can't be answered in a few words. They encourage others to talk and provide you with maximum information. Typically, open questions begin with what, how, why, or could: For example, "Could you tell me what brings you here today?" You will find these helpful as they can facilitate deeper exploration of client issues.

Closed questions can be answered in a few words or sentences. They have the advantage of focusing the interview and obtaining information, but the burden of guiding the talk remains on the interviewer. Closed questions often begin with *is*, *are*, or *do*: For example, "Are you living with your family?" Used judiciously, they enable you to obtain important specifics.

Some theorists and many practitioners raise important issues around the use of questioning, however. Some experts maintain that questions are best learned *after* expertise is developed in the reflective listening skills of chapters 6 and 7. There is also the danger that some will like questions so much that they will not give enough attention to the critical listening skills. Certainly, *excessive* use takes the focus from the client and gives too much power to the interviewer. Your central task in this chapter is to find your own balance in using questions in the interview. We suggest that you be egalitarian and share power.

Key Issues Around Questions

Why do some people object to questions? Take a minute to recall and explore some of your own experiences with questions in the past. Perhaps you had a teacher or a parent who used questions in a manner that resulted in your feeling uncomfortable or even attacked. Write here one of your negative experiences with questions and the feelings and thoughts the questioning process produced in you.

My difficult personal experience with questions was as follows:

*What is your
experience?*

The thoughts and feelings this experience produced in me were these:

*What are your
feelings?*

People often respond to this exercise by describing situations in which they were put on the spot or grilled by someone. They may associate questions with anger and guilt. Many of us have had negative experiences with questions. Furthermore, questions may be used to direct and control client talk. School discipline and legal disputes typically use questions to control the person being interviewed. If your objective is to enable clients to find their own way, questions may inhibit your reaching that goal, particularly if they are used ineffectively.

Closed questions, of course, can bring out specifics as well, but they place more responsibility on the interviewer. However, if the interviewer knows specifically the desired direction of the interview, closed questions such as “Did Ricardo show his anger by striking you?” “Does Ricardo tease you often?” and “Is Ricardo on drugs?” may prove invaluable, because they may encourage clients to say out loud what before they were only hinting at. But even well-directed closed questions may take the initiative away from the client.

4. Questions Are Critical in Assessment

Physicians must diagnose their clients' physical symptoms. Managers may have to assess a problem on the production line. Vocational counselors and coaches need to assess a client's career history. Questions are the meat of effective diagnosis and assessment. George Kelly, the personality theorist, has suggested for general problem diagnosis the following set of questions, which roughly follow the who, what, when, where, how, why of newspaper reporters:

Who is the client? What is the client's personal background? Who else may be involved? What is the client's concern? What is happening? What are the specific details of the situation? When does the issue occur? When did it begin? What immediately preceded the occurrence of the issue? Where does the problem occur? In what environments and situations? With what people? How does the client react to the challenge? How does the client feel about it? Why does the problem occur? Why is the client concerned about it?

Needless to say, the who, what, when, where, how, why series of questions also provides the interviewer with a ready system for helping the client elaborate or be more specific about an issue at any time during a session. To these, again, we suggest adding the *what else* question to encourage openness.

5. The First Word of Certain Open Questions Partially Determines

What the Client Will Say Next

Often, but not always, using key-question stems results in predictable outcomes.

What questions most often lead to facts. “What happened?” “What are you going to do?”

How questions often lead to a discussion about processes or sequences or to feelings. “How could that be explained?” “How do you feel about that?”

Why questions most often lead to a discussion of reasons. “Why did you allow that to happen?” “Why do you think that is so?” Finding reasons can be helpful but also can lead into sidetracks. Remember: Many clients associate *why* with a past experience of being grilled. But *why* is also often essential in meaning, vision, and determining one's life direction. A softer approach to *why* is “I hear your dream and vision. Could you tell me *why* that dream is so important to you?”

Could, *would*, and *can* questions are considered maximally open and contain some of the advantages of closed questions in that the client is free to say “No, I don't want to talk about that.” *Could* questions reflect less control and command than others. “Could you tell me more about your situation?” “Would you give me a specific example?” “Can you tell me what you'd like to talk about today?” As in the example above, the use of *could* softens the *why* and gives the client more room to respond.

Build trust at the client's pace. A central issue with hesitant clients is trust. If the client is required to meet with you or is culturally different from you, he or she may be less willing to talk. At this time, your own natural openness and social skills are particularly important. Trust building and rapport need to come first. With some clients, trust building may take a full session or more. Extensive questioning too early can make trust building a slow process with some clients. Often it is helpful to discuss multicultural differences openly. "I'm wondering how you feel about my being (White/male/heterosexual or vice versa) as we discuss these issues."

Accept some randomness. Your less verbal clients may not give you a clear, linear story of the problem. If they lack trust or are highly emotional, it may take some time for you to get an accurate understanding. A careful balance of closed and open questions to draw out the story and get "bits and pieces" will help you put together a coherent narrative. Keep your words as simple, straightforward, and as concrete as possible. With some clients you will find that briefly disclosing your own stories is helpful.

Search for concrete specifics. Counselors and therapists talk about the abstraction ladder. If you or the client moves too high on the abstraction ladder, things won't make sense to anyone. This is especially so with less verbal or emotionally distraught clients. After some trust is generated, you might begin by making an observation such as "The teacher said you and she had an argument." Then try asking a concrete open question such as "What did your teacher say (or do)?" "What did you say (or do)?" If you focus on concrete events and avoid evaluation and opinion in a judgmental fashion, your chances for helping the client talk will be greatly expanded. Examples of concrete questions focusing on narrow specifics include the following:

- (A) What happened first? (B) What happened next? (C) What happened after it was over? (This brings out the linear sequence of the story.)
- What did the other person say? What did he or she do? What did you say or do? (This focuses on observable concrete actions.)
- What did you feel or think just before it happened? During? After? What do you think the other person felt? (This helps focus emotions.)

Note that each of the preceding questions requires a relatively short answer. These are open questions that are more focused in orientation and can be balanced with some closed questions. Do not expect your less verbal client to give you full answers to these questions. You may need to ask closed questions to fill in the details and obtain specific information. ("Did he say anything?" "Where was she?" "Is your family angry?" "Did they say 'yes' or 'no'?"")

A leading closed question is dangerous, particularly with children. In the previous examples, you can see that a long series of closed questions can bring out the story, but it may provide only the client's limited responses to your questions rather than what the client really thought or felt. Worse, the client may end up adopting your way of thinking or may simply stop coming to see you.

Questioning and other listening skills. One effective counseling method is to repeat the client's main words by paraphrasing or reflecting feeling (see Chapters 6 and 7) and then to raise the intonation of your voice at the end in a questioning tone. For example:

O = Options (Restory)

6. **What workable strategies can you apply?** “Which strengths, resources, and positive assets can we employ to reach your goal?” Rather than draw on external theories as we often do in counseling, the coach seeks to draw out from clients things that might work and show them how their own existing capacities can be used to reach their goals. The Latin term *educare* describes this process. *Educare* is the root word of education, but the real translation is to draw out answers that already exist in the person or client.
7. **How confident are you that you can reach this vision?** “How do you feel and think about yourself now as we look at this goal?” “What’s going on in your life right now?” Here, we move to the area of emotions. And we want to use the executive right brain to focus on positive emotions. Coaching is not a negatively focused approach. We can best eliminate the negative from a strength-based positive psychology and wellness approach.

W = Way Forward and Will (Action)

8. **Are you ready and committed?** “Will you do it?” “How committed are you to change and action?” “On a scale of 1 to 10, how committed are you to actually doing this?” This examines clients in the here and now and their level of motivation for actually reaching their goals.
9. **Will you do it tomorrow?** “Can we write a contract for action?” “Let’s select something small enough that you actually want to and feel confident that you will do it.” Coaching believes that major change will not happen immediately, but we want to start the process as soon as possible. If the client has a challenging goal, break it down into small, manageable steps.

There is no apology for the many questions in coaching, and perhaps it is the emphasis on client goals and strengths that makes this possible. Those with mental health issues or more complex individual issues are referred as soon as possible.

Research

As a new field, coaching is seeking to expand a relatively small research base. As it has many commonalities with other helping fields, one might suggest that coaching researchers draw on existing research in related fields. For example, the research-related theories such as motivational interviewing and brief solution-oriented counseling support much of what we read here. Many databased studies from microskills will support the skills basis of coaching, including attending and listening.

Each helping system needs its own research for support, justification, and improvement of service delivery. Evidence-based coaching research has found that a solution-focused coaching program has lowered depression and anxiety, reduced stress, and improved the general quality of life for clients (Grant, 2003). A second study produced similar outcomes (Spence & Grant, 2005), and a third shows that the effects of coaching are maintained over 30 weeks (Green, Oates, & Grant, 2005). The Australian group (Grant, 2008) examined mindfulness (see Chapter 12) and coaching. They concluded that short “mindfulness training *before* coaching seems to build ‘psychological muscle’” that led to better results in effecting change and reaching goals.

Coaching Summary: Some Challenges

Despite a promising beginning, coaching has given little consideration to multicultural issues, working with social justice, or those who are poor. Many people who would refuse counseling are likely to accept the safer word “coaching” with its positive approach to change and growth. Coaching as an adjunct to interviewing, counseling, and psychotherapy needs serious attention. As clients improve through their counseling and therapy sessions, working with them on a coaching approach likely will be useful in helping them take action and maintain change over time.

Clearly, more research is needed on what makes an effective and ethical coach. At present, anyone can use the title of coach and market himself or herself at a high figure; this is disturbing. Even so, there are many ethical coaches, and groups such as the International Coach Federation (ICF) and the Harvard University and McLean Hospital Coaching and Positive Psychology Initiative aim for certification and competence in the field. The ICF code of ethics is stated in exceptionally clear language (the major helping professions would benefit if they reworked their own ethical standards to make them comparably short and clear). At present, only a few degree programs in coaching are available, although many universities and professional schools are beginning to offer instruction in coaching and coaching skills. Most notable is Coaching Psychology at the University of Sydney, Australia.

The future of coaching seems solid. The popular media give considerable attention to college coaches, executive coaches, personal coaches, retirement coaches, wellness coaches, and many others. It has been said that one cannot make it through today's complex and confusing world without a good coach. The coaching model would likely make for improved schools in the elementary and secondary schools due to its positive emphasis and solution-focused orientation. We hope that you will examine this new field in more detail, but with full awareness that you are not a trained coach, and ethically you cannot call yourself a coach. Use some coaching concepts and questions in your interviewing, counseling, and therapy practice, but continue the focus on strengths and positives.

SUMMARY: MAKING YOUR DECISION ABOUT QUESTIONS

We began this chapter by asking you to think carefully about your personal experience with questions. It is clear that their overuse can damage an interview. On the other hand, questions do facilitate conversation and help ensure that important points are brought in. Questions can help the client bring in missing information. Among such questions are “What else?” “What have we missed so far?” and “Can you think of something important that is occurring in your life right now that you haven't shared with me yet?”

Person-centered theorists and many professionals sincerely argue against the use of any questions at all. They strongly object to the control implications of questions. They point out that careful attending and use of the listening skills can usually bring out major client issues. If you work with someone culturally different from you, a questioning style may develop distrust. In such cases, questions need to be balanced with self-disclosure and listening. Coaching challenges those who avoid questions, but there is a person-centered style of coaching that seeks to reduce emphasis on questioning strategies.

Our position on questions is clear—we believe in questions, but we also fear overuse and the fact that they can reduce equality in the interview. We are impressed by the brief solution-focused counselors who seem to use questions more than any other skill but are still able to respect their clients and help them change. On the other hand, we have seen students who

KEY POINTS (continued)

Multicultural issues and questions

These questions may turn off some clients. Some cultural groups find North American rapid-fire questions rude and intrusive, particularly if asked before trust is developed. Yet questions are very much a part of Western culture and provide a way to obtain information that many clients find helpful. If questions are properly structured and your clients know their real purpose is to help them reach their own goals—as in coaching—questions may be used more productively.

Be positive

Emphasizing only negative issues results in a downward cycle of depression and discouragement. The positive asset search, strength emphasis, positive psychology, and wellness need to balance discussion of client issues and concerns. What is the client doing right? What are the exceptions to the problem? What are client personal, family, and cultural/contextual resources?

COMPETENCY PRACTICE EXERCISES AND PORTFOLIO OF COMPETENCE

Individual Practice**Exercise 1: Writing Closed and Open Questions**

Select one part of the following client stories and then write open and closed questions to elicit further information. Can you ask closed questions designed to bring out specifics of the situation? Can you use open questions to facilitate further elaboration of the topic including the facts, feelings, and possible reasons? What special considerations might be important with each person as you consider age-related multicultural issues?

*Jordan (age 15,
African American):*

I was walking down the hall and three guys came up to me and called me “queer” and pushed me against the wall. They started hitting me, but then a teacher came up.

*Alicja (age 35,
Polish American):*

I’ve been passed over for a promotion three times now. Each time, it’s been a man who has been picked for the next level. I’m getting very angry and suspicious.

*Dominique (age 78,
French Canadian):*

I feel so bad. No one pays any attention to me in this “home.” The food is terrible. Everyone is so rude. Sometimes I feel frightened.

Write open questions for one or more of the above. The questions should be designed to bring out broad information, facts, feelings and emotions, and reasons.

Could _____ ?

What _____ ?

How _____ ?

Why _____ ?

Now generate three closed questions that might bring out useful specifics of the situation.

Do _____ ?

Are _____ ?

Where _____ ?

Step 5: Conduct a 3- to 6-minute practice session using only questions. The interviewer practices open and closed questions and may wish to have handy a list of suggested question stems. The client seeks to be relatively cooperative and talkative but should not respond at such length that the interviewer has only a limited opportunity to ask questions. More time will be needed if you decide on a more challenging topic.

Step 6: Review the practice session and provide feedback to the interviewer for 12 minutes. Remember to stop the audio- or videotape periodically and listen to or view key happenings several times for increased clarity. Generally speaking, it is wise to provide some feedback before reviewing the tape, but this sometimes results in a failure to view or listen to the tape at all.

Step 7: Rotate roles.

Exercise 4: The Powerful Questions of the GROW Model

Note: This exercise may be completed more successfully if it comes later Chapters 5, 6, and 7 on observation and the basic listening sequence. On the other hand, this is also an excellent chance to test out positive questions in a role-play complete session.

Step 1: Divide into practice groups.

Step 2: Select a group leader.

Step 3: Assign roles for the first practice session.

- ▲ Client, who may think through a possible goal before the session.
- ▲ Interviewer, who will go through the GROW model and use the nine basic questions. The interviewer should also demonstrate listening skills in addition to the questions. Make the session real by asking suitable questions and showing that you listen and care.
- ▲ Observer 1, who uses the Feedback Form (Box 4-3) and leads the microsupervision process.
- ▲ Observer 2, who runs equipment, keeps time, and also completes the form.

Step 4: Plan. The interviewer and client should both have copies of the model and questions from pages 111 and 112 and refer to them as needed. The topic for the session ideally will develop from the questioning process itself. And the goal needs to be established early in the practice session. As necessary, build rapport and relationship as you start.

Step 5: Conduct a 6- to 10-minute practice session using only the nine questions or adaptations of them. The client seeks to be relatively cooperative and talkative but should not respond at such length that the interviewer has only limited opportunity to work through the GROW model and questions. More time will be needed if you decide on a more challenging topic.

Step 6: Review the practice session and provide feedback to the interviewer for 12 minutes. Remember to stop the audio- or videotape periodically and listen to or view key happenings several times for increased clarity. Generally speaking, it is wise to provide some feedback before reviewing the tape, but this sometimes results in a failure to view or listen to the tape at all.

Step 7: Rotate roles.

(Date)

(Name of Person Completing Form)

Instructions: On the lines below, list as completely as possible the questions asked by the interviewer. At a minimum, indicate the first key words of the question (*what, why, how, do, are*, and so on). Indicate whether each question was open (O) or closed (C). Use additional paper as needed. In the coaching practice session, is the practicing coach able to use the the nine questions and the GROW model? Does the session focus on strengths and goal attainment? How well did the interviewer listen as well as ask questions?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____
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1. Which questions seemed to provide the most useful client information?
2. Provide specific feedback on the attending skills of the interviewer.
3. Discuss the use of the positive asset search, wellness, and the use of questions.

- ▲ Discrepancies and conflict. Much of interviewing is about working through conflict and coping with the inevitable stressful incongruities we all face.
- ▲ Styles associated with varying individual and cultural ways of expression. How can you flex intentionally and avoid stereotyping in your observation?

Allen sometimes testifies in cases involving Social Security disability claims. In one case, the “claimant,” Horace, was an African American, about 60 years old, who had southern roots. He had a severe back problem from years of arduous lifting in a local factory. This is a common price that is paid in the bodies of men and women who do work that repeats the same motion again and again.

When called to the witness stand, Horace held his hat in his hand, spoke quietly to the judge, and took his oath. But as the judge questioned him, his eyes started to wander—all about the room. He did not look at the judge at all. The judge became irritated by what he saw as a lack of attention and spoke sharply to Horace about his lack of respect toward the bench. Horace was obviously embarrassed, but didn't know what to do. In fact, as he became increasingly nervous, he only looked away more.

What sense do you make of what is happening here? Is Horace being disrespectful? What would you do in a situation like this if you were sitting in court?

What are your thoughts?

Please turn to the end of the chapter to compare your thoughts with what Allen did.

INTRODUCTION: KEEPING WATCH ON THE INTERVIEW

If you use observation skills as defined here, you will notice more effectively what is going on in the immediate here and now of the session.

Observation Skills	Predicted Result
Observe your own and the client's verbal and nonverbal behavior. Anticipate individual and multicultural differences in nonverbal and verbal behavior. Carefully and selectively feed back your observations to the client as topics for discussion.	Observations provide specific data validating or invalidating what is happening in the session. Also, they provide guidance for the use of various microskills and strategies. The smoothly flowing interview will often demonstrate movement symmetry or complementarity. Movement dysynchrony provides a clear clue that you are not “in tune” with the client.

What should you observe about client behavior in the interview? From your own life experience you are already aware of many things that are important for a counselor or interviewer to notice. Brainstorm from what you already know and make a list.

