Passageways:
To the Next Generation of Counselors

Cathy Woodyard
CSI Newsletter Editor

Yesterday my grandmother, Nanny, had a mass on her thyroid biopsied. We don’t know the results yet. At eighty-five, she has already said she is unsure she will be willing to have surgery if the mass is malignant. Trying to hold back tears while reassuring me she isn’t worried or scared, she tells me she’s had a pretty good life but she’s tired. She doesn’t know it, but her daughter, my mother, will find out this week if she must have surgery to remove a lump in her breast. I let myself wonder how my life will be affected by the results of these medical tests and what it will mean to me when either or both of them die. Our lives are, and forever will be, intertwined. Each has contributed to my transition from child to adolescent to adult. I remember times when each has been present in my life: my first day of school, trips on the Greyhound bus across the Smoky Mountains, shopping for a pant suit for my first date, decorating my first house, college graduation. Both Nanny and Mom have helped me through many passageways in my life.

Moving Through Passageways

The New World Dictionary defines passageways as "a narrow way for passage" and defines passage as "change or progress from one process or condition to another; transition." Nanny, Mom, and I are each moving through a passageway. The choices we make as we move through them affect each other’s passage. These "narrow ways" are not comfortable. As I think about these two women in my life, the passageway I am now in feels tight and restricting, and while most of the time I feel certain I will be able to move through it, it is difficult and sometimes I feel very afraid. At such times, I turn to the “elders” in my life, those who have successfully gone through similar passages. I ask them for advice, encouragement, support and wisdom from their own lives and experiences. They cannot take away my fear of what might happen nor can they rescue me out of this inevitable passageway. Somehow, though, their words reassure me that I can and will get through this.

As counselors-in-training, we are taught to assist people in moving through passageways such as the ones Nanny, Mom, and I now face. As students we learn in our lifespan classes that some of our clients’ greatest struggles will be with their passage from one life stage to another, and we are taught to facilitate our clients’ movement through these normal developmental transitions. However, as we finish our counseling training and move toward graduation, many of us find ourselves in an uncertain and sometimes frightening transition—the transition from student to professional.

The Transition from Student to Professional

Passageways, Chi Sigma Iota’s first special edition of the Newsletter, is devoted to facilitating this narrow and often times uncomfortable transition faced by counseling students. Having finished and successfully passed many exams, graduating students have a stockpile of information in subject areas such as group, career, research, and the counseling relationship. While this knowledge can be re-

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THE HELPING PROCESS: 
PASSAGEWAY TO HUMAN POTENTIAL

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Michael sat quietly finishing his case notes. He was in a pensive mood, and pictures of past interactions with family members and friends flashed before him as if filmed and edited to provide a life review. He had just finished an initial counseling session with a new client in the Counselor Education Department's on-campus training clinic. His supervisor had viewed and taped the session and would be meeting with him in another fifteen minutes. Michael hoped he had done well enough; he knew he would not be permitted to initiate an internship in the community if he received inadequate evaluations in the practicum component of his master's program.

Michael found this session difficult even though he was affirmed by his new client for the understanding and empathy he provided during the session. Michael found the client's "story" to be uncomfortably close to his own. Although Michael had never been so depressed that he considered suicide, he had experienced the same difficulty as his client with stating and meeting his own needs, with saying no, and with accepting too much responsibility. He was glad the Counselor Education faculty let applicants to the degree program know that they were expected to undergo counseling/therapy prior to enrolling in practicum. He wondered if he had worked on his own "stuff" enough to continue with this client. He was really struck by the fact that the life of his client had been so negatively impacted in part because the client had not dealt with personal issues earlier.

"You seem lost in thought, Michael. Is there something you want to discuss as we begin to assess the session you just finished?" asked Dr. Allaire as she entered the room....

The three people in this scenario, student counselor, client, and supervisor, are all on a journey or passageway to enhancing their own potential to be as fully human as they can possibly be. Whether they accept the challenge and take the risk to do so will depend upon what takes place in the helping process between Michael and his client and between Dr. Allaire and Michael.

Counselor's Process

Michael knows that it is his obligation as a professional to facilitate introspection, commitment to change, and action on the part of his client. He knows that the needs of his client must take precedence over his own needs and that he cannot help his client if he is blind-sighted by the similarity of his client's story to his own or is still unable to make some of the same changes as those needed to be made by his client. Michael also knows he can provide the positive regard and empathy needed by his client, and he feels fortunate to have averted some of the difficulties of his client by working hard on his own, and more recently with his counselor, to grow in self-esteem and assertiveness. Michael feels an enhanced sense of well-being as he compares his life to that of his client. He hopes he has the strength and objectivity to continue work with this client.

Client's Process

Michael's client is impressed by his counselor's sensitivity. He notices that Michael seems to listen with...

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Let me begin by acknowledging that I am a developmentalist who practices counseling. However, my belief is that all counselors are developmentalists. Our profession has deep roots in developmental concepts, probably as a result of first practicing in schools, then moving into community agencies. In my own training, I gained faith in the developmental approach, thus choosing The George Washington University to earn an Ed.D. in Counseling and Human Development. However, once graduated and actually working, whether that's in a school, mental health center, or a career center, it is easy to forget our "roots." On the other hand, maybe we are not forgetting our roots but are forgetting that theory is nothing until the practitioner gives it life and meaning.

