



Contemporary Context of Counselling Skills M4X00954

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Contemporary Context of Counselling Skill

Module Learning Outcomes:

- Recognise health as a contested topic and Counselling's position in the discipline
- Evaluate a range of theories of causality relating to emotional distress and its impact on well-being
- Recognise the links between individual experience of health and health issues and the wider structural elements relevant to health and well-being.
- Employ appropriate academic conventions in the production and presentation of work suitable for this level

Contemporary Context of Counselling

Lesson Aims:

- To Explore the Concept of Resiliency and coping.

ASSIGNMENT GUIDANCE

Assessment Component One

- ❖ Academic Essay - 2000 words (10% +/-)
- ❖ Essay Title: 'There is often a link between ill health and poverty; Discuss the social, economic and environmental influences that impact psychological health and well-being'
- ❖ SUBMISSION DATE: 5th December 2017 at 12:00

❖ What do we mean by resiliency?

The Resilient Self

- ❖ The Oxford Dictionary defines Resiliency as 'The ability of a substance or object to spring back into shape' or 'the capacity to recover quickly from adversity'
- ❖ Robertson and Cooper (2013) review the behavioural and psychological components to resilience. Psychological resilience enables people to maintain mental health and well-being when faced with adversity. The behavioural component enables people to remain effective and continue to carry out relevant tasks

Hagland, Nestadt, Cooper, Southwick and Charney (2007)

- Identify six key attitudinal and behavioural factors that help maintain well-being during stress:
 - ❖ Positive attitude (optimism and sense of humour)
 - ❖ Active coping
 - ❖ Cognitive flexibility
 - ❖ Moral compass
 - ❖ Physical exercise
 - ❖ Social support and positive role models

Cognitive Transactional Model of Stress (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984)

Stress is a result of an interaction between an individual's characteristics and appraisals, and internal or external events (Stressors)

Lazarus' model maintains that when an individual confront a new situation they engage in a process of appraisal (Cognitive appraisal)

According to Lazarus, the stress and coping model involve two elements

- ❖ An evaluation of a situation that produces negative emotions
- ❖ Coping efforts which attempt to reduce these negative emotions
- ❖ 'Stress results from an imbalance between demands and resources'

Stress and Coping

- Cognitive dissonance
- Gregg and Looker (1996) consider physiological and behavioural responses and their interface with the environment. Stress is 'a whole body and mind interactive response to a demand or a pressure (stressor)
- Stress exists when an individual feels they cannot cope with the demands of the environment, so the evaluation of the perceived threat.
- Individual differences

Stress and Coping

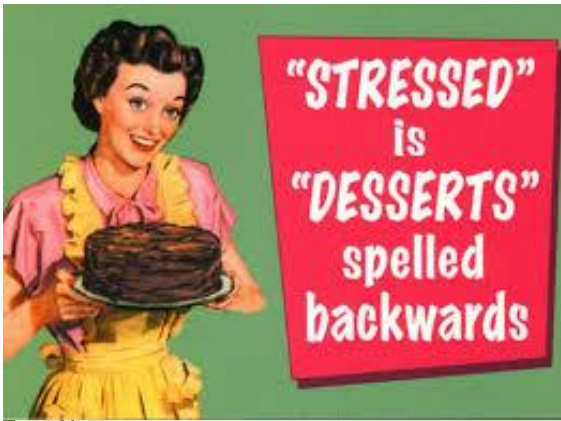
- ❖ According to psychological theory – Stress is a subjective experience.
- ❖ 'The mind is its own place and in itself can make a heaven of hell or a hell of heaven (John Milton, 1608-74)
- ❖ Appraisal is central to whether or not an event is stressful or not



Stress and Cognition

- ❖ Perceived control
- ❖ An individual with internal locus of control beliefs would take responsibility for what happens to them (I am in control of my health)
- ❖ An individual with external locus of control beliefs might attribute success to external circumstances such as chance or luck (I can only do what my doctor tells me to do)
- ❖ Aaron Beck (1976) and Albert Ellis (1977) assume that cognitive response to events, determine mood and feelings of distress are a consequence of 'irrational thinking'
- ❖ Cognitive schemata – A set of unconscious beliefs about ourselves and the world
- ❖ Beck identified thoughts that might lead to negative thinking such as 'catastrophic thinking', 'over-generalising', 'arbitrary inference', 'selective abstraction'

❖ Which comes first – the appraisal (thought) or the emotion?



Interpersonal Factors

- ❖ Social support and relationships
- ❖ Social relationships can be an important buffer against stress



Stress Management

- ❖ Triggers can be identified and modified using problem-solving skills
- ❖ Cognitive distortions can be identified and challenged (Cognitive restructuring)
- ❖ Muscular tension can be reduced through relaxation and breathing exercises
- ❖ 'Stressed' behaviour can be challenged through alternative behavioural responses



Seven Step Problem Solving Model

- ❖ Stage 1 – Identify the Problem
- ❖ Stage 2 -Select the Goal
- ❖ Stage 3- Explore Options
- ❖ Stage 4- Consider Consequences of Options
- ❖ Stage 5 – Make a Decision
- ❖ Stage 6- Agree Specific Actions
- ❖ Stage 7- Evaluate Actions

Translate Self Defeating thoughts into self-helping thoughts which serve to empower rather than hinder progress

What is Mindfulness?

- Mindfulness practice trains our mind not to attach ourselves to the thought, but to adopt the role of curious observer
 - 'Thoughts are not Facts'
 - 'I am not my Thoughts'
- (Teasdale et al 2000)



Evidence-Based Research

- Mindfulness-based Cognitive Therapy - MBCT (Segal, Williams and Teasdale, 2002)
- 'Interacting Cognitive Subsystems: A Systematic Approach to Cognition, Affective Interaction and Change (Barnard and Teasdale, 1991)
- Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction - MBSR (Kabat-Zinn, 1990, 1994, 2005)

❖ **How do you
Manage Stress?**

Resources

Essential Reading:

- ❖ Morrison, V. & Bennett, P., 2012. *An Introduction to Health Psychology 3rd ed.* England: Pearson Chapter 11
- ❖ Woolfe, R., Strawbridge, S., Douglas, B. and Dryden, W., 2010. *Handbook of Counselling Psychology 3rd ed.* London: Sage. Chapter 14
- ❖ Teasdale, J., Williams, M., and Segal, Z., 2014. *The Mindful Way: An 8-week programme to free yourself from depression and emotional distress.* New York: Guilford Press
- ❖ <http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/stress-anxiety-depression/pages/understanding-stress.aspx>
