



Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy

PSY_3_COU

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Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences

2007-2008

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1. UNIT DETAILS

Unit Title:	Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy	
Unit Level:	3 & Graduate Diploma	
Unit Reference Number:	PSY_3_COU	
Credit Value:	1	
Student Study Hours:	150	
Contact Hours:	48	
Private Study Hours:	102	
Pre-requisite Learning (If applicable):	None	
Co-requisite Units (If applicable):	None	
Course(s):	BSc (hons) Psychology, BSc (hons) Psychology and Sexuality, Graduate Diploma Psychology	
Year and Semester	2007-8, Semester 2	
Unit Coordinator:	Meg Barker	
UC Contact Details (Tel, Email, Room)	Dept. of Psychology, Extension Block: E335: barkermj@lsbu.ac.uk 0207 815 5814	
Subject Area:	Psychology	
Summary of Assessment Method:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 2500 word essay (50%)• 2500 word case study (50%)	<div>A</div> <div>A</div>

2. SHORT DESCRIPTION

This unit is designed primarily for students who wish to go on to counselling psychology and psychotherapy postgraduate courses (as distinct from Clinical Psychology and other related professions) following their degree. Each week will include both a theoretical component and a practical component where students will be able to try out various approaches in role-plays and triad work. Triad work is a standard counselling training practice where students take the role of counsellor, client and observer and try out techniques in this triad. Students are encouraged to talk about general aspects of life or minor problems rather than anything they are likely to find distressing and are encouraged only to disclose information that they are comfortable sharing.

The theoretical component of the unit introduces students to key theoretical approaches in counselling psychology and psychotherapy (focusing on humanist/existential and cognitive behavioural) as well as covering various types of therapy (one-to-one, group therapy, brief therapy and relationship work). There is a critical emphasis throughout the course considering issues of power, ethics, difference, and research on therapeutic effectiveness and processes. The material covered on this course will be similar to that in many foundation courses in counselling psychology and psychotherapy. Therefore it is important that students taking the course attend every week so that they, and their colleagues, get the full benefit. Students are also encouraged to engage in an appropriate placement or voluntary work during the year they are taking this unit so that they can reflect on this experience during their course and in the assessment.

3. AIMS OF THE UNIT

The unit will:

- Provide an overview of the main theoretical approaches to counselling psychology and psychotherapy.
- Introduce different various forms of counselling (one-to-one, group-based, family, relationship, brief, etc.)
- Examine research into the process and effectiveness of counselling psychology and psychotherapy.
- Develop skills in psychotherapeutic practice (e.g. listening skills, communication skills, basic approach-specific techniques)

- Introduce critical questions regarding counselling and psychotherapy (e.g. affirmative counselling, ethics, reflexivity, matching clients and counsellors, power, etc.)

4. LEARNING OUTCOMES

4.1 Knowledge and Understanding

- Describe and evaluate substantive material on broad theoretical perspectives on counselling such as psychodynamics and existential phenomenology. (1)
- Describe, understand and evaluate theoretical perspectives, concepts, topics and issues deriving from the work of, for example, Rogers, Yalom, Beck, Kelly. (2)

4.2 Intellectual Skills

- Apply knowledge of the suitability of different therapeutic approaches to different psychological problems. (3)
- Analyse problems and possible solutions in counselling psychology, including the examination of problems in evaluation of efficacy. (4)

4.3 Practical Skills

- Develop oral and written communication skills through group discussions, triad work and assessment completion. (5)
- Develop planning and time management skills through meeting deadlines and essay submission date. (6)
- Develop resource management skills through strategic use of available reading materials. (7)

4.4 Transferable Skills

By participating actively in this unit students will have the opportunity to develop the following skills:

- Communication skills (e.g. through group discussions, role-play and triad work);
- Time management skills (e.g. through reading in advance papers for different sessions and managing the two assessments);
- Resource management skills (e.g. through strategic use of available reading materials).

5. ASSESSMENT OF THE UNIT

This unit will be assessed by means of one essay and one case study:

1. A 2500 word essay (50%)
2. A 2500 word report on a case study (50%)

1. Essay

The essay assessment requires you to write an essay of no more than 2,500 words:

Choose from two of the psychotherapeutic approaches covered in the unit. These should be compared and contrasted. You should evaluate both of them in terms of theoretical perspectives, research, and other material published by therapists and counselling psychologists working within these approaches

2. Case Study

The case study assessment will take the form of a written report about a case study. The case study should comprise a brief transcript (up to 1000 words) of a counselling session. This should be accompanied by a 2,500 word report evaluating this session.

Those students who are undertaking a voluntary counselling-related placement may write an anonymized transcript of a session they have done from memory (checking with the organisation involved that this is acceptable under their ethical guidelines and obtaining client consent in whatever way the organisation deems appropriate). This does not have to be word-for-word accurate but should give a flavour for how the counsellor works with the client. It should follow a similar format to the example given below.