As a young practitioner, I theoretically knew that developmental principles applied to every client. However, I could not seem to move the words into practice, or maybe I was too busy just trying to be a "counselor." In any case, years passed before I "walked the talk"; that is, incorporated developmental theory routinely into my counseling practice. Because you will soon be working as a counselor yourself, let me share a few ideas with you on moving human development theory into practice.

Developmental Assessment

During our classes, the models of developmentalists like Erikson, Super, Gilligan, Marcia, Phinney, Levinson, and Levinson are introduced. We hear phrases like stages of development, developmental tasks, and unsuccessful achievement. Yet, we may leave these courses not understanding how to use this theory with clients. One way I use these models is to view them as assessment guides, the findings of which are useful in treatment to enhance a client's development.

For example, I might use Erikson's psychosocial stages of development to assess a client, depending on the client's issues. Therefore, his stages and corresponding psychosocial crises are the assessment guide, while not forgetting to consider the cultural and gender factors mentioned below. If a 30-year-old client feels like he doesn't make friends easily, is depressed, and can't stay in a relationship longer than 3 months, I begin by assessing the client's work related to "intimacy vs. isolation." On the surface, working on this young adult developmental task makes him appear developmentally "on-target." Learning the skills, behaviors, and affect necessary to initiate and maintain an intimate relationship defines successful achievement of this task. If this is what the client is struggling with, then my treatment plan directly impacts the enhancement of Intimacy achievement.

However, the assessment doesn't stop there. I assess the psychosocial crisis for each stage of development before young adulthood. Perhaps this client is also fearful of initiating anything, much less an intimate relationship, and more importantly, he may mistrust people's motives, putting people on the defensive. In this case, I would conclude that my client is developmentally delayed, and the treatment plan would focus on developing the skills, behavior, and affect necessary to achieve trust and initiative. Without determining that this client is "stuck" and didn't "successfully master" earlier developmental tasks, working on the developmental crisis of intimacy vs. isolation seems futile. Clearly, these models are not just words but can serve as guides in the assessment and treatment of clients.

Developmental Theory and the Medical Model

The DSM-IV-R and the medical model are no mystery to developmentalists; on the contrary, developmental theory has always incorporated a continuum of functioning, including pathology or maladaptive behavior. For example, in assessing a client's functional level of Erikson's trust vs. mistrust, I don't believe that functional achievement of that task means being on the upper end of a continuum. Rather, my philosophy is that functional achievement of that task resembles a bell curve. People who accomplish trust are in the middle, that is, knowing how to evaluate when not to trust a situation or person (34% below Mean) and knowing when to trust (34% above the Mean). A small percentage of people fall to the extreme left below the middle, thus always distrusting and questioning others' motives without logical reason. These people might be diagnosed within the Paranoid Personality Disorder classification. Similarly, a small percentage of people fall to the extreme right above the middle, thus always trusting people and situations without sensible or precautionary analysis. Theodore Millon (1969) classified the Pollyanna-like personality as Inadequate Personalities, and these people might fall within the Dependent Personality Disorder classification.

My beliefs about a continuum of functioning are my way of making sense of traditional developmental theory. Additionally, my beliefs help me understand that 1) the DSM-IV-R classifications provide labels for the extremes of developmental models; 2) we can determine to what extent (or not) a client has mastered the skills, behavior, and affect of a particular developmental task; and 3) treatment plans can include diagnosis from a DSM-IV-R perspective, while retaining the developmental nature of our profession.

Developmental Language

The language of human development is a rich one, and one that counselors can use with clients during the counsel-
ing process. I usually begin counseling with a client by filtering what I’m seeing through a developmental lens. Thus, I try to distinguish between a developmental crisis, or functional behavior, and maladaptive behavior in general. I first ask myself, “Theoretically, what crisis might this person be involved with to create a change in behavior, increase anxiety, or cause what I like to call a developmental dysfunction?” A developmental dysfunction is a situational response to a developmental crisis that causes undesirable or intolerable consequences. If an intervention does not occur to help a client learn more effective ways of coping, then any developmental dysfunction could become a permanent way of “being.”

A 15-year-old girl might be a referred client. Her 40-year-old mother reports that she is behaving “strangely,” unlike her normal self. The mother believes her daughter is on drugs because she yells back at her, doesn’t come home by curfew, shaved her head, cuts school, pierced her belly button and appears suicidal. This family might be dealing with a social developmental task called separation. Both the mother and daughter are struggling with letting go—the girl letting go of her child/daughter identity and the mother letting go of her identity as mother/protector.

In order to introduce the language of human development to clients, a determination must be made about the following:

1. Is the behavior a product of a developmental crisis; in this case, one of separation with both parties working at different levels and on different activities?
2. If it is developmental in nature, is their situational response functional or dysfunctional? Functional behavioral/affective responses produce desirable (or sometimes tolerable) consequences, while dysfunctional behavior/affective responses usually produce undesirable or intolerable consequences.
3. On the other hand, one or both of them may be exhibiting long-standing maladaptive behavior, which requires methods like a psychosocial history to determine the parent/child relationship of the past, personality assessments, and a more complete developmental assessment on each.

