

Psychology Doctor–Patient Counseling Scenarios: Questions and Answers

Q: How does a psychologist begin a first counseling session?

A: The psychologist welcomes the patient, establishes confidentiality, and asks open-ended questions such as 'How have you been feeling lately?' to build trust and comfort.

Q: What are some effective techniques to build rapport with a patient?

A: Active listening, empathy, maintaining eye contact, and validating emotions help create a safe therapeutic environment.

Q: How does the psychologist assess anxiety during counseling?

A: The psychologist may ask questions like 'Do you often feel nervous or tense?' or 'How do you manage stressful situations?' and observe nonverbal cues.

Q: How should a psychologist respond when a patient starts crying?

A: Offer empathy and space, avoid interrupting, and use supportive statements such as 'It's okay to feel this way' to validate emotions.

Q: What is Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)?

A: CBT focuses on identifying and changing negative thought patterns and behaviors to improve emotional regulation and coping skills.

Q: How should a counselor handle a resistant patient?

A: Understand their concerns without judgment, explore reasons for resistance, and collaboratively set achievable goals.

Q: How does the psychologist address guilt in patients?

A: They help the patient challenge irrational guilt, practice self-forgiveness, and focus on constructive behavior change.

Q: What are effective relaxation techniques for anxiety?

A: Deep breathing, mindfulness, guided imagery, and progressive muscle relaxation are common techniques.

Q: How can a psychologist identify depression symptoms?

A: Look for persistent sadness, loss of interest, fatigue, changes in sleep, and hopelessness during sessions.

Q: What approach helps patients with trauma recovery?

A: Trauma-focused therapy emphasizing safety, empowerment, and gradual exposure to traumatic memories.

Q: How should a psychologist manage patient confidentiality?

A: Maintain strict confidentiality unless the patient poses danger to self or others, as per ethical guidelines.

Q: What should a psychologist do when a patient refuses treatment?

A: Respect autonomy, explore the reasons for refusal, and provide education about potential benefits of therapy.

Q: How can therapy goals be set effectively?

A: Goals should be SMART – Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound.

Q: How can a psychologist help manage panic attacks?

A: Teach grounding techniques, slow breathing, and cognitive reframing to reduce panic frequency and intensity.

Q: How to conduct a follow-up session?

A: Review progress, discuss ongoing challenges, and adjust treatment plans to meet evolving patient needs.