

Training Manual

On

Importance of Understanding the Client for an Effective Counseling

In Tehsil Sohawa, District Jehlum
of Pakistan



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Introduction

In Pakistan we are generally hesitant to admit if we are suffering from some form of emotional or mental issue since it is considered to be something which causes embarrassment and shame.

In rural communities the issue multiplies in magnitude and any form of mental distress or emotional chaos is labeled as the 'effect of witchcraft' and the person suffering sinks deeper into his/her blanket of despair. There is also a great lack of sensitized and trained counselors specifically in the rural areas due to which people suffering from emotional issues are unable to receive the adequate care and assistance that may enable them to overcome their situation.

The approach being utilized in this training is of a different nature, in the sense that it will not concentrate upon the written and documented skills of a counselor. It will in fact focus on the attitude of the participant and will aim to sensitize the participant about Emotional Health and the individual who is undergoing emotional trauma otherwise known as the Client. It aims to create a real life image of a human being going through a crisis who is in need for comfort, help and guidance so that the participant may through his/her own emotional learning understand what attitude and skills s/he needs to deploy in order to ensure the wellbeing of the Client.

This training aims to create an awareness about the Client because effective counseling is all about understanding the Client and taking the appropriate and necessary steps to assist him/her in this time of need. This initial sensitization training is a prerequisite that every counselor should go through prior to interacting with their Clients.

Session 1:	What is Counseling?
Title	What is Counseling?
Introduction	This session will introduce the basic definition of the term 'Counseling'
Objective	The participants will develop an understanding of the term Counseling
Methodology	Discussion, Probing
Step 1	Draw diagram 1 given in example 1 on a chart within view of all the participants. Draw the arrows but do not add the words
Step 2	Ask the participants what they think this individual who is in a state of emotional crisis needs at this point in time in order to improve his/her frame of mind. Ask them to note their ideas down on their charts
Step 3	Once completed ask the participants to state their ideas one by one and note all their answers on another chart next to the one with the diagram
Step 4	Have an interactive discussion and bring into focus the four identified needs in the diagram. Inform the participants that Counseling is the help that is provided by a trained individual to someone who is in a state of emotional crisis (Client) by means of 'Support'. 'Comfort', 'Guidance', 'Assistance' and discuss the text given in example 1.
Step 5	Wind up the session by asking the participants to write a short account of any incident where they have encountered someone in a state of emotional crisis and how they assisted them (it may be anyone – family, friend, colleague, child)

Trainer's note: This last activity need not be shared at this point in time, but will be shared later on during the training in order to gauge participants' learning

Session 1
Example 1
Identifying the Needs of Emotional Crisis

What is Counseling?

Counseling is the help that is provided by a trained individual to someone who is in a state of emotional crisis (client) by means of

- Support
- Comfort
- Guidance
- Assistance

Support

To show the client through your attitude and communication that you are standing by their side and will understand their need for help and help them in every possible manner that you can

Comfort

To give the client the secure and cared for feeling of kindness, compassion and understanding that they may feel comfortable enough to release their feelings and emotions in your presence

Guidance

To present informed, structured and established options that the client can follow in order to improve his/her state of mind

Assistance

To provide any resources, facilities and referrals that may be available to the client. This may consist of medical, legal, shelter etc. assistance.

Session 2:	Emotional Health
Title	Emotional health
Introduction	This session will explain the term Emotional Health
Objective	Participants will become aware of emotional health and the factors that affect it
Methodology	Discussion, exercise
Step 1	Write the words 'Emotional Health' on a chart and paste a chart next to it
Step 2	Give the participants 10 minutes to think about this phrase after which ask them to come up one by one and write one line defining the phrase
Step 3	Have an interactive discussion and bring into focus the definition of Emotional Health provided in example 1
Step 4	Wind up the session by conducting exercise 1 provided at the end of the session
Step 5	Distribute the hand out provided in example 2
Step 6	Form three groups and ask the three groups to list 2 situations under each category that will ensure that the individual is emotionally healthy
Step 7	Once they have completed this; ask them to list 2 situations under each category that will effect the individual's emotional health in a negative way

Emotional Health

Emotional Health is that well being of a human being that is related to his or her mental frame of mind. An individual who is emotionally healthy is experiencing a conducive and positive environment, thought process and overall feeling of contentment with his/her circumstances in life.