Those students who are not undertaking such work, or who do not have time to produce such a transcript, are provided with an example case study from the literature which they can comment on, comparing the therapist's approach to the way in which they, themselves, would work.

In your report you should particularly refer to the literature on the type of issue the client presents, and on the type of therapy that was being applied. You should assess what the counsellor did well or badly in relation to counselling skills, process, theory, power, ethics and reflexivity, and what needs improvement

Please arrange a tutorial or ask in class if you are uncertain about any aspect of either of the assessments.

Notes about submitting coursework

This should be submitted in the way specified. Occasionally, individual students may be asked, in writing, to also provide an electronic copy. Failure to supply electronic copy within two weeks of a written request will result in the coursework being deemed as an incomplete submission, hence given a mark of zero.

Coursework deadlines are published on Faculty notice boards. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are aware of these dates. All coursework must be submitted to the Faculty Office in Borough Road.

1. When handing in coursework, you must:

- complete the coursework submission form and attach it to the front of your coursework;
- take the coursework to the Faculty Office. Your submission form will be date stamped and a receipt issued. Please keep all receipts.

You must not hand coursework to your unit co-ordinator or other lecturer.

2. Unless you have obtained a formal extension from your year tutor, coursework submitted:

- up to two weeks after the deadline date will receive a maximum mark of the pass mark (40%);
- more than two weeks after the deadline will not be marked.

3. Extensions are only granted for valid reasons (see Course guide). Concrete evidence (e.g. medical certificate) will normally be required by the Year Tutor. If you want an extension of the deadline date, you must:

- get a copy of the form for late submission from the Faculty Office;
- fill in Part A of the form, giving reasons why you cannot meet the existing deadline date;
- supply the Year tutor with relevant documentary evidence;
- ask the Year Tutor to fill in Part B – the decision whether to agree the request rests with the Year Tutor;
- attach the form to the front of your coursework when you submit it (keep a copy for your records).
- each extension form is only valid for one piece of coursework.

The maximum extension is two weeks.

6. FEEDBACK

Feedback will normally be given to students 15 working days after the submission of an assignment.

7. INTRODUCTION TO STUDYING THE UNIT

7.1 Overview of the Main Content

This unit will be delivered via 12 three hour sessions combining interactive lectures with small group seminar-type activities. There will also be directed study, self managed learning and tutorials.

This unit complements the unit on mental health (the other semester in level 3) which covers various mental health-related problems and issues. This unit covers the various psychotherapeutic approaches that are used by clinical and counselling psychologists, psychotherapists and counsellors in their work with individuals with psychological disturbances or more general life problems.

Students will be expected to draw on their knowledge from previous units (e.g. developmental psychology, biological basis of behaviour, social psychology, personality, intelligence and testing, and cognition units) in this unit, e.g. when considering the counselling of children, the use of medical treatments alongside counselling, relationship therapy, diagnosis and assessment, and cognitive therapeutic approaches.

7.2 Overview of Types of Classes

The **lecture/seminar** sessions will normally be in two 75 minute blocks. The lecture parts of the session aim to provide you with an overview of the main theories and practices in the therapeutic approach focused on that day as well as relevant research findings relating to that approach. The seminar will involve triad work (where one person counsels another with a third person observing), in order to try out some of the approaches and techniques of that particular form of therapy. It is vital that students attend both lecture and seminar in order to gain the relevant theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Each seminar will end with a brief 'development group' discussion of what has been covered that day.

7.3 Importance of Student Self-Managed Learning Time

In addition to these activities you also have a considerable amount of time in which to undertake **self-managed learning**. This is a vital component of study on a degree programme. Some of this time should be used to undertake preparatory reading for the lectures and to prepare for seminar sessions. However, you should also use this time to read around the subject and begin to develop the more in-depth knowledge that you will need to have in order to perform well in the essay and the case study assessment. It is impossible, and you are not expected, to develop in-depth knowledge on all areas of the curriculum. However, good performance requires knowledge that goes beyond that provided in classes and in Essential Reading. To study a topic in depth you might start from the Supplementary Reading for each topic and follow up the references to key journal papers provided in the Essential Reading.

7.4 Conceptual and Historical Issues

This is one of the key options in the psychology course covering conceptual and historical issues in psychology. Throughout the unit we will consider therapeutic approaches in their historical context (from early psychoanalytic approaches, through the advance of behaviourism, humanism and cognitivism to the embracing of social constructionist and existential approaches in more recent years). You will also be introduced to various critical theoretical perspectives (social constructionism, feminist, gay affirmative, multicultural and queer theory approaches, and 'anti-psychiatry' perspectives) and how these conceptualise counselling and therapy. Throughout the unit we will consider how various conceptual approaches to psychotherapy understand the human being and their experiences in the world.

