

In Lemberger-Truelove's Advocating Student-within-Environment (ASE) theory, reflections of feeling is a counseling technique that centers on recognizing and affirming the student's emotional responses, particularly as they relate to interactions within their school environment. This technique aligns with ASE's approach by situating students' feelings within the broader dynamics of their school relationships and culture, allowing students to see how their emotions are often influenced by environmental factors like peer dynamics, teacher expectations, or school policies. By reflecting these feelings back to the student, counselors can help them understand the connection between their internal experiences and external school influences, empowering them to navigate these emotions within the context of their environment.

Example Counselor Statements:

1. "I hear that you feel a bit isolated when working on group projects in class, especially when your ideas aren't considered. It sounds like the classroom setting isn't always making space for your voice, which must be really discouraging."
2. "It seems like you're feeling really stressed about keeping up with assignments because the school's pace feels overwhelming at times. It must be hard to stay motivated when the environment feels so fast-paced and intense."

In Lemberger-Truelove's Advocating Student-within-Environment (ASE) theory, paraphrasing is a counseling technique that involves restating the student's thoughts and concerns in the counselor's own words. This approach helps clarify the student's meaning, confirm understanding, and encourage them to consider their thoughts within the larger school environment. In ASE, paraphrasing goes beyond simple reflection, guiding students to recognize how their experiences and thoughts are shaped by school-related influences, like peer interactions, academic pressures, and institutional structures. By linking personal concerns to these external factors, paraphrasing can help students see their experiences as part of broader dynamics, facilitating self-awareness and encouraging proactive engagement with their school environment.

Example Counselor Statements:

1. "So what I'm hearing is that you feel frustrated when you don't have enough time to complete assignments, especially since it feels like the school's workload doesn't leave much room for breaks. It sounds like you're really aware of how the school's expectations are impacting your ability to focus and do your best."
2. "You're saying that it's difficult to speak up in class discussions because you feel others might judge your answers. It sounds like there's a strong social pressure here, and that's making it challenging to share your ideas openly."

In Lemberger-Truelove's Advocating Student-within-Environment (ASE) theory, **confrontation** is a counseling technique used to help students recognize discrepancies in their thoughts, behaviors, or beliefs, especially when these may be influenced by their school environment or when they impact their interactions within that context. This technique, while gentle and supportive, encourages students to reflect on inconsistencies that might be limiting their growth or sense of belonging in school. In ASE, confrontation is also about bringing to light the ways school dynamics, such as peer influence or school norms, may shape a student's actions or attitudes, helping them understand and navigate these influences in a more constructive way.

Example Counselor Statements:

1. *"You've mentioned that you want to feel more included by your classmates, but at the same time, you often avoid group activities. Do you think that keeping to yourself might make it harder for others to reach out to you as well?"*
2. *"You've shared that schoolwork is important to you and that you want to succeed, yet I notice you often put off studying until the last minute. Could it be that some of the school pressures or expectations might be making it tough for you to stay motivated?"*

In Lemberger-Truelove's Advocating Student-within-Environment (ASE) theory, **reflection of meaning** is a counseling technique that focuses on helping students uncover and reflect on the underlying significance and personal values behind their experiences within the school environment. This technique guides students to connect their actions, goals, and emotions with their broader purposes or values, particularly as these relate to their roles and relationships in school. In ASE, reflection of meaning also emphasizes the dynamic interplay between the student's personal motivations and the social or academic culture of the school, allowing students to gain a deeper understanding of how school influences shape their sense of purpose.

Example Counselor Statements:

1. *"You've shared that participating in sports helps you feel more confident and connected with others. It sounds like being part of a team is important for you, not only for the activity itself but also because it gives you a sense of belonging and support in the school environment."*
2. *"When you talk about working hard on school projects, you often mention how much it matters to you to set a good example for your younger siblings. It seems like your motivation isn't just about grades but also about showing them that school is a place where they can succeed and grow."*

In Lemberger-Truelove's Advocating Student-within-Environment (ASE) theory, **reframing** is a counseling technique that involves helping students shift their perspective on a situation or experience to view it in a more positive or constructive light. This technique encourages students to consider alternative interpretations or meanings that may empower them to see challenges as opportunities for growth, learning, or connection within their school environment. Reframing acknowledges the complex interplay between personal experiences and the broader social context of the school, facilitating a more adaptive approach to challenges and fostering resilience in students.