BOX 5-2 (continued)

the amygdala, critical center of emotional experience, appears to be highly sensitive to “fearful, irritated, and angry faces . . . even when the faces have not been perceived consciously. . . . We can be certain that in psychotherapy the patient will respond to even the tiniest sign of anger in the facial expressions of therapists.” Self-awareness of your own being is obviously as important as awareness of client behavior.

Nonverbal Communication and Culture

There are fascinating multicultural findings that have immediate relevance to counseling and therapy process. Among them are the following reported by Eberhardt (2005):

- ▲ Japanese have been found to be more holistic thinkers than Westerners (Masuda & Nisbett, 2001). Expect the possibility of different cognitive/emotional styles when you work with people who are culturally different from you—but not with stereotype!

- ▲ Brain systems can be modified by life experience (Draganski et al., 2004). As you learn to observe your client more effectively in the interview, your brain is likely developing new connections. Expect your multicultural learning to become one of those new connections.

- ▲ Blacks and Whites both exhibit greater brain activation when they view same-race faces and less when race is different (Golby et al., 2001). Note here that this could affect your work with a client whose race is different from yours, thus suggesting that discussing racial and other cultural differences early in the session can be a helpful way to build trust.

Vital to our work as counselors and therapists is awareness that brain functioning is not fixed but also relates to cultural factors and environmental issues (e.g., recurring racism and sexism), significant interpersonal events (e.g., experience of trauma, divorce, serious illness), and our own learning of new skills such as those described in this book.

These seemingly small responses are important clues to what a client is experiencing; to notice them takes work and practice. You may want to select one or two kinds of facial expressions and study them for a few days in your regular daily interactions and then move on to others as part of a systematic program to heighten your powers of observation. Ultimately, these careful observation skills become part of your being, and you will not have to think about them again—the samurai effect.

Body Language

People who are communicating well often “mirror” each other’s body language. They may unconsciously sit in identical positions and make complex hand movements together as if in a ballet. This is termed *movement synchrony*. *Movement complementarity* refers to paired movements that may not be identical but are still harmonious. For instance, one person talks and the other nods in agreement. You may observe a hand movement at the end of one person’s statement that is answered by a related hand movement as the other takes the conversational “ball” and starts talking.

Some expert counselors and therapists deliberately “mirror” their clients. Experience shows that matching body language, breathing rates, and key words of the client can heighten interviewer understanding of how the client perceives and experiences the world. If you are sufficiently empathic, you will start feeling the client’s feelings in your own body.

Particularly important are discrepancies in nonverbal behavior. Be alert for *movement dissynchrony*. Watch for times when clients suddenly change body posture. For example, you may challenge clients, and they will cross their legs or quickly look away. Movement dissynchrony also occurs when a client is talking casually about a friend, for example; one hand may be tightly

- ▲ Observer 1, who observes client communication, using the Feedback Form: Observation, Box 5-4.
- ▲ Observer 2, who observes counselor communication, using the feedback form. Here the consultative microsupervision process usually focuses on helping the interviewer understand and utilize nonverbal communication more effectively. Ideally you have a videotape available for precise feedback.

Step 4: Plan. State the goals of the session. As the central task is observation, the interviewer should give primary attention to attending and open questions. Use other skills as you wish. After the role-play is over, the interviewer should report personal observation of the client made during that time and demonstrate basic or active mastery skills. The client will report on observations of the counselor.

The suggested topic for the practice role-play is “Something or someone with whom I have a present conflict or have had a past conflict.” Alternative topics include the following:

My positive and negative feelings toward my parents or other significant persons
The mixed blessings of my work, home community, or present living situation

The two observers may use this session as an opportunity both for providing feedback to the interviewer and for sharpening their own observation skills.

Step 5: Conduct a 6-minute practice session. As much as possible, both the interviewer and the client will behave as naturally as possible discussing a real situation.

Step 6: Review the practice session and provide feedback for 14 minutes. Remember to stop the audiotape or videotape periodically and listen to or view key items several times for increased clarity. Observers should give special attention to careful completion of the feedback form throughout the session, and the client can give important feedback via the Client Feedback Form from Chapter 1.

Step 7: Rotate roles.

Portfolio of Competence

Determining your own style and theory can be best accomplished on a base of competence. Each chapter closes with a reflective exercise asking your thoughts and feelings about what has been discussed. By the time you finish this book, you will have a substantial record of your competencies and a good written record as you move toward determining your own style and theory.

Use the following as a checklist to evaluate your present level or mastery. Check those dimensions that you currently feel able to do. Those that remain unchecked can serve as future goals. Do not expect to attain intentional competence on every dimension as you work through this book. You will find, however, that you will improve your competencies with repetition and practice.

Check below the competencies that you have met to date.

Level 1: Identification and classification.

- ☐ Note attending nonverbal behaviors, particularly changes in behavior in visuals—eye contact, vocal tone, and body language.
- ☐ Note movement harmonics.

Comparing Paraphrasing and Reflection of Feeling

Paraphrasing client statements focuses on the content and clarifies what has been communicated. In the case discussed here, the content includes the father's drinking history, Mum being quiet and taking it, and of course, the actual situation when the client was last home. The paraphrase will indicate to the client that you have heard what has been said and encourage him to move further to the discussion.

Paraphrase: Thomas, your father has been drinking a long time, and your mom takes a lot. But now he's started to be violent, and you've been tempted to hit him yourself. Have I heard you right?

The key content issue is escalation of violence and the need to protect Thomas's mom. It will not help the situation if Thomas becomes part of the violence. At this point, the issue is to listen, learn more about the situation, and plan with Thomas actions for the future. In this example, we are focusing on what is happening and seeking to understand the total situation. Later in the session, we can focus on emotion in depth and help him work through issues.

Reflection of feelings: The first task in eliciting and reflecting feelings is to recognize the key emotional words expressed by the client. In the above example with Thomas, you may have used the words *really hurts*, *anger*, and *worry*. You can know with some certainty that the client has these feelings, as they have been made explicit. The most basic reflections of feeling would be: "It really hurt," "You felt angry," and "You are worried." These reflections of feelings use the client's exact words.

But there are also many unspoken feelings expressed in the statement—and the client may or may not be fully aware of them. If you saw Thomas on video, you would likely notice unspoken feelings expressed in his body language and vocal tone. For example, Thomas looked down with brows furrowed and body tense; anger and fear flashed in his eyes as he was talking about hitting. All this presents a powerful nonverbal portrait. While we do not have the *anger*, *fear*, *tension* said in words, it is often useful to reflect these feelings as well, but a solid, trusting relationship is necessary before reflecting or commenting on client nonverbal behavior.

Thomas says that his father's drinking didn't bother him until recently. But this seems unlikely, and it will be important at a later point to explore his early family life and how it affected him. At this point, however, the main issue is drawing out the story and noting the central emotions associated with the story.

While we believe that focusing first on the potential violence in the situation is critical, combining the paraphrase with feelings by repeating the client's stated and nonverbal key feeling words is likely also appropriate. For example, "You're really hurting with it all right now," "You're angry because your dad hit your mom," "You're worried that your dad's drinking is getting worse." Combining the feeling with the paraphrase acknowledges the client's emotions and may encourage a fuller telling of the story.

Later in the session, after the story is told more completely through your listening, you may help the client discuss and sort through the many and often conflicting emotions. There are numerous possibilities for reflecting implicit emotions that seem to be there. In each of the following we suggest a check-out so that the accuracy of your observations can be tested with the client. Here are three for your consideration:

Right now, you're hurting about the situation. I also see some anger. Is that part of what you feel too? (Uses a key word that reflects the implicit feeling.)

BOX 7-4 (continued)

prepare it for an outburst and release of damaging cortisol.

To carry this a bit further, real damage to neuronal functioning often occurs during a single traumatic event (war, rape, hostage situation, flood). This can produce posttraumatic stress and even destroy memory centers. Think of serious stress as either one “big bang”

or a series of small continuous acts of harassment, insults, or teasing/bullying, which are called *microaggressions*. Microaggressions on a daily basis damage neural functioning and can result in serious outbursts such as the rash of killings in universities, or they may beat down the individual, leading to “learned helplessness,” depression, and inactivity.

Searching for wellness and positive assets will likely be helpful. As part of a wellness assessment, be sure that you reflect the positive feelings associated with aspects of wellness. For example, your client may feel safety and strength in the spiritual self, pride in gender and/or cultural identity, caring and warmth from past and/or present friendships, and the intimacy and caring of a love relationship. It would be possible to anchor these emotions early in the interview and draw on these positive emotions during more stressful moments. Out of a wellness inventory can come a “back pack” of positive emotions and experiences that are always there and can be drawn on as needed.

When reflecting feelings, observe your client and elicit strengths. Make this part of your reflection of feeling strategy. For example, the client may be going through the difficult part of a relationship breakup and crying and wondering what to do. We don't suggest that you should interrupt the client or allow, but with appropriate timing, reflecting back the positive feelings that you have observed can be helpful.

Couples with relationship difficulties can be helped if they focus more on the areas where things are going well—what remains good about the relationship. Many couples focus on the 5% where they disagree and fail to note the 95% where they have been successful or enjoyed each other. Some couples respond well when asked to focus on the reasons they got together in the first place. These positive strengths can help them deal with very difficult issues.

When providing your clients with homework assignments, have them engage daily in activities associated with positive emotions. For example, it is difficult to be sad and depressed when running or walking at a brisk pace. Meditation and yoga are often useful in generating more positive emotions and calmness. Seeing a good movie when one is down can be useful, as can going out with friends for a meal. In short, help clients remember that they have access to joy, even when things are at their most difficult.

Service to others often helps people feel good about themselves. When one is discouraged and feeling inadequate, volunteering for a church work group, working on a Habitat for Humanity home, or giving time to work with animal shelters can all be helpful in developing a more positive sense of self.

Important caution: But please do not use the above paragraphs as a way to tell your clients that “everything will be okay.” Some interviewers and counselors are so afraid of negative emotions that they never allow their clients to express what they really feel. *Do not minimize difficult emotions by too quickly focusing on the positive.*

Noting Emotional Intensity: A Developmental Skill

Clients have varying styles and levels of intensity with which they describe emotional experiences. You may recall that some emotional styles are more resilient and positive than others.

Level 2: Basic competence. Aim for this level of competence before moving on to the next skill area.

- ☐ Acknowledge feelings briefly in daily interactions with people outside of interviewing situations (restaurants, grocery stores, with friends, and the like).
- ☐ Use reflection of feeling in a role-played interview.
- ☐ Use the skill in a real interview.

Level 3: Intentional competence. Review the following skills, all related to predictability and evaluation of the effectiveness of your abilities in working with emotion. These are skills that may take some time to achieve. Be patient with yourself as you gain mastery and understanding.

- ☐ Facilitate client exploration of emotions. When you observe clients' emotions and reflect them, do clients increase their exploration of feeling states?
- ☐ Reflect feelings so that clients feel their emotions are clarified. They may often say, "That's right . . . and . . ." They then continue to explore their emotion.
- ☐ Help clients move out of overly emotional states to a period of calm.
- ☐ Facilitate client exploration of multiple emotions one might have toward an important relationship (confused, mixed, positive, and negative feelings).
- ☐ Recognize and facilitate client exploration within the four styles of emotional expression—sensorimotor, concrete, formal-operational, and dialectic/systemic.

Level 4: Psychoeducational teaching competence. Teaching competence in these skills is best planned for a later time, but a client who has particular difficulty in listening to others may indeed benefit by training in observing emotions. Many individuals fail to see the emotions occurring all around them. Empathic understanding is rooted in awareness of the emotions of others. All of us, including clients, can benefit from bringing this skill area into use in our daily lives. There is clear evidence that people diagnosed with antisocial personality disorder have real difficulty in recognizing and being empathic with the feelings of others. You will also find this problem in some acting-out children. Here psychoeducation on recognizing the other person may be a critical treatment. A good place to start is with acknowledgment of feelings.

- ☐ Teach clients in a helping session how to observe emotions in those around them.
- ☐ Teach clients how to acknowledge emotions and, at times, to reflect the feelings of those around them.
- ☐ Teach small groups the skills of observing and reflecting feelings.

DETERMINING YOUR OWN STYLE AND THEORY: CRITICAL SELF-REFLECTION ON REFLECTION OF FEELING

This chapter has focused on emotion and the importance of grounding both yourself and your client. Special attention was given to identifying four varying styles of emotional expression as well as how you might help clients express more or less emotion, as appropriate to their situations.

What single idea stood out for you among all those presented in this chapter, in class, or through informal learning? What stands out to you is likely to be important as a guide toward

What is your story?

Most chapters begin with a case study. As we start here, let's change the focus to you and your story. Or perhaps you may prefer to work with a partner. Please select one of the following topics that relates to you at this moment. We'd like you to think about the present story or script that you are enacting. Describe your life in relationship to one of the following possibilities: leisure/play, physical activities, relationships, spiritual matters.

What is your present *story*? How are you living your life in one of these areas? Name at least two specific strengths that you observe in your story or life that might enable you to improve on where you are now.

Can you identify a goal for doing something better? Make it as specific, concrete, and measurable as possible. Begin with a general statement such as "I want a better relationship" or "I need to exercise more." Then make it more specific and doable within the coming week. Instead of reaching for a 10-point change, go for one or two smaller steps toward the larger objective.

Now it is time to restory. Take your present story and your goal. Note the difference or discrepancy between where your story is and where you would like it to be. Start the restorying process by imagining an ideal solution in which the present story is transformed. Note how you might feel to have that more desirable world. Then go to your specific, concrete, and more doable goal for the coming week. Do your two strengths help in this process? Imagine now actually meeting that smaller goal would result in a new paragraph or two in the larger story, perhaps even serving as a wedge for greater change later on.

Can you live into your new story?

Helping clients take action and live into new stories, narratives, and ways of being is what this chapter is about. You will use only empathy and listening skills to help clients find their inner strengths, wisdom, and abilities to restory and meet their goals.

INTRODUCTION: A REVIEW OF CULTURAL INTENTIONALITY AND INTENTIONAL COMPETENCE

A critical issue in interviewing is that the same skills may have different effects on people with varying individual and cultural backgrounds. Diversity will always characterize the mainstream of interviewing, counseling, and psychotherapy. In each interview you have, you will encounter people with varying life experiences. To this must be added the many issues of multiculturalism (e.g., ethnicity/race, people with disabilities, sexual orientation, spirituality/religion). Remember, all interviewing contains multicultural dimensions.

To this diversity must be added individual differences. One Arab American client cannot be expected to behave the same as the next. Many are Christians of varying denominations, and the Islamic religions are widely diverse in beliefs. Veterans from the Iraq war are not all the same. The individual client will behave differently from one interview to the next. Almost as soon as you think you "fully understand" a client, a new side of personality and style will appear.

The microskills offer us a way to have some predictability in our work with individuals, almost regardless of multicultural background. But individual men and women and those of varying groups may have surprising differences in response, despite our best efforts at prediction. We must always be aware that our wide-ranging clientele will constantly vary. What "works" as expected one time may not the next. Intentional competence requires flexibility and the ability to move and change in the moment with constantly shifting client needs.

Let us examine the basic listening sequence and its critical importance in more detail.

BOX 8-1 RESEARCH EVIDENCE THAT YOU CAN USE**Overview of Microskills Research**

Daniels (2007) has assembled and reviewed 450 data-based studies on microskills. This review is available in the accompanying CD-ROM. Among his central observations and conclusions that have direct relevance to interviewing practice are the following:

- ▲ The microskills listed in the hierarchy do exist and can be classified with excellent reliability. However, the basic listening sequence skills have more research validation than the influencing skills discussed later in this text. Microcounseling skill training appears to be as effective or more effective than alternative systems.
- ▲ Maintenance of skills requires practice and use. Research has found that if the skills are not used in actual practice, they may disappear over time. You may have seen practicing professionals so sure of themselves that they fail to listen to the client. Continued practice is necessary if these skills are to be transferred to your own interviewing sessions. Understanding does not automatically indicate the ability to perform.
- ▲ Research in the Netherlands and Japan clearly indicates the cross-cultural validity of the skills. Studies with medical practitioners in the Netherlands reveal the importance of establishing a solid relationship and then using listening skills and show that this leads to better compliance in using needed medications and patient satisfaction. Microskills (often termed “microcounseling”) have been translated into at least 20 languages. For example, the skills approach has been used in Africa by UNESCO staff to train peer counselors who work with AIDS patients and with refugees suffering from war trauma. Consultants in Sweden, Indonesia, and Japan use it to train top-level managers. Aboriginal social workers in Australia and Canadian Inuit community organizers have used this framework.
- ▲ A number of studies have shown that intentional skill usage in counseling results in predictable client impact and satisfaction with the session. Gill and O'Brien's (2004) review of parallel research on counseling skills produced similar findings on this important issue. Vary your say and do in the interview as well as what clients say and do. The basic interviewing skills of this book all can be used effectively with children, particularly if you use concrete language and match their cognitive/emotional style (Ivey, Ivey, Myers, & Sweeney, 2005; Van Velsor, 2004).
- ▲ Teaching clients skills of communication can be effective. Research has shown that clinical practice with clients who may demonstrate avoidant personality style (shyness), depression, schizophrenia, and other diagnoses has been particularly successful. Individual, group, and family communication skills can be taught. Clearly, more research needs to be conducted in this important area.

INSTRUCTIONAL READING 1: EMPATHY AND MICROSKILLS

Carl Rogers (1957, 1961) brought the importance of empathy to our attention. He made it clear that it is vital to listen carefully, enter the world of the client, and communicate that we understand the client's world as the client sees and experiences it. Putting yourself “into another person's shoes” and “viewing the world through someone else's eyes and ears” are other ways to describe empathy. The following quotation has been used by Rogers himself to define empathy:

This is not laying trips on people. . . . You only listen and say back the other person's thing, step by step, just as that person seems to have it at that moment. You never mix into it any of your own things or ideas, never lay on the other person anything that the person did not express. . . . To show that you understand exactly, make a sentence or two which gets exactly at the personal meaning the person wanted to put across. This might

- “What other alternatives can you think of?”
- “Can you brainstorm ideas—just anything that occurs to you?”
- “What has worked for you before?”
- “What part of the problem is workable if you can’t solve it all right now?”
- “Which of the ideas that you have generated appeals to you most?”
- “What would be the consequence of your taking that alternative?”

