


Helping and Problem Solving Skills 

Helping Plan

[COURSE NAME AND SECTION NUMBER]

Professor's name

Your name

Class Period

Due date

Date Presented

Helping Plan

I. Problem Conceptualization

Problem conceptualization is defined as mental activity on the part of the helper; the helper considers what information to obtain, methods for acquiring the information, as well as putting all elements together so as to generate a hypothesis regarding the consumer's problems, which ultimately provides clues for treatment planning. For the purposes of this helping plan, the consumer will be referred to as Journey. During the initial assessment, the consumer expressed a desire to be referred to as Journey because this title most closely reflects her desire to seek out and obtain assistance via the helping process. Journey stated that she feels this process is the beginning of a journey that will lead her to the accomplishment of her goals.

Journey is a 26 year old woman of African American descent. Small in stature, Journey is approximately 5'4" and weighs approximately 194 pounds. Journey arrived at the assessment interview casually dressed in a velour jogging suit. Her straight hair was pulled into a ponytail. Journey appeared relaxed and eager to begin the helping process. Journey is a single mother and is currently raising her five-year-old twins. Until recently, Journey was receiving TANF (Temporary Aid to Needy Families) assistance. Journey has obtained full-time employment as a claims specialist and states that the salary is sufficient to meet her living expenses. She has expressed a desire to go to college and obtain a degree. While unemployed, Journey frequently commented on the lack of available job offers. She attributed the lack of offers to her limited educational background.

I will use the ABC model of behavior in examining Journey's problem. The ABC model suggests that behavior is influenced by antecedents and consequences (Counmier,

Nurius, 2003). I chose the ABC model because it will allow the consumer and me to examine the consumer's specific maladaptive behaviors along with triggers that lead to the behavior and resulting consequences of the behavior.

In the case of Journey, her stated antecedents, or events which preceded the behavior of avoiding secondary education, were the previous acts of failing the second grade and receiving poor grades in high school. These previous actions are still a source of anxiety for Journey. Additional antecedents include worry regarding the cost of secondary education, the time necessary to devote to secondary education, and her ability to successfully complete the coursework. The sources of Journey's antecedents are affective and relational. Journey reports that when she contemplates the matter of secondary education she becomes angry, upset, and depressed (affective) and realizes that she needs help to begin, maintain, and complete the process, but further realizes that she has no one to help her (relational). As a result, she avoids taking steps to pursue higher education (behavior). Avoiding the pursuit of higher education allows Journey to avoid dealing with the lack of significant others in her life. This is the consequence. Journey's situation lends itself to the use of reality therapy. I will use Glasser's approach because he maintains that maladaptive behaviors are the direct result of a consumer's inability to connect with, or to have a satisfying or successful relationship with at least one of the significant people in their lives. Journey has stated that she has no one to help her. She further stated that she feels alone. According to Glasser (Corey, 2005) a primary goal of reality therapy is reconnection and helping consumers learn better ways of meeting their needs.


II. Problem Assessment

Problem assessment is the identification of the consumer's concerns. This information is obtained via open discussion throughout the assessment/interview process. During this process, the helper obtains information about the background of the problem.

Journey has identified three areas of concern: the need to obtain a college degree, a desire to improve her financial situation, and a desire to improve her spiritual relationship with her God. Of these concerns, Journey stated that she would like to initially address the matter of seeking out and obtaining a college degree. When asked why she thought she had not previously pursued secondary education, Journey stated that she often gets in her own way and then tends to fall back on excuses. She expressed concern regarding the cost, application process, financial aid, and her ability to complete coursework related to the degree. Journey further stated that concern regarding education began early in childhood. Journey was left back and had to repeat the second grade. This event led to feelings of inadequacy. Journey reports that she constantly worried about her grades. While in high school, Journey was forced to work to support herself. At that time, her mother was diagnosed as bipolar and schizophrenic. She states that she often did not know when and/or if she was going to eat. Journey stated that it was hard for her to concentrate in school because she was always worried about her home life. As a result, Journey stated, her grades fell.

III. Goals and Objectives

A goal is a general statement of a desired outcome, the objectives are the actions required in order to achieve the goal. (See Treatment Grid below)

Date (Objective Formulated)	Problem	Objectives 	Goal	Date (Objective Achieved)
01/29/06	Fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	Explore options for obtaining a degree once a week in session with helper	Eliminate fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	To Be Determined
01/29/06	Fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	Obtain specific information on enrollment, schedules, fees, once a week in session with helper	Eliminate fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	To Be Determined
01/29/06	Fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	Review information on educational alternatives, i.e. distance learning once a week in session with helper	Eliminate fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	To Be Determined

01/29/06	Fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	Complete one enrollment application once a week in session with helper.	Eliminate fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	To Be Determined
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IV. Contract

A contract is a document that outlines the purpose of the contact and helping relationship, the role of each individual, confidentiality, schedules, desired outcomes and general goals, and mutual expectations. See Appendix A.

