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NFSC 460

Critique of counseling skills

Counseling turned out to be a lot harder and more complex than I originally thought. I found it hard to listen to what the client was saying, write down information, remember that information and figure out what I was going to say next. After watching the video, I realized that there were many things I did right and there were things that I would like to work on in the future.

I feel that I followed the ten steps of counseling really well. I had a list of the ten steps on the table while I was counseling so I went through those pretty thoroughly. Right off the bat, I felt like I established good rapport with my client by asking her questions about her profession, her family life, what activities she and her kids like to do etc. I felt like my body language was inviting as I nodded, smiled, made eye contact, acknowledged, and leaned towards her as she was talking. I liked the way I educated her about the downside of trying to lose weight fast in a competition-like setting by explaining how losing weight in a certain amount of time may not be maintainable long term. I felt like I did a good job using empathy and being non-judgmental in that I related to what she was saying and I tried to come up with realistic changes based on her comments and concerns. I talked about hunger signals a lot and used concepts from *Intuitive Eating* to get her to think about her hunger/fullness cues and the reasons behind why she eats. I felt like I used motivational interviewing well in that I constantly asked her questions and asked her permission before presenting certain information, like the food log and exercise log, to her. In terms of goal setting, I think I did a good job guiding her to make small changes that could make a big difference over time. She agreed to become more active with her family and to add

healthier foods than just candy to her desk drawer at work. I made her feel at ease by telling her that she still could eat candy and brownies but reinforced the concept of hunger cues and intuitive eating.

There are some things that I would like to work on for future counseling sessions. I brought up the Division of Responsibility at one point but I soon realized that I didn't have much to say about it so I didn't explain what the concept was. I also started to talk to her about different coping tools she could employ besides eating when she felt stressed but then I didn't lead her in the direction of brainstorming what those could be. Next time, I would like to be more thorough and stay on track with certain ideas and concepts so that I don't confuse the client. My client also mentioned that she wasn't familiar with portion sizes and didn't know if what she was eating was considered too much. When she said that, I should have educated her about portion sizes, but instead, I veered away from that topic and started talking about something else. Next time I will bring in food models or handouts to demonstrate portion sizes and compare the portion sizes that my client typically eats to what's considered a standard portion size. I should have addressed her use of Alfredo sauce in order to educate her about the nutritional value of different types of sauces. I could have had her brainstorm different sauces she could put on her vegetables or fish that contained less fat and calories. Regarding the goals that my client came up with, I meant to ask her which ones she felt would be the hardest to achieve and which ones she felt would be the easiest to achieve. However, I completely forgot this step which didn't allow her to express her final feelings and present any concerns she might have had to me.

Overall, I thought this counseling session provided a lot of insight into the logistics of counseling and was a great learning experience for all involved.