Chapter 6

INDIVIDUAL COUNSELING IN THE SCHOOL ENVIRONMENT

> *Susan Roberts is a school counselor at Sharpton Middle School and has been working with 10-year-old Charlea one hour a week for the entire school year. Is this type of work considered as counseling or therapy?*

When the draft copy of the revised ASCA National Model® was released, appropriate and inappropriate school counseling activities were outlined with "working with one student at a time in a therapeutic, clinical mode" (p. 21) listed as an

inappropriate task. When the draft became available for public comment, school counseling professionals debated this position. Some professionals supported this position statement due to the multiple school counselor responsibilities that preclude devoting sufficient time to work intensely with individual students (Saginak, 2012). Others expressed that the terms "counseling" and "therapy" refer to the same process in that a theoretical framework is employed to bring about desired change (Canfield, 2012). School counselors are as skilled in counseling as those in the mental health counseling specialty field, and have the same knowledge and skills to bring about effective change in the students with whom they work, yet they do not have the time to work intensively with individual students at the expense of the majority of the student body. For example, the ASCA recommends a 250:1 student/counselor ratio, yet the national average is 459:1 (U.S. Department of Education, 2010-2011). In addition, administrators sometimes prohibit the use of the word "therapy" to describe a school counselor activity due to parent/guardians' negative perceptions of their child receiving therapy. In this chapter the word "counseling" as the therapeutic task school counselors perform, and the term "student" or "counselee" will be used in reference to the term "client."

Approximately 1 out 5 school-age youth has a diagnosed mental disorder (NIH, 2013) with statistics that indicate that during the 2005–2006 academic year, approximately 12% of youth received mental health assistance in a school setting (SAMHSA, 2008). Conceptual Application Activity 6.1 is designed for you to start thinking about the differences between these terms and the school counselor's role in this process. As you think about this process, keep in mind that the school counselor is often the only mental health professional in the educational setting and when personal or social issues are not addressed, students may experience significant barriers to personal growth and development.

CONCEPTUAL APPLICATION ACTIVITY 6.1

What are your own definitions of the words "therapy" and "counseling"? Look up the definitions as described by the American Counseling Association and the American School Counselor Association. Discuss your description of these terms with your peers. Based on this discussion, do you believe school counselors provide counseling or therapy? What do you believe is the difference?

Regardless of how you define this task, school counselors do work with students through a relationship that is intended to help the student resolve areas of personal concern. When working with students remember that for the most part

children do not voluntarily choose to come to counseling. They are usually referred or brought in by another adult, and as in any new situation they will have many questions regarding the counseling process such as:

- Who are you?
- Why am I here?
- Will it hurt?
- Am I in trouble?
- What do I have to do in here?
- Are you going to tell my parents/guardians?

At times the school counselor is the only trustworthy adult in a child's life and instrumental in providing support and succor to navigate life's challenges. As an example, a public school counselor enrolled a ninth-grade female who had spent all her school years in a private, Christian school. The mother of this shy girl was deaf but was able to communicate that she wanted her daughter to participate in softball. Unfortunately, due to state law she needed to wait to receive permission for athletic eligibility. The girl made frequent visits to the counselor to talk about her lack of friends and her wish to drop out of high school. Eventually, she made a friend with the help of her counselor, but at the end of the year the friend moved to a new school. When eligibility to participate in sports was finally granted the counselor suggested that the lonely student join the girls' swim team due to her interest in competitive swimming, and the hope that she would make friends with her team members. By the student's senior year of high school this once shy female was actively involved in several activities, no longer complained of being friendless, decided to stay in school, and eventually graduated. Several years later she stopped by the counselor's office to thank her for the time she spent with her.

Forming a relationship with students, understanding their needs, answering questions students may have about counseling, as well as discussing limits of confidentiality and other concerns will facilitate productive counseling sessions. Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a helpful "front-loaded" intervention (precedes a standard counseling approach) that works as a respectful approach in tandem with the theoretical counseling theory you choose (Frey, et al., 2011).

MOTIVATIONAL INTERVIEWING (MI)

Motivational interviewing (MI) supports an empathic counseling style (Enea & Dafinoiu, 2009; Frey et al., 2011; Miller & Rose, 2009). The MI counselor listens to the student's verbalizations, attends to language that emphasizes readiness to

change (Miller, 2010), and listens for *motivational ambivalence.* Motivational ambivalence refers to the struggle between the counselee's wish to change a behavior while simultaneously not wanting to change problematic conduct.

The counselor considers two interrelated phases of MI (Frey et al., 2011). During phase 1, or the pre-commitment phase, the counselor uses basic skills such as the use of open-ended questions, reflective listening, affirmation, and summarization (Miller & Rose, 2009) while listening for "change talk." Counselor encouragement and reminders of past successes reinforce the willingness to change and is facilitated through the question, "How will changing this behavior make life better for you?" Through change talk the counselee is better able to recognize the advantages of altering behaviors and attitudes (Frey et al., 2011). Phase 1 serves as a catalyst for phase two, in which the counselor and student collaborate in formulating goals, brainstorm options for reaching these goals, determine a plan for change, and commit to a plan.

During phase 2, a self-efficacy scale is used to ascertain the student's confidence in completing the goal. A 1–10 scale is used, with the number "1" representing "little confidence to be able to achieve the goal" and "10" indicating "high probability in achieving the goal." The counselor promotes a discussion of goal attainment by asking a question such as, "Using the scale, how confident are you that you are able to accomplish this goal?" From here a conversation of barriers to goal attainment assists in planning for potential difficulties that could arise. Student Activity 6.1 *To Change or Not to Change* is a concrete, visual activity for counselors to use with students to identify goals, motivation to change, and potential barriers that could frustrate success.

STUDENT ACTIVITY 6.1. TO CHANGE OR NOT TO CHANGE

Take a piece of paper, fold it into nine sections, and label each section with a number from 1–9. Open the paper and either draw a picture or write words to answer the following questions.

1 What behavior do you want to change?	2 What are some of your strengths (or competencies)?	3 Can these strengths be used to help you change?
4 What are your reasons for not changing this behavior?	5 What are your reasons for continuing this behavior?	6 What goal do you want to reach?

7	8	9
What are some of the strategies you can implement to reach your goal?	On a scale from 1–10, how confident are you that you can accomplish your goal?	When will this goal happen? How will you know when you have reached this goal?

After the student has completed this chart, the counselor and student are able to discuss the answers and identify tasks that can be accomplished during the following week to reach the goal.

Regardless of the initial method you choose to establish a relationship with students, selecting a counseling theory that is best suited to your personality and values gives direction to plan the counseling sessions. Research has not consistently identified the variables that most prominently contribute to a positive counseling outcome. However, Hubble, Duncan, and Miller (1999, as cited in Selekman & Gil, 2010) identified four contributing factors that assist in counseling effectiveness including: a) counselee characteristics such as strengths, expectations, and coping strategies; b) the counselor's ability to express empathy and warmth; c) the counselor's ability to convey hope in the counselee's ability to change; and d) the counseling theory and techniques. Of these, the counselee's characteristics are those that contribute most to a successful outcome. Surprisingly, counseling theories do not have empirical evidence to support their effectiveness (Archer & McCarthy, 2007) in generating change. In fact, the chosen theoretical approach only accounts for 15% of counseling effectiveness (Hubble et al., 1999, as cited in Selekman & Gil, 2010). Nevertheless, intentional principles such as those in MI provide a foundation for the counseling relationship to facilitate the change process.