7.5 Employability

This unit acts as a basic foundation course in counselling, psychotherapy and counselling psychology as it introduces you to key theoretical approaches and practical skills in this area. On completion of the unit and the assessments you should have a good understanding of the discipline, an idea of where you might situate your own theoretical approach, and the basic skills involved in being a counsellor or therapist. This course would provide the foundation needed to go on to a certificate, diploma or masters course in counselling, psychotherapy or counselling psychology.

Also this unit provides the basic skills and understanding needed for students going into a profession where counselling and listening skills are needed, such as social work, teaching, coaching, or nursing.

8. THE PROGRAMME OF TEACHING, LEARNING AND ASSESSMENT

Week	Lecture	Seminar
1 MB	Introduction to Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy. Historical overview.	Basic listening skills and beginnings (process)
2 MB	Cognitive-behavioural Approaches 1	Challenging assumptions
3 MB	Cognitive-behavioural Approaches 2	Retelling the story
4 MB	Humanist/Existential Approaches 1	Empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard.
5 MB	Humanistic/Existential Approaches 2	The here-and-now
6 MB	Humanist/Existential meets Cognitive-behavioural Approaches?	Mindfulness
7 MB	Systemic Therapy	Sculpting the experience of family life
8 MB	Relationship and Sex Therapy	Working with relationship dynamics
9 MB	Eclectic, Integrative and Brief Therapies	Building a history of the solution
10 MB	Feminist, Multicultural and LGBTQ Affirmative Therapy	Working with difference
11 MB	Research, Ethics and Power in Counselling	Considering our own approach. Endings
12 MB	Bank Holiday	Bank Holiday

9. LEARNING RESOURCES

9.1 Core Materials

You are recommended to obtain at least one of the following. Different books suit different people, so ideally you should browse them before choosing. McLeod's book is an excellent overview of theories and research in counselling. The Nelson-Jones introduction to counselling skills is very good for the practical components of this unit. The Woolfe and Dryden is more explicit in addressing counselling psychology rather than counselling more broadly which is useful for students who are definitely heading in this direction.

McLeod, J. (2003). *Introduction to Counselling*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Nelson-Jones, Richard (2005). *Introduction to counselling skills: texts and activities*. London: SAGE Publications.

Nelson-Jones, Richard (2006). *The theory and practice of counselling and psychotherapy*. London: Sage.

Woolfe, R. & Dryden, W. (2003). *Handbook of counselling psychology*. London: Sage.

Feltham, C. & Horton, I. (2000). *Handbook of counselling and psychotherapy*. London: Sage.

9.2 Optional Materials

Bond, T. (2007). *Standards and ethics for counselling in action*. London: Sage Publications.

Bor, R. & Pal, S. (2002). *A beginner's guide to training in counselling & psychotherapy*. London: Sage Publications.

Chaplin, J. (1999). *Feminist counselling in action*. London: Sage Publications.

Clarkson, P. (1998). *Counselling psychology: integration theory, research, and supervised practice*. London: Routledge.

Dryden, W. (1996). *Research in counselling and psychotherapy: practical applications*. London: Sage.

Dryden, W. (2006). *Counselling in a nutshell*. London: Sage.

Dryden, W. & Mytton, J. (1999). *Four approaches to counselling and psychotherapy*. London: Routledge.

Feltham, C. (2002). *What's the good of counselling & psychotherapy? the benefits explained*. London: Sage Publications.

Howard, A. (2000). *Philosophy for counselling and psychotherapy: Pythagoras to postmodernism*. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Jacobs, M. (2004). *Psychodynamic counselling in action*. London: Sage.

Jenkins, P. (2002). *Legal issues in counselling & psychotherapy*. London: Sage Publications.

Mearns, D. (2003). *Developing person-centred counselling*. London: Sage Publications.

Nelson-Jones, R. (2000). *Six key approaches to counselling and therapy*. London: Continuum.

Palmer, S. & Woolfe, R. (2000). *Integrative and eclectic counselling and psychotherapy*. London: Sage Publications.

Thorne, B. & Dryden, W. (1993). *Counselling: interdisciplinary perspectives*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press,

Journals (available in the library)

Therapy Today

Counselling

Counselling and Psychotherapy Journal

British Journal of Guidance and Counselling

WEEK BY WEEK GUIDE

Week 1: Introduction to Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy. Historical overview.