In effect, all of these are oriented toward opening clients’ thought, leading to new solutions. Encouraging skills are useful in helping clients stop and explore possibilities. Repeat key words that might lead the client to new alternatives for action.

Counseling and long-term therapy both try to resolve issues in clients’ lives in a similar fashion. The counselor needs to establish rapport, define the problem, and establish certain desired client outcomes. The distinction between the problem and the desired outcome is the major incongruity the therapist seeks to resolve. This incongruity or discrepancy may be resolved in three basic ways. The counselor can use extending skills to clarify the client’s frame of reference and then feel back a summary of client concerns and the goal. Often clients will generate their own synthesis and resolve their challenges. If clients do not generate their own answers, then the therapist can add interpretation, self-disclosure, and other influencing skills in an attempt to resolve the discrepancy. In that case, the counselor would be working from a personal frame of reference or theory. Finally, in systematic problem solving the counselor and client might generate and brainstorm alternatives for action and set priorities for the most effective possibilities.

During Stage 4, it is particularly important to keep the concrete issue, or challenge, in view while generating alternatives for a solution. However, a decision for action is not enough. You also need to plan to make sure that feelings, thoughts, and behaviors generalize beyond the interview itself. Stage 5 of the interview speaks to this task.

Stage 5. Action—Terminating: Generalizing and Acting on New Stories (“Will you do it?”)

“Will you do it?” The complexities of the world are such that taking a new behavior back to the home setting is difficult.

Some therapies work on the assumption that behavior and attitude change will come out of new unconscious learning; they “trust” that clients will change spontaneously. This can happen, but there is increasing evidence that planning and actually contracting in written form for specific change increases the likelihood of transfer of learning to the “real world” and actually changing things.

Consider the situation again with the teen in conflict with the principal. You may have generated some good ideas together, but unless the teen follows up on them, soon he or she will be back in your office again, and the principal may be wondering why you aren’t more effective. (And if the problem is not with the teen but with an insensitive teacher and/or principal, then your challenge is that much greater.) Your task is to find something “that works” and changes the repeating story.

Change does not come easily, and maintaining any change in thoughts, feelings, or behavior is even more difficult. Behavioral psychology has given considerable thought to the transfer of training and has developed an array of techniques for transfer; even so, clients still

EXAMPLE DECISIONAL COUNSELING INTERVIEW: USING LISTENING SKILLS TO HELP CLIENTS WITH INTERPERSONAL CONFLICT

“I can’t get along with my boss.” This interview illustrates how listening skills can be used to help the client understand and cope with interpersonal conflict. The interview has been edited to identify how the five-stage model works in the interview (*relationship—story and strengths—goal—restory—action*). When you conduct your own interview and develop a transcript indicating your own ability to use listening skills, you may want to arrange your transcript in a similar fashion to that presented here.

The client in this case is a relatively verbal 20-year-old part-time student who is in conflict with his boss at work. A verbal, cooperative client is required for a counselor to work through a complete interview using only listening skills.

This is a very abbreviated and edited example interview. Our goal here is to show you how the five stages can be identified in practice. The interview also illustrates how you can set up and analyze your own interview, focusing on listening skills.

Stage 1. Relationship—Initiate the Session

Develop rapport and structuring. “Hello, what would you like to talk about today?”

Interviewer and Client Conversation	Process Comments
<i>Machiko:</i> Robert, do you mind if we tape this interview? It’s for a class exercise in interviewing. I’ll be making a transcript of the session, which the professor will read. Okay? We can turn the recorder off at any time. I’ll show you the transcript if you are interested. I won’t use the material if you decide later you don’t want me to use it.	Machiko opens with a closed question followed by structuring information. It is critical to obtain client permission and offer the client control over the material before taping. As a student, you cannot legally control confidentiality, but it is your responsibility to protect your client.
<i>Robert:</i> Sounds fine; I do have something to talk about.	Robert seems at ease and relaxed. As the taping was presented casually, he is not concerned about the use of the recorder. Rapport was obviously established as they knew each other. There are some clients who will start the session as quickly as Robert, but don’t expect it.
<i>Machiko:</i> What would you like to share?	The open question, almost social in nature, is designed to give maximum personal space to the client. But Machiko might have been wise if she had spent more time telling him what to expect in this interview.
<i>Robert:</i> My boss. He’s pretty awful.	Robert indicates clearly through his nonverbal behavior that he is ready to go. We also see body movements indicating distress. However, Machiko observes that he is comfortable with her, and she will deal with the stress later. She decides to move immediately to Stage 2 and gather data on the client’s story. With some clients, several interviews may be required to reach this level of rapport and relationship.

Stage 2. Story and Strengths—Gather Data

Draw out client stories, concerns, problems, or issues. “What’s your concern?” “What are your strengths and resources?”

Interviewer and Client Conversation	Process Comments
<i>Machiko:</i> Could you tell me about it?	This open question is oriented toward obtaining a general outline of the concern the client brings to the session.
<i>Robert:</i> Well, he’s impossible.	Instead of the expected general outline of the issues, Robert gives a brief answer. The predicted consequence didn’t happen. This is where your cultural intentionality and ability to flex in the here and now of the session become so important.
<i>Machiko:</i> Impossible?	Encourager. Intentional competence requires you to be ready with another question if the client does not elaborate. This time the encourager started things.
<i>Robert:</i> Yeah, really impossible. It seems that no matter what I do, he is on me, always looking over my shoulder. I don’t think he trusts me.	This time the predicted result occurs, and Machiko begins to obtain a picture of what is going on with Robert.
<i>Machiko:</i> Could you give me a more specific example of what he is doing to indicate he doesn’t trust you?	Robert is a bit vague in his discussion. Machiko asks an open question eliciting concreteness.
<i>Robert:</i> Well, maybe it isn’t trust. Like last week, I had this customer lip off to me. He had a complaint about a shirt he bought. I don’t like customers yelling at me when it isn’t my fault, so I started talking back. No one can do <i>that</i> to me! And of course the boss didn’t like it and chewed me out. It wasn’t fair.	As events become more concrete through specific examples, we understand more fully what is going on in the client’s life and mind.
<i>Machiko:</i> As I hear it, Robert, it sounds as though this guy gave you a bad time, and it made you angry, and then the boss came in. It wasn’t fair.	Machiko’s response is relatively similar to what Robert said. Her paraphrase and reflection of feeling represent Level 3 basic interchangeable empathy. This is a good example of the last item mentioned by the client being the important one. Fairness is an important construct for Robert.
<i>Robert:</i> Exactly! It really made me angry. I have never liked anyone telling me what to do. I left my last job because the boss was doing the same thing.	Accurate listening often results in the client’s saying “exactly” or something similar.
<i>Machiko:</i> So your last boss wasn’t fair either?	Machiko’s vocal tone and body language communicate nonjudgmental warmth and respect. She brings back Robert’s key word <i>fair</i> by paraphrasing with a questioning tone of voice, which represents an implied check-out. This is an interchangeable empathic response (Level 3).

Interviewer and Client Conversation	Process Comments
<i>Machiko:</i> So, Robert, on the one hand I heard you have a long-term pattern of conflict with supervisors and customers who give you a bad time. On the other hand, I also heard just as loud and clear your desire to have less hassle and not give in to others. We also know that you are a good worker and like to do a good job. Given all this, what do you think you can do about it?	Machiko remains nonjudgmental and appears to be very congruent with the client in terms of both words and body language. In this major empathic Level 4 summary, she distills and clarifies what the client said. This adds to and integrates what has been said so far and leads to the future.
<i>Robert:</i> Well, I'm a good worker, but I've been fighting too much. I let the boss and the customers control me too much. I think the next time a customer complains, I'll keep quiet and fill out the refund certificate. Why should I take on the world?	Robert talks more rapidly. He, too, leans forward. However, his brow is furrowed, indicating some tension. He is "working hard."
<i>Machiko:</i> So one thing you can do is keep quiet. You could maintain control in your own way, and you would not be giving in.	Paraphrase, Level 3 additive empathy. Machiko is using Robert's keywords and feelings from earlier in the interview to reinforce his present thinking, but she waits for Robert's response.
<i>Robert:</i> Yeah, that's what I'll do, keep quiet.	He sits back, his arms folded. This suggests that the "good" response above was in some way actually subtractive. There is more work to do.
<i>Machiko:</i> Sounds like a good beginning, but I'm sure you can think of other things as well, especially when you simply can't be quiet? Can you brainstorm more ideas?	Machiko gives Robert brief feedback. Her open question is a Level 4 response adding to the interview. She is aware that his closed nonverbals suggest that more work is needed on relationships, specificity, and generating new possibilities for action.

Clients are often too willing to seize the first idea that comes up. It may not be the best thing for them. It is helpful to use a variety of questions and listening skills to draw out the client further. With Robert, some ideas came easily but others more slowly. Eventually, he was able to generate two other useful suggestions: (1) to talk frankly with his boss about the continuing problem and seek his advice, and (2) to plan an exercise program after work to help blow off steam and energy. In addition, Robert began to realize that his problem with his boss was but one example of a continuing problem. He and Machiko discussed the possibility of talking more or for him to visit a professional therapist. Robert decided he'd like to talk with Machiko a bit more. A contract was made: If the situation did not improve within 2 weeks, Robert would seek professional help.

Stage 5. Action—Terminating: Generalizing and Acting on New Stories

Conclude with plan for generalizing interview learning to "real life" and eventual termination of the interview or series of sessions. "Will you do it?"

BOX 8-4 (continued)

Provide specific behavioral evidence in the space provided to justify your rating of empathic behaviors on the chart.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____

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audiotape or observing your videotape. See the Feedback Form in Box 8-5. Also, the Client Feedback Form of Chapter 1 is important to help you obtain needed feedback, particularly if you do not have an external observer.

Following is an outline of things to consider as you work through the five stages of the well-formed interview.

1. *Relationship* (Initiating the session; rapport and structuring). Develop rapport with your client. Structure the interview by informing the client about video or audio recording and how the tape will be used. You may wish to say something like “What we are going to do today is discuss the issues around your career or your balance of work and play. A choice of specific career is a good topic (or we agreed to talk about . . .). Then we’ll search out some of your strengths, examine goals, and look at possibilities. Finally, we will talk about how to take home some of the things we’ve talked about today. Is that okay?” Include informed consent and ethical issues.
2. *Story and Strengths* (Gathering data; drawing out stories, concerns, problems, or issues). Use the basic listening sequence to draw out the client’s story. Be sure to obtain at least one positive asset that may later be helpful in facilitating decision making.

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SECTION III

Helping Clients Generate New Stories That Lead to Action: Influencing Skills and Strategies

The listening skills and the five-stage interview structure presented in previous chapters provide the foundation for the more action-oriented skills and strategies presented here. The influencing skills and strategies will help you effectively intervene to facilitate the process of change in your clients. In addition, you will find many of these skills and strategies useful in psychoeducational treatment, which supplements the interview.

Relationship—story and strengths—goals—restory—action is a general model of interviewing, counseling, and psychotherapy. Clients share their stories and problems and can do something about them. Moreover, your mastery of these basics will enable you to develop competence in multiple theories of helping.

Look for the following in this section.

Chapter 9. The Skills of Confrontation: Supporting While Challenging Clients Supportive confrontation is considered by some the most important stimulus enabling client change and development. Confrontation builds on your present ability to listen empathically and observe client conflict. Skilled supportive confrontation enables resolution of incongruity, which leads to new behaviors, thoughts, feelings, and meanings.

Chapter 10. Focusing the Interview: Exploring the Story From Multiple Perspectives Focusing, extends the concept of confrontation and illustrates how to ensure that you have made a comprehensive examination of clients' stories. This skill will enable clients to clarify how other people, situations, and the total environment relate to their lives and stories. Skilled focusing facilitates clients in reframing their stories in new ways without you supplying the answers for them.

Chapter 11. Reflection of Meaning and Interpretation/Reframing: Helping Clients Restory Their Lives Here you will examine the relationship between and among behaviors, thoughts, feelings, and their underlying meaning structure. These skills help you gain a deeper understanding of each client's issues and history. Clients will gain valuable new perspectives on their problems and stories.

Interviewer and Client Conversation	Process Comment
<i>Counselor:</i> You really want to meet him. On the other hand, you're a bit anxious.	The paraphrase and reflection of feeling confront the mixed feelings in the client. This catches both verbal and nonverbal observations.
<i>Client:</i> Yes, but what would happen if my partner found out? It scares me. I've got so much involved with him over the past 2 years. But, wow, this guy on the Internet . . .	The client responds, but turns her focus to the discrepancy between her and the partner. There are clearly two issues at least in this situation.

Step 2: Clarify Issues of Incongruity and Work to Resolve Them

Interviewer and Client Conversation	Process Comments
<i>Counselor:</i> Could I review where we've been this far? I know you have been having some difficulties with your partner, and you've detailed them over the last two sessions. I also hear that you want to work things out despite your present anger at him. You have a lot of positive history together that you'd like to give up. But on the other hand, you've found this man on the Internet, and he doesn't live that far away. You seem really excited about the possibility of meeting him. In the middle of all this, I sense you feel pretty conflicted. Have I got the issues right?	The summary indicates the counselor has been listening. Both verbally and nonverbally, the counselor communicates respect and a nonjudgmental attitude. We support by listening and searching for strengths (in this case, the positive history). The counselor summarizes the major discrepancies that led to internal and external conflict and checks out with the client to see if the listening has been accurate.
<i>Client:</i> Yes, I think you've got it. As I hear you, it makes me think that I've got to work a bit harder on the present relationship, but—wow—I sure would like to meet that guy.	Through having her thoughts and feelings said back to her, the client starts some movement. Resolution of conflict and discrepancy best occurs after the situation is understood fully.

The conversation continues over the next 10 minutes, and the client's thoughts and feelings evolve to a new perspective.

Step 3: Evaluate the Change

The effectiveness of a confrontation is measured by how the client responds. In the example on the next page, the client keeps moving toward a new resolution. However, there are many clients who stay stuck in the same place and repeat the same discussion of their concerns over and over again. Later in this chapter, the Client Change Scale (CCS) is presented. This is a systematic way to evaluate the effectiveness of confrontations and whether clients are moving to new ways of thinking, feeling, and behaving.

BOX 9-2 (continued)

With severe conflict such as this, I question the need or wisdom of drawing out the detailed story underlying the conflict. While I think in-depth sharing is important and vital in counseling, when we move to severe conflict we are going to have to focus on positive assets and strengths and use a wellness approach. Without extensive community and governmental support and increased contact among groups, we are going to see ever more “recreational rioting” in which young

people riot because it becomes the stimulating and fun thing to do. As counselors and therapists, we can become part of the solution to these complex issues by first learning how to listen effectively and then working to resolve contradictions and conflict in our individual client, family, and group work. With this experience, we can then move to the real challenges of broadly and deeply based misunderstandings. It is a large task, but it is one we must undertake.

we resolve real problems of deep conflict between peoples? What is our role as counselors in such conflict prevention and social justice? Skilled confrontation skills are vital in such counseling.

Step 3: Evaluate the Change

The effectiveness of a confrontation is measured by how the client responds. If you observe closely in the *here and now of the session*, you can at a glance how effective your interventions have been. You also can assess whether your client has changed as a result of your interviewing and counseling skills. The means of evaluating cognitive/emotional change described here is based on an adaptation of work by Elisabeth Kübler-Ross (1969), who revolutionized our thinking about death and dying.

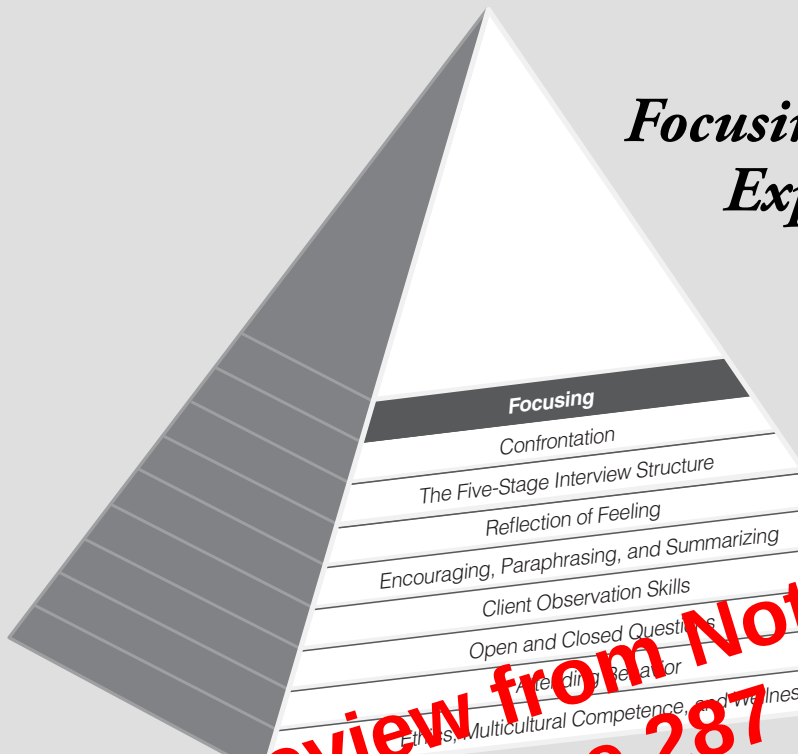
Kübler-Ross identified five stages of cognitive and emotional change as people faced death and dying (see Box 9-3). Her well-known theory has implications for change in areas ranging from interviewing to addiction and career choice. When people face death, they tend to display one of five reactions ranging from denial to acceptance to transcendence. The framework has five levels, and many people move through them in order; some people stay in one stage and never change, while others may “bounce” among the stages. Change is not always as linear and progressive as Kübler-Ross suggests.