You may have already taken a class or have yet to take a class specifically devoted to counseling theories in your school counseling program curriculum. The information in this chapter is not intended to replace this course, but to supplement theoretical models used in school settings. A personal awareness of beliefs, values, personal interests, and biases is an essential foundation for understanding others' worldviews. Self-awareness assists in evaluating cultural practices and how these practices impact counseling relationships. In choosing a theoretical counseling model and/or creative approach to use with students, an understanding of differences within cultural groups, in addition to unique individual differences (Locke & Bailey, 2014) are critical considerations. As you read the following section, keep in mind the cultural influences that could influence the growth and development of each individual student with whom you work.

Person-centered, Adlerian Counseling, Reality Therapy, Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy, Solution-focused, and Narrative theories are discussed below. A brief summary of the theory, techniques, multicultural considerations, and applications in a school setting are also summarized.

PERSON-CENTERED COUNSELING

CACREP

Dr. Carl Rogers is credited with a phenomenological, non-directive counseling theory based on a humanistic philosophy. Rogers believed that each individual has an innate desire to meet basic needs while moving toward self-actualization (Archer & McCarthy, 2007) or, as stated in the popular Army slogan, "Be all you can be."

Techniques

Rogers believed specific techniques interfere with the counseling process. Instead, the counselor tries to understand the world from the counselee's perspective. According to Rogers, personal problems arise when there is a discrepancy between the perceived self and the ideal self, or the self-concept that is desired but not yet attained (Archer & McCarthy, 2007). Core conditions need to be created for effective counseling to occur which include congruence, unconditional positive regard, and empathy. Through the counselor's use of active listening, reflection, paraphrasing, clarification, and summarizing, the counselee is able to accept and respect self, the foundation for solving personal problems.

Congruence. When the counselor is genuine and authentic and able to openly express thoughts, feelings, and attitudes, openness is modeled, and the student begins to feel comfortable and accepted (Corey, 2009).

Unconditional Positive Regard. This core condition relates to the counselor's ability to see the student as worthy of acceptance without judgment. Through the stance of caring and accepting, the student develops unconditional positive self-regard, or a sense of self-worth (Corey, 2009).

Accurate Empathy. As the counselor enters the student's world of feelings and thoughts, a sense of understanding emerges. Accurate understanding is the foundation to person-centered counseling and is a key to promoting change (Corey, 2009).

Multicultural Considerations

All cultures accept the tenets of person-centered counseling due to the emphasis on value and dignity and the opportunities for personal growth (Ivey, D'Andrea, & Ivey, 2012). However, because an understanding of the essence of the counselee's experiences serves as the foundation of person-centered theory, it could be difficult for the counselor to completely enter and understand a worldview of a counselee from a diverse culture (Archer & McCarthy, 2007). Person-centered counseling has shown success in Asian cultures through the ideologies of empathy, harmony, and relationships that parallel those found in Confucianism and Zen Buddhism, yet the nondirective approach may be difficult for those from cultures who prefer a hierarchical, directive approach (Lee & Yang, 2013).

Applications in Schools

As a school counselor, you both respond to and model the basic skills you learn in your program. Through these skills you are responsible for creating an inviting environment that facilitates self-growth and autonomy (Thompson, Rudolph, & Henderson, 2004). Person-centered counseling facilitates self-esteem development, with success and achievement used as stepping-stones to develop a greater sense of self-worth. Student Activity 6.2 *ME!* assists students in identifying personal strengths.

STUDENT ACTIVITY 6.2. ME!

Bring in different types of magazines that represent different aspects of life (e.g., sports, school, fashion, family, etc.). Students are asked to make a collage that represents their successes and achievements by cutting out pictures in the magazines. Students will share their accomplishments with their classmates or group members.

ADLERIAN COUNSELING

Alfred Adler was the founder of Adlerian Counseling, also known as Individual Psychology. Initially, as an admirer of Sigmund Freud, he joined the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society but later resigned, due to disagreements with Freudian theory. Adler believed that each person constructs his/her own reality based on experiences and biological factors, which form a unique lifestyle as he/she strives to overcome inferiority, a normal condition of everyone regardless of culture, gender, or ethnicity (Archer & McCarthy, 2007). In addition, an individual forms opinions

about life and how to meet life challenges based on perceptions of events that they encounter. These perceptions form the foundation for their lifestyle and the mistaken goals that lead to problems, which are largely created due to a fear of not belonging. Counselors view their counselee from a social, holistic perspective in the areas of work/school, love, and friendships.

Techniques

The counselor is an active participant in the counseling relationship, and works hard to understand the counselee's "private logic" while teaching the counselee about his/her mistaken beliefs, where they have originated, and strategies for change. Adler's approach is one that incorporates listening, instruction, demonstrations, and practicing (Thompson et al., 2004). Socratic questioning such as "What would happen if? . . ."; "How would your life be different and what would you do if you didn't have this problem?"; or "Can this be seen differently?" help the student develop insight. Although Adler himself did not view his approach as one that used techniques, Adlerian counselors use numerous strategies including encouragement, the family constellation and early recollections, and acting "as if."

Encouragement. Discouraged individuals behave inappropriately, and encouragement is the key to changing impaired beliefs and behaviors. Adlerian counselors attempt to make their counselees feel heard and accepted and work cooperatively with their counselee to create goals. Encouragement is given before a task is undertaken with the intention of: 1) helping the counselee gain a sense of confidence, and, 2) to break self-defeating beliefs and behaviors when goals are accomplished. Encouragement serves as a foundation for the creation of hope with an expectation that self-confidence will emerge (Thompson et al., 2004).

Family Constellation and Early Recollections. Adlerian counselors make efforts to get a picture of the student's social world and lifestyle by understanding his/her view of the family dynamics. A questionnaire is used to understand this structure in which the student describes his/her parent and sibling personalities, relationships to one another, talents, interests, and so forth. To better understand how the student views his/her world, the counselor considers that the psychological position of the family members as more important rather than the chronological position.

Furthermore, the use of early recollections serve as additional metaphors for understanding the counselee's present world view. To retrieve these memories the counselor says, "Think back to a time when you were young and tell me one of your earliest childhood memories." A minimum of three memories is used to

assess personal beliefs, strengths, assets, and mistaken beliefs, and although these recollections may not be accurate, what is important is the child's perception of these events. Box 6.1 is an example of some of the questions that can be asked to determine lifestyle and mistaken goals. A nonverbal student may do better in drawing pictures to answer the questions.