An individual who is emotionally not healthy is experiencing a negative and dismal thought process and has an overall feeling of sadness/grief/despair/unhappiness with his/her circumstances in life.

Factors that effect Emotional Health

- Family
- Childhood Experiences
- Society
- Circumstances
- Medical Reasons

Family

The support, love, care and appreciation that we receive from our families affects our emotional health since this is the primary unit from where we receive our feeling of self worth and daily comfort. If there are issues within a family like abuse, violence or even lack of appreciation, then the emotional health of the recipient who faces these negative issues will suffer

Childhood Experiences

Children are innocent sponges who grow up absorbing all that they see and hear on a daily basis. Their emotional wellbeing as adults will be primarily based upon their circumstance, environment and interactions with others while they were growing up. If a child has experienced trauma, beatings, yelling, abuse and a lack of appreciation and praise then these factors will affect his/her emotional health in a highly negative way when s/he becomes an adult also

Society

The communities we all live in have a certain mindset and way of thinking which may at times affect us in a negative way. Communal attitudes towards disabled persons, divorced women, women who are unable to bear children, girls who remain unmarried all have a negative effect on the persons who fall into these categories.

Circumstances

Poverty, lack of a job, pregnancy, being childless, loneliness, trauma, rape, violence, abuse or the death of a loved one will affect a person on an emotional level

Medical Reasons

Depression, anxiety, physical wounds due to abuse as well as any form of disability will also have a detrimental effect on a person's emotional health

Session 2

Exercise 1
The Emotional Wellbeing of an Individual

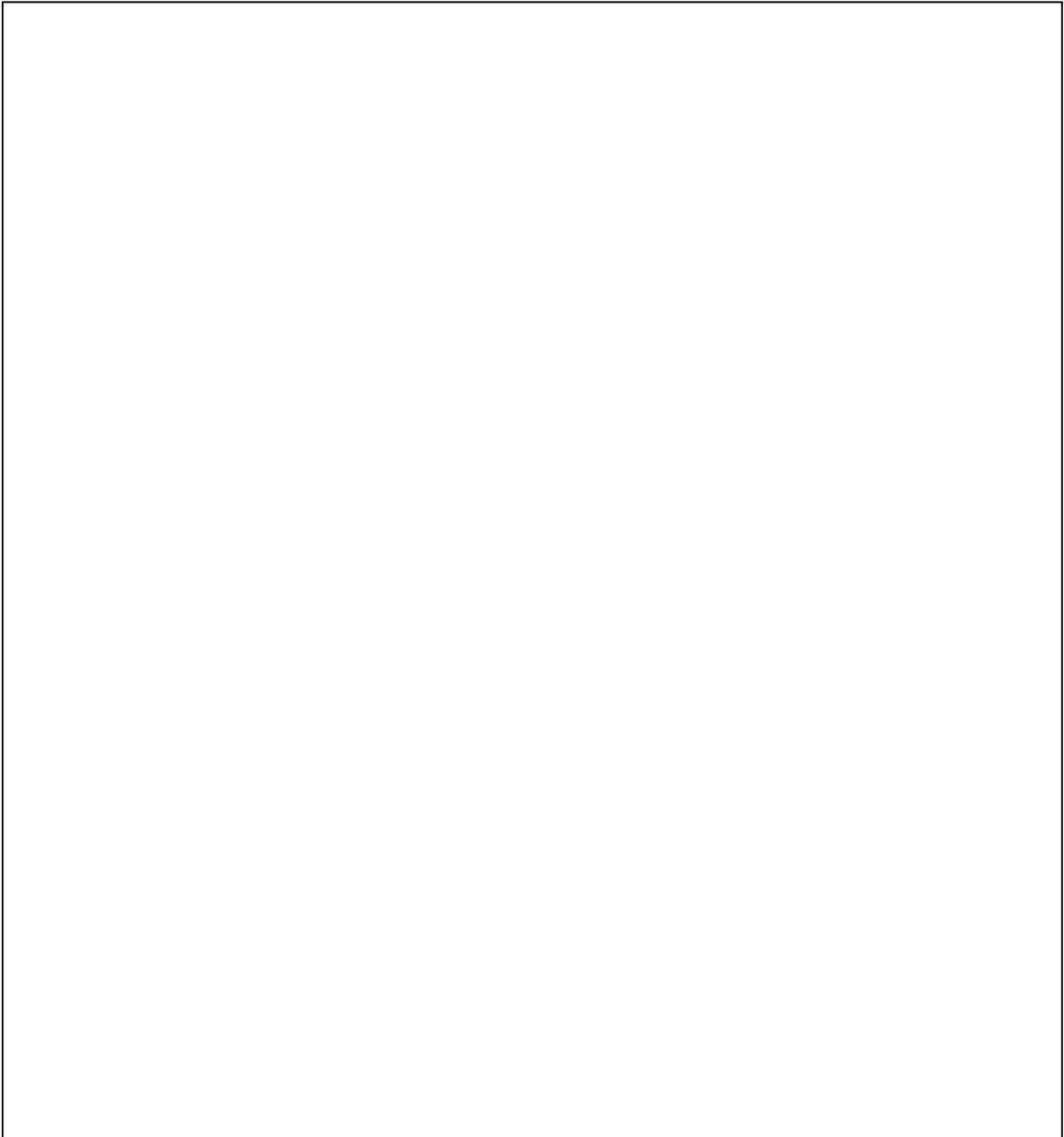
Session 2
Exercise 1
Factors Effecting Emotional Health