Apply the Kübler-Ross framework to interviewing, counseling, and therapy using the *restory* framework. The client tells us a story and we, of course, listen. If the client is in the denial stage, the story may be distorted, others could be blamed unfairly, and the client's part in the story may be denied. In effect, the client in *denial* does not deal with reality. When the client is confronted effectively, his or her story changes to discussing inconsistencies and incongruity and we see *bargaining and partial acceptance*—the story is changing. At *acceptance* (Level 3), the reality of the story is acknowledged, and storytelling is more accurate and complete; it is possible to move to *new solutions* and *transcendence* (Levels 4 and 5). When changes in thoughts, feelings, and behaviors are integrated into a new story, we see the client move into major new ways of thinking accompanied by action after the session is completed.

Virtually any problem a client presents may be assessed at one of the five levels. The five levels may be seen as a general way to view the change process in interviewing, counseling, and therapy. Each confrontation or other interview intervention in the *here and now* may lead to identifiable changes in client awareness.

CHAPTER 10

Focusing the Interview: Exploring the Story From Multiple Perspectives



One very important aspect of motivation is the willingness to stop and to look at things that no one else has bothered to look at. This simple process of focusing on things that are normally taken for granted is a powerful source of creativity.

—Edward de Bono

How can focusing help you and your clients?

Chapter Goals

Focusing is a skill that enables multiple tellings of the story and will help you and clients think of creative new possibilities for restorying. Client issues are often complex, and the systematic framework of focusing can help in reframing and reconstructing problems, concerns, issues, and challenges. Focusing is a skill you may not see in other books. We developed the skill of focusing because it remains the clearest way to (1) stress the importance of the *individual*, and (2) expand awareness of how individual clients develop in social context—especially community and family.

Competency Objectives

Awareness, knowledge, and skill in focusing will enable you to

- ▲ Increase client cognitive and emotional complexity. Too often issues are considered from only one frame of reference.
- ▲ Better understand the viewpoints of others with an accompanying increase in empathic understanding and cultural intentionality.
- ▲ Incorporate family and cultural issues, particularly through family and community genograms.
- ▲ Be aware of the role of advocacy and social change as part of the focus of your interviewing practice.

BOX 10-1 DEVELOPING A COMMUNITY GENOGRAM***Identifying Personal and Multicultural Strengths***

The community genogram is a “free-form” activity in which clients are encouraged to present their community of origin or perhaps a present or recent community, using their own unique artistic style.

Through the community genogram, you can better visualize your own developmental history and that of your clients. With a positive approach, you will identify strengths that both you and your clients can use later to help them reach goals. Clients may construct a genogram by themselves or be assisted by you through questioning while you listen to their stories and strengths.

Before you start using this strategy with your clients, it is important that you first develop your own community genogram. With this understanding, you are better prepared to engage your client.

Step 1: Develop a Visual Representation of the Community

- ▲ Select the community in which you were primarily raised; the community of origin is where you tend to learn the most about culture. But any of the community, past or present, may be used.
- ▲ Represent yourself or the client with a significant symbol. Use a large poster board or flipchart paper. Place yourself or the client in that community, either at the center or at another appropriate place. Encourage clients to be innovative and represent their communities in a format that appeals to them. This could include maps or unique personal constructions of the community. Remember that the two examples presented here are only suggestions. Reward creativity in unique presentations.
- ▲ It is important to place family or families—adoptive, single-parent, nuclear, or extended—on the paper, represented by the symbol that is most relevant for you or the client. Different cultural groups define family in varying ways.
- ▲ Place important, most influential groups on the community genogram, represented by distinctive visual

symbols. School, family, neighborhood, and spiritual groups are most often selected. For teens, the peer group is often particularly important. For adults, work groups and other special groups tend to become more central.

- ▲ You may wish to suggest relevant aspects of the RESPECTFUL model (page 46). In this way, diversity issues can be included in the genogram.

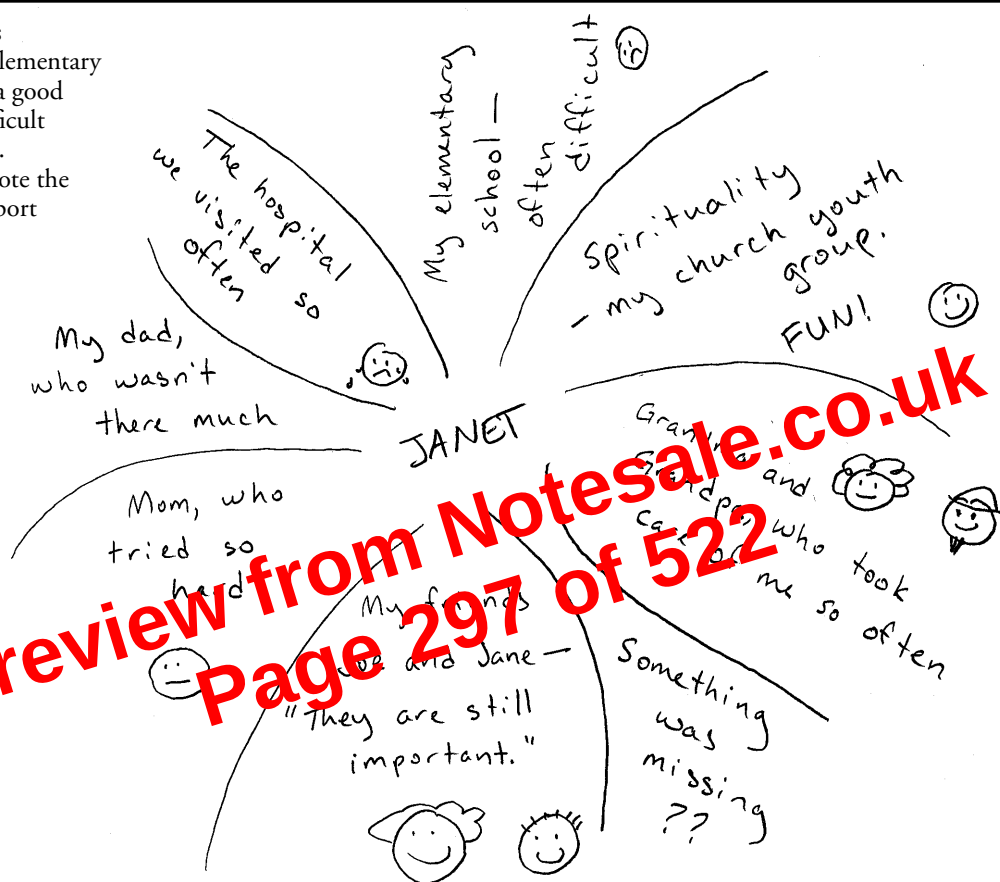
Step 2: Search for Images and Narratives of Strengths in Your Own Life or That of the Client

- ▲ Post the community genogram on the wall during counseling sessions. Think through the diagram yourself or help the client provide an overall summary of what he or she sees.
- ▲ The focus is on one single dimension of the community. Emphasize positive stories even if the client wants to start with a negative story. Do not work with the negatives until positive strengths are solidly in mind unless the client clearly needs to tell you the difficult story. (The community genogram can later be used as a useful diagnostic framework to look at the client's past challenges as they still play out today.)
- ▲ Help the client share one or more positive stories relating to the community dimension selected. If you are doing your own genogram, you may want to write your story in journal form.
- ▲ Develop at least two positive visual, auditory, or kinesthetic images from different groups within the community. It is often useful to have one positive family image, one spiritual image, and one cultural image so that several areas of wellness and support are included. Relax, close your eyes, and get that positive experience in your mind. With a meditative approach, it is possible to actually recall and experience those positives from the past. These thoughts and body feelings can serve as resources to the client in problem solving and living more effectively.

before us is the most critical and important focus. Using the person's name and the word *you* is central to every interview. But if we are to fully discover client uniqueness, we need to understand the broader context of the client. To help in this understanding we present the community genogram (Boxes 10-1 and 10-2). The family genogram illustrates the importance

BOX 10-2 (continued)

2. *The star:* Janet's world during elementary school tells us a good bit about a difficult time in her life. Nonetheless, note the important support systems.



subjects that make you uncomfortable. You may do the same thing with clients. Becoming aware of your possible biases will free you to understand the uniqueness of each individual more fully.

The Family Genogram

The family genogram brings additional information about all-important family history. We frequently use both strategies with clients and often hang the family and community genograms on the wall in our office during the session, thus indicating to clients that they are not alone in the interview. Many clients find themselves comforted by our awareness of their strengths and social context.

Box 10-3 presents the major “how’s” of developing a family genogram. Specific symbols and conventions have been developed that are widely accepted and help professionals communicate information to each other. The family genogram is one of the most fascinating exercises

- ▲ You are working with an African American client who has dangerous hypertension. You know that there is solid evidence that racism influences blood pressure.

What are your thoughts?

The elementary counselor can work with school officials to set up policies around bullying and harassment, actively changing the environment that allowed bullying to occur. The high school counselor faces an especially challenging issue as interview confidentiality may preclude immediate classroom action. If this is not possible, then the counselor can initiate school policies and awareness programs against oppression in the classroom. The passive teacher may become more aware through training you offer to all the teachers. You can help the African American client understand that hypertension is not just “his problem” but rather his blood pressure is partially related to racism in his environment, and you can work to eliminate oppression in your community.

“Whistle-blowers” who name problems that others try to avoid can face real difficulty. The company may not want to have their systematic bias exposed. On the other hand, through careful consultation and data gathering, the human relations staff may be able to help managers develop a more fair, honest, and equitable style. Again, the issue of policy becomes important. Counselors can advocate policy changes in work settings and equal pay for equal work. You can help the client who suffers racial, gender, or sexual orientation harassment. You can speak to employers about how they can employ more people with handicaps.

The counselor in the community agency knows that advocacy is the only possibility when a client is being abused. For clients in such situations, advocacy in terms of support in getting out of the home, finding new housing, and learning how to obtain a restraining order against the abusing person may be far more important than self-examination and understanding.

Counselors who care about their clients also act as advocates for them when necessary. They are willing to move out of the counseling office and seek social change. You may work with others on a specific cause or issue to facilitate general human development and wellness (e.g., prenatal care, child care, fair housing, the homeless, athletic fields for low-income areas). These efforts require you to speak out, to develop skills with the media, and to learn about legal issues. *Ethical witnessing* moves beyond working with victims of injustice to the deepest level of advocacy (Ishiyama, 2006). Counseling, social work, and human relations are inherently social justice professions. Speaking out for social concerns needs our time and attention.

SUMMARY: BEING-IN-RELATION, BECOMING A PERSON-IN-COMMUNITY

Focusing helps the client see issues and concerns in a broader setting. While the “I” focus remains central, we are also *beings-in-relation*. We must start, of course, by focusing on the special individual before us. Interviewing and counseling are for the person. However, by focusing on various dimensions, we can help clients expand their horizons. Connection and interdependence are as important for mental health as are independence and autonomy.

The community genogram places the client in connection with the family in a cultural context. Rather than focusing on the many possible negatives in our communities of origin, the genogram reveals that these are places where we also learned strengths. The imaging of stories about community and cultural strengths can be an important resource in interviewing and counseling.

Group Practice

Exercise 4: Practice Focusing the Interview in a Group

Step 1: Divide into groups.

Step 2: Select a group leader.

Step 3: Assign roles for the first practice session.

- ▲ Client, who has completed a family or community genogram.
- ▲ Interviewer.
- ▲ Observer 1, who will give special attention to focus of the client, using the Feedback Form, Box 10-6. The key microsupervision issue is to help the interviewer continue a central focus on the client while simultaneously developing a comprehensive picture of the client's contextual world.
- ▲ Observer 2, who will give special attention to focus of the interviewer, using the Feedback Form, Box 10-6.

Step 4: Plan. Establish clear goals for the session. The task of the interviewer in this case is to go through all seven types of focus, systematically outlining the client's issue. If the task is completed successfully, a broad outline of client issues should be available.

A useful topic for this role-play is a story from a client's family or community. Your goal here is to help the client see the issues in a broader perspective.

Observers should take this time to examine the feedback form and plan their own interviews. The client may fill out the Client Feedback Form of Chapter 1.

Step 5: Conduct a 5-minute practice session using the focusing skill.

Step 6: Review the practice session and provide feedback for 10 minutes. Give special attention to the interviewer's achievement of goals and determine the mastery competencies demonstrated.

Step 7: Rotate roles.

Some general reminders. Be sure to cover all types of focus; many practice sessions explore only the first three. In some practice sessions three members of the group all talk with the same client, and each interviewer uses a different focus.

Portfolio of Competence

The history of counseling and therapy has provided the field with a primary "I" focus in which the client is considered and treated within a totally individualistic framework. The microskill of focusing is key to the future of interviewing, counseling, and psychotherapy as it broadens the way both interviewers and clients think about the world. This does not deny the importance of the "I" focus. Rather, the multiple narratives made possible by the use of microskills actually strengthen the individual, for we all live as selves-in-relation. We are not alone. The collective strengthens the individual.

At the same time, the above paragraph represents a critical theoretical point. Some might disagree with the emphasis of this chapter and argue that only the individual and problem focus are appropriate. What are your thoughts and feelings on this important point? As you work through this list of competencies, think ahead to how you would include or adapt these ideas in your own Portfolio of Competence.

BOX 10-6 (continued)

Observations about client verbal and nonverbal behavior:

Observations about interviewer verbal and nonverbal behavior:

Use the following as a checklist to evaluate your present level of mastery. As you review the items below, ask yourself, "Can I do this?" Check those decisions that you currently feel able to do. Those that remain unchecked can serve as future goals. Do not expect to attain intentional competence on every dimension as you work through this book. You will find, however, that you will improve your competencies with repetition and practice.

Level 1: Identification and classification. You will be able to identify seven types of focus as interviewers and clients demonstrate them. You will note their impact on the conversational flow of the interview.

- ☐ Identify focus statements of the interviewer.
- ☐ Note the impact of focus statements in terms of client conversational flow.
- ☐ Write alternative focus responses to a single client statement.

Level 2: Basic competence. You will be able to use the seven focus types in a role-play interview and in your daily life.

- ☐ Demonstrate use of focus types in a role-play interview and draw out multiple stories.
- ☐ Use focusing in daily life situations.

Level 3: Intentional competence. Use the seven types of focus in the interview, and clients will change the direction of their conversation as you change focus. Maintain the same focus as your client, if you choose (that is, do not jump from topic to topic). Combine this skill with earlier skills (such as reflection of feeling and questioning) and use each skill with alternative focuses. Check those skills you have mastered and provide evidence via actual interview documentation (transcripts, tapes).

- ☐ Clients tell multiple stories about their issues.
- ☐ Maintain the same focus as my clients.
- ☐ During the interview, observe focus changes in the client's conversation and change the focus back to the original one if it is beneficial to the client.
- ☐ Combine this skill with skills learned earlier; use focusing together with confrontation to expand client development.
- ☐ Use multiple-focus strategies for complex issues facing a client.

Level 4: Psychoeducational teaching competence. Some clients will have a primary “I” focus as they discuss their issues. By learning the skills of multiple focus dimensions, they can discover important new ways to view their issues and become more amenable to change. Those clients who are more externally directed may avoid the “I” focus as they blame others. They also can benefit from learning their responsibility in the larger system. The impact of teaching is measured by the achievement of students, given the preceding criteria.

- Teach focusing to clients and small groups.

DETERMINING YOUR OWN STYLE AND THEORY: CRITICAL SELF-REFLECTION ON FOCUSING

What single idea stood out for you among all those presented in this chapter, in class, or through informal learning? What stands out for you is likely to be important as a guide toward your next steps. What are your thoughts on multicultural issues and the use of the focusing skill? What other points in this chapter struck you as important? How might you use ideas in this chapter to begin the process of establishing your own style and theory? What are your thoughts and experiences with the communication family diagrams?

*What are your
thoughts?*

OUR THOUGHTS ABOUT VANESSA

There are many clients like Vanessa, who have numerous issues in their lives. We, perhaps like you, often feel overwhelmed when we get 3 to 5 nonstop minutes of stories about different complex problems. Sometimes there is an insistence that we do “something” immediately and start solving the issues. We have noted that when we have fallen into solving problems for clients they often refuse to listen to us and generate still more problems and difficulties.

So what needs to be done here? Each client, of course, is unique, and there is no magic answer. But one rule really helps us settle down and start working with the client. Counseling is for the individual client. Our responsibility is to focus on what we can see and work with—specifically, the unique human being in front of us. We can’t see the family, we can’t see the boyfriend, and we can’t study for the client.

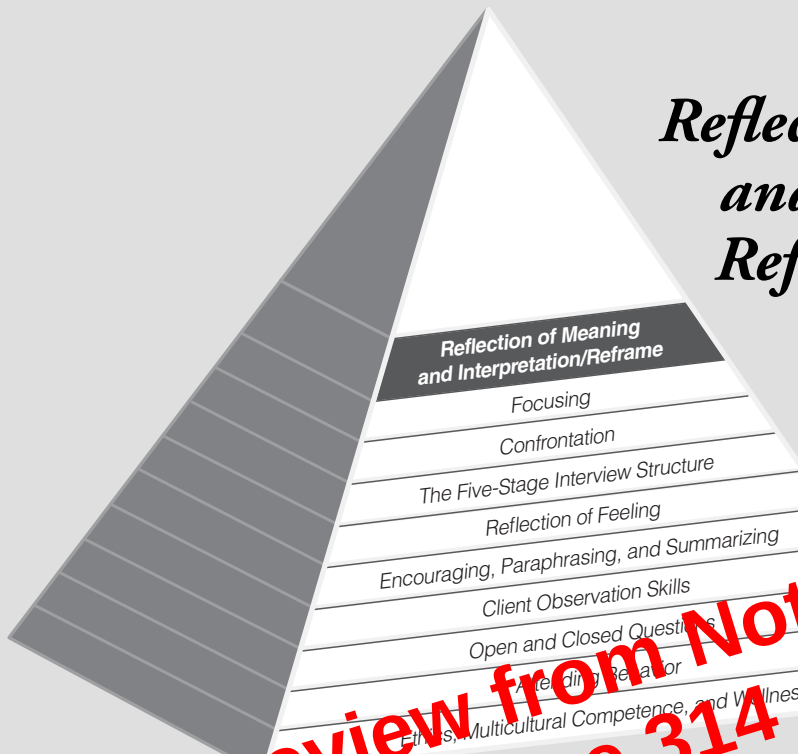
Thus, our first efforts are to focus on the individual client. Although this chapter emphasizes a broadly based contextual perspective, we always want to recognize that counseling is most effective when we focus on the client as the core of our interviewing and treatment plan.