BOX 6.1 LIFESTYLE QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Write the names of your parents and their ages.

   a. Father _____ age _____

List 3 of his personality characteristics

Describe his education/occupation

   b. Mother _____ age _____

List 3 of her personality characteristics

Describe her education/occupation

2. If you have siblings, write the names, ages, and 3 personality characteristics of each

   c. Sibling(s) _____ age _____

   _____

   Move to next section if you do not have siblings.

   3. Which sibling is most and least like you, your dad, your mom? _____
      _____

   4. If you have more than one sibling, which sibling is most and least athletic, studious, friendly, popular, serious, funny?_____

Early Childhood Memories

Think of three of your earliest childhood memories and describe these recollections in detail below. Think in terms of your age, who you are with, where you are, what can you see, smell, hear, touch, taste?

(Continued)

(Continued)

Memory 1 _____

_____

Memory 2 _____

_____

Memory 3 _____

_____

From here, the counselor looks at themes to determine the student's mistaken beliefs, and makes tentative guesses about the student's lifestyle that are shared with the student.

Acting "As If." Collaborative goal-setting is essential to an effective counseling session. A counselee may have a picture of how he/she would like to be in the future, but may believe reaching this goal is impossible. With counselor encouragement and an instruction for the student to act "as if" he or she would like to be in the future, a glimpse of their goal emerges. The counselor uses the following steps while working with a student:

1. Visualize what you would be doing, saying, thinking, and doing when your goal is reached. Who is with you? Where are you? Hold onto this picture.

2. Now that you have this picture in your mind, act "as if" you have already achieved this goal.

3. When you leave my office I want you to behave and think as you just described to me. Pay attention to your feelings and thoughts when you are acting as you envision.

Multicultural Considerations

Adlerian counseling works well with individuals from any culture due to the counselor's basic respect for others' beliefs and values, the egalitarian relationship, and the importance of family influences on culture. Recently, Adlerian counselors added the concept of spirituality as a supplementary life task and critical component for understanding individuals from a holistic viewpoint, which is consistent with an emphasis some cultures place on sacrosanctity (Ivey et al.,

2012). Furthermore, the preventive focus inherent to this theory that emphasizes fostering mental wellness and psychological well-being before problems occur facilitates skill development, as marginalized individuals (Ivey et al., 2012) confront prejudice and other discriminatory behaviors and attitudes. Finally, Adlerian counseling is a good alternative for those in cultures who have difficulty with the idea of receiving counseling about social/personal issues, but value the concept of exploring educational concepts (Strasser, 2013).

Applications in Schools

Students who are having life difficulties often have problems that are evident in multiple areas of life. If a student is having conflict at home, this stress will be viewed in the school setting and in peer relationships. People who are anxious are difficult to be around, and as problems continue friends and family often distance themselves from this student. This social withdrawal leaves the student without the critical support system that is needed to buffer painful events. When a student finally seeks counseling or is referred, the student often has difficulty identifying a certain area in which to focus the counseling session. When this occurs, the school counselor can use Student Activity 6.3 *Good News/Bad News* to identify a counseling goal.

STUDENT ACTIVITY 6.3. GOOD NEWS/BAD NEWS

The counselor asks the following questions and records the student's response. "I'm going to ask you to think about school, family, and friends and I would like you to tell me the 'good news' or 'bad news' in each of these areas."

1. Good News School _____

2. Bad News School _____

3. Good News Family _____

4. Bad News Family _____

5. Good News Friends _____

6. Bad News Friends _____

This activity serves as a guide for addressing problems the child perceives as presenting the most difficulty and provides a focus for the counseling session.

REALITY THERAPY

William Glasser is the founder of Reality Therapy, also known as Choice Therapy. This approach emphasizes that all individuals are motivated to fulfill the five basic needs of survival, love and belonging, power or achievement, freedom or autonomy, and fun (Glasser, 2001). Each of us has the ability to choose how we want to meet our unmet needs. In our minds we store "picture albums" that contain images of what we think we need for our "quality world." When these images are different from the way we presently view life, we choose something we believe will be more satisfying. The acronym W-D-E-P is useful in helping our students evaluate goals and present behaviors to reach these ideals (Wubbolding, 2000).

W = Wants-   What do you want?

D = Doing-   What are you doing to get what you want?

E = Evaluate-   Is what you are doing working?

P = Planning-   What can you do to get what you want?

Techniques

Goal-Setting. The counselor uses skillful questioning such as, "What do you want?" to help the counselee identify what he/she wants to meet their needs and identified goal. Goal setting is facilitated through the SAMIC acronym: S = simple; A = attainable; M = Measureable; I = Immediate; C = Commit (Wubbolding, 2000). By providing more direction for the counselee at the beginning of counseling sessions and helping the student accomplish small steps toward goal attainment, the student is eventually able to evaluate wants and plans without the help of the counselor (Corey, 2009).

Multicultural Considerations

Many counselees from diverse backgrounds respond better to a thinking and behaving focus rather than one that concentrates on feelings (Corey, 2009). Therefore, the counselor needs to adapt questions to fit the needs of the student. For example, some cultures tend to be more direct and assertive, where others may be resistant to candid questioning. Furthermore, because people from different cultures hold different perspectives and values that comprise their "quality world," the counselor has a responsibility to examine and understand the values, traditions, and worldviews of each student.

Applications in Schools

When needs are not satisfied, destructive behavior, poor achievement, and unsupportive social relationships could result. Many students are not aware of the relationship between need satisfaction and destructive behaviors (Loyd, 2005). When students are able to make decisions that are mentally and physically healthy, they are able to become more autonomous and in control of their lives. Active techniques such as role-playing, humor, confrontation, and goal-setting teaches students concepts integral to reality therapy. Student Activity 6.4 *Recipe for Meeting Needs* could be implemented to determine personal needs and a plan for reaching them.

STUDENT ACTIVITY 6.4. RECIPE FOR MEETING NEEDS

Directions: Write out "ingredients" that are needed to make a "recipe for success." Identify people, values, events, and so on that can be used to meet each of the needs identified in each of the cells. When finished, answer the questions below.

To make a recipe for freedom, the following ingredients are needed: FREEDOM	To make a recipe for love and belonging, the following ingredients are needed: LOVE & BELONGING
To make a recipe for survival, the following ingredients are needed: SURVIVAL	To make a recipe for fun, the following ingredients are needed: FUN

What are you *doing* to meet each of these needs?

Evaluate how well your behaviors are working

Write out a goal (S-A-M-I-C) for each of the needs above, and make a *plan* to meet or fulfill your needs.

RATIONAL-EMOTIVE BEHAVIOR THERAPY (REBT)

Albert Ellis is credited with developing Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy (REBT). REBT practitioners adhere to the belief that everyone is capable of irrational, or what is often referred to as "stinking thinking" (Archer & McCarthy, 2007), as well as rational thought (Corey, 2009). According to this theory, it is not an event that creates emotional and behavioral consequences but rather the belief or thought about the event that creates anxiety and/or distress. This is known as

the A-B-C-D-E-F steps of REBT. For example, Rachel sees her boyfriend, Carl, talking with Susan, the homecoming queen.