Aims

- To introduce students to the unit
- To explore popular perceptions of counselling and psychotherapy which clients are likely to hold
- To define key terms: counselling, counselling psychology and psychotherapy
- To overview the history of psychotherapy and counselling psychology and to locate the main approaches within this

Synopsis

This week will introduce the tutor and students to each other and to the unit. We will go over the unit guide and make sure that everyone is clear how the lectures and seminars work, what content will be covered and how the unit will be assessed. This weeks lecture aims to introduce students to counselling, counselling psychology and psychotherapy: definitions of these terms will be introduced, students will be given a brief historical overview of psychotherapy and counselling psychology, and the similarities and differences between the main approaches will be summarised.

Seminar: Basic listening skills and beginnings (process)

In the seminar students will be introduced to the concept of the process of counselling (beginnings, middles and endings). They will cover what the important tasks are to conduct at the beginning of therapy. We will also cover basic listening skills and students will be given the opportunity to try these out in triad work.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this weeks session students should be able to:

- Understand what is expected of them in this unit
- Explain what counselling, psychotherapy and counselling psychology are and how these are distinguished from related professions (e.g. clinical psychology and psychiatry)
- Give a brief overview of the history of psychotherapy and counselling psychology
- Explain key aspects of the main approaches to therapy
- Understand the structure of counselling
- Apply basic listening skills

Key Reading

McLeod (2003) chapters 1 & 2

Nelson-Jones (2006) chapter 1

Woolfe and Dryden (2003) chapter 1

Feltham and Horton (2000) part 1

Nelson-Jones (2000) whole book for counselling skills

Week 2: Cognitive-behavioural Approaches 1

Aims

- To introduce students to the cognitive-behavioural approaches in psychotherapy and how these differ from the humanistic/existential approaches covered previously
- To revise CBT understanding of 'disorders' and their roots in 'dysfunctional' thoughts and beliefs and cognitive 'distortions'
- To cover key techniques in behavioural and cognitive therapy (already covered in the psychology course): conditioning, reinforcement, challenging and replacing automatic thoughts and negative assumptions

Synopsis

Cognitive behavioural therapy is the 'gold-standard' therapeutic approach in the UK and US, dominating psychology training courses and healthcare practice. In this session we recap on the basic theoretical underpinnings of CBT (the behaviourist theories of conditioning and reinforcement and the cognitive therapy approaches of Beck and Ellis). With a number of exercises we review the kinds of therapeutic approaches used in cognitive behavioural therapy to challenge negative thoughts, beliefs and assumptions. Specifically we will cover use of daily thoughts records, diary keeping and downward arrow techniques. We will also focus on CBT understandings of depression and how therapists would understand and treat this 'disorder' (compared to how the experience might be understood and worked with by the humanist/existential approaches covered previously).

Seminar: Challenging assumptions

Cognitive therapists believe that human problems are rooted in 'dysfunctional' assumptions: those that are counterproductive, rigid, extreme, and resistant to change. In the seminar this week we will practice ways of highlighting the client's 'dysfunctional' assumptions, and how these might be worked with in order to reveal their problematic nature and to replace them with something more helpful. Students might find it useful to reflect on how these approaches do, or do not, relate to the existential practice of exploring sedimented world-views, or the humanistic practice of challenging 'conditions of worth'.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this weeks session students should be able to:

- Explain the cognitive behavioural approach to psychological 'disorders' and their treatment
- Apply some of the common techniques used by cognitive behavioural therapists
- Critically evaluate the cognitive behavioural approach in the light of existential and humanistic perspectives
- Help clients to highlight negative assumptions and to challenge these

Key Reading

McLeod (2003) chapter 4

Nelson-Jones (2006) chapters 10-13

Woolfe and Dryden (2003) chapter 7

Feltham and Horton (2000) 5.12-15

Beck, A. T. (1976). *Cognitive therapy and the emotional disorders*. New York: Penguin Books, Ltd.

Beck, J. (1995). *Cognitive therapy: basics and beyond*. New York: Guilford Press.

Greenberger, D. & Padesky, C. A. (1995). *Mind Over Mood*. London: Guildford Press.

Week 3: Cognitive-behavioural Approaches 2

Aims

- To understand the meanings of constructivist and constructionist approaches to psychotherapy
- To describe the basic tenants of personal construct psychology and the relevance of binary constructs
- To explain the narrative therapy approach and the importance of stories in how people make sense of their lives
- To explore the implications of social constructionist perspectives for individual psychotherapy

Synopsis

McLeod (2003) reports that there has been a 'constructivist revolution' in response to the cognitive-behavioural approach in counselling and psychotherapy. This mirrors the 'new paradigm' in social psychology which marked the turn, by some, away from social cognition and towards social constructionist perspectives. In this session we will consider three therapies which embrace a more constructivist/constructionist perspective: personal construct therapy, narrative therapy, and the social constructionist approach of Gergen and colleagues. We will explore how personal construct therapy, like existential therapy, sees people as active 'construers' of their world, and how it emphasises language as the primary means through which the world is understood. Using repertory grid techniques we will consider the nature of binary constructs and how these might be 'loosened' in therapy. We will consider the narrative therapy emphasis on 'stories' and how we might story our lives in various ways. Finally, we will think about the implications of social constructionist perspectives for therapy, locating individual constructs and narratives within a wider social and cultural context.

