

Practical Skills

General Counselling Skills (maximum 500 words)	
Example: Empathy	<i>Poor: I felt that there was very little empathy shown in this encounter, the counsellor almost seemed to mock the client when they admitted their lack of self-control e.g. 3.20mins into video "so you haven't really tried very hard yet".</i>
Establishing a rapport and Developing a Relationship	
Awareness of Boundaries	Clear: the evident way of setting boundaries that both parties understood was during the beginning of the session, e.g at 2.0 minutes; agreeing that confidentiality was prominent yet if the counsellor believed that the client was 'a risk to self or others' then she would need 'to consult with her supervisor', to which the client agreed with.
Ethical framework – creating a safe space	Presented well: before starting the session with the client, the counsellor gave clear and detailed information of her qualifications, 'I am a BACP registered accredited counsellor', this is due to informing the client that the counsellor operates out of an ethical framework at all times; e.g at 1.06 minutes.
Active Listening Skills SOLER S O L E R	During the entire session with the client, the counsellor demonstrated all areas of the active listening skills required; firstly, the counsellor's posture and sitting positioning 'sitting squarely' (ACS Distance Education, 2019), was always professional yet comforting to ensure the client was relaxed and enabled to ability to build trust. Secondly, leaning towards the client was always visible throughout, as shown from beginning to end, the counsellor leaned in to the client in a way that was not overwhelming and intimidating yet helping to relax the atmosphere in the room; thus helping client to open up. Also, the eye contact and relaxed mood of the counsellor was perfected throughout the entirety of the session, the evidence to back up these statements is simply that of the rapport that was built between both parties.
Minimal encouragers	The vast use of minimal encouragers from the counsellor was evident to see, the use of slight head nodding e.g at 2.59 minutes; words such as wow e.g at 4.15 minutes, as well as the use of the word yes being said throughout the duration of the session, all factors to show the client they are being listened to, to the fullest extend, thus making them more comfortable to open up about their situation that they feel needs to be discussed.
Reflective Skills	
Restating – A word or Phrase	Excellent: the counsellor shows a clear use of restating a phrase correctly after listening to the client, 'so no support' e.g at 5.39 minutes.

Paraphrasing/Reframing	Intellectual: the counsellor here has briefly reframed the information given to her by the client, to which she has replied 'you lost you' e.g at 10.56 minutes; this skill presented has an instant effect on the client as he responds, 'that's a good point as I've never thought about it in that way'.
Summarising	Good: after listening to the client, the counsellor reiterates that the last 'problem' the client has expressed, is the reason that he may of coming to the session today; summarising how the client got to the point of asking for help, thus understanding how to move forward; e.g 3.44. Also, at 10.20 minutes, the counsellor concludes that there are two main issues that have to be addressed to possibly solve the main distressing emotion, 'as a result, there's where you in all of it'.
Use of question or other skills	Clear method of progression: at 4.51 minutes, the counsellor asks a simple yet effective question 'so what have you been doing?', resulting in the client giving enough information to receive more of a foundation, to attain a better understanding of the help needed.
Demonstrating Core Conditions	
Empathy, Unconditional Positive Regard Congruence	After carefully examining the session at hand, the use of the core conditions are clearly used at maximum capacity; the use of the counsellor's tone and body demeanour, consistent eye contact, as well as visible empathy, has effectively allowed the client to feel comfortable enough to express his worries knowing there is no judgement, only the possibility of a solution as the end goal.
Reflective Commentary: A Self-reflection (maximum 1000 words): Reflect on your own skills and development. • What skills do you feel you would be most competent in? and Why? • What skills would you struggle with the most? • What are some considerations for future growth? Use the Gibbs Cycle of reflection as a guide: Reference Support is required:	
Throughout the process of examining the counselling session video tape, it has become clear that the ability to help another individual, yet following specific guidelines to maintain ethical while empathetic standards is not easy. The evident variety of expectations to meet while in a session with a client has proven effortless for the counsellor in said video tape, yet I have learnt a lot about myself in regard to the ability that I currently obtain. In the process of self-reflection, using 'Gibb's reflective cycle' (The University of Edinburgh, 2020), I possess a certain set of skills from such a short time in education; that of empathy. Possibly due to life experience or easy absorption from being present at university, I can confidently express empathy in vast amounts; possessing the ability to understand the emotions of another individual as well as the feeling of wanting to help another individual in need. Though, due to the experience of the analysis of a professional counsellor's work, I have come to realise I do not hold enough qualities expected of me for my future as a counsellor. It is rather discouraging to discover this while self-evaluating, yet motivating as it is evident that the work is often beneficial to those in need, thus pushing me to the full extent to attain the skills listed above. The course I am currently involved in at university will provide all the information needed to improve my mind set in relation to counselling skills, though I cannot be certain I will attain all skills, after the analysis of the session provided, and after careful self-reflection - I am hopeful. While completing the evaluation of the counselling session video tape, I also became aware of the timing it took me to observe certain aspects asked, for example,	

the use of reframing, though I did attain the evidence to support my observation; I can reflect on my time management and realise that finding an example of 'reframing' cost more of my time, thus concluding for myself that it is a skill that needs more time perfecting. A future plan I have put into place is that of extra time in such places as the library and/or study sessions to improve my abilities in this field, so that I can effectively help those in need in relation to my desired career as a counsellor after graduation.

References

ACS Distance Education. (2019). SOLER - A Counselling Skill. Acsedu.co.uk.
<https://www.acsedu.co.uk/Info/Psychology-and-Counselling/Counselling/SOLER-A-Counselling-Skill.aspx>

The University of Edinburgh. (2020, November 11). Gibbs' Reflective Cycle. The University of Edinburgh; The University of Edinburgh.
<https://www.ed.ac.uk/reflection/reflectors-toolkit/reflecting-on-experience/gibbs-reflective-cycle>