However, should I be dealing with an expected “developmental crisis,” I use the language of human development with my clients. I might say to this mother and daughter, “You’re working on a developmental task called separation that many mothers and daughters experience at your ages, although your experience of it is unique due to your relationship. I think we first should get a better understanding about what separation means. Then, we should examine your responses to the developmental task of separation and determine if they’re helping you achieve this task or causing you more difficulty. Additionally, we might look at how your responses will affect your mother/daughter relationship in the future, as well as your future individual experiences with similar separation situations.”

### Cultural and Gender Factors

By now you’re probably tired of “my” voice, but I need to remind you that any developmental model is only a guideline. We know that humans struggle with moral development, but Carol Gilligan (1982) clearly demonstrated that women experience the stages differently and with a different emphasis than men. Therefore, any developmental model used must be filtered through the cultural and gender context of the client being counseled.

For example, is it fair to assess the career development of African-Americans based on Donald Super’s model since it was developed using White, middle-class boys/men? If you use it as a guideline and not “gospel truth” as written, I would say, “Yes, but use it cautiously.” I would filter Super’s model through the African-American experience before relying on its validity with this client population. I need to know how the experience might impact (1) a person’s progress through the stipulated stages; (2) how meaningful and important the achievement of the proposed developmental tasks are to cultural demands/expectations; and (3) any unique perspectives or translations regarding the “language” of the model. Additionally, are the experiences of African-American men similar enough to African-American women to use the same filter to examine the model?

### References


### To the New Counselor

Have patience. Be considerate of my feelings. Listen and understand.

Lindsay, 11 years old
To the Next Generation
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assuring, it can also be overwhelming for graduates as they wonder, "Out of all of this, what do I need to remember? And how can I possibly remember it all?" Just emerging from several years of school, they may feel like newborn babes being asked to assist with adult-size problems. Although most graduates are glad to be completing school, some may yearn for the more black and white paper and pencil exams rather than the confusing and often times nebulous cases they face as a professional.

Passageway's Purpose

In Passageways, some of the "elders" in counseling who have successfully moved through these transitions and who have become leading educators in the field informally talk to transitioning students about what each thinks is important for graduates to remember as they move into the profession. Each offers information or words of advice from their experience and expertise on one particular area of counseling. Through their words, they hope to assist in the next generation of counselors' movement through this natural but uncomfortable passageway. Also included are words of advice from children, adolescents, and adults who have themselves been clients in counseling. They speak as first-hand experts on what they believe is important for counselors to remember in order to be effective and helpful.

In my own family, how each of us maneuvers through our own passage will affect each other's transition and journey. So it is within the professional family. As a profession facing many internal and external challenges, we look to these incoming professionals for new ideas, energy, and leadership. Hopefully, the words offered by these counseling professionals and clients in Passageways will provide direction, support and assistance for the transition of this next generation of counselors.

The Helping Process
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great perceptivity and responds in a way that helps him share some thoughts and feelings that are difficult to express. He feels understood and wonders if his counselor has had similar experiences. He questions if he should ask his counselor if this is so but hesitates; after all, it has never been easy for him to say what he has wanted to say to those around him. Somehow, though, he thinks maybe he will ask that question of his counselor and thinks maybe he can do so during the next session. Somehow his counselor's encouragement feels so good to him that he thinks he will take that risk.

Supervisor's Process

Dr. Allaire realizes, when she enters the room for the supervisory session, that Michael was troubled with aspects of the counseling session she had just observed. She thought Michael, for the most part, had done an excellent job even though there are some suggestions she knows she can make that might be helpful to Michael. Dr. Allaire also knows she cannot simultaneously supervise Michael and provide personal counseling but has decided to give Michael the opportunity to identify what is bothering him so she can dialogue with him in a direct way. She believes doing so is important—particularly if there seems to be barriers between Michael and his client in future sessions that are related to the concerns she guesses Michael is experiencing. Dr. Allaire, in the past, has had difficulty with being forthright with graduate students and is glad she is not allowing herself to give into the temptation to avoid addressing the observations she had made about Michael's behavior during the session. She knows she does better supervision when she acts on a combination of her intuition and her observations. Supervision with Michael provides another opportunity for her to grow in her ability as a helper.

Opportunities for Growth

It is my hope that reading the above scenario and the brief (and certainly incomplete) description of the three individuals involved in the helping process will have personal meaning to you. I believe that the helping process provides a passageway to enhancing the potential of both the helper and the helpee even though each of the individuals involved is bound by certain limits, role responsibilities, or ethics that cannot be disregarded. All of us have an obligation to continue growing in our capacity to provide competent and compassionate assistance to those seeking our help. Every client, every clinical experience, and every supervisory session provides opportunity for everyone involved to grow through the helping process.

As each of you move from the role of graduate student to that of professional counselor or educator, I hope you never lose sight of the fact that every helping experience can move all parties involved closer to actualizing their potential to be more fully human. You cannot draw from what you have learned from your mentors in your degree program unless you continue to introspect, seek supervision, and respect what each client can bring to your life. You have my best wishes for continued personal and professional growth and success.

To the New Counselor

I remember the counselor who had the most impact on me. She always made me feel safe and never threatened. She would become very vulnerable with me in relating her life so I could better understand mine.

With her, I felt valued as a person. The lines she gave me which truly pulled me through were "You are okay," "You are right where you need to be," and "Trust the process."

She showed me how to put light to my shame and still breathe.

