

Helping Relationships

Education 423

Section: E200

Term: 2010 Spring

Instructor: Instructor: Gillian Smith

Email: gds1@sfu.ca

Class: Thursdays 8:30-8:20, Burnaby campus: 7500F

Discussion Topics: Learning Objectives

This course will focus on the development of basic listening, empathetic and interviewing skills that help to foster human relations and understanding of others. There will be an emphasis on the role-play and personal use of a variety of empathy skills. These skills are not meant to reflect any one theory of counselling but are seen as fundamental to the development of helping relationships in any domain. Specifically, at the end of the course, students will have had the opportunity to:

- a. Increase your awareness of your own natural resources for helping others.
- b. Enable you to understand and demonstrate the appropriate use of a broad repertoire of specific helping skills.
- c. Enable you to more fully understand the interrelationship between your personality, your personal experiences, and the processes and skills involved in becoming an effective helper.
- d. Enable you to investigate more deeply the roots of others behaviour, and how to effectively intervene to help people make constructive changes in their lives.

Course Content and Assignments

The major focus of this course will be your active participation in the practice of basic listening and empathy skills. This will be accomplished through an experience/reflection format with opportunities to practice skills every class, and by videotaping your active listening exchanges and transcribing them. This will then be followed by self-critique, and constructive feedback from the instructor and fellow students in your group.

Grading: Other Requirements

Students are required to attend ALL classes, with only the exception of special circumstances. This is a course based on practicing within partnerships. Missing classes or portions of classes affects the learning of your assigned partners, and may affect your final grade!!

Required Texts: Young, M. (2008). Learning the Art of Helping: Building blocks and techniques (4th ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Merrill Prentice Hall.

Recommended Texts:

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Materials/Supplies: Evaluation

1. Attendance and participation in class discussions 15%
2. Tape and critique 1 15%
3. Tape and critique 2 20%
4. Tape and critique 3 35%
5. Two reflection papers on personal skill development 15% (one due the third week, and one due the last class (3-5 pages, double spaced)).
6. Reflection journal I do not read your personal journals, and therefore they are not graded, but the content is intended to help you write your above final reflection paper (see below).

* For additional information, see hand-out on grading criteria.

Videotape Transcriptions and Self-Critique

A formal requirement of the course will be the preparation and self-critique of 3 videotapes. The tapes will be prepared and presented as follows:

The first two tape assignments

In class, you will be assigned a classmate, or classmates to role-play your listening skills during the term. You are to videotape ALL practice sessions with one another. For the first two videotape assignments, you are required to select a 5-7 minute segment of one of your tapings for me to watch. Transcribe this 5-7 minute segment, and critique your responses based on the skills we have learned in class. If you did not demonstrate a skill effectively, don't fret!! You will have an opportunity to come up with an alternative response that you could have stated instead. The first two tapes will be graded on your actual and alternative responses.

Steps for the first two tape assignments:

1. Practice skills with partner and videotape all of your sessions.
2. When an assignment is due, choose a 5-7 minute segment that you feel demonstrates your skills to date, and transcribe the 5-minute segment. (This will likely be 10 to 20 statements from you, depending on how much talking your client is doing). Ensure you choose a segment that captures several empathy statements from you (ie., I cannot provide feedback on your skills if only your client is speaking!) I will not watch the session in its entirety, only the 5-7 minute section you have transcribed. Ensure you practise taping role plays for lengthy periods to ensure you have practised with longer sessions.
3. Write a brief description of the client and outline of the presenting problem (a few sentences).
4. Using the example template on the following page, do a self-critique of your transcribed performance.

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5. Transcript column verbatim transcription of your session

(+, , -) + = your response was on target

= your response was neutral

- = your response was off-track, out of place or unsuitable

Alternate response column - write what you would consider to be an improved response. I.e.: actual response You didn't like what she did; alternate response You were outraged at your boyfriend for drinking and driving.

Comments/Reflection Your process in determining what you said, your assessment of your/their response, body language, etc. and how you can improve, or be more effective in the future.

6. To complete your assignment, write three behavioural goals in point form (tangible and objective) that you will continue to work on. I.e. 1) I will work on leaning forward, 2) I will work on maintaining more eye contact with my client, and 3) I will stop fidgeting during sessions; rather than I will work on body language). Try to be clear and specific and in point form.