Guidelines for the Exercise

- ⇒ Discuss the example 1 and 3 among your group.
- ⇒ Identify two situations under each category that will ensure that the individual is emotionally health.
- ⇒ The time frame for the exercise is 15 minutes.

Session 4:	The Client
Title of Session	The Client
Introduction	This session will introduce the Client (the individual who is undergoing an emotional crisis) to the participants
Objective	The participants will develop an understanding of the emotional frame of mind of the Client
Methodology	Group work, probing
Step 1	Draw the diagram provided in example 1. Draw the arrows but do not write the words
Step 2	Divide the participants into groups of 3 or 4 and hand them a chart each.
Step 3	Ask them to brainstorm among themselves and just as they identified what this individual needed in the previous session, now they are to identify what this individual is <i>feeling</i>
Step 4	Ask one representative from each group to come up and write down the group findings on a chart next to the one with the diagram
Step 5	Once complete have an interactive discussion focusing around the identified feelings provided in the diagram given in example 1 and add them to the diagram as you go along.
Step 6	Once complete, write the words 'The Client' above the diagram, and inform the participants, that this is what s/he looks and feels like
Step 7	Ask the participants to read the example 2 and discuss the definition of client and feelings of clients.
Step 8	Wind up the session with exercise 1 given in example 1. Divide the participants into two groups and handout one case study to each group. Ask them to read the stories and have a discussion based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Client and her feelings • The reasons behind this situation • If you were Bilquees/Rukhsana's best friend who happened to walk into the current situation, what would you do?

Session 4
Example 1
Feelings of the Client

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying the central portion of the page. It is intended for the client to write their feelings.

Definition of the Client and his/her Feelings

The Client

An individual who is undergoing emotional trauma, depression, grief, loss, fear, anxiety, depression is a human being with 'A name', 'A family', 'A community', and above all...their own unique personalities as human beings

Feelings of the Client

Guilt, Fear, Confusion, Grief, Despair, Physical pain, Anger

A client may be experiencing one or more of these feelings at the same time, and is also unable to adequately identify these feelings or communicate them to others due to the ongoing chaos that exists in his/her mind.

Guilt

Guilt stems from the Client thinking that s/he has done something wrong. In cases of abuse and rape victims usually experience feelings of guilt because they feel that **they** have done something wrong and it is because of **them** and their actions that the rape and abuse occurred.