Jean, 45 years old
The Continuous Process of Appraisal
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Appraisal in counseling involves making comparisons among measurements or relating them to other variables. As an example, a professional counselor forms an opinion or makes judgments about a client or group of clients by examining features, attributes, and traits as they compare to those of other individuals or groups. The purpose of appraisal in counseling is rather straightforward—to help the counselor and client. An important part of the appraisal process is assessment, which in essence is the methods and strategies used in gathering data. Implementing this part of the appraisal process, however, can be problematic. First, frequently confused with appraisal and assessment is the term measurement which is the act of identifying the amount of a feature or attribute—an estimation of how much. Relatively, used or misinterpreted information or inappropriately used data can result in poor decisions that can adversely affect clients and can limit the counselor’s ability to be of assistance.

Another problem of some dimension is that many counselors mistakenly view appraisal as paper-and-pencil testing that is primarily normative in nature. Rather, assessment in counseling is a multi-dimension process of which paper-and-pencil testing is only one component. Also, normative assessment is making judgments or comparisons in relationship to large groups. Counselors, however, are involved with the appraisal of a client’s behavior in a given situation, in relation to other individuals, or in relation to the client’s total functioning. Appraisal is a continuous process that serves to assist the counselor and the client.

A Process for Bringing about Change
Appraisal should be viewed as a means for helping to bring about client change but not as a process that finds the “truth” for selection and placement. Rather, clients change and groups of individuals change in response to life experiences in general and particularly if engaged in counseling with counselors. The goals, methods, and techniques that a counselor may use in the counseling process may not necessarily be appropriate, and thus it is important that counselors explicitly include assessment and appraisal as part of the counseling process. Appraisal should be used by counselors in their day-to-day activities as a means of improving their own accountability and thus increasing their effectiveness as it pertains to clients. If counseling is to be a true profession, it has to be self-correcting. We can only self-correct if we have “feedback” about what is taking place. To achieve feedback, we need to both assess and then appraise. In an earlier publication (Vacc, 1982), I conceptualized this process with a client as illustrated in figure 1. Standing at the top of the circle in the figure and continuing clockwise, the counselor begins with assessment, which leads to identifying goals and determining intervention strategies. With this continuous process that is ongoing, the strategies are implemented during counseling and reassessed in order to assist in determining the next goals and strategies. The judgments made during these assessments include comparisons and evaluation, which also are part of the appraisal process.

Necessities for Appraisal
In order for counselors to engage in the appraisal process, they should have course work and other acquired experiences that provide (a) a knowledge-base that is derived largely from the social and behavioral sciences, (b) information on reliable and valid measures, methods, and techniques of assessment, (c) a conceptual framework of continuous assessment, and (d) skills to work with clients to affect change. Of particular concern is the third goal above, continuous assessment in practice. This has not uniformly emphasized in counselor education training programs. However, some excellent resources for counselors that address appraisal include the Multicultural Assessment Standards: A Compilation for Counselors which is available through the Association for Assessment in Counseling, the Code of Fair Testing Practices in Education which has been prepared by the Joint Committee on Testing Practices and is available through the American Psychological Association, and the Responsibilities of Users of Standardized Tests which is available through the American Counseling Association.

References
Professional Orientation: Giving Direction to the Counselor’s Journey

Carol L. Bobby  
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Idea #1 - Accreditation standards define the minimum training requirements for entry into the profession. Step back in time. It is still 1980. The question of the day was who should be responsible for accrediting counselor education programs? Well, I got to learn all about the controversy of who should do it in my one-credit course. Of even greater significance was the fact that I got to learn about this controversy from the late Dr. Robert Stripling, now remembered by many as the “father of accreditation in counselor education.” I learned about how the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) believed they should remain the accreditors in counselor education programs. I learned how committees of the Association of Counselor Education and Supervision had developed standards and how certain state ACEs had begun state-wide program approval. I learned that many had concerns that if a single accrediting unit were not formed soon that there would be splintering of the profession into different specialties.

Of course, I did not realize my fortune to have heard first-hand from Dr. Stripling the history of counselor education accreditation. Nor did I understand the following year how truly exciting it was when I saw Dr. Joe Wittmer receive the first ever shipment of brochures for the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP). It was 1981, and counselor education accreditation by a single, national body had become a reality with the incorporation of CACREP.

Idea #2 - As professionals, counselors must demonstrate that they have attained and will maintain a high level of knowledge and skills. It is now 1982. I have earned both my master’s and educational specialist degrees in agency counseling, and due to the support and encouragement of the department faculty, I am now in the doctoral program. Although my doctoral coursework is completed, I still have major hurdles ahead of me; passing my doctoral qualifying exams and writing a dissertation are just two of them. With all of this going on, my husband and I decided to move to the Washington, DC area where he had accepted a position in the federal government. Naturally, I knew no one in this area, but I had heard that the American Personnel and Guidance Association (APGA), now known as the American Counseling Association (ACA), was located close to my new home.

I took a chance one afternoon and went to the APGA offices and asked if there was any part-time work available. I had one name to contact, and I offered to do practically anything. I only wanted part-time work, since I was determined to work diligently on completing my dissertation. I was hired! Of course, the job consisted of membership data entry, but my feet was in the door. After a few weeks, I was moved to another work area where boxes and boxes of mail were being received everyday. There was so much mail they needed extra hands. This office was the newly established National Board for Certified Counselors (NBCC), and they were receiving the first ever applications for taking the new certification exams. I have to tell you that there was excitement in the air. The response to the creation of the NBCC and its examination process was positively overwhelming. It was evident that counselors wanted recognition for the level of education they had attained. Furthermore, since the NBCC was going to require documentation of continuing education for maintaining the certification, counselors were making a statement of their commitment to

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continue their professional quest for knowledge and skills.
Being a member of the first batch of National Certified Counselors (NCCs) is a source of pride and continued recognition for me as a professional counselor. Having been a witness to the excitement and volumes of mail received at APGA headquarters and having had the opportunity to meet and work with some of the leaders of the first NBCC Board will always bring the importance of professional commitment to the forefront of my mind.