Most likely, with Vanessa, we would listen to her for no more than 3 to 5 minutes—and there are clients who will engage in nonstop talking for that time and longer. At some point, we would likely interrupt and say something like this:

Vanessa, could we stop for a moment? I really hear you loud and clear. There are a lot of things happening right now. One of the best ways to approach these issues is to focus on how you are feeling and what’s happening with you. Once I understand you a bit more, we can move to working on the issues that you describe.

CHAPTER 11

Reflection of Meaning and Interpretation/Reframing: Helping Clients Restory Their Lives



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Then I spoke of the many opportunities of giving life a meaning. I told my comrades . . . that human life, under any circumstances has meaning. . . . I said that someone looks down on each of us in difficult hours—a friend, a wife, somebody alive or dead, or a God—and He would not expect us to disappoint him. . . . I saw the miserable figures of my friends limping toward me to thank me with tears in their eyes.

—Viktor Frankl (who helped many Jews survive and find meaning while imprisoned at Auschwitz during the Holocaust)

How can reflection of meaning and interpretation/reframing help you and your clients?

Chapter Goals

The goal of reflection of meaning is to facilitate clients in finding deeper meanings and values that provide a guiding sense of vision and direction for their lives. The goal of interpretation/reframing is to provide a new way of restorying and understanding thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, which often results in new ways of making meaning. Clients usually generate their own meanings, whereas interpretations/reframes

This chapter is dedicated to Viktor Frankl. The initial stimulus for the skill of reflection of meaning came from a 2-hour meeting with him in Vienna shortly after we visited the German concentration camp at Auschwitz, where he had been imprisoned in World War II. He impressed on us the central value of meaning in counseling and therapy—a topic to which most theories give insufficient attention. It was Frankl's unusual ability to find positive meaning in the face of impossible trauma that impressed us most. His thoughts also impacted our wellness and positive strengths orientation. His theoretical and practical approach to counseling and therapy deserves far more attention than it receives. We have often recommended his powerful book, *Man's Search for Meaning* (1959) to clients who face serious life crises.

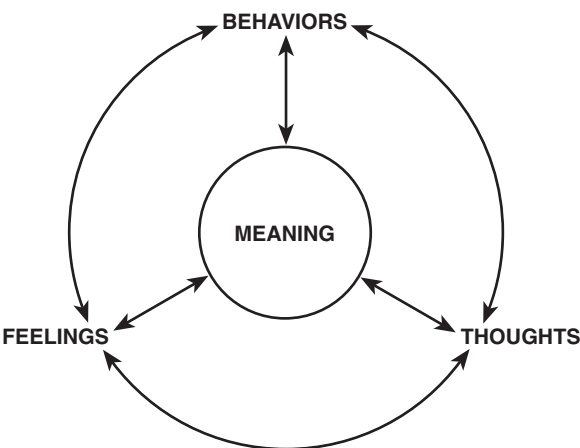


FIGURE 11-1 Pictorial representation of the relationships among behaviors, thoughts, feelings, and meanings.

“What does . . . *mean* to you, your past, or future life?” At the same time, effective exploration of meaning becomes a major strategy in which you bring out client stories, *past, present, and future*. You use all the listening, focusing, and confrontation skills to facilitate this self-examination, yet the focus remains on the client’s meaning and finding purpose in his or her life.

Interpretations and reframes vary with theoretical orientation, and the joint term *interpretation/reframing* is used because both skills focus on providing a new way of thinking or a new frame of reference for the client, but the word “reframe” is a gentler construct that usually comes from your here-and-now observations. Keep in mind when you use influencing skills that interpretive statements are more directive than reflecting meaning. When we use interpretation/reframing we are working primarily from the interviewer’s frame of reference. This is neither good nor bad; rather, it is something we need to be aware of when we use influencing skills.

If you use reflection of meaning and interpretation/reframing skills as defined here, you can *predict* how clients will respond.

Reflection of Meaning	Predicted Result
Meanings are close to core experiencing. Encourage clients to explore their own meanings and values in more depth from their own perspective. Questions to elicit meaning are often a vital first step. A reflection of meaning looks very much like a paraphrase but focuses on going beyond what the client says. Often the words “meaning,” “values,” “vision,” and “goals” appear in the discussion.	The client will discuss stories, issues, and concerns in more depth with a special emphasis on deeper meanings, values, and understandings. Clients may be enabled to discern their life goals and vision for the future.

(continued)

another frame of reference for considering problems or issues. And eventually the client's story may be reconsidered and rewritten as well.

The basic skill of interpretation/reframing may be defined as follows:

- ▲ The counselor listens to the client story, issue, or problem and learns how the client makes sense of, thinks about, or interprets the story or issue.
- ▲ The counselor may draw from personal experience and/or observation of the client (reframe) or may use a theoretical perspective, thus providing an alternative meaning or interpretation of the narrative. This may include *linking* together information or ideas discussed earlier that relate to each other. Linking is particularly important as it integrates ideas and feelings for clients and frees them to develop new approaches to their issues.
- ▲ (positive reframe from personal experience) “You feel that coming out as gay led you to lose your job, and you blame yourself for not keeping quiet. Maybe you just really needed to become who you are. You seem more confident and sure of yourself. It will take time, but I see you growing through this difficult situation.” Here, the blame has been reinterpreted or reframed as a positive step in the long run.
- ▲ (psychoanalytic interpretation with mutuality awareness) “It sounds like the guy who fired you is insecure about anyone who is different from him. He sounds as if he is projecting his own unconscious insecurities on you, rather than looking at his own heterosexism or homophobia.”

Consider an example interpretation/reframe developed from the logic of the interviewer. Allen, the client, was stuck through a divorce and was very angry—a common reaction for those engaged in a major breakup, particularly when finances are involved. He was telling his attorney, at some length, about what he wanted and why. Attorneys use a form of interviewing involving many questions, and it sometimes involves informal counseling. After listening carefully to Allen's issues and acknowledging his strong feeling (acknowledging, not reflecting), the attorney got out from behind the desk and stood over Allen saying: “Allen, that's your story. But I can tell you that you won't get what you want. Your wife has a story as well, and what will happen is something between what you both feel you need and deserve. For your own and your children's sake, think about that.” This was a rather rough and confrontative reframing of Allen's story. It also changed the focus from Allen and his problems to his wife and children. Fortunately, he heard this powerful reframe, and resolution of differences in the divorce finally began.

This story has several implications. First, even with the most effective listening, clients may still hold on to unworkable stories, ineffective thinking, and self-defeating behaviors. Clearly, they need a new perspective. Respect clients' frame of reference before interpreting or reframing their words and life in new ways. In effect, *listen before you provide your interpretation or reframe*. There will always be some clients who will need the strong, confrontative interpretation that Allen got, but recall that the attorney first listened attentively to Allen.

We may also consider the interpretation/reframe as the creation of the *New* because we and the client are building another way to think about issues—and ultimately create a more effective and happy self. The value of an interpretation or reframe depends on the client's reaction to it and how he or she changes thoughts, feelings, or behaviors. Think of the Client Change Scale (CCS)—how does the client react to each interpretation? If the client denies or ignores the interpretation, you obviously are working with denial (Level 1 on the CCS). If the

KEY POINTS (continued)

	For example, you could reflect an immediate meaning this way: “Anish, you value service to others, and you’ve enjoyed working in the hospital as a volunteer.” However, if there is conflict of values and meanings, the following could be added to confront the discrepancy between individual and family values. “On the other hand, your family values medical practice as it offers more money, but you want to work in research on cancer as you see that as the best way to help more people in the long run, and the financial rewards are not as important to you. Have I summarized the value conflict clearly?”
Interpretation/reframing	The counselor helps clients obtain new perspectives, new frames of reference, and sometimes new meanings, all of which can facilitate clients’ changing their view and way of thinking about their issues. This skill comes primarily from the counselor’s observations and occasionally from the client. <i>Theoretical interpretations:</i> These come from specific counseling theory such as psychodynamic and interpersonal, family therapy, or even Frankl’s logotherapy. Clients tell the story or speak about their problems and issues. The counselor then makes sense of what they are saying from their theoretical perspective. “That dream suggests that you have an unconscious wish to run away from your husband.” “Sounds like an issue of what we call boundaries—your husband/wife is not respecting your space.” “I hear you saying that you don’t know where you are going; it sounds like you lack meaning in your life.” <i>Reframes:</i> These tend to come from here-and-now experience in the interview, or they may be larger reframes of major client stories. The reframes are based on your experience in providing the client with another interpretation of what has happened or how the story is viewed. Effective reframes can change the meaning of key narratives in clients’ lives. The positive reframe is particularly important. “Charlis, what stands out to me at this moment is how able you are, and we can use your ‘smarts’ and ability to understand situations to find new, more comfortable directions.” Positive reframes in the here and now are often the most useful.
Interpretation/reframing at the deepest level	Meaning affects interpretation. Viktor Frankl constantly reframed his experience in the German concentration camp, integrating here-and-now positive reframing with meaning. In the middle of the terror, he was able to enjoy the beauty of a sunset; he remembered his times with his wife; he was able to enjoy and focus on tasting and eating a small bit of bread. The major reframe of such traumatic experience, of course, is “I survived” or “You survived.” Despite the traumatic experience (war, rape, accident), you are still here with the possibility of changing a part of the world.

COMPETENCY PRACTICE EXERCISES AND PORTFOLIO OF COMPETENCE

The concepts of this chapter build on previous work. If you have solid attending and client observation skills, can use questions effectively, and can demonstrate effective use of the encourager, paraphrase, and reflection of feeling, you are well prepared for the exercises that follow.

Individual Practice

Exercise 1: Identification of Skills

Read the following client statement. Identify the following counselor responses as para-phrases (P), reflections of feeling (RF), reflections of meaning (RM), or interpretations/reframes.

I feel very sad and lonely. I thought Jose was the one for me. He's gone now. After our breakup I saw a lot of people but no one special. Jose seemed to care for me and make it easy for me. Before that I had fun, particularly with Carlos. But it seemed at the end to be just sex. It appears Jose was it; we seemed so close.

- _____ “You’re really hurting and feeling sad right now.”
- _____ “Since the breakup you’ve seen a lot of people, but Jose provided the most of what you wanted.”
- _____ “Sounds like you are searching for someone to act as the father you never had, and Jose was part of that.”
- _____ “Another way to look at it is that you unconsciously don’t really want to get close; and when you get really close, the relationship binds.”
- _____ “Looks like the loss of peace, caring, ease, and closeness meant an awful lot to you.”
- _____ “You felt really close to Jose and now are sad and lonely.”
- _____ “Peace, caring, and having someone special mean a lot to you. Jose represented that to you. Carlos seemed to mean mainly fun, and you found no real meaning with him. Is that close?”

List possible single-word encouragers for the same client statement. You will find that the use of single-word encouragers, perhaps more than any other skill, leads your client to talk more deeply about the unique meanings underlying behavior and thought. A good general rule is to search carefully for key words, repeat them, and then reflect meaning.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Exercise 2: Identifying Client Issues of Meaning

Affective words in the preceding client statement include “sad” and “lonely.” Some other words and brief phrases in the client statement contain elements that suggest more may be found under the surface. The following are some key words that you may have listed under possible encouragers: “the one for me,” “care for me,” “easy for me,” “I had fun,” “just sex,” and “we seemed close.” The feeling words represent the client’s emotions about the current situation; the other words represent the meanings she uses to represent the world. Specifically, the client has given us a map of how she constructs the world of her relationships with men.

Listening response _____

Interpretation/reframe from a psychodynamic frame of reference (i.e., an interpretation that relates present behavior to something from the past) _____

Interpretation/reframe from a gender frame of reference _____

Interpretation/reframe from your own frame of reference in ways that are appropriate for varying clients _____

Example 5

"I'm thinking of trying some pot. Yeah, I'm only 13, but I've been around a lot. My parents really object to it. I can't see why they do. My friends are all into it and seem to be doing fine."

Listening response _____

Reframe from a conservative frame of reference (one that opposes the use of drugs) _____

Reframe from an occasional user's frame of reference _____

Interpretation from your own frame of reference on this issue _____

The preceding examples of interpretations and reframes are representations of meaning and value issues that you will encounter in interviewing and counseling. What are the value issues involved in these examples and what is your personal position on these issues? Finally,

BOX 11-5 FEEDBACK FORM: INTERPRETATION/REFRAME

_____	_____ (Date)
(Name of Interviewer)	(Name of Person Completing Form)
Instructions: Observer 1 will complete the Client Change Scale in Chapter 9. Observer 2 will complete the items below.	
1. Did the interviewer use the basic listening sequence to draw out and clarify the client's story or concern? How effectively? Preview from Notesale.co.uk Page 343 of 522 2. Provide nonjudgmental, factual, and specific feedback for the interviewer on the use of the interpretation/reframe. 3. Did the interviewer check out the client's reaction to the intervention? Did the client move on the Client Change Scale?	

Level 3: Intentional competence. You will be able to use questioning skill sequences and encouragers to bring out meaning issues and then reflect meaning accurately. You will be able to use the client's main words and constructs to define meaning rather than reframing in your own words (interpretation). You will not interpret but rather will facilitate the client's interpretation of experience.

With interpretation/reframing, you will be able to provide clients with new and fresh perspectives on their issues.

- ☐ Use questions and encouragers to bring out meaning issues.
- ☐ When you reflect meaning, use the client's main words and constructs rather than your own.
- ☐ Reflect meaning in such a fashion that the client starts exploring meaning and value issues in more depth.
- ☐ In the interview, switch the focus as necessary in the conversation from meaning to feeling (via reflection of feeling or questions oriented toward feeling) or to content (via paraphrase or questions oriented toward content).
- ☐ Help others discern their purpose and mission in life.
- ☐ When a person is hyperreflecting on the negative meaning of an event or person, find something positive in that person or event and enable the client to dereffect by focusing on the positive.
- ☐ Provide clients with appropriate new ways to think about the issues, helping them generate new perspectives on their behavior, thought, and feelings.
- ☐ Provide a new perspective via interpretation/reframing, using your own knowledge from the interview, helping your clients use these ideas to enlarge their thinking on their issues.
- ☐ Use various theoretical perspectives to organize your reframing.

Level 4: Psychoeducational teaching competence

- ☐ Teach clients how to examine their own meaning systems.
- ☐ Facilitate others' understanding and use of discernment questioning strategies.
- ☐ Teach reflection of meaning to others.
- ☐ Teach clients how to interpret their own experience from new frames of reference and to think about their experiences from multiple perspectives.
- ☐ Teach interpretation/reframing to others.

DETERMINING YOUR OWN STYLE AND THEORY: CRITICAL SELF-REFLECTION ON REFLECTING MEANING AND INTERPRETATION/REFRAMING

Meaning has been presented as a central issue in interviewing, counseling, and psychotherapy. Interpretation has been presented as an alternative method for achieving much the same objective but with more interviewer involvement. What single idea stood out for you among all those presented in this chapter, in class, or through informal learning? What stands out for you is likely to be important as a guide toward your next steps. What are your thoughts on multicultural issues and the use of this skill? What other points in this chapter struck you as important? How might you use ideas in this chapter to begin the process of establishing your own style and theory? Are you able to find new meanings and reinterpret/reframe your own life experience? And, in particular, what have you learned about discernment and its relation to your own life?

This strategy of logical consequences is particularly important in making decisions and is used in many theoretical approaches to the interview. It is most often a gentle strategy used to help people sort through issues when a decision needs to be made. It may be useful to rank alternatives when a complex decision is faced. In interviewing, assist clients to foresee consequences as they sort through alternatives for action: “If you do . . . , then . . . will possibly result.”

The strategy of logical consequences is most often used in Adlerian counseling (Dreikurs & Gray, 1968; Sweeney, 1998) and decisional counseling (Chapter 13). The interviewer helps individuals explore alternatives, consider consequences of alternatives, and facilitate decision making among the possibilities. For example, an individual may come to the interview aware that changing jobs offers more pay but less aware of the effects of a move to a new city. Through systematic questioning and discussion, the interviewer can help the client clarify the factors involved in the decision. Potential *negative consequences* could include leaving a smoothly functioning and friendly workgroup, disrupting long-term friendships, moving to a new school, and other factors that may cause problems. *Positive consequences* might be a pay raise and the opportunity for further advancement, a better school system, and money for a new home.

In another use of logical consequences, the interviewer or counselor may need to help clients become aware of the potential negative consequences of their actions. Some examples include the client who is thinking of dropping out of school, the pregnant client who has not stopped smoking, or the client who wants to “tell off” a co-worker or friend. It is equally important to help clients anticipate the positive consequences—the results and rewards—of specific behaviors. The pregnant woman’s baby is likely to be healthier if she stops smoking; the client who graduates from school will probably find a better job; and the person struggling with a difficult co-worker or friend may avoid more unpleasantness by simply keeping her or his mouth shut for the moment. Clients can make better decisions when they can envision the likely consequences of any given action.

Counselor: What is likely to happen if you continue smoking while you are pregnant?

Client: I know that it isn’t good, but I can’t stop, and I really don’t want to.

Counselor: Again, what are the possible negative consequences of continuing to smoke?

Client: (pause) I’ve been told that the baby could be harmed.

Counselor: Right; is that something you want? What is the benefit of stopping smoking for the baby?

Client: No, I don’t want to do harm. I’d be so guilty. But how can I stop smoking?

Counselor: Let’s explore that. There are several ways, none of them easy. But let us consider . . .

In situations when the client has been required to come to the session, it is important to note that more power rests with the interviewer. The court may ask the interviewer to recommend actions that the legal system could take. The gentle logical consequence skill becomes more powerful. Warnings are a form of logical consequences and may center on *anticipation of punishment*; if used effectively, warnings may reduce dangerous risk taking and produce desired behavior. The counselor or correctional staff often need to help clients see clearly what might be ahead if they continue the present behavior.