A = activating event (seeing Carl talking with Susan)

B = Belief ("I MUST not be popular enough for Carl")

C = Emotional and/or behavioral consequences (Rachel gets angry)

D = Disputing belief ("I am a worthwhile person, too")

E = Effect of new belief ("Just because Susan is the homecoming queen doesn't mean Carl doesn't care for me")

F = New feeling (Relief)

Techniques

REBT is an educational model in which individuals are taught how to manage irrational emotions and thoughts through cognitive restructuring and behavioral strategies (Banks & Zionts, 2009). School counselors may wish to consider a different theoretical approach with children under the age of seven due to their developmental level and their difficulty in disputing irrational beliefs (Bernard, Ellis, & Terjesen, 2006; Vernon, 2011).

Disputing Irrational Thoughts. Counselees who are able to think more abstractly are able to challenge their irrational thoughts by recognizing and replacing absolute language such as "must," "ought," or "should" with rational, self-affirming language. Homework, imagery, role-playing, and humor are additional techniques associated with REBT.

Multicultural Considerations

Ellis has long been considered as having a respect for human differences; however, he has also been criticized for his ethnocentric approach to mental health (D'Andrea, 2000, as cited in Ivey et al., 2012). REBT works well with individuals from cultures in which a directive, active approach is preferred (Thompson et al., 2004). Therefore, the counselor needs to adapt the types of questions to ask counselees (Thompson et al., 2004), in order not to appear confrontational and offensive to those who prefer a more indirect approach (Ivey et al., 2012). When the individual's culture is not explored, it is difficult for the counselor to understand the context in which the irrational thoughts are occurring (Archer & McCarthy, 2007). REBT has been successful with counselees from some cultures in the

Middle East when counselees are taught to alter their beliefs such as that behaviors originate from the devil or "evil eye" (Mikhemar, 2013). A counselor may confront an analogous belief among those from the U.S. and other cultures who have been taught to believe that their actions are prompted by the devil and that an evil spirit may be within them.

Applications in Schools

Practical, comprehensive interventions with a wide range of activities and strategies have been successful with individuals and groups; even children around the age of 7 are able to accept responsibility for their emotions through REBT programs. A red light/green light construct can be implemented in which the student and counselor identify and dispute the "red light" thoughts that disrupt communication and produce conflict. "Green light" thoughts are identified to dispute the conflict-producing thoughts and behaviors. Student Activity 6.5 *Helpful Thinking* can be used as a homework assignment with a student to assist him/her in refuting irrational thoughts associated with an event.

STUDENT ACTIVITY 6.5. HELPFUL THINKING

Complete the worksheet after an upsetting event has occurred.

A. What event occurred? (Activating Event can be something that happened in the past, present, or future)

B. What was your irrational thought about the event (A)?

To identify this thought look for:

- Dogmatic thoughts include "shoulds," "oughts," or "musts"
- "Awfulizing" thoughts include "it's awful," "terrible," "the worst"

C. Identify your unhealthy behavioral or negative emotions to the event? (These may include anxiety, hurt, shame, rage)

D. What are some of your disputing beliefs from B?

To identify these thoughts, ask yourself the following questions:

- Is this belief helping or hurting me?
- What are the facts to support this belief?
- Does this belief seem logical?

(Continued)

(Continued)

E. What is your new effective belief in response to D?

To answer this question consider:

- Identifying beliefs that are not absolutes
- Evaluating the extent of the belief

F. What are the feelings/behaviors that are healthy?

Identify the new productive feelings and behaviors

- New healthy emotions and behaviors

Adapted from Ellis (2001, as cited in Rosenthal, 2001)

SOLUTION-FOCUSED BRIEF COUNSELING (SFBC)

Steve de Shazer and Insoo Kim Berg are credited as the founders of Solution Focused Brief Counseling (SFBC; Archer & McCarthy, 2007), also known as Brief Counseling. Counselors using this approach believe that people are able to work through their own problems when there is a focus on what is wanted rather than what is not desired. Too often people focus on the problem that brought them to counseling, which hinders their ability to focus on a more favorable outcome. The theory is strength-based as the focus is on the successes that have been achieved so far in life, and on the idea that small changes lead to greater outcomes (Thompson, et al., 2004). Change is seen as inevitable (Archer & McCarthy, 2007), and solution-focused counselors concentrate on goal-setting to allow students to think about what they want. Asking the question, "What would you like to see happen in your time with me?" gives the student an opportunity to provide a direction for counseling or goal setting. The SAMIC acronym described in the reality therapy description also applies to SFBC in establishing goals.

Once a goal is identified, the counselor will want to establish the times that the goal is happening, or the *exceptional times* that that the problem is not happening. The student is encouraged to discuss events in which the goal was present, the people involved in these exceptional times, when these events occurred, how the goal transpired, and to recall feelings, behaviors, and thoughts. Once these times are identified the student is given a homework assignment to make more of these exceptional times occur.

At times students are unable to recall exceptional times. When this occurs the *miracle question* is asked to help the student visualize possibilities and what life

would be like when the problem no longer exists. For instance, "Suppose you went to bed at night and when you woke up in the morning all of your problems were gone. What would you be doing, thinking, feeling that would make you realize that the miracle occurred?" For younger students the question could be, "Suppose I waved a magic wand that wiped away all your problems. How would you know that the magic worked?" The counselor then has a responsibility to keep the student focused on what he/she would be do when the miracle happened, and to assign this visualization as homework to complete prior to the next counseling session.

Techniques

Scaling Questions. Scaling questions help students evaluate their willingness to achieve goals and their commitment to change. To gauge commitment, the counselor asks the question, "On a scale of 1–10 with '10' meaning the problem is completely gone, and '1' meaning the problem is the worst it has ever been, how would you rate where you are today?" Suppose the student responds with "3." The counselor would then ask, "What do you need to do from the time you leave my office until the next time I see you to move to a '4'?" The school counselor uses this information to assign homework to help the student experience a move up the scale.

Coping Questions. When the student is able to identify unique times without the problem, the counselor reinforces personal skills and talents that may not have been previously recognized through questions such as, "How were you able to manage to do so well given the things that have happened to you?"

Flagging the Minefield. The counselor and student collaboratively create a plan to identify possible people or events that might stand in the way of goal attainment. Advance planning teaches skills that may be activated if a barrier stands in the path of a personal objective.

Multicultural Considerations

SFBC requires that the counselor understand the counselee's perception of the problem for the purpose of generating solutions to the dilemma (Archer & McCarthy, 2007), and it is possible that the counselor may have difficulty grasping the problem without an understanding of the student's values and culture. In addition, a necessary ingredient to SFBC is an equalitarian relationship that may be difficult for those from cultures in which a hierarchical relationship is expected. Finally, SFBC may not work with individuals who prefer a direct, cognitive focused method of dealing with problems; in these cases, a consultant role may be the preferable strategy (Thompson et al., 2004).