Seminar: Retelling the story

The seminar will draw on narrative and social constructionist perspectives to help us to elicit stories from our clients and to involve them in retelling stories from different perspectives and in different ways. In triad work students will elicit the story of a relationship conflict from their clients and will help them to consider alternative ways of telling the story. Counsellors and clients may also think about whether stories reveal any binary personal constructs that might be useful for further exploration.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this weeks session students should be able to:

- Explain how constructivist and constructionist approaches constitute a 'revolution' in therapy
- Outline the key aspects of personal construct psychology and how this understands human being and human struggles
- Outline the key aspects of narrative and social constructionist therapy, particularly the importance placed on the telling of stories and on the socio-cultural context
- Apply some of the techniques (rep grids, story-telling) in a therapeutic context

Key Reading

McLeod (2003) chapters 4 and 8
Woolfe and Dryden (2003) chapter 11
Feltham and Horton (2000) 5.12-15
Fransella, F. and Dalton, P. (2000). *Personal Construct Counselling in Action*. London: Sage.

Week 4: Humanist/Existential Approaches 1

Aims

- To introduce students to the humanistic and existential approaches in psychotherapy and what these have in common
- To revise key theories in humanistic psychology introduced previously in the psychology course: Rogers and Maslow
- To understand Roger's core conditions: empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard

Synopsis

This lecture will build on material covered in years 1 and 2 of the psychology course regarding the humanistic approach to psychology and counselling. Students will recap the key theories of Rogers and Maslow: how humans are understood to have a self-actualising tendency to realise their potential, and how 'conditions of worth' create a gap between the 'ideal' and 'actual' selves. We will cover Rogers' person-centred approach in some depth, particularly his core conditions of therapy: empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard.

Seminar: Empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard

In the seminar we will consider how Rogers' core conditions might be manifested by a counsellor. How can we display empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard in the counselling session? We will think about how to bring questions into our therapeutic practice, considering how to make interventions which are non-directive, empathic and congruent. This will be practiced in triad work.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this weeks session students should be able to:

- Explain the humanistic approach to psychology and therapy
- Describe how humanistic approaches view the person and their experience
- Understand the importance placed on the therapeutic relationship and the core conditions
- Demonstrate the core conditions in practice
- Make appropriate interventions by asking questions in a therapeutic context

Key Reading

McLeod (2003) chapter 5
Nelson-Jones (2006) chapter 4
Woolfe and Dryden (2003) chapter 6
Feltham and Horton (2000) 5.16-5.23
Mearns, D. and Thorne, B. (1999). *Person-Centred Counselling in Action*. London: Sage.

Week 5: Humanistic/Existential Approaches 2

Aims

- To introduce students to existential therapy
- To provide an overview of the phenomenological approach to psychotherapy which most existential therapists use to engage with the client's lived experience (horizontalization, bracketing and verification)
- To consider some of the key philosophical theories which have influenced existential therapy and the implications of these for understanding and working with human struggles

Synopsis

This lecture will introduce students to the, probably unfamiliar, existential approach to psychotherapy. This approach sees people as meaning-constructors who are actively involved in making sense of their worlds. Students will consider what existential therapists mean by engaging phenomenologically with clients (bracketing off their own ways of seeing the world as much as possible in order to gain a full picture of the client's unique lived experience and worldview). We will also explore the concept of sedimentations (how worldviews can become fixed) and what alternative ways of understanding may be possible. We will cover the existential givens of human being proposed by existential theorists (e.g. the

fact that we will all die and do not know when, the fact that we are free to make choices in life, the fact that we are alone despite our being thrown into a world where we are inevitably connected to others, and the fact that life has no inherent meaning: we create it for ourselves).

Seminar: The here-and-now

Existential therapists, such as Yalom, place great emphasis on using the 'here-and-now' of the therapy session to gain access to the client's worldview, and potentially to explore other, alternative, ways of seeing the world. The seminar will look at some case studies where therapists have worked with the 'here-and-now' and we will have a go at exploring client meanings and lived experiences through the 'here-and-now' in triad work.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this weeks session students should be able to:

- Explain the existential approach to psychology and therapy
- Understand how phenomenological therapy works and what is expected of the therapist
- Describe some of the key existential philosophical concepts that existential therapists draw on, particularly those around authenticity, existential givens and existential tensions
- Work with the here-and-now in therapy

Key Reading

Nelson-Jones (2006) chapter 8

Woolfe and Dryden (2003) chapter 8

Feltham and Horton (2000) 5.16-5.23

Cooper, M. (2003). *Existential Therapies*. London: Sage.

