

THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION BY EXTENSION
IN CONJUNCTION WITH
THE PRESBYTERIAN UNIVERSITY OF EAST AFRICA
OPEN AND DISTANCE LEARNING MODE

UNIT: PRINCIPLES OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING

UNIT CODE: CNL 021

ASSIGNMENT: CAT ONE

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QUESTION: PRINCIPLES OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELING –CNL 021

CAT 1: The characteristics of the counsellor coupled with therapeutic skills are key to effective counselling”. Discuss any five counselling skill statement in detail giving practical example. 20 marks

ANSWER:

The term skill is defined as proficiency, competence and expertness in some activity. The essential element of a skill is the ability to make and implement an effective sequence of choices so as to achieve a desired objective. It is also important to strive to use a skill in a spontaneous way so as to avoid being mechanistic.

A counsellor needs to be **Empathetic**. Empathy is an intellectual process that involves the ability of the counsellor to perceive correctly the client's emotional state and point of view and communicate the same understanding, that is, feel with one another. It means temporary living in another's life, moving in it delicately without being judgemental. Empathy encourages further and deeper exploration on the part of the client in the relationship. Empathy lays the foundation for the counsellor's responses to the client. It takes into account the context of what is said, that is, everything that surrounds the client statement. This is because feelings are more important than ideas and understanding the client on the feelings level helps understand them better on the context level. Empathy develops the client's own awareness of experiences and feelings thus help to expand and clarify their own self understanding as well as understanding others.

A counsellor should be **Genuine**. Genuineness is the willingness to be real and not hiding behind a professional facade, to be no-defensive and to be reasonably role-free. It also means being honest with oneself and with clients as well as being spontaneous. Genuineness communicates a high degree of harmony in the counsellor between levels of experience, awareness of experience and communication of awareness. It facilitates establishment of a good relationship with the clients. It also enhances the quality of responses and interactions between the counsellor and the client.

A counsellor should also have **Unconditional Positive Regards or UPR**. UPR is the ability of the counsellor to accept the client just as he/she is without being judgemental or possessive. It communicates respect of the client irrespective of how offensive the client's behaviour might be. It means accepting their strengths and their limitations, their favourable and unfavourable qualities, their positive and negative attitudes, their constructive and destructive thoughts as well as their feelings and behaviours. It helps to shatter the isolation of the client in as far as attitudes, which portray lack of self-acceptance behaviour is concerned. UPR will help establish a relationship based on trust and confidence. It also frees the client from defensive posturing in therapy and enables them to trust and feel safe enough to explore previously fearful aspects of lives and become more accepting of themselves.

The counsellor should also be attending. This is the ability of the counsellor to give quality presence by being physically, psychologically, and emotionally available to the client. The counsellor's non-verbal behaviour will carry a powerful message. The effect of what the counsellor says will be diminished if the attending behaviour is inappropriate. Some of the attending behaviour include appropriate sitting position. The counsellor should face the client squarely, adopt an open posture and avoid crossing the arms or legs. The counsellor should also lean forward at an appropriate moment. He/she should keep eye contact, without staring and should be relaxed during session. The main purpose is to follow and encourage the clients to explore their problem situation. Non verbal behaviour regulates conversation, communicate emotions, modify verbal messages, providing cues that clients are not saying what they are thinking. Facial expression, body emotions, and voice quality, often modify and punctuate verbal messages. They confirm what is being said verbally, and control what is happening. The counsellor should be on the look out for denial and confusion of what is being said.

The counsellor should also observe Silence. This is simply giving the client space. It is about active listening where the client is given time to speak. Silence is one hard part of listening in a counselling session. Active listening is critical as the client could be trying to understand feelings they have expressed or ideas. Listening allows the client to maintain his/her line of thought and also to process their thoughts. It encourages the client to talk. It also helps the client to be in touch with their feelings and thoughts.

Resources: Principles of Guidance And Counselling Course Book (PUEA)

: <https://journals.openedition.org>