

CASE NOTE**CLIENT NAME:** Betty Boop**STUDENT COUNSELOR NAME:** Damian Bariexca**CLIENT AGE:** 24**CLIENT SEX:** F**DATE OF SESSION:** 11/14/2006**SESSION NUMBER:** 2**LENGTH OF SESSION:** 30 mins.**TOTAL TIME (APPROX.) SPENT WITH THIS CLIENT TO DATE:** 60 mins.**STATEMENT OF CONCERN:**

Client wishes to feel empowered to make life decisions. Client also wishes to determine if her current academic/professional path is indeed what she wants.

RELEVANT BACKGROUND INFO.:

Currently working as a teacher's aide in a special education elementary school classroom. Client reports generally liking working with children, but dislikes her lack of authority in her position. Client also reports feelings of frustration when colleagues make decisions that she feels either undermines what little authority she has, or do not make the decisions she feels are best for the situation at hand (e.g., behavior support plans) (source: client).

Client is in second year of the Counseling M.A. program at Rider University, and reports feelings of uncertainty as to whether pursuing a career in counseling was the right decision for her. She fears that the program is too time-consuming and costly for it to turn out to be "a mistake" later on (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 an attempt at determining the evening's goals, but digressed to the client venting about frustrating experiences at work this past week. Dr. Murphy joined us to provide some further empathic response and suggestions for future directions to pursue. Session ended with a "homework assignment": the client will attempt to visualize her "ideal" workplace scenario (source: counselor observation).

Verbal and nonverbal behavior was congruent. Client's tone of voice was apropos of the subject matter (e.g., she waved her arms and put a "finger gun" to her head when describing frustrating events at work) (source: counselor observation).

GOALS

Short-term: Identify specific characteristics of her ideal work environment (homework).

Long-term: Become more decisive (general) and determine if current graduate program/career path is right for her (specific).

PROGRESS TOWARD GOALS: Client says she thought a bit about last week's homework, but soon steered the session in a more cathartic direction, as she felt she needed to vent about the week's events.

FIELD SUPERVISOR COMMENTS:**Counselor Signature:** _____**Date:** 11/14/2006**Field Supervisor Signature:** _____**Date:** _____

TECHNIQUES USED BY COUNSELOR:

- Empathic Response
- Here & Now
- Body Techniques (awareness)
- Cognitive homework

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

Hypothesis: The client's persistence in focusing on the negative aspects of her job suggests the degree to which it overwhelms her. The client is clearly unhappy in her job: she feels frustration that her co-workers seem incompetent to her and undermine her authority with the students, both directly and indirectly. She expresses frustration and a sense of futility when describing the students' home lives and role models. Her need for "security," in the sense of a job with which she is familiar, outweighs the negative impact her job seems to have on her.

Analysis: According to Reality Theory, personal involvement, responsibility, and action are key components to constructive living. This client takes responsibility on the micro level (her daily job duties), but seeks to avoid responsibility on the macro level through her inaction with regard to major life decisions and maintaining routines simply because they are "comfortable." This unwillingness to leave her present job (despite her protestations that she "hates it" most of the time) may well be impacting her perspective on what it means to be a counselor (or other public school system employee) – she has only seen one side of public education (a seemingly unfavorable one), and has not sought out different perspectives through working in different school systems. This could be at the root of what is causing her to doubt her desire to become a counselor. The client may benefit from an alternate professional perspective, perhaps through an observation or practicum experience in a different school system with different personnel. In accordance with Reality Theory, when the client determines what she does want in a profession, as opposed to what she does not want, she can then make some informed decisions about what she is or is not doing to achieve those ends, and plan what future action she can take in the desired direction.

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

I got a little frustrated (not overwhelmingly so) when I attempted to review last week's "homework" with the client and she began venting about her week, but I let it go because it seemed clear to me that she needed to blow off steam (as evidenced by her agitated tone and hand movements). I think I'm improving with my empathic response, but to be honest, my confidence going into tonight's session was a little shaken by my experience in the round-robin counseling session earlier in the evening, where I didn't feel I did a very good job. This was compounded by my asking a "why" question – my intention wasn't to be judgmental, but rather to get the client to think about other, less frustrating places to work, without telling her directly. In hindsight, I can now think of other ways to get the client to that place, and will attempt to do so in future similar circumstances. I'm still not sure where the main issues are here, and if I should focus more on her job dissatisfaction, her uncertainty with grad school and future career choice, or the bigger picture of her "needing guarantees" in life and rarely taking decisive action of her own volition when it comes to major life decisions. I'm thinking that I'll start small with the job issue, and hope that I or the client will eventually steer the discussion to some discovery of those bigger picture issues.

UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR COMMENTS:

UNIVERSITY SUPERVISOR SIGNATURE: _____

DATE: _____