

TAPE CRITIQUE FORM

Name: Damian Bariexca
Client ID: Betty Boop

Date: 14 Nov. 2006
Session No.: 1

Topic Area of Concern: Indecision; uncertainty as to whether counseling is the right career choice for her

Brief Summary of Session Content:

- Client expresses above concerns
- Discussion of current job situation & reasons for her dissatisfaction (undermined authority; perceived incompetence among colleagues)
- Client expression of own unwillingness to make major life decisions
- Attempt to identify types of decisions from which client shies away

Intended Goals:

- First session – no pre-existing goals.
- Goals established: Short-term: identify specific decisions in the next week that she avoids making
Long-term: become more decisive and determine if current graduate program/career path is right for her

Positive Counseling Behaviors (Identify at least two areas of strength which you exhibited during the session and why they were effective):

- Empathic Response: I tried to validate the client's feelings as much as possible through empathic response. In doing so, I seemed to be able to "stay with her" instead of "getting ahead of her," as Dr. Murphy suggested in the review session (and I agree with). It's a technique I will try to use in greater depth in future counseling sessions with this client.
- Here & Now: Twice I asked the client to focus on her present feelings about situations she brought up in an attempt to "go deep." Although I think my follow-up needs improvement, I think that on those occasions, I was able to get the client to focus on her feelings and address them with a little more clarity, particularly when the anxiety about her job was becoming evident and she seemed to be getting carried away.

Areas of Counseling Needing Improvement (Identify at least one area of weakness and how it interfered with the counseling process. What area do you need to work on to become more effective?):

- In an attempt to reframe the client's thoughts, I kept focusing on positive elements of her job and her graduate study. After reviewing the tape, it is evident that I need to become more comfortable dealing with negative emotions and exploring them in order to get to the more significant themes at hand. I would also like to try to attend more to the parenthetical "throwaway" comments so I can explore them in greater detail with my client.

Plans for Further Counseling with this Client:

- Identify "ideal" workplace scenario
- Possible career counseling

Theoretical Approach – Identify a theoretical approach you were trying to follow. How did this counseling session reflect this theoretical orientation? In what ways did you feel comfortable or uncomfortable with this approach?

- Adlerian Theory: attempts to encourage the client and address her feelings of inadequacy/inability or unwillingness to make major life decisions were all done with Adlerian Theory in mind. I felt comfortable in this approach because I feel I am a good “nurturer” – I tried to encourage and support the client (e.g., reinforcing her opinions on her colleagues’ classroom management skills). Her concerns regarding her career choice also seem to fit under Adler’s “Life Tasks” concept. While I think I did well in these regards, I probably should, in the future, stray a bit from this theory and incorporate some more Reality Theory in encouraging the client to look rationally at these situations and initiate some personal responsibility in taking control of her life.

Counseling Techniques – Did you do any of the following? Select at least three, cite relevant examples, and comment whether it was helpful or detrimental.

- **Stay in the “here and now”** – At one point, I asked the client to talk about how she felt right now discussing her colleagues. This allowed her to explore her disgust and frustration, and realize how significantly those feelings impact her. I think this was helpful in that it put her indecisiveness into perspective – her job angers her this much, and yet she still won’t take action to change the situation.
- **Questioning** – Throughout the session, I asked what and how questions for a variety of reasons – to explore her feelings, to clarify content information for myself, etc. It was mildly helpful, but I should probably ask fewer questions about content and focus more on “going deep.”
- **Assign homework** – At the end of the session, I asked the client to keep a mental list of the types of decisions she shies away from over the course of the next week. My thinking was that in doing so, we might be able to identify common threads or issues that pervade the client’s decision-making process (or lack thereof).

Did you risk trying to experiment with new responses or utilize new skills? Elaborate.

- **Empathic response** – Since this was my first session with this client, I was really trying to get a feel for her and for her situation, but I did attempt to give more empathic responses than I had in the past. I feel this went well for me, but I still need to make a conscious effort to continue to respond empathically more frequently in a session.

Did you feel distracted at any time? If so, when?

- I think the time of day works against me – after a full day of work and 90 minutes of class, my attention span is usually fried by the time we get to our breakout dyads. I try my best to stay on task, but when the client started going on about her work problems without a break, I started to drift a bit. I think this may be why I should interrupt more – it will help prevent me from zoning out (as much as I try not to, it happens from time to time).