Virtually all human behavior has costs and benefits. By involving the client in examining the pluses and minuses of alternatives, the counselor gives the client the power to make a

The relaxation response is a quickly learned strategy that clients can use immediately. The basic process for relaxation training is presented here. For the training to be effective, the client must be ready, and you will need a minimum of 15 minutes to engage in these fundamentals. Quick learning must be accompanied by daily, serious practice in reaching the here and now. Following are the basics of relaxation training:

1. Ask the client to sit quietly with closed eyes.
2. "Notice your breathing and focus on it. Discover the life-giving breath coming in and out." With practice, this one act is often sufficient to start the relaxation response. A deep breath loosens the body and prepares the client to deal realistically with the situation.
3. "Now, start with your feet and toes. Notice any tension in them; let the tension go, and notice how your muscles feel when they are relaxed."
4. "Next, move up the body, muscle area by muscle area, and relax the tension the same way, until your body is fully relaxed."
5. "Now that we have gone through the basics of relaxation, open your eyes, lower, and pay attention to what is around you. When you get up, do so slowly and relaxed."
6. "How was this experience for you?" "How do you feel?"

With clients who are more tense, this relaxation awareness process may be ineffective. Ask them to tighten each muscle group separately, and then let it go. In this way, they can begin to learn the difference between tension and relaxation. When the tension/relaxation approach is mastered, then turn to the relaxation awareness training.

You can assign relaxation as homework, and then you need to follow up to see if the task was actually done. Homework is necessary for real success. The ultimate goal is for clients to be able to produce a here-and-now relaxation response when faced with stressful situations. Clients learn that they can release here-and-now tension by focusing on their breathing or on a part of their body even while working through the immediate stress. This makes a real difference in how clients respond when facing difficulty.

Mindfulness Meditation and Mindfulness

Jon Kabat-Zinn (2005) has also researched and promoted relaxation as a technique to help people cope with stress, pain, and anxiety. Kabat-Zinn calls his technique the "body scan," which he uses with mindfulness meditation. The body scan is basically the same as Benson's relaxation methods described earlier.

One of Allen and Mary's helpful life experiences occurred over several weeks when they participated in Kabat-Zinn's systematic program and learned mindfulness meditation. This technique is usually preferred by most practitioners over the body scan and systematic relaxation. But we do not believe that interviewers, counselors, and therapists should teach mindfulness unless they have sufficient training and have practiced it themselves. Mindfulness may require a lifestyle change for many.

Mindfulness meditation is derived primarily from Buddhist thought and practice. There is no "goal" except perhaps to live as much as possible in the immediate here and now. Similar in some ways to relaxation, practitioners usually lie comfortably on the floor or sit in a suitable chair, then close their eyes.

The focus becomes the *Now* and paying special attention to breathing, noting the breath come in and out. You may want to breathe in with one nostril and out with the other as this tends to help one focus on the *Now*. Thoughts and feelings will likely start running through

Physical Exercise and Nutrition

A sound body is fundamental to mental health. Moving the body increases blood flow, and an exercise routine has been found to help reduce stress and depression. Proper eating habits and a regime of stretching and meditation make a difference in the life of your clients. Teaching clients how to nourish their bodies is becoming a standard part of counseling. We love and work more effectively if we are comfortable in our bodies. It has even been suggested that it is unethical not to include the recommendation for exercise in all treatment programs (Ratey, 2008).

Counselor: Alisia, you seem stressed much of the time. What's happening with exercise in your life?

Alisia: I simply don't have time, and when I think of it, I realize that I have some errands to run or someone calls me on the cell.

Counselor: Evidence is clear that tension can be relieved by exercise. I'd like you to consider the possibility. What types of exercise have you enjoyed in the past?

Alisia: Well, I used to run, and I did feel more "up" when I got out. But since I've moved to the city, I just don't seem to find time anymore.

Counselor: As part of dealing with Chris and your various stressors, I think it is very important that we start some sort of exercise routine. You feel better and will be able to deal more effectively with those challenges if you take care of yourself.

Alisia: Well . . . I should consider it. I know I felt better when I did run. (pause) But how?

Counselor: Let's work on it. Tell me more about your schedule. (The session continues.)

It is obvious that we can't tell Alisia what to do. For example, "You should start exercising and running daily" simply won't work and will build client resentment. Helping clients change their behavior involves a more subtle use of directives in which the client is a full co-participant in the process. Regardless of what directive you want to provide on any topic, the client has to "buy in" and be central in the choice of action.

One of the best and most important wellness and stress prevention strategies is a well-designed exercise plan. How are you going to integrate these ideas into your own interviewing practice?

Thought-Stopping

This strategy is a brief but effective intervention. If you take the time to learn and practice thought-stopping on yourself, you gain a valuable tool to increase your self-esteem and effectiveness. Thought-stopping is useful for all kinds of client problems: perfectionism, excessive culture-based guilt or shame, shyness, and mild depression. This is one of our favorite strategies, and we have found it very helpful to us and our clients over the years. It stops our negative thinking about ourselves or someone who is troubling us.

Almost everyone engages in internalized negative self-talk. These stressful thoughts are said to yourself, perhaps several times a day. For example:

"Why did I do that?"

"I'm always too shy."

"I always foul up."

"I should have done better."

"Life is so discouraging for me."

"Nobody will listen to me."

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- ▲ *Cognitive behavioral therapy.* CBT is currently the most researched therapy. CBT is rich with many alternative strategies to produce change. Stress management is emphasized here.
- ▲ *Motivational interviewing.* This is a relatively new approach that is rapidly gaining popularity. Developed as a therapy for work with persons suffering from alcoholism, it is now recognized as a highly useful strategy for all clients. You will find that your knowledge of microskills is particularly compatible with this method of helping.

Chapter 15. Determining Personal Style and Future Theoretical/Practical Integration *Intentional Interviewing and Counseling* concludes with a focus on you and your plans for the future.

- ▲ *Level of competence.* How do you assess your abilities in using microskills and strategies?
- ▲ *Preferred interviewing style.* Which theories of counseling appeal to you most?
- ▲ *Sensitivity to multicultural issues.* How will you integrate an awareness of multicultural issues into your interviewing practice?
- ▲ *Natural style.* Putting it all together: Where are you going?

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TABLE 13-2 (continued)

Skill Classifications			Counselor and Client Conversation	Process Comments
Listening and Influencing	Focus	C		
Self-disclosure, open question	Interviewer, client		13. <i>Allen</i> : Well, first, I'm divorced and have one child living with me while the other is in college. Of course, I'd be glad to talk about the counseling career and share some of my thoughts. What thoughts occur to you around divorce and counseling?	Keep self-disclosures brief and return the focus to the client. But be comfortable and open in that process.
	Client, main theme		14. <i>Mary</i> : That helps. Going through my divorce was the worst thing of my life. My children are so important to me. Allen, perhaps your experience with divorce will help you understand where I am coming from. Let's get started and look at what my career should be.	Mary smiles, sits back, and appears to have the information she was wondering about. She actually says, "Let's get started."
STAGE 2: Story and Strengths: Gather data—Draw out stories, concerns, problems, or issues ("What's your concern? What are your strengths or resources?")				
Open question	Client		15. <i>Allen</i> : Could you tell me, Mary, where you would like to start?	In this series of leads you'll find that Allen uses the basic listening sequence of open question, encourager, paraphrase, reflection of feeling, and summary, in order. Many interviewers in different settings will use the sequence or a variation to define the client's problem.
	Client, problem/concern, others		16. <i>Mary</i> : Well . . . ah . . . I guess there's a lot that I'd like to talk about. As I said, I went through . . . ah . . . a difficult divorce, and it was hard on the kids and myself and . . . ah . . . we've done pretty well. We've pulled together. The kids are doing better in school, and I'm doing better. I've . . . ah . . . got a new friend. (breaks eye contact) But, you know, I've been teaching for 13 years and really feel kind of bored with it. It's the same old thing over and over every day; you know . . . parts of it are okay, but lots of it I'm bored with.	As many clients do, Mary starts the session with a "laundry list" of issues. Though the last thing in a laundry list is often what a client wants to talk about; the eye-contact break at mention of her "new friend" raises an issue that should be watched for in the interview. As the session moves along, it becomes apparent that more than the career issue needs to be considered. Mary discusses a "pattern" of boredom. This is indicative of an abstract formal-operational cognitive/emotional style.

(continued)

TABLE 13-2 (continued)

Skill Classifications			Counselor and Client Conversation	Process Comments
Listening and Influencing	Focus	C		
			I really felt good being able to share some of my ideas with some people on the staff. I felt that was kind of neat, being able to teach other adults.	The “I” statements here are more positive, and the adjective descriptors indicate more self-assurance.
Closed question	Client, others		31. <i>Allen</i> : Do you involve yourself very much in counseling the students you have?	A closed question with a change of topic to explore other areas.
	Client, others		32. <i>Mary</i> : Well, the kids . . . you know, teaching them is a nice, comfortable environment, and kids stop in before class and after class, and they talk about their boyfriends and girlfriends. I find I like that part . . . about their concerns.	Mary responds to the word “counseling” going with discussion of interactions with people. It seems important to Mary that she have contact with others.
Summary, closed question	Client, problem/ others		33. <i>Allen</i> : So, as we’ve been reviewing your current job, it’s the training, the drug education, some of the teaching you’ve done with kids on topics other than phys. ed. (<i>Mary</i> : That’s right.) And getting out and doing training and other stuff with teachers . . . ah, sharing some of your expertise there. And the counseling relationships. (<i>Mary</i> : Ummm.) Out of those things, are there fields you’ve thought of transferring to?	This summary attempts to bring out the main strands of the positive aspects of Mary’s job. In an ongoing interview, a closed question on a relevant topic can be as facilitating as an open question. Note, however, that the interviewer still directs the flow with the closed question.
	Client, problem/ concern		34. <i>Mary</i> : Well, a lot of people in physical education go into counseling. That seems like a natural second thing. Ah . . . of course, that would require some more going to school. Umm . . . I’ve also thought about doing some management training for a business. Sometimes I think about moving into business . . . entirely away from education. Or even working in a college as opposed to working here in the high school. I’ve thought about those things, too. But I’m just not sure which one seems best for me.	Mary talks with only moderate enthusiasm about counseling. In discussing training and business, she appears more involved. Mary appears to have assets and abilities, makes many positive “I” statements, is aware of key incongruities in her life, and seems to be internally directed. She is clearly an abstract formal-operational client. For career success, she needs to become more concrete and action-oriented.

(continued)

TABLE 13-2 (continued)

Skill Classifications			Counselor and Client Conversation	Process Comments
Listening and Influencing	Focus	C		
Paraphrase, reflection of feeling	Client, problem/concern	C	55. <i>Allen:</i> Mm-hmm . . . so you've thought about it . . . looking into business, but you've not done too much about it yet. Neither teaching nor business is really promising now, and that's a little scary.	This paraphrase is somewhat subtractive. Mary did indicate that she had summer experience with her father. How much and how did she like it? Allen missed that. The paraphrase involves a confrontation between what Mary says and her lack of doing anything extensive in terms of a search. The reflection of feeling acknowledges emotion.
	Client		56. <i>Mary:</i> That's right. I've thought about it, but . . . ah . . . I've done very little about it. That's all . . .	Mary feels a little apologetic. She talks a bit more rapidly, breaks eye contact, and her body leans back a little. Mary's response is at Level 2 on the CCS. She is only partially able to work with the issues of the confrontation.
Interpretation	Problem/concern		57. <i>Allen:</i> And, finally, you mentioned that you have considered the counseling field as an alternative. Ah . . . what about that?	Allen omitted further exploration of business. If Allen had focused on positive aspects of Mary's experience and learned more about her summer experience, the confrontation (of thinking without action) probably would have been received more easily. As this was a demonstration interview, Allen sought to move through the stages perhaps a little too fast. Also, the counseling field is an alternative, but it seems to come more from Allen than from Mary. An advantage of transcripts such as this is that one can see errors. Many of our errors arise from our own constructs and needs. This intended paraphrase is classified as an interpretation, as it comes more from Allen's frame of reference than from Mary's.
	Problem/concern, others		58. <i>Mary:</i> Well, I've always been interested, like I said, in talking with people. People like to talk with me about all kinds of things. And <i>that</i> would be interesting . . . ah . . . I think, too.	Mary starts with some enthusiasm on this topic, but as she talks her speech rate slows, and she demonstrates less energy.

(continued)

TABLE 13-2 (continued)

Skill Classifications			Counselor and Client Conversation	Process Comments
Listening and Influencing	Focus	C		
Interpretation	Client, others		73. <i>Allen:</i> And, I sense you have some reactions to his . . .	Allen interrupts, perhaps unnecessarily. It might have been wise to allow Mary to talk about her positive feelings toward Bo.
	Client, problem/concern		74. <i>Mary:</i> Yeah, I'd like to be able to explore some of my own potential without having those restraints put on me right from the beginning.	Mary talks slowly and deliberately, with some sadness in her voice. Feelings are often expressed through intonation. Here we see the beginning of a critical gender issue. Women often feel constraints in career or personal choices, and men in this culture often place implicit or explicit restraints on critical decisions. Feminist counseling theorists argue that a male helper may be less effective with these types of problems. What are your thoughts on this issue?
Interpretation/reframe, check-out	Client, problem/concern, others, cultural/environmental/contextual		75. <i>Allen:</i> Um-hmm . . . In a sense he's almost placing similar constraints on you that you feel in the job in physical education. There are certain things you have to do. Is that right?	This interpretation relates the construct of boredom and the implicit constraint of being held down with the constraints from Bo. The interpretation clearly comes from Allen's frame of reference. With interpretations or helping leads from your frame of reference, the check-out of client reactions is even more important. The drawing of parallels is abstract formal-operational in nature.
	Client, problem/concern, others		76. <i>Mary:</i> Yes, probably so. He's putting some limits on me . . . setting limits on the fields I can explore and the job possibilities I can possibly have. Setting some limits so that my schedule matches his schedule.	Mary answers quickly. It seems the interpretation was relatively accurate and helpful. One measure of the function and value of a skill is what the client does with it. Mary changes the word "constraints" to the more powerful word "limits." Mary remains at Level 3 on the CCS, as she is still expanding on aspects of the problem.
Open question, oriented to feeling	Client		77. <i>Allen:</i> In response to that you feel . . . ? (deliberate pause, waiting for Mary to supply the feeling)	Research shows that <i>some</i> use of questions facilitates emotional expression.

(continued)

We believe that all interviewing and counseling could be described as decisional processes. This is so whether you are deciding your college major, selecting your career, or determining whether to obtain a divorce. The person-centered approach is focused on deciding what type of person you are and what you want to be. Logotherapy and Victor Frankl remind us of the need for deciding our life direction. Cognitive-behavior theory and practice focus on solving and resolving many types of problems and issues. Brief therapy is very much a decisional approach, but it places much more attention on the clear definition of life goals.

Key points of Chapter 13 are summarized below.

■ KEY POINTS	
Decisional counseling	Decisional counseling, a modern reformulation of trait-and-factor theory, assumes that most, perhaps all, clients are involved in making decisions. By considering many traits of the person and factors in the environment, it is possible to arrive at a more rational and emotionally satisfying decision.
Decisional structure and alternative theories	The restorying model of the interview can be considered a basic decisional model underlying other theories of counseling and therapy. Once you have mastered the skills and strategies of intentional interviewing and the five-stage model, you will find that you can more easily master other theories of helping.
Interview analysis	Using the constructs of this book, it is possible to examine your own interviewing style and that of others for microskill usage, focus, structure of the interview, and the resultant effects on a client's cognitive and emotional developmental style.
Interview plan and note taking	It is possible to use the restorying model structure to plan your interview before you actually meet with a client. This same five-stage structure can be used as an outline for note taking after the interview is completed.
Treatment plan, case conceptualization, and case management	A treatment plan is a long-term plan for conducting a course of interviews or counseling sessions. Case conceptualization is your integration of client, issues, challenges, and goals for the future. Case management often leads to alternative change strategies beyond the original interview and may involve efforts with the family, community, and other agencies.

COMPETENCY PRACTICE EXERCISE AND PORTFOLIO OF COMPETENCE

Students often find that the highlight of their experience with this book is videotaping or audiotaping their own session, transcribing it, and analyzing what occurred. You will find that you have learned a great deal about what occurs in the interview, and your ability to discuss what you see will be invaluable throughout your interviewing or counseling career.

Practice Exercise in Case Conceptualization and Interview Analysis

This is the most important practice exercise in this book. It involves conducting a complete interview and preparing a transcript in which you demonstrate your interviewing style, classify your behavior, and comment on your development over the term.

Interviewer and Client Conversation	Process Comments
<i>Dr. Brinkley:</i> Stressors are simply internal or external conditions or situations. Internal because, for example, you said your mind won't shut up, and you end up feeling pressure. It's not anything going on outside of you; it's your mind that's precipitating the stress symptoms. So it's what you're thinking and saying to yourself. But for external, that's something outside of us. So stressors can be negative thoughts, events, people, situations, traffic, like that. All of these can impact your mind and body in negative ways.	Information/psychological education, including instructions about some elements of stress.
<i>Tonya:</i> Mind and body, huh. . . . That makes sense.	
<i>Dr. Brinkley:</i> And what's key here is our perception. Sometimes when our perception of something that needs our attention outweighs our perception of our ability to cope, we start to experience some different symptoms of stress. So stress is based on our perception, the meaning we give to different situations.	Information with elements of reframing—specifically, the explanation about how our perceptions affect reality.
<i>Tonya:</i> My perception, huh? But how do I give meaning to a situation?	
<i>Dr. Brinkley:</i> Well . . . drawing on past experiences with a similar situation, beliefs and values from your family or cultural background, and maybe some fears about the future. What we're trying to do is to make the new situation make sense based on what we already know. And by the way, we are the only ones who can give meaning to those situations.	A complex interviewer comment with multiple dimensions. Note the focus on family and the cultural/environmental/contextual, linkage of these issues to current situations, but ultimately focusing on Tonya, the individual's need to make her own meanings.
<i>Tonya:</i> So I give meaning to it by trying to understand the situation and use my life as a guide, so I can then do something about it? So you mean, it's like, I <i>love</i> my calculus class; I always feel so psyched there.	
<i>Dr. Brinkley:</i> Exactly. The meaning you give to that class is excitement, you love it, and you look forward to it. Right?	Reflection of Tonya's meaning system, which helps her understand how she can take more direction in her own life.
<i>Tonya:</i> Yeah, I do. And after class, I'm still psyched, so I use that energy for my physics lab.	Don't we all wish that we had that excitement for school? Dr. Brinkley is lucky to have this client.
<i>Dr. Brinkley:</i> So for you, your calculus class energizes you, but for others, they'd rather have a root canal with no anesthesia than have to take it. So the meaning they give to this situation is possibly based on past experiences with terrible math professors. So their belief becomes, "This is going to be stressful, and I don't want to have anything to do with it."	Dr. Brinkley begins with an interesting confrontation illustrating where Tonya stands in contrast to others who are less enthusiastic about math. She explains various meaning systems developed in the past (there and then) and how they relate to the now. Then she offers the interpretation that fear of something being stressful leads many people to avoid tasks.