V. Helping Strategies

Helping strategies are the methods, approaches to be used during individual sessions to accomplish the agreed upon objectives. I will utilize Wubbolding's (Corey, 2005) system for implementing reality therapy. His strategy, WDEP, is an acronym that describes a series of techniques for usage in reality therapy. Each letter refers to a specific strategy: W = wants and needs; D = direction and doing; E = self-evaluation; and P = planning. Throughout the "WDEP" process, I will encourage Journey to examine her process for meeting her individual needs. Next, we will examine Journey's current behavior, specifically where she is going and where her current behavior is taking her. This process will allow Journey to gain awareness of her actions. The third step is self-evaluation. I will present Journey with thoughtful questions that will enable her to evaluate each aspect of her total behavior. In this phase, Journey will examine the quality of her actions in an

effort to make appropriate choices. The final step in this process is planning. At this point in the helping phase, Journey will have identified what things she wants to change and should be open to the possibility of exploring additional behaviors which will lead to the achievement of her needs and wants. Working along with the Journey, we will formulate an action plan.

VI. Evaluation

Evaluation is the process of assessing the impact of the interventions used in the helping process. In order to determine whether or not the helping methods described above were helpful, I will observe and document Journey's behavior. I will encourage Journey to self-evaluate her behavior. I will provide Journey with self-report forms which will allow her to indicate her level of client satisfaction. See Appendices B and C.



References

Corey, G. (2005). *Theory and practice of counseling & psychotherapy*. (7th ed.).

Belmont, CA: Brooks/Cole-Thomson Learning

Cormier, L., Nurius, P. *Interviewing and change strategies for helpers*. (5th ed.) 2003 Pacific









Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole-Thomson Learning

Appendix A

Helping Contract **Helper:** your name**Consumer:** consumer's pseudonym

On this date, [insert date] **your name** (Helper) and **consumer's pseudonym** (Journey) have agreed to work together in a helping relationship designed to assist Journey in overcoming her fear toward pursuing a college degree.

This document is designed to inform all parties about the nature of this helping relationship. NAME and NAME have entered into this arrangement voluntarily and agree to the following terms and conditions:

1. es will meet weekly for a period of [insert number] weeks. These weekly meetings will take place in helper's office [insert location] or in helpee's home. The designated day is [insert day]. The designated time is [insert time]. If either party is unable to meet at this time reasonable efforts will be made to reschedule during the following week. 
2. [NAMES]  have agreed to enter into a helping relationship as a requirement of the Masters of Human Services (MHS) program at Lincoln University. NAME is currently working through her second semester as a Lincoln University graduate student. NAME is not a licensed therapist and therefore will not be providing counseling services. However, through the course of the helping relationship, NAME will provide helpee with suggestions which may assist helpee in the attainment of stated goals.
3.  helpee may terminate the helping relationship at any time, however, [insert Name] has requested a minimum of two weeks notification prior to termination.
4.  regarding the matter of confidentiality, [Helper's name] has agreed to protect helpee's anonymity. [Helper's name] will not reveal any information which may lead to the discovery of helpee's actual identity. [Helper] has revealed to [Helpee] that session notes detailing specifics from the helping sessions will be forwarded to Lincoln University professors in accordance with the MHS program, however at no time will [Helper] reveal [Helpee's] actual identity.
5.  regarding goals and objectives – [NAMES] have come up with [insert number] objectives for goal attainment. See attached Treatment Grid.
6.  AMES agree to engage in open discussions which will lead to mutual growth and development.
7.  [Helper's name] agrees to act in a professional and appropriate manner consistent with ethical guidelines.

I have read, understand and agree to the above terms.

Helper: [Helper's name printed] _____

Consumer: Helpee's name (pseudonym) **Signature on file with original document.**

Treatment Grid

Date (Objective Formulated)	Problem	Objectives	Goal	Date (Objective Achieved)
DATE	Fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	Explore options for obtaining a degree once a week in session with helper	Eliminate fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	To Be Determined
DATE	Fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	Obtain specific information regarding enrollment, schedules, fees, once a week in session with helper	Eliminate fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	To Be Determined
DATE	Fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	Obtain/review information on educational alternatives, i.e. distance learning once a week in session with helper	Eliminate fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	To Be Determined
DATE	Fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	Complete one enrollment application, once a week in session with helper	Eliminate fear associated with pursuit of secondary education	To Be Determined

I have read, understand and agree to the goals and objectives.

Helper: [Helper's name, printed] _____

Consumer: [Helpee's pseudonym, printed] **Signature on file with original document**