Idea #3 - Knowledge of and adherence to ethical standards is imperative for the professional counselor. Do you remember the Ethical Standards Casebook by Herlihy and Golden? You should. It was first published by APGA in 1965, just four years after the association officially adopted its ethical standards. It is now in its fourth edition (1990) and will undoubtedly be revised again. Why? Because ethical standards are not static. As the profession matures, so will the expectations and responsibilities for its professionals. For example, today there are some fascinating conversations occurring on the computer networks for counselors that focus on ethical issues surrounding case consultation through the listservs. Follow them. They will probably result in future changes in the ethical standards for our profession.

Another important issue to be aware of is that there is not just one set of ethical standards that the professional counselor should follow. If you are a member of the ACA, you need to have a copy of their ethical standards. If you are certified by the NBCC or one of its specialty academies, you should maintain copies of their ethical standards. These sets of standards provide guidance to the counselor and the consumer of counseling services on appropriate interactions and responsibilities.

The year is 1987, and I am finally eligible to become a Licensed Professional Counselor in the Commonwealth of Virginia. I am still a member of APGA (then known as the American Association of Counseling and Development), I am an NCC, and I have completed my doctoral degree. During my oral examination with the Virginia State Board's examiners, we talked about the ethical issues and importance of practicing only in areas for which I had received training. I was being tested, and I was glad I knew the "standards!"

Idea #4 - Be an active member of the profession. Be a leader. One of the first handouts received in that easy little one-credit course called "Professional Orientation" was a student membership application to join the APGA and one or more of its divisions, plus a membership application for the state branch. There was an expectation that we would join, attend the conferences, read the journals and newsletters, and even present workshops or get involved in committee work. Fifteen years later, this is still the best advice that can be given to anyone reading this article.

Chi Sigma Iota (CSI) provides its members with unique opportunities to get involved at local, state, and national levels. Because CSI holds its national meetings in conjunction with the annual conference of the American Counseling Association, CSI members receive the benefit of being able to attend CSI's leadership training, go to ACA workshops, learn about different division activities, attend various committee meetings, and meet leaders in the profession. I urge you to absorb as much as you can during these conferences and do not be afraid to introduce yourself to the person standing next to you. You will meet some wonderful people and broaden your ability to impact the profession in the process. You can get involved with government relations issues. You can attend a workshop about how to get published. You can browse through the exhibit halls and buy the latest publications. You can make a difference.

Continuing My Journey
So what am I? I am no different from you. I began my journey in the same way as you, although you may have a better sense of direction than I had in 1980. Nevertheless, I heard the challenge given to me. I attended conferences; I wrote papers; I put out my hand to a stranger and landed a job with the association and NBCC; I became certified and licensed, and I worked in the field in a group and a private practice. Today I am the Executive Director of CACREP, and I have the pleasure of talking to students, faculty, deans, and presidents about issues in counselor education and higher education. I have been able to work with committees, attend conferences of the American Association of State Counseling Boards, and train individuals about the accreditation process. I have served as president of CSI. Currently I serve on two boards involved in higher education—the Center for Quality Assurance in International Education and the Association for Specialized and Professional Accreditors.

I look back on this journey and gasp at the changes I have seen and the changes that are to come. I want to be involved and I urge you to do the same!
Addressing the Challenges of Cultural Diversity

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I am honored to be writing this article about the significance of the social and culture foundations of counseling to the next generation of counseling professionals. It is my hope that my personal reflections here will, in some small measure, help your passage into the profession and give you some directions for addressing the challenges of cultural diversity.

Professional Experience

My professional experience with the social and cultural foundations of counseling spans 16 years. During that time I have written extensively on issues of culture and counseling, served as a president of the Association of Multicultural Counseling and Development, served as editor of the Journal of Multicultural Counseling and Development, established multicultural counseling courses at two major universities, and consulted extensively on multicultural issues both in the United States and abroad.

Training

I was first introduced to the issues of cultural diversity in counseling as a master’s student over 20 years ago. It was my extreme good fortune back then to take a course on counseling Black clients from the late Alfred B. Pasteur. Pasteur is best remembered for his provocative and cutting-edge scholarship on the positive aspects of mental health for Black people. He was a dynamic and inspirational teacher who became my mentor. He encouraged me to pursue doctoral work and steered me to a visionary counselor training program at Michigan State University. This program, founded by Thomas S. Gunnings, focused exclusively on preparing counseling professionals who could address the mental health issues of ethnic minority client populations through teaching, research, and practice. Gunnings and his colleagues trained students to work with clients within their social and cultural contexts.