Applications in Schools

SFBC has been used successfully with numerous issues youth bring to counseling. For instance, greater completion and accuracy in math assignments resulted when SFBT was used with students who had difficulty completing math homework (Fearrington, McCallum, & Skinner, 2011). In addition, SFBC has also been effectively used in Response to Intervention, classroom management, counseling, and social skills groups (Jones et al., 2009). SFBC was also effective with both bullies and targets of bullying when students were encouraged to view exceptions to the bullying, identify strengths, visualize life without the problem, and develop strategies for the potential of future bullying incidents (Paterson, 2011). Student Activity 6.6 *I Am Capable* could be implemented as an SFBC strategy to assist students in identifying goals and exceptional times.

STUDENT ACTIVITY 6.6. I AM CAPABLE

Directions: Complete the following worksheet

1. Describe in detail the problem you would like to resolve.

2. The circle below represents 100% of the time. In the circle, shade in the percentage of time you are currently having this problem.
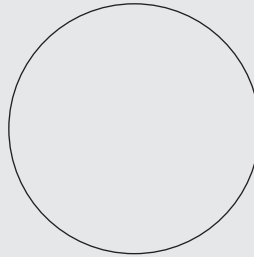
3. Now look at the unshaded area that indicates times the problem isn't occurring (exceptional times) and describe in detail what is happening during these times.

4. What do you need to do make the percentage of time that the problem doesn't occur larger? Describe in detail.

5. Use the S-A-M-I-C acronym to establish a goal.

6. What can you do between now and next week to make the "unshaded "times occur?

NARRATIVE COUNSELING

Michael White is credited as the founder of Narrative Counseling, a theoretical approach that focuses on the stories we choose to tell in counseling. These selected narratives are based on perceptions of interactions with others, social factors, and experiences. The problems that bring the student to counseling, or *dominant plots,* are uncovered as the counselor carefully listens and assists the student in authoring new possibilities for living (Archer & McCarthy, 2007). Through the counselor/student relationship and the counselor's use of wisely couched questions, attention is given to *alternative discourses* or other interpretations of the problem (Carey, Walther, & Russell, 2009). This collaborative approach deconstructs or "re-examines" the problem with the intent of developing alternative stories or plots for problem resolution (Archer & McCarthy, 2007).

Techniques

Narrative counseling consists of defining the problem, mapping the influence of the problem, evaluating the effects of the problem, identifying unique outcomes, and restorying (White & Epston, 1990). Movement through these stages is facilitated through skillful questions, metaphors, strength identification, and unique outcomes.

Questions. Questions are used to gain a clearer understanding of how the student views the problem. *Relative influence questions* are used to separate the student from the problem and to "map" the influence of the problem on the student's life. The counselor and student collaboratively determine how the problem influences school, peers, and family, and so on. For example, the counselor could ask, "How has the issue gained control over your life?" or, "When would your mom say you have control over the situation?"

Use of Metaphors. Figurative language offers the student an opportunity to objectify the problem by giving the problem a name. This externalization of the problem aids the counselee in re-authoring the stories by recognizing that "the person is not the problem, the problem is the problem" (Schofield, 2013). In addition, externalization symbolizes the problem as peripheral to the student, gives the student an opportunity to "view" the problem from a distance (Carey et al., 2009; Lambie & Milsom, 2010), and facilitates a more comfortable counseling environment to tell a story (Lambie & Milsom, 2010). For example, the counselor could say, "You have been telling me about your experiences in school and the difficult

time you are having. Could you come up with a name for the trouble?" I once worked with a high school student who had test anxiety. In working with her from a narrative perspective, she named the text anxiety as "Fred," and from here on our counseling consisted of talking about Fred and the frequency Fred would visit, the duration of his visit, and the intensity of his influence in different aspects of life. Or, as in the questions above, "How has Fred gained control over you?" or, "When would your teacher say you have control over Fred?"

Strengths and Unique Outcomes. As the counselor listens to the student's story, attention is given to individual strengths as resources to generate positive change. These *unique outcomes* or *sparkling moments* are then used to re-author a new story that is facilitated by: a) emphasizing the unique outcomes; b) focusing on the new problem-free story; c) asking about strategies to make the new narrative happen; and d) questioning how unique outcomes can continue outside counseling sessions (Lambie & Milsom, 2010). These skills invite inquiries about intention and purposes. For instance, "What were you hoping would happen when you decided to do that?" or, "How did this action reflect what is important to you?" (Carey et al., 2009).

Multicultural Considerations

Through narrative counseling, counselors are able to listen to students' stories and explore their cultural views (Semmler & Williams, 2000). Although there is a paucity of literature surrounding narrative therapy and diverse populations, it is a powerful counseling approach in which to explore the influence of culture on counselee's lives (Semmler & Williams, 2000). Narrative counseling is also a respectful method for telling narratives among some indigenous communities in Africa and Australia (Mpofu et al., 2013; Schofield, 2013).

Applications in Schools

Clearly, this theoretical orientation provides students with an opportunity to tell their story, yet not all youth are able to verbalize events in their lives. In these cases the counselor could consider combining a narrative approach with creative arts. For example, drawing a self-portrait is an alternative, creative strategy for students to "tell" their story (Carlson, 1997), or the counselor could ask the student to draw a picture of a person with the same problem he/she is currently experiencing. These activities give the counselor an opportunity to ask about the influences of the problem on the student's life while he/she is able to distance him/her self from the problem. From here, the student could visualize the illustrated person

having control over the problem and draw a picture of that person controlling the problem. Through a combination of art and narrative counseling the counselor is able to get a better understanding of the dominant story, and the student is able to externalize the situation and recognize new behaviors that lead to a new, revised life story. In addition to art, visualization and the use of puppets in counseling are also effective techniques to externalize the problem (Butler, Guterman, & Rudes, 2009). Student Activity 6.7 *Powerful Me* is an example of bridging narrative counseling with creative methods.

STUDENT ACTIVITY 6.7. "POWERFUL ME"

Write out or draw your answers to the following questions in as much detail as possible.

1. Name the problem. Describe this issue in as much detail as possible.

2. How is this a problem for you? (Is it evident in relationships, behaviors, feelings, or in other ways?)

3. How is it influencing your life? (Evaluate how it is influencing school, friends, work, activities, family, etc.)

4. When do you have control over the problem?

5. When is the problem easier to handle?

6. What strengths or skills do you have that can be used to solve the problem?

7. Describe how you can use these skills to conquer the problem.

Traditional counseling theories such as those summarized above can be supplemented with expressive, creative approaches to better meet the developmental needs of individual students. Expressive arts is the " . . . use of techniques, such as drawing, painting, collage and sculpting, to help a person express and visualize emotions" (Bauer, 2011, para. 2). Not only are expressive strategies conceptualized as a mode of working with children, individuals of all ages are able to engage in these methodologies (Murphy, 2010). Advantages for using creative arts in counseling include the following: 1) students are able to express themselves in ways that cannot be conveyed through "talk"; 2) a chance to give voice to people marginalized due to race, gender, diversity, or any other reason (Ledger & Edwards, 2011); 3) a "hook" for engaging youth in ways that other techniques are unable to do (Olson-McBride & Page, 2012); and 4) an opportunity for collaboration and group

connectedness. Creative interventions take a number of forms, such as walking with a student around the playground or track, making collages, or bringing in photographs. Spontaneity and flexibility and selecting the types of media that would best meet the needs of the counselee are essential in determining when to use a creative intervention. Play in counseling, art media, literature, music, and movement in counseling are discussed below.

