



Transilvania
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The Counselling Activity

Introductory course for pre-service
counsellors



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E-PSY

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The Counselling Activity

Introductory course for pre-service counsellors

Contents

UNIT 1: What does it mean to be a good counsellor? The counsellor's competencies.

Objectives:

- To identify the characteristics and the competences necessary for the counselling profession
- To discuss the expectations and requirements of a good counsellor
- To identify differences between individual and group counselling and their specificity
- To identify topics to be used for individual and/or group counselling

UNIT 2: Individual counselling

Objectives:

- To use a standardized observation worksheet in order to identify the key elements of an individual counselling activity
- To analyse a model for an individual counselling activity
- To design an individual counselling activity

UNIT 3: Group counselling

Objectives:

- To use a standardized observation worksheet in order to identify the key elements of a group counselling activity
- To analyse a model for a group counselling activity
- To design a group counselling activity

UNIT 4: Developing prevention programmes

Objectives:

- To identify when, where and why to use a prevention programme
- To design individual and group counselling activities on topics regarding prevention

UNIT 5: Strategies for promoting counsellors' well-being

Objectives:

- To identify the most effective strategies for promoting one's well-being
- To design a weekly schedule respecting the work-life balance

UNIT 1: What does it mean to be a good counsellor? The counsellor's competencies

Objectives



- To identify the characteristics and the competences necessary for the counselling profession;
- To discuss the expectations and requirements of a good counsellor;
- To identify differences between individual and group counselling and their specificity;
- To identify topics to be used for individual and/or group counselling.



Learning activities

Activity 1.1.

Main task - To identify the characteristics and the competences necessary for the counselling profession and to discuss the expectations and requirements of a good counsellor



Form of organisation:

The participants are divided into group of 4 – 5.

TIPS for the trainer

Use various ways of groups the participants throughout the

Ways of dividing participants into small groups:

- Based on vicinity – desk mates or students sitting close to each other;
- By drawing lots - for example, drawing tickets or coloured tokens, different

pictures and then forming groups based on the same colour/picture/class of objects designated on the cards, etc.;

- By openly designating students to be part of a group based on the counsellors' decision;
- On a voluntary basis - direct expression of a wish, enlisting, choosing a theme or method of working;
- Based on various criteria: results in various games, favourite cartoons, favourite colours, etc;
- By bringing smaller groups together or segmenting larger groups.

The trainer presents the following problem:

You are in the position of hiring a counsellor. Each team must determine what a good counsellor is from different perspectives:

Team 1: What does it mean to be a good counsellor from the employer's perspective

Team 2: What does it mean to be a good counsellor from the client's perspective

Team 3: What does it mean to be a good counsellor from the other professors' perspective

Team 4: What does it mean to be a good counsellor from their own pre-service counsellor's perspective

**Work
time:**

60 minutes

Participants' activity

TO DO:

1. Identify what makes a counsellor efficient, from the given perspective
2. Negotiate with your team members the most important skills
3. Decide who will be the person to present your results to the whole group

Work time:

15 minutes

Participants' activity:

Each group presents their results!

Trainer's activity

Offers a summary of the main abilities for an efficient counsellor, drawing conclusions on the group work and adding valuable information from the theoretical foundation.

*

TIPS for the trainer

The motivation to become a counsellor can be very different from one student to the other. Also, the perception of this job can influence the pre-service counsellors' image of the profession.

If the participants offer a very short list of competences and characteristics, you can use a list you prepared in advance (*Cheatsheet for the counsellor*)

Cheatsheet for the counsellor (Băban, 2001; Jigău, 2001)

A counsellor's competences and characteristics

Attitudes:

- ✓ Respect for the counselled
- ✓ Supportive approach
- ✓ Unconditional acceptance
- ✓ Empathy
- ✓ Congruence
- ✓ Collaboration
- ✓ Positive thinking
- ✓ Responsibility

Abilities:

- ✓ Observation
- ✓ Formulating and asking questions

- ✓ Rephrasing and paraphrasing
- ✓ Interactive provision of information
- ✓ Comprehension, reverberation and resonance expression
- ✓ Appropriate disclosure of own feelings experienced in the relationship with the child/client

Knowledge:

- ✓ To correctly identify the knowledge that children possess;
- ✓ To identify the knowledge they need, so as not to provide an unnecessary surplus of information that may hinder problem solving;
- ✓ To possess interactive information provision skills.



Activity 1.2. Personal profile as a counsellor

Main task – to reflect on one’s own skills as a counsellor



This activity invites the participants to reflect on their own profile as a counsellor, identifying their strengths and the abilities that still need to be developed.

**Work
time:**

30 minutes

Possible reflective journal prompts:

- What abilities do you have that would make you a great counsellor?
- What abilities do you have that would make you a great counsellor?
- What do you still need to learn in order to become a great counsellor?
- What abilities do you still need to develop in order to become a great counsellor?

- What attitudes do you still need to develop in order to become a great counsellor?
- Where can you find information on the topics above?
- How long would it take you to achieve all of the above?

Participants' activity

TO DO:

- **present journal entries, based on voluntary offers.**



Activity 1.3. Social perception of the counselling profession

Main task – to capitalize on the results of the previous activities.

Use the results of the previous activities to create a poster with the information collected before on the counselling profession. The participants can choose key words or images, draw, sketch a diagram or create any other type of poster.

**Work
time:**

60 minutes

TIPS for the trainer

Briefly review the requirements of a good poster (David..., 2020)

Title: short, interesting, easy to read from a distance.

Written part: easy to read, short sentences, not too many fonts and distinct sizes.

Pictures, graphics: meaningful, supporting the message, easy to remember.

Start with a sketch of the poster and then assemble the final product!

Instructions for the trainer:

- Prepare all the necessary materials (A3 sheets of paper, glue, crayons, scissors) before the activity.
- During the activity, offer guidance and support if needed.
- At the end of the activity, organize an exhibition of the posters. The gallery tour requires each team to present their work, answer questions and get feedback from their colleagues. Each team should have a representative to present the poster.
- Give examples of efficient feedback and make sure that each poster receives feedback.

**TIPS for the trainer**

Remind the students the criteria of a good feedback (David, Truta, Cazan, 2019)

The feedback should:

1. be descriptive
2. be specific
3. be meaningful
4. balance positive and negative statements, starting with the positive ones
5. include suggestions and ways to improve performance
6. serve the needs of the receiver and not of the giver