The Beginning of the Process

My view of counseling has been profoundly affected by my training and professional experiences. I have come to realize that issues of culture are central to the theory and practice of counseling. I have also come to understand that my generation of multicultural experts and those who preceded us have merely begun the process of understanding the role of culture in counseling and human development. We have been able to generate many issues, questions, and more than a few controversies about social and cultural issues in counseling. It will be up to your generation to continue addressing these issues, questions, and controversies in your work as multicultural counseling experts. You will need to continue expanding the boundaries of multicultural theory and practice.

Seeking a Refined Definition

As you make the transition from student to professional, let me briefly share with you some insights I have gained that may facilitate your efforts to expand those important boundaries. First, it is apparent to me that multicultural counseling has become one of the hottest disciplines in the profession. Every area of the profession seems to be searching for new ways to intervene successfully into the lives of people from increasingly diverse client populations. This would seem natural since American society in the last several decades has become more pluralistic, and projections suggest that cultural diversity will have an even greater impact on population demographics as we enter the 21st century. In spite of this however, don’t expect to find consensus in the profession about what is meant by “multicultural counseling.” If you were to ask 100 professional counselors for an operational definition of that term, you would no doubt get 100 different responses. Much of this lack of consensus is due to the expansive nature of the concept of culture. At present, any group that considers itself “different” in some fashion can usually make a valid argument about being a “culture” worthy of scholarly and practical consideration in counseling. This lack of consensus is further underscored in our training standards for entry-level counselors. An examination of CACREP training standards, for example, will make obvious to you that the most ill-defined and softest aspect of the core entry-level training curriculum is the area called Social and Cultural Foundations.

I would therefore urge you to continue efforts to operationally define multicultural counseling. Work to define constructs that advance a viable theory of multicultural counseling. Such a theory, while inclusive, should also provide specificity about the nature and limits of culture. As you endeavor to refine a workable definition of discipline, it is important that you find ways to insure that issues of diversity are infused throughout both pre- and in-service training. Likewise, insure that cultural competency is the foundation of counselor licensure and certification.

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Addressing the Challenges
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More Research Needed
Second, I would encourage you to let research evidence guide multicultural counseling practice. Your future agenda, therefore, should be the empirical validation of continuously evolving concepts about multicultural counseling and human development. Multicultural counseling process and outcome research must be conducted. Empirical evidence is needed, for example, to support hypotheses concerning the effectiveness of indigenous models of helping and related to culturally responsive counseling interventions in changing client attitudes, values and behaviors. You should strive to make the evaluation of culturally responsive methodologies an integral part of counseling service delivery in all helping settings.

More research is also needed on culturally diverse notions of normal human development. You should consider conducting specific investigations that assess mental health outcomes by attempting to delineate the developmental processes of person-environment interactions among diverse groups. New studies need to investigate cultural differences in coping styles and mastery skills. An empirically validated knowledge base concerning cultural variations on normal development is crucial for proactive counseling interventions.

All multicultural counseling research efforts should be structured to investigate intragroup differences among people. The majority of research evidence concerning the dynamics of counseling people from diverse cultural backgrounds has generally been gathered without consideration for possible demographic differences. Such evidence lends credence to the concept that cultural groups are monolithic entities with no within-group variability among people. Your future multicultural counseling research efforts, therefore, should investigate within-group differences among groups of people.

Global Interconnectedness
Finally, as we prepare to enter the 21st century, there is a growing awareness of a new global interconnectedness. With old ideological barriers falling and new alliances replacing long-standing animosities, there is great anticipation about a new era of mutual respect and cooperation among nations. This has been heightened by universal improvements in communication and travel that have made the world, in many respects a "global village."

As the concept of global interconnectedness continues to grow, it has prompted efforts in many parts of the world to reconfigure social and economic institutions to make them more responsive to interactions across national boundaries. Most professions are exploring ways to adopt a global perspective in order to address more effectively challenges that increasingly transcend political borders. The counseling profession, for example, has taken a series of significant steps to internationalize the scope of mental health intervention. This has resulted in an emerging process to develop an international helping paradigm.

I would encourage you to establish professional links with mental health colleagues in other countries. Such cross cultural links can be forged through international forums for the exchange of ideas and research on mental health and human development. A goal of such forums should be the establishment of an international perspective on the role of counseling in promoting human development. Both individually and organizationally, I would encourage you to move beyond provincial conceptions of theory, research, and practice to join in collaborative efforts to foster notions of mental health and human development that transcend geopolitical boundaries.

In closing, let me say that as we enter a new century, a new counseling professional must emerge, one who has a solid knowledge base with which to meet the challenges of counseling practice with culturally diverse client groups. The development and well-being of individuals from every cultural background demands no less. I wish you the best with your careers.

To the New Counselor
From an adolescent at a residential treatment center
There are going to be times when you're having a bad day and you don't want to come to work and you definitely don't feel like listening to us bicker and complain about everything, and it's going to be hard to leave personal problems outside when you step through the front door. You're going to end up getting close to a client even though you'll be going against the "golden rule of counseling," and when you see them leave and go back to drugs or commit suicide or when you have to call the police to come pick the person up and take him to jail or juvenile, it'll crush your heart.
Then you have to sit in a group and listen to people talk about it and you have to tell them how to deal with it... There are good times too. You'll see clients in here grow and improve from their first day. You'll see the ones who succeed and make it. You'll be there to watch them as they finally deal with a problem they've been fighting with since the day they first got here. You'll see the ones that you can tell how to deal with something and they'll be able to do it. You'll be able to spend time with them and you'll form a friendship that will last forever. It isn't all bad.
17 years old