EXPRESSIVE ARTS IN COUNSELING

Play in Counseling

Play is a child's natural activity and is therefore a useful developmental approach for working with children who have not yet mastered their verbal skills or abstract reasoning (Hall, Kaduson, & Schaefer, 2002). Through play, children are able to indirectly view and express a problem from a different perspective while learning about themselves and others (Shallcross, 2010).

Careful consideration of the types of materials to include in counseling facilitates the communication process. Media to consider include: 1) playdoh; 2) puppets that fit into the categories of real-life toys (doll houses, dolls, household items, telephones, fruit and vegetables, etc.); 3) acting-out and aggressive toys (handcuffs, suction darts, hammer, toy soldiers and military equipment, masks, etc.); or 4) creative media (chalk, markers, colored paper, tape, paste, pipe cleaners, etc.). Toys that represent violence such as toy guns and plastic knives are useful in play counseling rooms, yet because of "zero-tolerance" policies many school administrators do not allow any semblance to weapons in the schools. (See Box 6. 2 for toy selection ideas). However, if you believe these toys are essential to the goals of counseling, discuss the importance of these toys with your principal for permission for their inclusion into your array of counseling materials. Student Activity 6.8 *The Feeling Game* is a creative approach for students to recognize the link between feelings and physiological responses.

STUDENT ACTIVITY 6.8. THE FEELING GAME

Everyday toys such as blocks or even the Jenga game can be used to assist students in recognizing feelings and understanding issues influencing the student. The counselor evenly divides the Jenga blocks between him/herself and the student. A block is placed on the table and each person selects a block and places it on top of the already placed blocks to make a tower. As each block is placed, a specific event is discussed along with a feeling statement and physiological response. For instance, "When my

girlfriend ignores me I feel sad." "I know I am sad because my stomach hurts and I cry." If the child is having difficulty identifying an incident, feeling, and response, the counselor can write down open-ended statements on index cards. For example, "I am happy when . . . ," and "I know I am happy because. . . . ." The child reads the statement on the card and places a block on top of the previous block. The game continues until the tower tumbles over.

BOX 6.2 TOYS FOR PLAY IN COUNSELING

Counselors select toys that represent all facets of life. A list of toys that facilitate expression is below.

Nurturing Toys	Expressive Toys	Cultural Considerations	Nature	Aggressive Toys
Dolls	Pipe Cleaners	Dolls with various skin tones	Shells	Representations of "scary" animals (e.g., sharks)
Families	Crayons	Variety of jewelry or utensils from other countries	Stones and rocks of various sizes	Toy soldiers
Furniture	Newsprint	Cultural toys	Sand	Handcuffs
Nursing bottle	Blunt scissors	Doll clothes representing culture	Leaves	Rubber knife
Play dishes & Utensils	Popsicle sticks	Pictures	Twigs	Aggressive hand puppets

Adapted from Landreth, Ray, & Bratton (2009)

Considerations in Play. The benefits of play in counseling are documented (VanVelsor, 2013); however, teachers and parents may not fully understand how play can actually be a useful counseling approach for helping children and youth. They naturally want to know the purpose of play in counseling, particularly if instructional time will be missed (Landreth, Ray, & Bratton, 2009). If you wish to garner support for dismissing students from class who may be struggling

academically, conduct an in-service workshop at the beginning of the year to discuss the benefits of play in counseling (Landreth et al., 2009) and to solicit parent/guardian and teacher cooperation. Ideally, a fully equipped room designed specifically for play is recommended, yet few school counselors have the luxury of having a room dedicated specifically for counseling. Many school counselors have to share an office with another person such as the speech therapist, or travel from building to building. In these instances a tote bag filled with items that can be transported from place to place is helpful. In your school counseling program you will learn about theoretical models, child development, and basic responding skills. If the use of play in counseling is an approach that you would like to incorporate into your school counseling program, identify an experienced school counselor to receive appropriate training under supervision to develop personal insight, skill, and practice in the use of toys in counseling.

Visual Arts in Counseling

The use of art in counseling involves creating or viewing art, and emotionally processing the final product. It is also a useful method for fostering cultural awareness, personal growth, and mental wellness (Gladding, 2005) in a nonthreatening manner. Several visual arts methods include using already existing artwork such

Photo 6.1 Students Expressing Themselves Through Chalk Drawings

as that which appears in magazines, or postcards, posters, art prints, in addition to photos taken by the counselee, of the counselee, self-portraits, or any photograph that creates emotional responses. Although these types of methods speak to individuals from all ethnicities and cultures, the counselor has a responsibility to be aware of the counselee's cultural heritage to more thoroughly understand the meaning of the imagery and metaphor (Gladding, 2005). Student Activity 6.9 *My Future Timeline* is an example of a creative art activity to identify long-term goals.

STUDENT ACTIVITY 6.9. MY FUTURE TIMELINE

The student with whom you are working is given a piece of paper on which a horizontal line is drawn. On the far left side of the line, the student draws or locates a picture from a magazine or other source to represent his/her birth date. On the far right side, the student selects or draws a picture to represent an appropriate long-term, future goal. The student then draws a short vertical segment on the horizontal line between the two points to represent his/her age at the present time. Next, the student is asked to write words, draw a picture, or paste pictures on line segments that represent significant life events that have occurred. For instance, birthdays, holidays, preschool, or traumatic incidents can be indicated. As the events are recalled, the student is encouraged to discuss these events in as much detail as possible, while the counselor asks questions such as, "How did you feel when this happened?" or "How do you feel now?" or "Is there anything that you could do to make this situation better today?" Then, the student can identify future events he/she hopes will occur to reach the specified goal indicated by the year on the far right. The counselor is able to prompt the student through questions such as, "How can you make this event happen?" The use of pictures provides a concrete reminder of the steps needed to reach the designated goal and to envision future possibilities.

2/14/2006	2008 Sister Born	2010 Parents Divorced	Age Today	2020

The Use of Literature in Counseling

Bibliocounseling, poetry, storybooks, fairytales, and nursery rhymes are all forms of literature that aid in personal growth and self-understanding. Children's literature teaches lessons about handling personal issues, inspires courage, aids in overcoming fears, teaches interpersonal communication skills, and interconnects fictitious characters whose feelings and challenges parallel the student's issues. Identification, catharsis, insight, and universality are four interrelated stages when literature is used in counseling. During the

Photo 6.2   Art Is a Nonthreatening Vehicle for Communicating and Expressing Oneself

identification stage, characters, situations, and settings are recognized with the intention of creating emotional involvement and reactions. Identification with the story characters including recognition of characteristics, motivations, thoughts, behaviors, and feelings brings about insight. Universality is an outcome when the counselor processes these factors with the student, having the intention of gaining self-awareness with newly experienced thoughts, feelings, and behaviors (Gladding, 2005).