(continued)

Interviewer and Client Conversation	Process Comments
	behavioral while the naming is cognitive—thus cognitive-behavioral counseling. Following that, she imprinted the cognitive-behavioral experience through silence, thus making it more likely that Tonya will be able to draw on her grandmother's words in times of stress. And the exercise itself also becomes a multicultural experience. We can draw on our cultural and family backgrounds to help us through stressful experiences. What is your "Peace, be still"?
<i>Dr. Brinkley:</i> Yes you can. Now let's try something else. It's called cognitive restructuring. Tonya, remember last week when we discussed the need to look at your thinking process about events and people in your life?	Clear transfer to another strategy. With most clients, you will want to use only one strategy per session.
<i>Tonya:</i> Yes, I think you said we should look at how my words, my thoughts, my perception of situations can influence how I feel and then what I do.	Perceptions here are thoughts that come from our center of meaning; see Chapter 11 diagram, page 294.
<i>Dr. Brinkley:</i> Right. And we talked about continuing to self-monitor your triggers for anxiety and worry, and we identified that they were physical sensations and thoughts. Today, I want to add something to be about thoughts and about our choice of words. We've talked about how our choice of words can influence how we feel, and that in turn can influence what we eventually do. Our choice of words can make us feel good or not so good. One way most of us feel good is when we think we have possibilities and control in our lives, rather than others controlling us.	Words give meaning to experience. Dr. Brinkley is enforming a new story about the way our bodies inform us about what is happening. Implicit is a focus on words and meaning. A person's body is the first alert system, moving even faster than words. But the words used and the thoughts associated with them also influence how the body reacts and feels.
<i>Tonya:</i> Yeah, I feel good when I have choices. I really hate feeling boxed in. But I feel I have no choice in that class.	
<i>Dr. Brinkley:</i> Since you say you hate feeling boxed in, what do you think about the possibility that sometimes the words we say to ourselves can decrease the choices we see for ourselves? For example, I noticed several times today that you used the word <i>should</i> to describe things. Did you notice that?	Paraphrasing, information giving, and focusing on the key word <i>should</i> . Watch your clients for "shouldy" language and "oughts." These are important words, because living a life dictated by the word <i>should</i> is very different from naming it as "my life," "I could," "I decided," or "by my own choice."
<i>Tonya:</i> Ahhh, well, no.	
<i>Dr. Brinkley:</i> That's okay for right now. But I do have another question for you that's related to our choice of words and using the word <i>should</i> . What do you think of the possibility that some of your thoughts may not be as truthful as your mind tells you?	Open-ended question.

(continued)

Interviewer and Client Conversation	Process Comments
<i>Tonya:</i> You mean what I think is real, may not really be real?	
<i>Dr. Brinkley:</i> Well, yes and no. No, because sometimes, what we think is happening, really is happening, like when you're anxious and troubled by the treatment you're getting in class. This is true. But when you think about this situation almost all the time, your thinking may not be as accurate. (information and instruction) Because we talk to ourselves a lot and if what we mostly say to ourselves is negative or in absolutes, like "always," "never," "I should," or "I have to," pretty soon those messages can become automatic, and we may begin to believe them and think that they're true.	Information/instruction with some interpretation/reframing. Dr. B is returning once again to automatic thoughts and how the words we use determine our inner feelings and meanings.
<i>Tonya:</i> So you mean it's like I think I'm afraid in class, and thinking about it makes it so. I know my body gets tense and upset, but what about the words I say to myself?	
<i>Dr. Brinkley:</i> Well, for example, we say words like <i>should</i>, <i>always</i>, <i>never</i>; those are called absolutes; they are either/or with no gray area. Yet is life really full of absolutes, no middle ground, no possibilities?	Information/psychological education.
<i>Tonya:</i> Hadn't thought about that before. I guess not.	
<i>Dr. Brinkley:</i> I mean, basically what you're doing is creating possibilities with your words and giving up the use of <i>have to</i> and <i>should</i>. One thing you may notice is that when you change the words, your emotions may change and things may seem a little easier. And this is related to your tension in class. Now usually our thinking, it's so automatic, we don't monitor our thoughts, and we end up feeling not so good. But if we begin to take a few extra seconds, notice our words and thoughts, and create openings or possibilities instead of absolutes and closures, we may begin to notice we feel differently. This is like when we talked earlier about using words that were meaningful to you to help you relax. You gave yourself an opening, a possibility.	Dr. B starts with more information/psychological education. This is followed by linkage, instruction about automatic thoughts, and how these thoughts relate to emotions and the body.
<i>Tonya:</i> So are you saying that I should, I <i>could</i>, change some of the words and thoughts, and that may change the way I feel?	Tonya paraphrases and provides a brief summary, indicating that she understands. When clients start repeating new material from the interview, we have a clear example of restorying.

(continued)

Stage 5. Action: Generalizing and Action on New Stories

Interviewer and Client Conversation	Process Comments
<i>Tonya:</i> I'm starting to feel some of these benefits, both physical and psychological, so you don't have to convince me about exercise. And, you know, as I feel better, I think I can handle the situation in class with the professors and students—but I still need a lot of help there.	
<i>Dr. Brinkley:</i> I hear you. Could you sum up for me what you plan for the coming week?	It is best if the client can summarize the session. But be ready to supplement that summary as necessary.
<i>Tonya:</i> First, I'm going to practice calming myself when I feel tense—"Peace, be still" will remind me of better times and my grandmother. It'll help me relax. I think the change of words will be more difficult, but I'll give it a shot. I'm a very responsible person, and I guess I do have a lot of <i>shoulds</i> in my life. Perhaps the automatic thoughts charts will help in that. But, certainly, the exercise will continue. I've been amazed how much better I feel when I take time for it. I'm beginning to think it is basic for me if things are going to get better.	The word <i>perhaps</i> is important. Tonya has not fully bought into the automatic thoughts procedure. When talking about homework, observe the client's nonverbals as well. Be ready in the next session to check on homework and work on it to ensure that relapse is less likely to occur.
<i>Dr. Brinkley:</i> Great summary. I couldn't have said it better myself. Well, looking forward to seeing you next week.	
<i>Tonya:</i> Thanks, I'll be here.	

Dr. Brinkley did not bring up the issue of racism in the classroom until the third session. Because part of Dr. Brinkley's ethnic heritage is African American, it might be easier for her to discuss this issue with Tonya. However, remember that several factors must be considered when attempting to create and maintain an effective therapeutic relationship, such as Hays's (2007) multidimensional addressing factors, not just a possible shared ethnic heritage.

Additionally there are some general principles for dealing with racism or other forms of oppression that may show up in the session. First, don't shy away from talking about oppression. You will find some students who blame themselves or the general situation for the difficulties. "Professors have so many students and very few minorities. Maybe I should speak up for my own race, but it feels so uncomfortable." "If I weren't lesbian, they wouldn't bother me." "I know that it's hard for the administration. They'd like to help those of us who are disabled, but the legislature says no."

Name it! If the client is experiencing something that appears to be racism, heterosexism, any type of ableism, or some other form of oppression, name what is occurring and state that it is wrong! Interviewers, counselors, and therapists tend to be gentle people and like to avoid conflict. This is a place where you can help your clients. In the process of naming, you are changing cognitions in important ways.

idea that something can be done. Your goal in this stage is to solidify and organize the solutions and move toward concrete action. Work on the clearly defined goals in specific manageable form. Every successful idea for solution needs to have a practical use outside the session.

Basic questions.

- ▲ What have you been doing right?
- ▲ What do you have to keep doing so that things continue to improve?
- ▲ What will tell you that things are going well?
- ▲ How can we take what we have learned today to daily life?

Thinking about change and “taking it home.” We need to change negative talk to a new conversation about change and possibility. We need to transfer session learning to the real world. General guidelines from de Shazer (1985, 1993) include these:

- ▲ Note what the clients do that is good, useful, and effective. Find out what efforts they have been making and support their process of change. This is essentially the microskills positive asset search.
- ▲ Note exceptions to the problem. What is going on when the problem isn't happening? Be concrete and specific in this search.
- ▲ Promote the two above to relate to clear, specific client goals.

In effect, de Shazer says *work on what we have already done*. If you did a good job with goals, exceptions, and other elements, the solution may already be in hand and may just need to be reemphasized.

Brief solution-focused counseling represents a contract and commitment to the clients. Do not leave them at this point. Stay with them until they accomplish *their goals*. Contract for specific follow-up in the next session or by phone. Assign a task that the client can use to ensure transfer from the interview. Concrete, achievable tasks, set up in small increments, move the client toward significant change. Homework is valuable to ensure learning.

As part of brief solution-focused counseling you could ask the child, adolescent, or adult client to tell the old story from a new frame of reference. Children can be asked to draw pictures of the old story and pictures of the new. The newly developed narrative becomes the cognitive and emotional framework for behavioral change. The skill of interpretation/reframing and focusing can help to describe the problem in new ways. For example, the old perspective may have focused on what other people are doing to make the client's life miserable. The new story focuses on what the client can do or has done to cope successfully with the situation. White and Epston (1992) suggest that counselors write down summaries of the client's new possibilities and share them in a letter sent to the client's home or at the next session. Finally, remind your client that he or she is welcome to come back at a future time for more work on this concern or any new issues that may arise.

Bringing multicultural issues into brief solution-focused counseling. A questioning style can be a problem if you have not built sufficient rapport and trust with your client. Establishing a natural and effective rapport is perhaps even more important in this approach than it is in others. Listen to the story until the client is ready; share your questions and interview plan with the client. Emphasis on positives will help make the solution approach culturally relevant. Box 14-3 illustrates the importance of using a multicultural approach to brief solution-focused counseling.

BOX 14-5 (continued)

D. Strategies to provide appropriate outcomes for behaviors: Regulating consequences

9. Can you identify some probable outcomes of succeeding with your new behavior? _____
10. How can you reward yourself for a job well done? _____
Generate specific rewards and satisfactions. _____

III. PREDICTING THE CIRCUMSTANCE OF THE FIRST POSSIBLE FAILURE (LAPSE)

Describe the details of how the first lapse might occur, including people, places, times, and emotional states. This will be helpful to you in coping with the lapse when and if it comes.

Stage 1. Relationship: Initiating the Session

Farah: Good morning, Jerome. Today we've got a little less than an hour. At the beginning the most important thing is that I listen to what you have to say. I'd like to know what your concerns are and what you'd like to see as a result of being with me. There will be some details I'll ask you about a while. Perhaps we could begin with your telling me what you'd like to talk about.

Needless to say, this introduction will vary with the client. MI does not stress multicultural issues, and we believe that the system would profit from more attention to individual and cultural variation. Thus we would suggest that you take whatever time is necessary to build sufficient rapport and trust before starting, although many clients would be "ready to go" with this brief introduction by Farah. However, if a true collaborative interview is to follow, it may be important in some cases to discuss differences of ethnicity/race or gender and share something of yourself.

Let us assume that Jerome comes to Farah with an issue around alcohol abuse. He shares his story in response to that beginning question. He tells Farah that his family has told him that he drinks too much and needs to get help. He says that he'd like to stop. MI theory recommends that we start working on change immediately.

The counselor, Farah, brings out a paper with a 10-point scale below and asks Jerome to indicate how important changing his behavior is to him. Jerome rated his interest as a 7—interested in change, but not fully committed.

How Committed Are You to Change and Reach Your Goals?

Not Interested
or Motivated

Somewhat Interested
and Motivated

Let's Start, I'm Ready!
Highly Motivated

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

The rating scale is an important "hook" in MI as it immediately introduces belief in the possibility of change, and the counselor also learns of the client's depth of motivation.

BOX 14-6 FEEDBACK FORM: MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING

_____	_____ (Date)
(Name of Interviewer)	(Name of Person Completing Form)
Relationship: Initiating the session—Rapport and structuring (“Hello; this is what might happen in this session”). How well did the interviewer structure the interview? How did he or she establish rapport? Was the client’s motivation for change explored? Did the client complete the 10-point motivation for change score? Story and strengths: Gathering data—Drawing out stories, concerns, problems, or issues (“What is your concern? What are your strengths or resources?”). Was the basic listening sequence used to widen awareness with special attention to “change talk”? Were the positives and negatives of the area of potential change explored? Did the counselor offer sufficient client affirmations? Goals: Mutual goal setting—Establishing outcomes (“What do you want to happen?”). Were positives and negatives around change explored on the decisional balance sheet? Was there some future pacing with the client such as “What are the future consequences of change?” Restory: Working—Exploring alternatives, confronting client incongruities and conflict, restorying (“What are we going to do about it?”). Was the counselor able to maintain a client focus on change talk? How did the counselor handle resistance (be specific)? Was the client able to shift style and try another skill or tactic if resistance was met? Was listening continued? Was a “confidence ruler” brought in and were past strengths and successes of the client reviewed as support mechanisms? Action: Terminating—Generalizing and action on new stories. (“Will you do it?”). How did the interviewer go about helping the client develop a concrete plan for action? Was the Maintaining Change and Relapse Prevention Worksheet used? Did the interviewer really help the client plan for generalization to daily life? General comments on interview and skill usage:	

circles as noted in the legend below the chart. Then compare your preferred skill pattern with Table 15-2 on the next page. Which theory (or theories) most closely matches your preferred skill pattern? Do the meaning issues that you select relate to the theories presented in that table? Does the result suggest areas that you may want to study further?

	<i>Microskill Lead</i>	<i>Skill Preferences on 3-Point Scale</i>			<i>Fill in the Circles (see legend below)</i>
BASIC	Open question	1	2	3	☐
LISTENING	Closed question	1	2	3	☐
SKILLS	Encourager	1	2	3	☐
	Paraphrase	1	2	3	☐
	Reflection of feeling	1	2	3	☐
	Summarization	1	2	3	☐
INFLUENCING	Reflection of meaning	1	2	3	☐
SKILLS	Interpretation/reframing	1	2	3	☐
	Self-disclosure	1	2	3	☐
	Feedback	1	2	3	☐
	Logical consequences	1	2	3	☐
	Information/psychoeducation	1	2	3	☐
	Direction	1	2	3	☐
	Confrontation (combined skill)	1	2	3	☐
SKILL FOCUS	Client	1	2	3	☐
	Main theme/problem	1	2	3	☐
	Other	1	2	3	☐
	Family	1	2	3	☐
	Mutuality	1	2	3	☐
	Counselor/interviewer	1	2	3	☐
	Cultural/environmental/contextual	1	2	3	☐
MEANING	Which issues of meaning would you most like to address?				
TALK-TIME	What amount of talk-time do you believe is appropriate?		High	Medium	Low
THEORY	Which theory (theories) do you prefer?				

Legend: ● Your favorite skill. ● Will use often. ○ Will use occasionally.

Your Personal Style and Future Theoretical/Practical Integration

There are two major factors to consider as you move toward identifying your own personal style and integrating the many available theories—your own personal authenticity and the needs and style of the client. Unless a skill or theory harmonizes with who you are, it will tend to be false and less effective. It is also obvious that modifying your natural style and theoretical orientation will be necessary if you are to be helpful to many different clients.

In summary, remember that you are unique, and so are those whom you would serve. We all come from varying families, differing communities, and distinct views of gender, ethnic/racial, spiritual, and other multicultural issues.

constantly. The basic listening sequence, in particular, is likely part of your being at this point. Moreover, expect that the *relationship—story and strengths—goals—restory—action* framework will become part of your practice, regardless of your final theoretical orientation.

The next steps are yours. Many of you will be moving on to individual theories of counseling, exploring issues of family counseling and therapy, becoming involved in the community, and learning the many aspects of professional practice. Others may find this presentation sufficient for their purposes. We have designed this book as a clear summary of the basics; a naturally skilled person can use the information here for many effective and useful helping sessions.

We have selected a few key books that will help you follow up on ideas from our presentation. The books will take you in very different directions, but we have found them all helpful. Select one or two favorites to start and then expand from there. Enjoy delving more deeply into our exciting field.

We have enjoyed sharing this time with you. We have come a long way together and we appreciate your patience. Many of the ideas for presentation in this book have come from students. We hope you will take a moment to provide us with your feedback and suggestions for the future. Again, e-mail us at info@emicrotraining.com and say hello. These pages will be constantly updated with new ideas and information. You have joined a never-ending time of growth and development.

The relationship is forever. . . . Find joy in helping.

—Benjamin Zander

Welcome to the field of interviewing and counseling! You are the key to the future.

Allen, Mary, and Carlos

SUGGESTED SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

The literature of the field is extensive, and you will want to sample it on your own. We would like to share a few specific books that we find helpful as next steps to follow up ideas presented here. All of the materials build on the concepts of this book, but we have recommended some books that take different perspectives from our own.

Microskills

www.emicrotraining.com

Visit this Web site for up-to-date information on microcounseling, microskills, and multicultural counseling and therapy. You likely will enjoy the many interviews with leaders of the field. There are links to professional associations, ethics codes, and many multicultural and professional sites.

Daniels, T., & Ivey, A. (2007). *Microcounseling* (3rd ed.). Springfield, IL: Thomas.

The theoretical and research background of microskills is presented here in detail.

Evans, D., Hearn, M., Uhlemann, M., & Ivey, A. (2007). *Essential interviewing* (7th ed.). Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole.

Microskills in a programmed text format.

Ivey, A., Gluckstern, N., & Ivey, M. (1997). *Basic influencing skills* (3rd ed.). Hanover, MA: Microtraining Associates.

More data on the influencing skills. Supporting videotapes are available.

Davis, M., Eshelman, E., & McKay, M. (2008). *The relaxation and stress reduction workbook* (6th ed.). Oakland, CA: New Harbinger.