Spinelli, E. (2007). *Practising Existential Therapy: The Relational World*. London: Sage.

Van Deurzen, E. (2002). *Existential Counselling and Psychotherapy in Practice*. London: Sage.

Yalom, I. D. (2001). *The Gift of Therapy*. London: Piatkus.

Week 6: Humanist/Existential meets Cognitive-behavioural Approaches?

Aims

- To review the humanist/existential and cognitive-behavioural approaches covered in the first five weeks of the course, drawing out the similarities and differences between them
- To consider mindfulness approaches as a potential step towards an synthesis of these approaches
- To introduce key 'mindfulness' concepts and how these are employed in ACT, DBT and MBCT

Synopsis

In recent years some have heralded a 'third wave' of CBT: a group of therapeutic approaches which incorporate Buddhist 'mindfulness' practices into cognitive therapy. Such approaches include the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy (ACT) of Stephen Hayes and the Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT) of Marsha Linehan as well as the Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) programmes of John Kabat-Zinn which have been developed into Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) by Segal, Williams and Teasdale. This session outlines the Buddhist approach of mindfulness, with practical exercises. It explores how mindfulness ideas can be seen as fitting in with both cognitive behavioural and humanistic/existential understandings of human difficulties. The approaches of ACT, DBT and MBCT will be briefly outlined including some of the key techniques employed.

Seminar: Mindfulness

In the seminar we will consider how it is possible to be mindful as a therapist, and how to employ non-grasping techniques to work with a client. Morgan (2005) explores mindful questions that a therapist might ask a client such as 'what can you tell me about your experience right now? Notice any changes in your feeling, however subtle'. She also considers ways of cultivating moment-by-moment awareness of self-kindness. We will explore how we might draw on such techniques with a client and try out some triad work where we attempt a mindful stance to what we are doing.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this session students should be able to:

- Explain what 'mindfulness' means
- Describe how such approaches have been incorporated in the 'third wave' of CBT
- Explore how mindfulness might work in practice (therapists practicing daily meditation, therapists being mindful during therapy, and therapists teaching or modelling mindful ways of being for their clients)
- Practice returning to the moment during therapy

Key Reading

Germer, C.K., Sigel, R. D. & Fulton, P. R. (Eds) (2005). *Mindfulness and Psychotherapy*. London: Guildford Press.

Hanh, T. N. (1991). *The Miracle of Mindfulness*. London: Random House.

Hayes, S. C., Follette, V. M. & Linehan, M. M. (Eds) (2004). *Mindfulness and Acceptance: Expanding the Cognitive-Behavioural Tradition*. London: Guildford Press.

Segal, Z. V., Williams, J. M. G. & Teasdale, J. D. (2002). *Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Depression*. London: Guildford Press.

Week 7: Systemic Therapy

Aims

- To introduce students to systemic therapy
- To explore the theoretical reasons for working with family and group systems rather than with individuals
- To cover some of the key techniques involved in working with systems

Synopsis

Counselling has traditionally been conducted on a one-to-one basis, with one counsellor working with one individual in an attempt to alleviate the client's individual suffering. However, many critiques of therapy have pointed out that human suffering does not happen on an individual level. Critics of the mental health profession such as R. D. Laing and Lucy Johnstone have pointed out that much individual suffering has its roots in family and other social systems and that the individuals who come to therapy may be the ones who are expressing the problems that exist within the system. Systemic therapists, therefore, work with the whole system and the structures, roles and communications within it. They frequently also work in teams rather than as individuals. This approach runs less risk than others of individualising psychological problems – something that western therapeutic models have been strongly criticised for.

Seminar: Sculpting the experience of family life

One technique that is often used in family therapy is to produce family sculptures. When working with families one family member arranges the others to represent the way they see them (positioning their bodies, changing their postures and facial expressions). They may also then rearrange them to show how they would like them to be. In this seminar we will work with individuals to produce family sculptures using materials rather than real people. The student working as the counsellor will encourage the client to choose objects to represent the different people in their family or the people they live with. They will then position these objects in a sculpt and talk through the decisions they've made. They can also change the positions afterwards into how they would ideally have those people in relation to themselves.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this week's session students should be able to:

- Explain what systemic therapy was and some of the history of this approach
- Understand the systemic critique of individual therapy
- Apply some of the techniques of systemic therapy

Key Reading

McLeod (2003) chapter 6

Woolfe and Dryden (2003) chapters 12, 20 and 21

Feltham and Horton (2000) 7.10 and 7.13

Week 8: Relationship and Sex Therapy

Aims

- To introduce the particular issues involved in working with couples and other relationships
- To cover key techniques used when working with relationships
- To consider traditional, and more critical, approaches to sexual difficulties in therapy