Mutual storytelling is another bibliocounseling technique in which the counselor and student tell a story together. The counselor starts the story with the words "Once upon a time . . ." and narrates a tale that is similar to the student's current issue. At a certain point the counselor invites the student to add to the story and only gives assistance when the student is stuck. This creative approach facilitates insight as the student subconsciously reveals aspects of him/herself while indirectly resolving life events.

Adolescents can also bring in literature that is personally meaningful, write stories, or create poetry. Bibliocounseling can also be used to meet academic standards as school counselors collaborate with teachers to integrate reading and writing competencies while learning about self and others. Or, teachers of language arts and history can collaborate with the school counselor through discussing narratives that teach culturally specific information. For example, in a history class a poem written from a certain sociocultural perspective may facilitate the reader's ability to move beyond his/her culture and empathize with the affect behind the poetry. Literature also has the potential to increase an appreciation for

one's own culture and ethnicity (Pehrsson & McMillen, 2003). The school counselor, in partnership with a social studies teacher, could work with students to write a poem or song lyrics that depict a character from a different country, a dissimilar ethnicity from the student, or from a different period of time. Or, the school counselor could share a poem that has personal meaning for him/her, discuss the key concepts, special connection with the characters, and offer a particular empathic reflection of the characters (Ingram, 2003).

The needs and the developmental level of the student are points to consider when using literature in counseling because there is always a danger that the student does not identify with the story protagonists, may refuse to discuss topics that create discomfort, or may not follow through on the application of appropriate solutions to personal problems (Eppler, Olsen, & Hidano, 2009). Student Activity 6.10 *A Personal Diamante* is an example of a literary counseling strategy that could address the student competencies identified in the counseling program and in language arts classes.

STUDENT ACTIVITY 6.10. A PERSONAL DIAMANTE

A diamante is a poem that forms a diamond when finished. The first and last line consist of one word that starts and ends with an antonym, a synonym, or the same word. The second line of the poem consists of two adjectives about the first word. The third line contains three "ing" words about the beginning topic. The fourth line includes four nouns or a short phrase linking the topic. The fifth line contains three "ing" words that relate to the ending topic. The sixth line contains two adjectives about the final word.

<div align="center">

Dark

Ebony   Eternal

Prohibiting   Tossing   Thinking

Shadows   Demons   Voices   Visitors

Flickering   Guiding   Beckoning

Hopeful   Visible

Light

</div>

After reading the poetry, respond to the following questions.

1. What are you feeling about the poem or story?

2. If you were the writer of the poem or story, how would you feel? Behave?

Music and Dance

Regardless of culture or ethnicity, music produces a range of mental, emotional, physical, and/or spiritual responses (Gladding, 2005). Children are naturally energetic, and although movement is a natural means for expressing self (Gladding, 2005), unfortunately outside of physical education or recess, the educational environment does not always welcome this form of expression as a learning strategy. Music connects people, and youth are much more likely to participate in group activities when they are allowed to listen, and share feelings and thoughts about music that "speaks to them" (Olson-McBride & Page, 2012). Music in counseling can take the form of writing lyrics, listening, playing an instrument, or singing.

Photo 6.3 The Use of Literature in Counseling Is a Creative Approach for Helping Students Develop Personal Insight While Reinforcing Academic Skills

Songs help individuals relax, learn, or develop self-understanding. The counselor could ask the student to select a song that has special meaning to better understand the student's attitudes and values, or students may wish to write a song with lyrics that express their feelings, thoughts, or behaviors. Olson-McBride and Page (2012) conducted intervention groups with at-risk adolescents in which the use of poetry and music provided the means for self-disclosure. In these sessions students selected songs that contained themes of special personal significance, and as the group progressed members shared song lyrics that were meaningful to them. This process of moving from "song-to-self" facilitated movement from a discussion of lyrics to personal thoughts, feelings, and experiences, while a community of trust was created in which students felt comfortable in sharing horrific acts of sexual abuse, mental illness and substance abuse. These disclosures resulted in members having the courage to form meaningful relationships with group members from whom they were previously

distanced. Student Activity 6.11 *Rapping Science Vocabulary* is an example of a strategy for using music that meets counseling standards as well as standards in academic classes such as science.

STUDENT ACTIVITY 6.11. RAPPING SCIENCE VOCABULARY

Students can create a rap song using the concepts they learned in science class. Have the students talk about ways songs can help them learn and remember academic terms.

Movement in Counseling

Dance and movement facilitate a mind-body connection in which actions are integrated with emotion. Counselors often combine dance/movement with activities such as martial arts, yoga, breath-work, and relaxation. Although some movement strategies such as yoga are not part of traditional forms of counseling, its use significantly enhances psychological growth through its emphasis on feelings and senses, while reducing a focus on performance. Koshland, Wittaker, and Wilson (2004) conducted a 12-week dance/movement program with elementary-age children that focused on socialization and self-regulation. As a result of participating in this program, children showed a significant decrease in the frequency of aggressive behaviors and negative classroom behaviors.

Khalsa, Hickey-Schultz, Cohen, Steiner, and Cope (2011) also revealed the benefits of movement. Adolescents were randomly assigned to either a regular physical education class or to a yoga class over an academic semester. The study results revealed that the students in the yoga group reported improvements in stress compared to those who participated in the regular physical education class.

Regardless of the type of approach that is chosen, school counselors talk about the difficulty of counseling with school-age youth while respecting the rights of parents/guardians and teachers who work with students on a daily basis. Whether or not to tell parents that their child is receiving counseling services, and how to safeguard confidentiality are two of the most difficult concerns expressed by school counselors (Williams, 2007, 2009). The next section provides information on best practices for communicating the school counselor's role with respect to the various school stakeholders.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND WORKING WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Some school districts consider counseling as a part of the educational services provided by the district, whereas other school districts require parent/guardian

permission before any child can be seen for counseling (Williams, 2009). The rights of students to seek counseling while being assured of a confidential relationship that complies with laws, policies, and ethical standards is of paramount importance to school-age youth. In a 1995 study by Collins and Knowles, as cited by Williams (2007), over 53% of surveyed adolescents stated that confidentiality with their school counselor was essential to an effective relationship, with another 46% who responded that confidentiality was important. Regardless of the approach that is taken by your school board, educating others about your program is a prerequisite to a healthy, supportive relationship among all stakeholders. A professional disclosure statement that outlines your professional education, experience, and training that is offered to interested parties is considered a best practice. Box 6.3 is an example of a professional disclosure statement and can be used as a template to develop your own disclosure statement.

BOX 6.3 PROFESSIONAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENT

Melissa Martin

Licensed Professional School Counselor

Hartley Middle School

This Disclosure Statement is designed to inform you of my professional credentials, types of services I provide and therapeutic orientation and style.