7. Hand in your written assignment and tape together in an envelope or wrapped in an elastic band.

The third tape assignment

The final tape is meant to be more in-depth. The final tape is intended to reflect the process and skills developed in this course. In other words, in this final tape you should be able to demonstrate that you can carry a session satisfactorily from beginning to end. This includes opening and closing a session, in addition to your empathetic listening skills. Unlike the first two tapes, I will watch this one in its entirety. The criteria to evaluate this tape will include the degree to which you achieve the following:

a) Competency and accuracy in the use of the skills learned in this course, and

b) Your own evaluation of this tape from the perspective of the above two points.

Steps for the third tape assignment:

1. Follow the steps for the first two assignments, but transcribe this one in its entirety. Ensure to include the opening and closing of your session. If you forget to include various aspects of opening and closing the session, be sure to include them in your alternate response section. This tape should be between 20-30 minutes in duration. Hand in the tape, and written assignment together in an envelope, or wrapped in an elastic band. To ensure confidentiality, all tapes must be handed in to me in person.

Written Assignments
Reflection Papers

At the beginning of each semester, all 423 students will write a 3-5 page, (12 font, double spaced) paper that self-assesses your strengths and challenges to communications and human relations. This paper is due the third class. At the end of the term, you will critique your first paper with respect to any changes in perspective. Details will be discussed in class. The final critique is due the last class, along with your final tape assignment. (See

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steps below)

The following may be helpful to assess your skills progression:

Level 1 ability to identify and classify active listening behaviours in your simulated conversations with others (i.e. Your transcribed videotapes).

Level 2 ability to perform a variety of listening skills in your everyday conversations, as well as your simulated ones.

Level 3 mastery of a variety of skills such that you can demonstrate their integration and appropriate use in an active listening session.

Steps for first reflection paper

1) Using the textbook, class discussions and your journal as a reference, write out your reflections on your gifts/strengths/qualities/inherent contributions to the helping profession. What is it about you that make you already an effective helper? What brings you to this class? What draws you/haunts you to want to learn to help others in a more efficient and effective way? Alternatively, what are some of the pitfalls/challenges/stumbling blocks/emotional barriers and other histories that might be in your way as you continue your journey? (3-5 pages, 12 font, double-spaced)

Steps for the final reflection paper

1) Beginning with the first class, keep a reflection journal of in-and-out-of-class experiences/participations as you evolve your listening skills and perceptions of helping. The journal will be self-evaluative and reflective, allowing you to track your own progress through out the course. You will use your journal to see how you have progressed and to recognize identified shifts in your development as a more efficient helper. Quote from it in your final reflection paper. You will not be expected to hand it in it is for your learning use.

General Information

Equipment

You are encouraged to use your own laptops and video cameras, if you have them. Otherwise, cameras have been set-aside in the audio-visual center in the CET. You may also wish to use an audiotape, as a back up for your sound recording, and also to make easier your transcriptions of sessions. External mics will also improve the sound quality of your sessions; this will reduce the source of much frustration as you begin to transcribe your dialogues.

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Counselling Assistance

Even though the emphasis on role-playing will be educational, sometimes students find bringing up issues in class and mock sessions leads them to experience heightened anxiety, stress, or other types of emotional discomfort or challenges. If this should happen to you, and it interferes with your class participation and learning, please consult with me, and/or call/drop-in to speak with a professional counsellor at the SFU Health, Counselling and Career Center in the Maggie Benson Building (778 782 4515) or at the Counselling Center at SFU Surrey. There is also an SFU Nightline, which offers after hours crisis support available to the SFU community. The line is staffed by trained student volunteers specializing in crisis intervention, peer counselling, information and referrals (604 857 7148) 4:30 to 8:30 pm weekdays and 24 hrs weekends and holidays.

Class Conduct and Special Considerations

Please note that this class is not based on competition among students. Often, students get higher marks when they participate in class in a cooperative and collaborative way that facilitates mutual learning and respect. Thus, I am responsible for creating a class atmosphere conducive to students self-exploration, simulated counselling interaction, and open communication. The psychological safety of all of the students is paramount when they are taking the role of student-counsellor and the student-client in simulated interaction. Student behaviours that interfere with the development and maintenance of psychological safety for them selves and/or others will not be tolerated. The instructor will approach and problem-solve with students who show ethno-racial or gender discrimination, insensitivity of others feeling and needs, intolerance of individual and cultural differences, judgemental attitudes toward others, or inappropriate behaviours toward others or the instructor. Occasionally, students demonstrate that they are not able or ready to complete the course requirements and have been asked to withdraw from the course.

Prerequisite/Corequisite: Prerequisite or co-requisite: EDUC 323

Notes:

This outline is derived from a course outline repository database that was maintained by SFU Student Services and the University's IT Services Department. The database was retired in 2014 and the data migrated to SFU Archives in 2015.