Synopsis

Last week we considered working with family systems. Another system that some therapists work with is with people who are in sexual/love relationships with each other (usually in the form of the couple although alternative relationship structures should also be considered). This lecture will summarise some of the key aspects involved in relationship therapy, drawing on Crowe and Ridley's integration of CBT and systemic approaches, and also on Spinelli's couple-work, which involves seeing individuals

separately as well as couples together. Some of the issues that particularly emerge in relationship therapy are sexual problems. We will look briefly at the concept of sexual 'functioning', covering the traditional (Masters and Johnson) and more critical (Tiefer) techniques for working with sexual issues.

Seminar: Working with relationship dynamics

In this seminar we will practice working with relationship dynamics. Expanding our usual triads to four people, counsellors will experience working with a dyad (people in class who are either friends or colleagues). The counsellors will apply some of Crowe and Ridley's techniques to explore the ways in which the dyads communicate and to encourage them to address their communication style within the counselling session.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this weeks session students should be able to:

- Describe some of the differences in working therapeutically with couples rather than individuals
- Explain the key techniques employed by Crowe and Ridley, and Spinelli, when working with couples
- Describe the Masters and Johnson (and DSM) perspective of sexual 'dysfunction' and some key techniques for addressing these (e.g. sensate focus)
- Understand critical approaches to sex therapy
- Apply communicative techniques working with dyads

Key Reading

Woolfe and Dryden (2003) chapter 20

Feltham and Horton (2000) 6.23 and 7.7

Crowe, M. and Ridley, J. (2000). *Therapy With Couples: A Behavioural-Systems Approach to Couple Relationship and Sexual Problems*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Week 9: Eclectic, Integrative and Brief Therapies

Aims

- To revisit the importance of counsellors having a clear theoretical approach (following the work on research presented last week)
- To consider the possibilities of an eclectic or integrative approach to therapy
- To present various forms of 'brief' therapy and explore the possibilities and limitations of these

Synopsis

This session will build on the work we did the previous week thinking about our own theoretical perspective. We will briefly consider the place of theory in counselling and how important it is to have a clear theoretical approach. Then we will explore the possibilities of eclectic or integrative therapy. Eclectic approaches involve choosing the best ideas and techniques from across a range of models, whilst integrative approaches attempt to bring elements of different models together into a new approach. After this we will focus in on 'brief' therapy approaches. These are becoming more and more important with NHS, and other organisational, constraints on the number of sessions counsellors are able to offer. We will focus particularly on Steve de Shazer's 'solution focused' form of therapy, and on Strasser and Strassers' 'time-limited' existential therapy.

Seminar: Building a history of the solution

This seminar invites students to experiment with and experience a way of talking that is intended to build 'the history of the solution' (following Steve de Shazer's approach). Histories in psychology, psychiatry, social work and some other disciplines have tended to focus on constructing with the client the history of the problem, building an account which 'explains' the existence of the problem. It may be that so doing serves to solidify the status of the problem. This seminar is intended to experiment with ways of solidifying the 'solution'. Students acting as counsellors will ask a number of questions which bring out evidence of client *resources* and *strengths*.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this weeks session students should be able to:

- Weigh up the pros and cons of having one theoretical approach versus being an eclectic therapist versus being an integrative therapist
- Understand and describe the techniques involved in two forms of brief therapy
- Apply some of the key 'solution-focused' therapy skills

Key Reading

McLeod (2003) chapters 10 and 11

Nelson-Jones (2006) chapters 14 and 17
Woolfe and Dryden (2003) chapters 13 and 25
Feltham and Horton (2000) 5.24-5.29
Strasser, F. & Strasser, A. (1997). *Existential Time-Limited Therapy: The Wheel of Existence*. Chichester: Wiley.

Week 10: Feminist, Multicultural and LGBTQ Affirmative Therapy

Aims

- To introduce why counsellors need to be aware of issues of gender, culture and sexuality
- To present feminist, multicultural and LGBTQ critiques of conventional therapy
- To cover feminist, multicultural and LGBTQ affirmative forms of therapy

Synopsis

Traditional therapeutic approaches have been critiqued by feminist, multicultural and LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans and queer) therapists for their individualist stances which can erase experiences of difference and of being in an oppressed group and/or minority. In this lecture we will consider the suggestions that have been put forward for feminist, multicultural and gay/queer affirmative therapies which aim to recognise difference and social context as well as affirming the experience of women, BME (black and minority ethnic) people and LGBTQ people.