Example Counselor Statements:

1. *"You mentioned feeling overwhelmed by your workload and thinking that you're not good enough to keep up. What if we reframe that feeling as an opportunity to develop better time management skills? This could not only help you with your current classes but also prepare you for future challenges in school."*
2. *"I hear that you feel frustrated when classmates don't include you in group discussions. Instead of seeing it as a personal rejection, could we think about it as a chance for you to advocate for yourself and express your ideas more confidently? Engaging with your peers might strengthen your relationships and your voice in the classroom."*

1. Values Exploration Mapping

- Guide students to map out personal values and interests, connecting these with their goals, actions, and potential influences from their school environment. This helps students visualize how their values align with the broader school community.

In Lemberger-Truelove's Advocating Student-within-Environment (ASE) theory, **values exploration mapping** is a counseling technique used to help students articulate, prioritize, and navigate their personal values within their educational and social environments. This technique emphasizes understanding the ways in which students' values influence their motivations, behaviors, and decision-making, particularly in contexts that include relationships with peers, educators, and broader school systems. By mapping out values, students are encouraged to recognize how their individual preferences and beliefs align or differ from their environmental demands, ultimately fostering a deeper awareness of personal agency and critical consciousness within their surroundings.

Example Counselor Statements:

- *"Let's take a moment to think about a situation at school where you felt really proud of your actions. What values do you think were guiding you at that time, and how might those values help you navigate similar situations in the future?"*
- *"As you consider this decision, let's map out the values that feel most important to you. Imagine where each value could fit in your choices—are there any that stand out as essential to your goals or that might create tension in your school environment?"*

2. Strength-Based Reflection

- Focus on identifying each student's unique strengths and skills. Use these strengths as a foundation to build confidence and resilience, allowing students to approach challenges with a sense of empowerment.

In Lemberger-Truelove's Advocating Student-within-Environment (ASE) theory, **strength-based reflection** is a counseling technique that emphasizes identifying and building upon students' inherent strengths, talents, and personal achievements within their school and social contexts. This approach encourages students to see themselves as resilient agents of change capable of positively impacting their environment. By reflecting on past successes and positive qualities, students become more aware of their ability to overcome challenges and meet their goals, empowering them to actively engage in their personal growth and social environments.

Example Counselor Statements:

1. *"I remember you mentioning how you managed to bring your group together on a recent project, even though it was challenging. What qualities do you think you drew on to make that happen, and how could those same strengths help you in other areas?"*
2. *"You've shown a lot of determination in improving your grades this semester. What do you think has helped you stay motivated, and how might you apply that strength to tackle other goals you have in school or beyond?"*

3. Guided Compassion Dialogues

- Facilitate discussions where students practice empathy by sharing and reflecting on each other's experiences, promoting compassion and connectedness within the school community.

In Lemberger-Truelove's Advocating Student-within-Environment (ASE) theory, **guided compassion dialogues** are a counseling technique that fosters self-compassion and empathy by helping students to thoughtfully explore their feelings, motivations, and behaviors within a supportive framework. Through these dialogues, students are guided to recognize and address challenging emotions or social interactions with understanding and kindness, both toward themselves and others. This technique is rooted in ASE's emphasis on co-regulation and interconnectedness, encouraging students to see their experiences as part of a broader relational context and develop resilience through compassionate perspectives.

Example Counselor Statements:

1. *"It sounds like you were really hard on yourself after that presentation. Let's take a step back and look at it from a more compassionate angle—what would you say to a friend who felt the same way?"*
2. *"When you think about the argument with your friend, what feelings come up? Let's explore those emotions with a sense of understanding rather than judgment, so you can decide on the best way to move forward and reconnect."*

4. Community Resource Mapping

- Work with students to identify resources within the school and the broader community that can support their development. Encourage students to make connections with supportive individuals and programs.

In Lemberger-Truelove's Advocating Student-within-Environment (ASE) theory, **community resource mapping** is a counseling technique that helps students identify and connect with supportive resources within their school and local community. This approach aligns with ASE's emphasis on situating students within their broader environment, recognizing the value of external resources in fostering personal growth, resilience, and social support. By mapping community resources, students become aware of various supportive networks and services—such as mentors, after-school programs, mental health services, or cultural organizations—that they can utilize to enhance their well-being and academic or personal success.