To the New Counselor
From adolescents at a residential treatment center
You will have better relationships with clients if you are completely honest about your thoughts and feelings. Call them out on behaviors you see. They'll appreciate you more if you tell them rather than let them think they're conning you. They'll respect you.
17 years old

Some of the things you new counselors have to remember is we are exposing our deep secrets. With those secrets come a lot of feelings. Be sensitive to those feelings and help your clients work through them.
17 years old

Most of all, don't forget that your clients can teach you a lot of things too.
17 years old
If You’ve Asked A Question, You Must Be a Researcher

L. DiAnne Borders
University of North Carolina at Greensboro

Bottom line, research is about answering questions, and counselors have a lot of questions. We want to know what caused our clients to have the problems and concerns they present to us and what interventions will be effective. We wonder what home situation might contribute to a child's acting out behavior in the classroom, why a female client is in her third abusive relationship, why one stressed client turns to alcohol while another in a similar situation "buckles down" and keeps moving forward. In the middle of the counseling process, we wonder why a favorite intervention doesn’t work with this client, try to decipher the meaning of a client’s resistance, etc. Counselor educators have another set of questions about what training methods and supervision approaches best prepare students to become effective counselors.

Counselors, then, ARE researchers, or scientist-practitioners, or practitioner-scientists. They need only pay attention to the questions they ask their clients and themselves to identify their research questions. Some answers to these questions will be found in counseling journals and books, in terms of what has worked or what similar behaviors have meant for other clients. To answer some other questions, counselors may need to conduct their own studies. If open to the experience, what they can discover is that the process of pursuing answers can be fun and satisfying.

Actually, we could view each and every counseling session as a research case study. The study "design" includes the traditional research steps: (a) asking questions about the client, the process and even ourselves (“Why am I having a difficult time being empathic with this client?”); (b) making observations (e.g., of client nonverbal behavior, content themes, etc.) to gather information relevant to the questions; (c) formulating a clinical hypothesis that integrates all of the available information; and (d) testing some aspect of the hypothesis (If that behavior is a result of ______, then this intervention should work.). In other words, good counselors achieve the status of researchers simply through their approach to working with clients.

Counselors, then, should not be asking whether or not they want to be involved in research, but instead they should be focusing on how to be better researchers in their pursuit of answers to their many questions.

Research Training

There are several avenues for improving one's performance as a researcher. Counselor education programs provide master’s-level students with opportunities to develop some needed skills. Knowledge of basic research design and statistics typically are taught. These skills are particularly helpful in reading published studies; research findings give counselors the dynamics of a particular client issue and what interventions have proven to be most effective. Program evaluation skills also are critical, especially for school counselors and others who must respond to persistent accountability checks.

Some of the best research training, however, can occur in the supervision of practicum and internship experiences, as supervisors - and supervision peer group members - help the counselor explore client dynamics, create clinical hypotheses, review the "evidence" supporting an hypothesis, choose interventions appropriate to an hypothesis, and evaluate the outcome of the intervention. In this way, counselors function as applied researchers, to the betterment of their clients and counseling programs.

Some counselors decide to pursue their research questions on a larger scale than the N = 1 case studies described above. To gain the skills needed to conduct studies that can have implications and application beyond a single client or family, many apply to doctoral programs. Back in school, these counselors have opportunities to explore an area of interest in great depth and breadth, not only studying the counseling literature in the area of interest but also reading perspectives found in related fields (e.g., sociology, human development and family studies, anthropology, etc.). Additional coursework in research design and statistics introduces them to the variety of approaches possible for answering their questions and helps them refine their particular questions into a form that can best be translated into a valid study. In the end, they leave their doctoral program with an advanced degree, some important answers, and many, more questions.

As a member of the Admissions Committee at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro, I am always interested in hearing doctoral applicants' current research questions during their admissions interviews. Typically, applicants have many questions...
**Lifestyle and Career Development: A Commitment for All Counselors**

Edwin L. Herr  
Pennsylvania State University

As graduate students leave that status to enter into new professional roles as counselors, they also enter a world of new expectations and realities that differs from the world of the graduate school. Depending upon the setting they enter and the client population with whom they work, the roles that counselors play are shaped by the demands of the settings in which they find themselves and also take on individual styles depending on what theories or models of counseling the person has been reinforced to use in their graduate program and those techniques one feels most comfortable using.

**Moving from the Abstract to the Real**

Perhaps as much a challenge as any other is making the transition from graduate student to fully certified and responsible professional is that what had previously been abstract is now a daily or weekly reality. Course content that, as a graduate student, one needed to read and be examined about is now intertwined in the dilemmas that counselors must help clients explore, negotiate, and take action on. One's stereotypes about those areas and populations with which one hopes to work tend not to be so discrete and easy to separate in the crucible of the counseling office as one attempts to cope with the demands of students in a school or university or adults in the workplace or private practice. Problems that were clearly classified and differentiated in textbooks tend to be linked in the lives of students or adults. Practices that were learned and rehearsed as single techniques associated with single theories become part of a typically eclectic repertoire of differential treatments extracted from multiple theories.