Fear

One of the most difficult emotions to deal with is fear, since it makes a person feel weak, vulnerable and exposed. In cases of rape and abuse this fear could stem from the opposite sex in general. It could stem when the Client is alone etc.

Confusion

Due to the scattered thoughts and inability to make rational sense out of his/her own emotions and feelings, the Client is in a state of confusion and does not know which logical pattern of thinking s/he should adopt because at this point in time they have lost the power to think logically.

Grief

Something has been taken away from the Client – be it on a personal level i.e. their dignity, self worth, respect or on a physical level i.e. the death of a loved one. This loss that the Client is experiencing will cause them to be in a state of grief and it will take a certain time span for the client to overcome this state.

Despair

When all hope is lost and we are unable to see and ray of light in our lives, we reach the level of despair. The Client has lost all hope for betterment or happiness and feels a prevailing sense of despair

Physical Pain

When the human body has been wounded – either physically or emotionally, there is generally a level of physical pain associated with their situation

Anger

At times the Client will experience various levels of anger which stems from his/her own circumstances and situation. This anger may be directed at him/herself, the person who committed the injustice or even the person who is trying to help.

Session 4
Example 1
Case Study 1

Bilquees looked out the window to make sure her husband had left. She limped to the door and locked it and then collapsed. She could not move her foot and the screaming pain made her sweat. She knew that he had broken it this time. Bilquees turned onto her stomach and dragged herself forward by clawing the floor and pulling herself forward. Slowly, inch by inch she managed to drag herself into the kitchen and then painfully turned over onto her back and put her hand on her stomach. She was 7 months pregnant.

Background

Bilquees's husband started to hit her the second day of their marriage

Her parents and family live in a different village so she has no contact with them

He has broken one bone previously, and now she is more fearful for the wellbeing of her unborn baby than she is for herself.

Bilquees knows that she will face disgrace from her in-laws, her own family and her community if she leaves her husband – and Bilquees also knows that if she stays, eventually he will kill her

Session 4
Example 1
Case Study 2

Rukhsana hurried to make breakfast while her husband helped the children pack their bags for school. They would all be ready and waiting on the mat in no time. The images came back in her mind – they always did these days. She could see that evil man again smiling and laughing as he came towards her. She quickly shook her head and tried to focus on what she was doing ‘Please go away’ she whispered under her breath. She quickly got breakfast ready and helped her children eat while they all chatted happily. She went into the kitchen and again the image was there – that same man, and this time he was touching her. She again shook her head and tried to get him out of her mind. Her husband had silently walked into the kitchen and she did not hear him. He put his hand on her shoulder to get her attention and she screamed loudly. ‘Leave me alone. Let go. Go away’...and then she fainted.

Background

When Rukhsana was only 9 years old she was raped by her uncle.

Her husband does not know about this incident.

She has never spoken about this to anyone, and the only person who knows is her mother who cleaned her up and told her that she would kill her if she ever breathed a word to anyone.

Recently Rukhsana’s brother-in-law moved in to live with them.

Rukhsana has a daughter who is 8 years old.

Session 4
Exercise 1
The Client

Guideline for the Exercise

- Discussion time is 15 minutes.
- Read the stories and have a discussion based on:
 - The Client and her feelings
 - The reasons behind this situation
 - If you were Bilquees/Rukhsana's best friend who happened to walk into the current situation, what would you do?

Session 5:	An Effective Counselor
Title	An Effective Counselor
Introduction	This session will identify the specific characteristics of an effective counselor
Objectives	Participants will be able to understand the characteristics that are necessary for an effective counselor
Methodology	Discussion, Probing
Step 1	Write the words “An Effective Counselor” on a chart for all the participants to see.
Step 2	Give the participants 10 minutes to brainstorm the term and then ask them to define the term in simple words by coming up one by one and writing it on a chart next to it.
Step 3	Once complete, have a detailed discussion around the term and highlight the definition given in example 1.
Step 4	Wind up the session by asking the participants to refer back to the case studies of Bilqees and Rukhsana, and ask them to write a detailed account of what steps they would follow if they were the Counselor and the women in the stories were their Clients