Example Counselor Statements:

1. *"Let's take a look at some community resources that align with your interests and needs. Are there any clubs, groups, or support services in the school or neighborhood that you'd like to learn more about?"*
2. *"You mentioned feeling stressed about finding a place to study outside of school. Let's think about some local spots or community centers that might offer a quiet space, and I can help you identify which ones could be the best fit."*

5. Social Network Analysis

- Help students assess their social networks to better understand the influences (both positive and negative) within their environment. Students can identify supportive relationships and areas where they may need to set boundaries.

In Lemberger-Truelove's Advocating Student-within-Environment (ASE) theory, **social network analysis** is a counseling technique used to help students examine and understand their social connections within their school and community environments. This technique focuses on mapping out relationships and identifying the types of support, influence, and interaction patterns present in a student's life. By analyzing their social network, students can recognize both positive and negative influences, understand their role within different social circles, and make intentional choices about who to seek for support or collaboration. This approach emphasizes ASE's focus on the relational aspects of student experience and helps students build intentional, supportive connections that can aid in their academic and personal development.

Example Counselor Statements:

1. *"Let's map out the people you interact with regularly, both in and out of school. Who do you feel most supported by, and are there any relationships that you think might be challenging for you right now?"*
2. *"When you think about your friendships and connections, who stands out as someone who shares similar goals or values? Identifying these people can help you build a network that encourages and motivates you."*

6. Co-Regulation Strategies Workshop

- Teach students techniques for managing emotional states in social contexts. Use mindfulness, breathing exercises, and other co-regulation tools to enhance their ability to engage calmly and effectively with others.

7. Perspective-Taking Exercises

- Encourage students to explore different viewpoints by placing themselves in another person's shoes. This helps to build empathy and expand students' awareness of diverse perspectives within the school environment.

8. Personal Narrative Development

- Assist students in creating personal narratives that reflect their identities, values, and aspirations. This helps students see themselves as authors of their own stories and promotes self-reflection and agency.

9. School Climate Feedback Loop

- Collaborate with students to gather feedback on their perceptions of the school climate. Use their insights to advocate for systemic improvements and involve students in initiatives that enhance school inclusivity and equity.

10. Critical Consciousness Building

- Introduce students to social justice concepts, empowering them to critically analyze systems of power and oppression. Encourage them to think about ways they can effect positive change in their own school and community.

11. Mindfulness for Allostasis

- Teach mindfulness techniques that help students adapt to stress in healthy ways, supporting allostasis. Help them understand the importance of maintaining balance and flexibility in the face of life's challenges.

12. Values-Based Goal Setting

- Facilitate goal-setting sessions that align with students' core values. This approach ensures that goals are personally meaningful and motivating, rather than externally imposed.

13. Peer Mentoring Circles

- Organize small peer groups where students mentor and support each other in achieving personal and academic goals. Encourage students to share resources and strategies, fostering a sense of community.

14. Growth Mindset Journaling

- Encourage students to maintain journals that document their challenges, achievements, and reflections. This can reinforce a growth mindset by highlighting the progress they make over time.

15. Skill-Building Workshops

- Offer workshops focused on building executive functioning, communication, and problem-solving skills. Frame these workshops around developing capacities that are useful both in school and in life.

16. Empathy Mapping

- Guide students through exercises where they identify the feelings, thoughts, and needs of others. This helps them to practice empathy and consider the broader social dynamics at play within their environment.

17. Resilience-Building Dialogues

- Use storytelling and guided conversations to discuss how students can overcome challenges. Focus on building resilience and showing students that obstacles can be opportunities for growth.

18. Community Engagement Projects

- Encourage students to participate in or design service projects that benefit the school or local community. Emphasize the importance of contributing to the well-being of others while gaining practical skills.

19. Reflection and Regeneration Sessions

- Hold periodic reflection sessions where students assess their growth and consider areas for further development. Encourage them to think about how they can continue evolving as individuals and as members of the community.

20. Collective Problem-Solving Exercises

- Present group challenges that require collaboration and creative thinking. Guide students in approaching these problems as a team, promoting both individual agency and collective responsibility.

21. Self-Advocacy Training

- Teach students how to identify and communicate their needs effectively. Equip them with strategies to advocate for themselves within the school system and beyond.

22. Gratitude Practice

- Encourage students to engage in regular gratitude exercises that focus on appreciating both personal achievements and positive aspects of their school environment. This can enhance students' well-being and strengthen their connections with others.

23. Cultural Awareness Activities

- Incorporate activities that celebrate and explore cultural diversity. This promotes inclusivity and helps students understand the importance of respecting and valuing differences.

