

CASE NOTE

CLIENT NAME: Betty Boop**STUDENT COUNSELOR NAME:** Damian Bariexca**CLIENT AGE:** 26**CLIENT SEX:** F**DATE OF SESSION:** 10/10/2006**SESSION NUMBER:** 3**LENGTH OF SESSION:** 30 mins.**TOTAL TIME (APPROX.) SPENT WITH THIS CLIENT TO DATE:** 90 mins.**STATEMENT OF CONCERN:**

Client wishes to find better ways of dealing with/managing stress.

RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFO.:

Recently left long-time position due to long shifts/lack of free time; currently working two jobs (recently resigned from one, but has not yet stopped working). Currently renting space in a house and living there with landlord; relationship has been and continues to be problematic (source: client).

Recently discussed living arrangement with landlord/roommate; came to mutual conclusion to move out. Client reports relief at the resolution of this problem, but anxiety about the uncertainty of finding a new apartment. (source: client).

OBJECTIVE DESCRIPTION OF SESSION:

No immediate concerns with client hygiene, dress, physical appearance or health. Client was open and willing to discuss issues at length with counselor (source: counselor observation).

Session began with discussion of determining the evening's goals, and progressed to a recap of what happened in past week as client ended her job (still has three days left). We revisited the idea of uncertainty as a major stressor, and also identified the client's mixed feelings about leaving her job. Session ended with discussion of the upcoming week's events and potential stress management goals for next session (source: counselor observation).

Verbal and nonverbal behavior was congruent. Client's tone of voice was mostly upbeat and animated (source: counselor observation).

GOALS

Short-term: Develop strategy/ies for dealing with overwhelming multitasking (client will attempt to create a priority list)

Long-term: Reduce environmental stressors in client's life.

PROGRESS TOWARD GOALS: Discussion held with landlord/roommate; definitive decision reached on action (moving out) and timeline established (end of November).

Client has begun to tie up loose ends at soon-to-be former job and has attempted to establish boundaries with former co-workers.

Client has agreed to consider implementing list-making as a task- and stress-management technique.

FIELD SUPERVISOR COMMENTS:**Counselor Signature:** _____**Date:** 10/17/2006**Field Supervisor Signature:** _____**Date:** _____

TECHNIQUES USED BY COUNSELOR:

- Body Techniques
- Stress Inoculation
- Empathic Response
- Reframing/Positiveness
- Plans

ANALYSIS OF SESSION (Connect counselor hypotheses/hunches to theoretical knowledge base):

Hypothesis 1: The client defines herself, to a great degree, by her job. Her recent upheaval in that area of her life has been extraordinarily stressful for her because she connects much of who she is as a person to her job. She takes both successes and perceived failures at work very personally, and as such is sometimes overly critical of herself. This may be due to low self-esteem.

Analysis 1: According to cognitive theory, the client sometimes puts too negative a connotation on seemingly innocuous situations. She volunteered to work as a substitute at her current job after she officially resigned, and her shift leader declined to hire her. The client was so upset that she went higher up in the organization to determine if that was legal. In the meantime, she has made several comments to me about how leaving that job is the best thing she can do for herself, as the management and staff atmosphere is “toxic.” These contradictory messages indicate a lack of awareness in terms of the positive elements of this situation: she thinks her boss is being vindictive and mean, yet she cannot see that, even if unintentionally, by refusing to allow her to continue working there, her boss has probably done her a favor.

Hypothesis 2: The recent upheaval in the client’s life (work, living situation, etc.) has placed several seemingly monumental tasks at her feet (e.g., ending one job, starting a new one, grad school work, finding a new place to live) simultaneously. The client sometimes “shuts down” while trying to accomplish many tasks at once. This may signal the need for a more effective system of prioritizing or self-planning in order to complete the tasks at hand.

Analysis 2: According to reality theory, anxiety can stem from feelings of loss of control. The client feels her life is in a state of chaos at the moment, and reports feelings of high anxiety when faced with the numerous large-scale tasks to which she must attend. This likely comes from the current lack of structure and routine in her life right now. According to this theory, planning strategies and “pinning down” commitments to achieve specific goals in a determined order may be beneficial.

STUDENT COUNSELOR COMMENTS (Reflections, thoughts, and feelings on self during the session):

My comfort level in the role of counselor continues to grow. In my position as an English teacher, I am experienced in asking open-ended questions that require thought and elaboration, and I’ve been putting this skill to use in my counseling sessions. One skill I would like to improve upon is offering empathic responses that don’t sound patronizing. Maybe it’s just my perception, but I am fearful that if I do it too frequently, it’ll be more off-putting to the client than validating. I am also falling back a bit on my cognitive-behavioral orientation for counseling techniques – in three sessions, I feel I have moved from repeating back to the client what she tells me to actually being able to make progress – forward or down deep – with that information.

I also had what I felt was a particularly successful attempt at reframing tonight. In the larger context of her difficulty in making a “clean break” from her job (she wants to, but is having a hard time doing so), she mentioned that she was irritated that when she offered to stay on for a bit as a substitute, her boss told her she wouldn’t hire her as a sub. I asked the client if she thought her boss was actually doing her a favor. After the client proceeded to tell me about how much her boss didn’t like her, etc., I asked, “but is it possible she’s doing you a favor anyway?” After a brief period of silent reflection, the client smiled, laughed, and said she guessed

that was another way of looking at it. I felt good to have helped my client to reframe a very frustrating and embittering situation to view it a lot more positively.

UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR COMMENTS:

UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____

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