Seminar: Working with difference

In this seminar we will consider the issues that are raised when counsellors and clients come from different groups. Working with people we have worked with before counsellors and clients will consider the ways in which they differ from each other (e.g. ethnicity, gender, sexuality, class, age) and will explore the implications this would have for therapy. How easy is it to understand each other? How important is it to be open about these differences? What do we think about counsellor self-disclosure? Would we find it easier to work with someone from the same group as ourselves? Following this we will explore the ways in which we are similar to each other. Do these similarities raise any problems? Are any differences hidden when we perceive ourselves as similar? What assumptions might we make on the basis of similarity? Clients can take some time to talk about an experience that their counsellor is likely to be very familiar with (e.g. an aspect of student life) and then an experience that their counsellors is likely to be very unfamiliar with (e.g. a religious celebration or aspect of a subculture they are part of) to help explore these issues.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this weeks session students should be able to:

- Critique forms of counselling which do not take account of gender, culture, sexuality and other forms of difference
- Describe feminist, multicultural and LGBTQ affirmative forms of therapy
- Work explicitly with issues of difference or similarity in therapy

Key Reading

McLeod (2003) chapters 7, 9 and 13
Nelson-Jones (2006) chapters 15 and 16
Woolfe and Dryden (2003) chapters 9, 23 and 24
Feltham and Horton (2000) part 2 and 7.11, 7.12 and 7.20
Chaplin, J. (1988). *Feminist Counselling in Action*. London: Sage Publications Ltd.
Lago, Colin & Thompson, Joyce (1996). *Race, Culture & Counselling*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Week 11: Research, Ethics and Power in Counselling

Aims

- To introduce students to the various ways in which counselling and psychotherapy are researched
- To present the quantitative evidence about whether counselling 'works'
- To consider more process-based research in counselling
- To revisit themes that have come up across the unit about the politics of counselling
- To examine critical approaches to counselling and to think about how counsellors should take account of these
- To consider codes of ethics and what these should include

Synopsis

Counselling psychology puts an emphasis on researching therapeutic practice. There is also a strong move in British psychotherapy and counselling towards 'evidence-based' practice, especially within the NHS. This session will consider quantitative methods for evaluating 'outcomes' of counselling (particularly questionnaire measures like the BDI or GRISS), as well as 'process' research which is more qualitative. Some of the research about whether counselling 'really works' will be presented and engaged with critically. What does it mean to ask whether counselling has 'worked'? Who is research for? And how should it be conducted?

Throughout this unit we have considered some of the main criticisms of psychotherapy. In this final session, and in relation to research, we will return to these explicitly, particularly focusing on the power of the therapist and what this means for the therapeutic encounter. Specifically we will cover some of Howard's 'challenges' to counselling and psychotherapy and how these relate to the issue of how we might practice ethically as therapists. We will consider the importance of boundaries and 'frames' in therapy. We will also touch on divisions between therapy and other kinds of 'counselling-related' activities, and on the kinds of training that are necessary. We will return briefly to issues of judging the effectiveness of therapy and having a clear theoretical approach, and to the issues around individualising and pathologising people which have come up throughout this unit and in the mental health unit.

Seminar: Considering our own approach

Now that all of the main theoretical approaches have been presented, students will be encouraged to reflect upon their own preferred approach towards therapy. We will try to write a brief paragraph explaining how we work with clients and will practice using this with clients when they ask questions about what is involved in therapy.

Many therapists argue that endings are a key part of therapy, sometimes even the part where most of the work is done. Endings can enable clients to revisit everything they have achieved during therapy, they can provide a sense of urgency to cover anything that has been left out, and they are an opportunity to rehearse endings in other parts of life (which many people find difficult). Yalom has suggested that endings are a good way of bringing the existential given of death into therapy. In this seminar we will revisit the process of therapy (beginnings, middles and endings). We will work in triads to reflect over the whole unit now that we are ending (particularly in relation to our personal progress). We will use Yalom's gravestone exercise to think about 'ultimate' endings.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this weeks session students should be able to:

- Outline the main methods for researching counselling practice (evaluation and process)
- Critically engage with both quantitative and qualitative approaches in this area
- Evaluate the evidence around whether counselling and therapy 'really work'
- Conduct their own process based case study research for the second assessment
- Understand key critiques of the business of therapy and counselling
- Describe their own ethical code of practice (and how this relates to those of the BPS, BACP, UKCP, etc.)
- Present their own understanding of their theoretical approach
- Explain the importance of endings in therapy and apply some techniques for managing these

Key articles/chapters

McLeod (2003) chapters 14, 17 and 12

Woolfe and Dryden (2003) chapters 2, 3, 4 and 30

Feltham and Horton (2000) 4.1-4.11, 4.5

Howard, Alex (1996). *Challenges to Counselling and Psychotherapy*. London: Macmillan.