24. Environmental Influence Journals

- Have students keep a journal where they reflect on how various aspects of their environment (people, settings, events) impact their thoughts, feelings, and actions. This

increases self-awareness and helps them identify constructive ways to engage with their surroundings.

25. Vision for the Future Sessions

- Facilitate sessions where students create a vision for their future, including personal, academic, and community-related aspirations. Encourage them to consider how they can contribute to a more positive and equitable world.

Reflecting Feelings

Humanistic counseling:

Example 1: As we are talking about your parents, I can see the profound grief that you're experiencing (*empathy*). This is more than a memory, but a feeling that you carry with you even now in this room after all these years (*here-and-now; experiential*).

Example 2: I noticed you pulled back when I said that; fearful of what you're experiencing now as we talk about what you experienced in the past (*here-and-now; immediacy & authentic experience*)

Cognitive behavioral counseling:

Example 1: Witnessing the grief of others (*activating event*) reminds the struggles you endured after your own parents passed away, and now you believe that you will never escape the feelings of despair (*beliefs*), which in turn compels you to limit your interactions with other people in your life (*consequence*).

Example 2: You attach shame to your experiences of grief; a belief which has haunted you for decades (*Core belief*)

Post-modern counseling:

Example 1: The grief still persists from the loss of your parents; some days are better than others (*deconstruction; dominant story; externalizing*). This illustrates that you are more than your grief, you are someone who can suffer deeply and also someone who experiences deep joy (*reauthoring*).

Advocating Student-with-Environment:

Example 1: You're experience of grief (curiosity and connectedness) affects you deeply (compassion) and in different ways across different circumstances (co-regulation).

Example 2: The loss you experienced is associated with a feeling of distress, yet sadness is coupled with this profound passion to support your family members as they are also grieving (contribution).

Questions:

Humanistic counseling:

Example 1: How does reflecting on the past affect you in this moment? (*here-and-now; experiential*)

Example 2: You've endured much and I witness your resilience. In a similar way, I wonder what you learned about yourself? (*meaning*)

Example 3: You work hard to maintain your composure, but what is your fidgeting knee tell us if it could speak? (*somatic here-and-now*)

Cognitive behavioral counseling:

Example 1: (downward arrow) 1) Can you tell me what you experienced when you were taking the test? (*minor mode*) 2) Okay, so felt anxious because you had the impression that you were not performing well after much preparation. If true, from your perspective, what does this experience tell you about yourself as a learner? (*protoschema*) 3) So you interpreted this one anxiety laden experience as reflective of your total ability as a learner. How might you then describe yourself as a learner generally? 4) You have this circular experience, you believe that you are incapable of learning even when preparing, which leads to anxiety in performance situations, contributing to undesirable learning outcomes and now this larger belief that you are unable to learn or demonstrate your learning? (*core belief*)

Post-modern counseling:

Example 1: I wonder how someone else might interpret this experience in class. Think of the most charitable person you know, if she or he knew how anxious you were in class how might they interpret your performance after studying so many hours? (*externalizing*)

Example 2: Let's not disregard this recent episode, but let's also not focus only here. Could you describe to me some occasions when you had a different experience in a similar situation? (*exceptions*)

Advocating Student-with-Environment:

Example 1: What aspects from your classroom experiences most affect how you participate as a student (curiosity, co-regulation, and contribution)?

Example 2: Who in class is most helpful when you are struggling (co-regulation)?

Example 3: How might you notice when your attention starts to get distracted (co-regulation)? What things typically occur in class when you start to experience distraction (curiosity)?

To further illustrate how ASE theory employs reflections of feelings and questions to support the development of children, I (Matthew) was supervising my five-year-old son and his 4-year-old cousin. After a few normal disagreements, my son said that he wanted to play by himself, assumingly to avoid further conflict. This greatly disappointed my nephew who apparently felt rejected and angry, as he said, "If you don't play with me, I am going to hit you." My response to my nephew was something like the following:

Matthew: I see that you're quite angry when Atom (my son) said that he wanted to play alone. You were so upset that you said you're going to hit him.

Nephew: Yes, I am so angry at Atom.

Matthew: I wonder if you can tell me all of the different things that you can do when you get this angry?

Nephew: (listed about 3 strategies his parents had formerly introduced)

Matthew: That's a lot of ways to express anger; I wonder which ones might make you feel just a little bit better?"

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