This is clear, direct, and easily translatable into microskills approaches to the interview.

Dobson, K. (Ed.). (2002). *Handbook of cognitive-behavioral therapies* (2nd ed.). New York: Guilford.

A comprehensive and specific presentation of key skills, strategies, and theories.

Wolpe, J., & Lazarus, A. (1966). *Behavior therapy techniques*. New York: Pergamon.

Old but in many ways still the best and worth searching for in the library.

Multicultural Counseling and Therapy

Fouad, N., & Arredondo, P. (2008). *Becoming culturally oriented: Practical advice for psychologists and educators*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

The most comprehensive coverage of the necessary skills and competencies in the multicultural area.

Sue, D. W., Ivey, A., & Pedersen, P. (1999). *A theory of multicultural counseling and therapy*. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole.

The first general theory of MCT with many implications for practice.

Sue, D. W., & Sue, D. (2008). *Counseling the culturally diverse* (5th ed.). New York: Wiley.

The classic of the field. This book helped launch a movement.

Integrative/Eclectic Orientations

Ivey, A. (2000/1986). *Developmental therapy*. Hanover, MA: Microtraining.

Two books that offer skill integration as well as a developmental theory. Useful follow-up from microskills training, particularly in the focus on sensorimotor, concrete, formal, and dialectic/systemic strategies.

Ivey, A., Ivey, A., Myers, J., & Sweeney, T. (2006). *Developmental counseling and therapy: Promoting wellness over the lifespan*. Boston: Little, Brown, Houghton-Mifflin.

Lazarus, A. (2006). *The manual way*. New York: Springer.

The basic model for eclectic multimodal therapy. You will find the BASIC-ID model useful in conceptualizing broad treatment plans.

Psychodynamic Theory

Bowlby, J. (1988). *A secure base: Parent-child attachment and healthy human development*. New York: Basic Books.

Bowlby has become the most researched figure in the psychodynamic framework. His work on human attachment will continue to be the foundation for psychodynamic practice in the near future.

Miller, A. (1981). *The drama of the gifted child*. New York: Basic Books.

One route to understanding psychodynamic theory is looking at your own experience. This book reads well and can make a difference in the way you think about yourself as a counselor. Our students often thank us for referring them to Alice Miller.

NEUROSCIENCE RESEARCH AND INTERVIEWING, COUNSELING, AND PSYCHOTHERAPY: MODELING INTERDISCIPLINARY INTEGRATION

The whole brain is greater than the sum of its parts, and the brain is a constantly interacting system within itself and in relation to the cultural/environmental/contextual (CEC). Each component affects the total system of the holistic brain. Knowledge of the brain and awareness of the constant new knowledge being developed will lead you to more effective intentional interviewing and counseling. Of necessity, the following discussion breaks down the brain into specific parts, which are important for you to know, if you are to communicate with other professionals in the near future. Two important issues as you read this appendix:

1. This book presents a basic beginning to a very complex area of study. It is the first book to discuss the implications of a skills approach to neuroscience, interviewing, and counseling. This is only a beginning. A lot more is coming. Some key books and an audio tape for further study will follow this presentation.
2. *Again, the brain is holistic, and each part affects the others.* One caveat: Often discussion of a single part of the brain is presented. Always recall that this is an overview of complex interacting parts and that considerable further study is needed to complete the picture.

The key term for this new field is *neuroplasticity*. Simply put, the brain can change—it is not fixed, and it responds to external environmental events and actions initiated by the individual. The old idea that the brain does not change is simply wrong. Neuroplasticity means that even in old age, new neurons, new connections, and new neural networks are born and can continue development. “Neuroplasticity can result in the wholesale remodeling of neural networks . . . A brain can rewire itself” (Schwartz & Begley, 2002, p. 16).

Particularly fascinating is *neurogenesis*, the development of completely new neurons, even in the aged. For example, there is evidence in adults that this occurs in the *hippocampus*, the main seat of memory (Siegel, 2007). This is where effective counseling can affect important change and new neural connections, but there are many areas of the brain where neurogenesis occurs. We develop new neural networks throughout the lifespan in response to new situations or experiences in the environment. Exercise is particularly important as a lifetime process to ensure brain and physical health (Ratey, 2008). Exercise increases blood flow and the release of positive neurotransmitters such as serotonin. Many of you reading this have experienced the serotonin “high” of running or other physical activity. This positive high through exercise needs to be part of your treatment regime. It is particularly helpful for depression due to serotonin release. If you are sad—walk or run! If you can’t run, meditate and use relaxation training.

SOME BASIC BRAIN STRUCTURE

There are some key aspects of the brain that will enable you to understand and converse with physicians, neuropsychologists, and others that you will encounter in your career.

The frontal lobe (see Figure AII-1) is associated with executive functioning, abstract reasoning, and decision making. It is also the focus of much of motor behavior and the attentional processes. The *prefrontal cortex* is at the very front of this lobe. Clients with frontal lobe issues may show language problems, personality changes, apathy, or inability to plan.

The parietal lobe gives us our spatial sense, but it also serves as a critical link from the senses (see/hear/feel/taste/touch) to our motor abilities. The *temporal lobe* works with

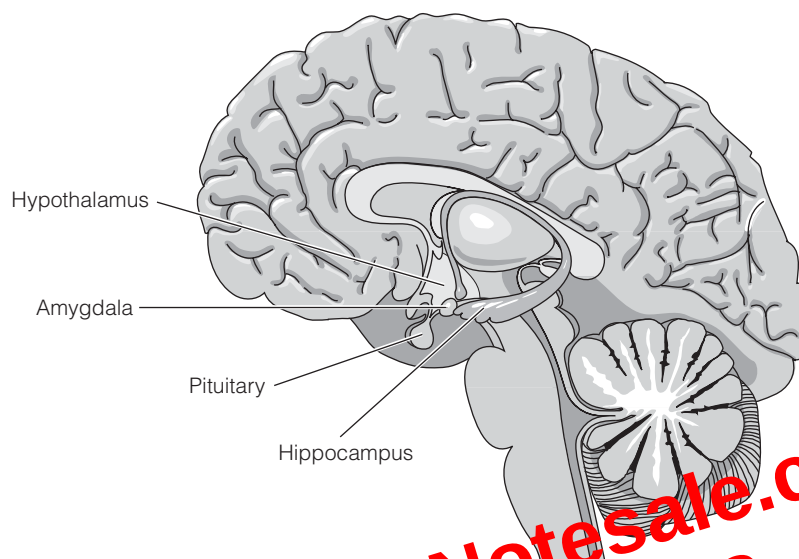


FIGURE AII-2 The limbic system in the social brain.

▲ *Fear.* The amygdala is central in fear and other negative emotions. If you walk down a dark street and sense someone following you, expect the amygdala to activate. Awareness of fear was and is the most essential and basic emotion for our survival as individuals. The importance of the amygdala and its relationship to fear is one of the earlier findings of neuroscience (for example, see the study by Selden et al., 1991). Memory of fear is located in the hippocampus and can couple rapidly with the amygdala to bring out fright feelings. The right brain has connections to both the hippocampus and the amygdala and transfers information instantaneously to the decision-making left brain. But if time is short, the right brain takes over. Thus, notice how, when you are in danger, your heart races, your breathing speeds up, and your whole body takes over to deal with the situation.

Building on this foundation, recent neuroscience research has offered exciting findings. For example, it is now possible to identify specific neurons in the amygdala that affect anxiety, depression, and posttraumatic stress. These harmful networks remain in place unless treated effectively. Using classic behavioral methods derived from Pavlov's work, it is possible to change the power of these neurons "through presenting the feared object in the absence of danger." Medications will be able to do the same thing as counseling and therapy if targeted to specific "intercalated neurons" (Ekaterina et al., 2008).

In short, we have now some of the most concrete evidence that counseling and therapy focusing on strengths can enable a generation of new positive neural networks, right to the cellular level. This is accomplished through building strong, positive neural networks through many of the methods discussed in this book.

▲ *Sad.* In studies of brain scans of depressed patients, sadness produced altered activation in more than 70 different brain regions, particularly the amygdala, hippocampus, and prefrontal cortex (Freed & Mann, 2007).

While this book has given attention to broad issues of neuroscience and the impact of counseling on the brain, we will take a risk and say that affecting neurotransmitters through *effective and quality* interviewing and counseling is where the “rubber ultimately hits the road.” We do not yet have research that backs up this claim, but it is ultimately the neurotransmitters that influence the development of new neural networks. And as we have said, new neural networks through counseling is change—the creation of the *New*. Science and the art of counseling come together at this point.

Consider the presentation in Table AII-1 as a beginning presentation showing how your practice can influence neurotransmitters and produce change and create the *New*. Art becomes science, and science becomes art.

MICROSKILLS AND THEIR POTENTIAL IMPACT ON CHANGE

The microskills of attending, observation, and the basic listening sequence are vital for the communication of empathy. We start with the biological possibility of “feeling the feelings” of others because of mirror neurons. Through our childhood and later developmental experiences, we become more or less attuned to others. Neuronal structures of empathic understanding can pass away if not nourished. In turn, the teaching of empathy, particularly through the listening skill, may be especially helpful in human change. Moreover, if you are empathic with a client, you are helping that person become more understanding of others.

Restak (2003, p. 2) found that training volunteers in movement sequences produced sequential changes in activity patterns of the brain as the movements became more thoroughly learned and automatic. Systematic step-by-step learning, such as that emphasized in this book, is an efficient learning system also used in ballet, music, golf, and many other settings. If there is sufficient skill practice, changes in the brain may be expected, and increased ability in demonstrating these skills will appear in areas ranging from finger movements to dance—and from the golf swing to interviewing skills. Table AII-2 presents a summary of how various microskills relate to the learning process involved in counseling and psychotherapy.

TABLE AII-2 Key microskills concepts and neuropsychology

<i>Microskills Concept</i>	<i>Some Issues Related to Neuroscience and Neuropsychology</i>
Attending Behavior	Attention is measurable through brain imagining. When client and counselor attend to the story, the brain of both interviewer and client become involved. Factors in attention are arousal and focus. Arousal involves the reticular activating system, at the brain's core, which transmits stimuli to the cortex and activates neurons firing throughout many areas. Selective attention “is brought about by . . . a part of the thalamus, which operates rather like a spotlight, turning to shine on the stimulus” (Carter, 1999, p. 186). If you listen with energy and interest, and this is communicated effectively, expect your client to receive that affect as a positive resource in itself.
Questions	New histories and stories are written in the counseling session. The very asking of questions impacts old memories stored in the hippocampus. “The new history is influenced by current determinants of neural experience, and such factors are usually very different from those that affected the original experience a long time ago” Grawe (2007, p. 67).

(continued)

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Additional new features

- A warmer “tone” increasing emphasis on relationship, here and now immediacy, and creativity—the Creative New
- Coaching as an extension of skilled interviewing and counseling
- A new chapter on reflection of meaning and interpretation/reframing
- Clear explanations and illustrations showing how modern neuroscience validates present counseling practice

Supportive Confrontation and the *Creative New*

Powerful Coaching Questions

Many of the powerful questions used in coaching have been introduced by Margaret Moore, director and co-founder of the Coaching Center for Executive Intelligence at McLean Hospital. She is also a faculty member in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School. She kindly gave us permission to list the copyrighted questions in this book. Effective coaching assumes a positive working relationship between client and coach. Without that, coaching will almost certainly fail.

To be successful, a coach must be an effective listener, one who uses attending behavior and the important skills of clarifying and summarizing what the client has said. This tells clients that you have heard them. These skills include observation, encouraging, paraphrasing, acknowledging feelings, and the summary, and they are detailed in Chapters 5 through 7. While we emphasize questions in this chapter, we hope that you will use them minimally when you practice interviewing using only the listening skills presented in Chapter 8. Below are the central questions in the GROW model:

G = Goals

1. **What is the ideal person you want to be? Your best self?** This is coupled with such questions as “What’s going on your life right now?” “How do you imagine your ideal life?” “What matters most to you?” and “What do you really want?”

You will note the person-centered influence of the real and ideal self here, plus some influence from decisional counseling and meaning issues (Chapters 8, 12, 13).

2. **What is the gap between here and your vision?** “How does your vision of the future differ from the now?” “How does your real self differ from your ideal self?”

In the second question, we see the early confrontation of the discrepancy between the expressed or implied goals in 1 and the client’s present position. This is particularly characteristic of brief solution-focused counseling and motivational interviewing (Chapter 13).

3. **Why does this vision really matter to you?** “How does this goal make a difference in your life?” “Could we get more specific as to how the vision or goal is defined?” This is clearly a meaning issue. As we say in Chapter 12, achieving meaning and one’s vision in life is often the most important issue we face in counseling. Note how central it is to coaching.

R = Reality (Story and Strengths)

4. **What strengths can you use to help you get there?** This should sound very familiar to you. Use the questions we provide in this chapter and the many examples in the book. Coaching has a very strength-based and nonpathological orientation.

5. **What is the key challenge?** “What’s getting in your way?” The language possibility is used rather than the problem-focused approach of too our field.

INSTRUCTIONAL READING: MAKING QUESTIONS WORK FOR YOU IN A SUPPORTIVE CASHIOL

Clients usually come for counseling because they are some degree of stress associated with a problem. They may be stuck in their lives as, thoughts, feelings, and value decisions. There is a real need to make these “stuck” problems and decisions to the *New*, changing these issues to challenges and opportunities for change. Working on the discrepancy between present issues and goals may help the client use their creative strength to move and become “unstuck.”

The person-centered counselor seeks to resolve the discrepancy between the real and ideal self; the cognitive-behavioral therapist aims to resolve behavioral and thought inconsistencies; and the decisional counselor facilitates resolving conflicting wishes and desires. Different theories focus on and confront different aspects of client conversation. In effect, they see different routes to problem resolution. However, all have the goal of supporting the client and resolving conflict.

Although all counseling skills are concerned with facilitating change, it is the clarification and confrontation of discrepancies that acts as a lever for the activation of human potential. Most clients come to an interview seeking some sort of movement or change in their lives. Yet they may resist your efforts to bring about the transformation they seek. Your task is to help them move beyond their issues and problems to realize their full potential as human beings. An understanding of confrontation is basic to helping clients restore their lives.

When client discrepancies, mixed messages, and conflicts are confronted skillfully and nonjudgmentally, clients are encouraged to talk in more detail and to resolve their problems and issues. Confrontation can be defined in this way:

Confrontation is not a direct, harsh challenge. Think of it, rather, as a more gentle skill that involves listening to the client carefully and respectfully; and, then, seeking to help the client examine self or situation more fully. Confrontation is not “going against” the client; it is “going with” the client, seeking clarification and the possibility of a creative *New* which enables resolution of difficulties.

But while the gentle, empathic approach to confrontation is basic, there are many clients who will need and even prefer a more direct challenge. For example, if you are working with an acting-out or antisocial client, a firm and more solid confrontation may be necessary. The client may sneer at and manipulate “nice” helpers, but may be more likely to respect and work with a counselor who listens and offers respect but takes no “garbage” from the client. Nonetheless, empathic listening remains central if you are going to establish any type of working relationship.

INSTRUCTIONAL READING: MAKING QUESTIONS WORK FOR YOU

Questions make the interview work for me. I searched through many questions and found the ones that I thought most helpful in my own practice. I then memorized them and now I always draw on them as needed. Being prepared makes a difference.

Norma Gluckstern-Packard

Following are several issues around the use of questioning techniques and strategies. Questions can be facilitative or they can be so intrusive that clients want to close up and say nothing. Use the ideas presented here to help you define your own position around questioning, facilitate your memory of key questions, and learn how questions fit with your natural style.

Additional Resources



Helping Professions Learning Center

Designed to help you bridge the gap between coursework and practice, the Helping Professions Learning Center (HPLC) offers a centralized online resource that allows you to build your skills and gain even more confidence and familiarity with the principles that govern the life of the helping professional. The interactive site consists of six learning components: Video Activities organized by curriculum area and accompanied by critical thinking questions; Ethics, Diversity and Theory-based Case Studies; Flashcards and Practice Quizzes; a Professional Development Center, and a Research and Writing Center.

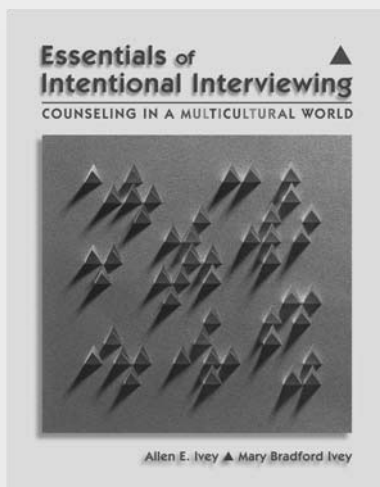
For information on packaging access to these resources with the text, please contact your local Cengage Learning representative. You can locate your sales representative by visiting the "Find Your Rep" feature on www.cengage.com/counseling. You may also call Customer Service at 1-800-423-0563 for assistance.

Brooks/Cole "Clips for Coursework" Video for the Helping Professions

ISBN-10: 0-534-53347-7 | ISBN-13: 978-0-534-53347-2

Available to adopting instructors for classroom use.

Explore pertinent counseling issues by watching videos of real-life professionals! With a central purpose of exposing students to pertinent issues and scenarios through first-person testimony, this video contains numerous segments that explore social problems and helping strategies through interview and documentary footage of helping professionals and experts in the field.



Also Available

Essentials of Intentional Interviewing: Counseling in a Multicultural World, 1st Edition

Allen E. Ivey and Mary Bradford Ivey

ISBN-10: 0-495-09724-1 | ISBN-13: 978-0-495-09724-2

This book offers you and your students a shorter, more incisive version of the best-selling *Intentional Interviewing and Counseling*. Every sentence and concept has undergone a thorough review to ensure both relevant and clarity for beginning helpers. It features an active voice, a flexible modular style, with the same multicultural awareness that the Iveys are famous for. Needless to say, the renowned Microskills model of teaching students vital interviewing skills remains central, thus ensuring mastery and competence in each concept as they progress through the text and into real-world practice. Instructor Resource Guide, PowerPoint slides, and extensive web-based student supplements are available.