1. An Effective Counselor

A counselor is more than a professional, and it is to be noted that it is not a job for someone who has not received adequate training since the betterment of an individual undergoing emotional trauma is at stake. There are three main elements that constitute the makings of an effective counselor

- A. Attitude
- B. Body Language
- C. Communication

A. Attitude

One's attitude is the general overall behavior and approach that one deploys when interacting with others. The attitude of a person is usually the unspoken means of communicating to others as to what they think of their own self worth and the worth of others. The attitude will depict the level of importance that you are paying to the person you are interacting with.

When one desires to become a good and efficient counselor, it must be noted that one's Attitude is one of the initial characteristics that must be analyzed prior to embarking upon counseling.

Your attitude should depict that you understand and will ensure Client confidentiality

B. Body Language

- When you approach someone who has been through trauma like rape or violence, your body language must be relaxed and you must maintain a certain physical distance from them. We tend to overpower people by hugging and putting our arms around them as a means of comfort, but it must be noted that in such instances the Client's body has been violated and as such they will want to recoil from any form of human contact due to fear.
- Your movements should be at a minimum so that the Client does not become scared
- You should look at the Client so that s/he can feel reassured
- Nod your head to acknowledge what they are saying if they speak
- If and only if need be – then you may reach out to hug them
- If the Client expresses a concern for confidentiality, you should nod your head in agreement because ***your body language should depict that you understand and will ensure Client confidentiality***

C. Communication

C 1 Listening

Listening is a highly important aspect of counseling since it is by this means that you will be able to understand the situation of the Client.

- Allow Silence: if the Client is highly distraught, s/he will need spaces and times of silence to gather him/herself together.

- Sounds of acknowledgement: Give small sounds of acknowledgement that will encourage the Client to continue speaking and let him/her know that you are being attentive
- Do not get distracted: at this point in time you are the only one that the Client is speaking to and reaching out to. Do not let surroundings and other things distract you and give you undivided attention
- Acknowledge the Client's need for confidentiality by making sounds of agreement because ***your listening should depict that you understand and will ensure Client confidentiality***

C 2 Speaking

Speaking is the means by which you will be able to reach out to the Client and explain that you are there to help.

- Speak slowly
- Speak clearly
- Do not raise your voice
- Do not make false promises
- Tell the Client that you will utilize all available means to assist them
- Do not push them
- Do not compare them to others who have been in the same situation because each individual is unique and different in their personality
- Do not tell them that they have to be stronger – because they already are
- Voice the words ***'I understand and will ensure your confidentiality'***

2. Dealing with a Client

When dealing with a Client, you need to assess the situation.

If it is a crisis where extreme trauma has occurred (rape, burning, physical violence) then you should immediately

- Seek medical help
- Ask the Client if there is any other safe home where she can stay (family, friend etc)
- Ask if the client wants to involve the police

If the Client is not in a critical condition then these steps may not be necessary and you should deploy counseling through your attitude, body language and communication.

Above all it must be noted that Client Confidentiality is of utmost importance since there have been cases where abusers have returned and killed women because they have spoken up and word has spread throughout the community.

Session 6:	Participant's Learning
Title	Participant's Learning
Introduction	This session will gauge the level of participants learning
Objective	To reinstate the essence of all the previous sessions
Methodology	Discussion, Exercise
Step 1	Ask the participants to refer back to their initial exercise from session 1 where they were asked to write a brief account of how they had assisted someone in a state of emotional crisis
Step 2	Ask them to re-write their account and how they would have dealt with the situation keeping in mind what they have learned during the span of the training
Step 3	Once they have completed their task ask them to they think deeply about the previous session and the highlighted point which was referred to in every characteristic of an Effective Counselor
Step 4	Now ask them if any of them would like to share their account with the rest of the participants
Trainers note	The ideal situation here is that the participants should have understood the importance of confidentiality by themselves without having to be spoon-fed and as such they should decline to share their accounts thus upholding the values of an Effective Counselor.