Education

M.S. in School Counseling, Technology College, 2007

B.S. in Psychology, University of Excellence, 2004

Work Experience

Hartley Middle School 2007–present

Case Manager, 2004–2007

Professional Organizations

American Counseling Association (ACA)

American School Counselor Association (ASCA)

Counseling Philosophy

My role in the school is to support the academic, career, and personal/social growth of all the students enrolled in the school. I provide consultation, advocacy for students, and individual and group counseling. Within these roles I recognize that my primary responsibility is confidentiality to your child, but I also recognize parental rights as primary voices in the lives of their children. In order to work most effectively with your child, I collaborate with individuals who have a primary role in your child's life, and in doing so I respect the child's right to privacy. However, I will disclose information your child shares if he/she indicates harm to self or others.

Counseling Approach

I feel every child is unique and a complex being; therefore, the approach I take with your child will be based on his/her development and needs. I use a variety of counseling approaches including person-centered, cognitive-behavioral, reality, rational-emotive counseling, narrative, and solution-focused brief counseling. In addition, I use creative approaches to help your child gain a better understanding of the issues that brought him/her to counseling. Most sessions will focus on self-awareness, choice, problem-solving, and setting goals for the present and future to support academic growth. There are times I will assign homework such as journal writing, reading, or art.

You are encouraged to discuss any questions or concerns you have about my role as a school counselor or the counseling process. Thank you for the opportunity to work with your child.
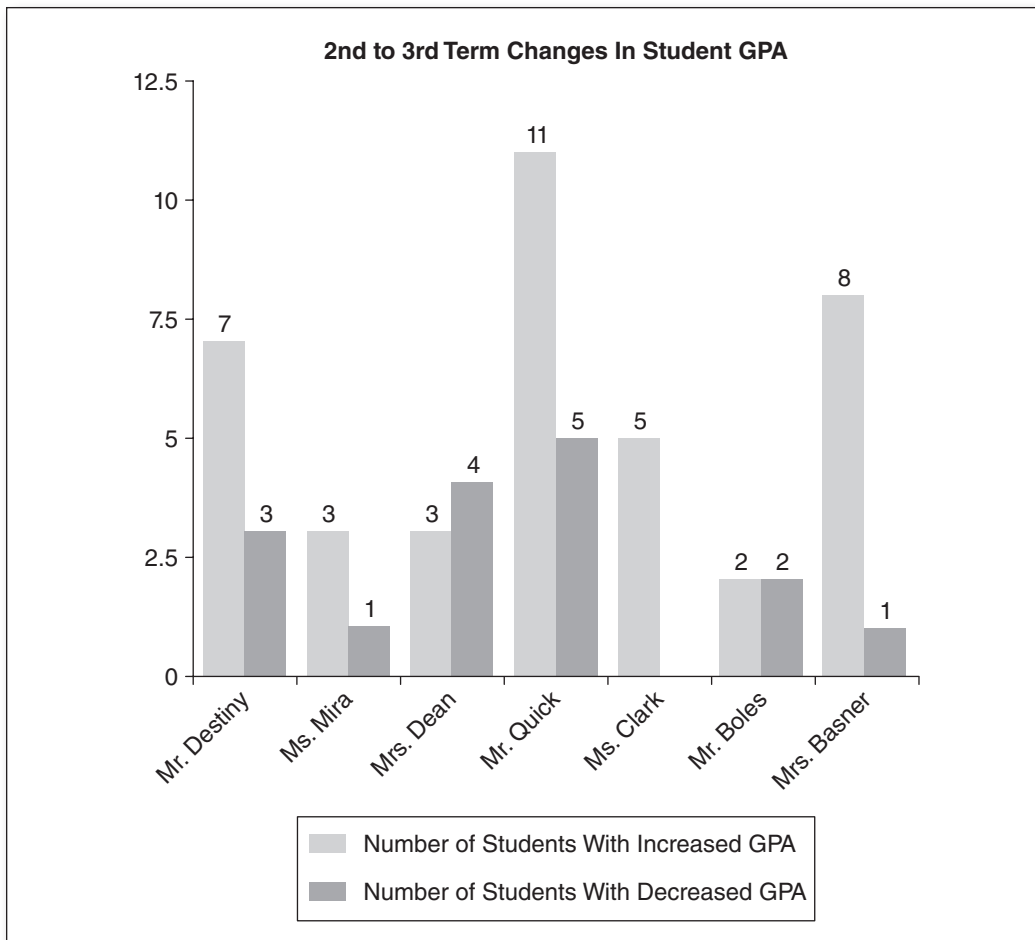
Although ASCA ethics discuss the importance of confidentiality, we must also follow school policy and procedures, and there are some school districts that require parental/guardian permission for counseling, or specify a specific number of counseling meetings before parent/guardian permission is needed. With policies such as these in place, students who desperately need the counseling services will miss an opportunity for receiving the support they need. If this is the established requirement there are several steps you can take. Clarifying the counseling relationship with both parents and children through informed consent at the beginning of each school year is an opportunity to begin the year with clear boundaries. In addition, the importance of confidentiality should be included in the student handbook, on the school counseling website, or in brochures. Through straightforward communication from the beginning problems can be avoided.

Finally, how do school counselors convince teachers to release students from classes when there is so much pressure for students to spend as much time in the

classroom to master identified concepts? Some school counselors work with students when they are in related classes such as music, art, or physical education, yet these are often the classes that students who are struggling enjoy more than the more academic-based classes. Furthermore, the teachers of these classes tend to feel that this practice devalues the content of these subjects. Perhaps the most essential approach to gain the support of teachers to release students from their classes is to demonstrate how counseling can aid in supporting academic progress. Figure 6.1 depicts the progress of students who worked with a school counselor on academic goals, and when the counselor shared this information with teachers they had a greater appreciation for counselor interventions and the usefulness of counseling to their subject content.

Figure 6.1   Results of Students' Improved GPA After Receiving Counseling

2nd to 3rd Term Changes In Student GPA

Legend:
- Number of Students With Increased GPA
- Number of Students With Decreased GPA

CONCLUSION

School counselors provide individual counseling for students who are struggling academically, vocationally, and personally. The practice of motivational interviewing is a useful strategy to use in conjunction with any counseling theoretical approach. Person-centered Counseling, Adlerian counseling, Reality Counseling, Rational-Emotive Behavior Therapy, Solution-Focused Brief Counseling, and Narrative Counseling are commonly used theoretical approaches adopted by school counselors. When students are unable or uncomfortable talking through personal issues, creative techniques can complement these methods. Play, visual arts, literature, music, and movement in counseling are expressive arts methodologies that are successful in facilitating change. In selecting an expressive art for a particular student, the school counselor considers the child's developmental needs and interests to best facilitate change.

Although many school districts consider individual counseling as an essential component of the academic mission, other school districts have been reluctant for counseling to occur without full knowledge and consent of the parent or guardian. School counselors are often placed in a precarious position when they have an ethical obligation to maintain the confidences of the child while maintaining their obligations to parents/guardians. A professional disclosure form that emphasizes the school counselor's experiences, education, and training provided to all stakeholders from the beginning assists in role clarification and educating others about the counseling relationship.

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