The observations just cited tend to be particularly true in the area of lifestyle and career development. Research has shown repeatedly that many counselor education programs and many graduate students have de-emphasized courses and skills in these areas. They often treat courses in career counseling and career development as somehow inferior to or less challenging than those dealing with psychopathology and psychotherapy. Some counselor educators and many graduate students behave as though anyone can do career counseling and give out occupational information, so let's get on to the important stuff, the dramatic and the challenging problems of emotional illness and its treatments. Depending upon the counselor education institution or the graduate student, the emotional distress that is emphasized in a given academic year may be eating disorders or chemical dependency or co-dependency or spousal abuse or diffuse anxiety. Obviously, these are each important classes of behavior that each graduate student and counselor needs to know about. But they are not the lived experience or everyday concern of most people. The latter is found much more frequently in the areas of daily existence captured by the term "life-style and career development."

**Lifelong Dilemmas**

In my personal experience as a counselor in schools, universities, and in private practice with a range of youths and adults, males and females, overarching questions that persons experience have to do with the relationships between academic content and careers, choice of jobs or occupations or the training to prepare for them, indecision and indecisiveness, evaluating alternatives, decision-making style, integration of work and other family roles, self- and career-identity, induction and adjustment to work, interpersonal relations with coworkers and supervisors, coping with unemployment and underemployment, and pre-retirement planning. These are the lifelong dilemmas and topics that the theoretical approaches termed career development theory have come to describe. How the individual copes with these dilemmas, pursues one set of interests or values or another, makes or avoids decisions, plays out unresolved family issues of power, authority and self-worth in the workplace, develops a realistic sense of one's abilities and preferences for applying them, compromises with or engages in risk-taking, influences the patterns in life and in career that combine to forge the individual's lifestyle.

Depending upon how the elements that make up career and lifestyle development unfold, they can be faced with information deficits, unwillingness to commit oneself or be purposeful in one's planning and action, anxiety, panic attacks, physiological distress and behavioral problems, and depression. In addition, such problems can ripple throughout all of the systems one occupies — family, school, work, religion — and affect the lives of those who are in significant relation to the individual — children, spouses, friends, parents, teachers, employers. As such, the multiple and complex dimensions of career and lifestyle development become the content of much of what counselors do whether they work directly with the person who is experiencing a specific career problem or with the persons who are indirectly affected by the problem (e.g., the child of an unemployed worker, the parent of an indecisive adolescent, the co-worker of an uncaring and insensitive worker, the spouse who needs anger management and

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The Clinical Supervision of Counselors: A Lifespan Perspective

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Fairfield University

Infancy

Twenty years ago when I began my career as a counselor educator, the area of clinical supervision was in its infancy. A handful of persons had written in the area (e.g., Ekstein & Wallerstein, 1972; Kadushin, 1964, 1976), but for the most part, clinical supervision was synonymous with being an experienced practitioner. Although many counselors were being trained in schools of education, virtually no one seemed to be taking advantage of these educational roots to teach supervisors how to supervise. In fact, my first three articles in supervision represented my attempt to become grounded in the historical context of supervision (Leddick & Bernard, 1980), to conceptualize the process of supervision (Bernard, 1979), and to outline the necessary components for the initial training of clinical supervisors (Bernard, 1981).

Adolescence

More recently, Rod Goodyear and I described supervision as being in its adolescence (Bernard & Goodyear, 1992), with a preponderance of competing paradigms, a pre-theoretical nature, and a zealous willingness to practice supervision in spite of these limitations. Today, I believe most counselor educators would agree that clinical supervision seems to have reached the front end of young adulthood. The area of supervision now has its own credentials in the form of standards (ACES, 1990) and ethical guidelines (ACES, 1993). There is both a welcomed sense of direction in the literature, yet an awareness that the area of study is still young and needs some experience (i.e., research) to determine its future.

Young Adulthood

The lifespan developmental literature informs us that young adulthood is the most stressful period of life because the young adult is attempting to cover all bases and excel in every category important to him or her. I believe my metaphor holds regarding clinical supervision. It seems to me that the professional literature presently is bursting with its own ambition (if not burdened by it). New models and techniques of supervision are constantly emerging; developmental variables regarding both supervisees and supervisors continue to receive a great deal of attention; individual and cultural factors are receiving greater attention; ethical and legal issues and the role of evaluation within these parameters are highly visible; finally, the importance of the institutional context, if clinical supervision is to provide development for the supervisee and protection for the client, is an area of significant growth in the field. So, whereas there was very little in the professional literature twenty years ago to guide the clinical supervisor, today there is an abundance of exciting developments in the field and a host of outstanding and inquisitive professional minds mapping out future directions, asking more discriminating questions, and advancing important insights into the process and outcomes of clinical supervision. Furthermore, just as the young adult has launched from his or her family of origin while still remaining connected in many important ways, I believe we can safely say at this point in the lifespan of clinical supervision that supervision has launched from, though is still intrinsically connected to, the practice of counseling and psychotherapy.

To return to my earlier description of young adulthood, this plethora of activity in the area of clinical supervision makes this area not only more exciting but also more challenging. While Ekstein and Wallerstein (1972) describe a relatively lengthy (and seemingly sedate) process of apprenticeship with the supervisee who was most often being asked to address complicated nuances of transference and countertransference, the supervision literature today is a “busier” place with bugs in the ear, dual relationships, impaired students, dual track recordings, criteria for evaluation, multicultural issues, and, of course, Tarasoff, to name just a few. (It is too early in young adulthood to look longingly, just a little, at the “good old days?”)

The Future

So, now what and where are we headed ultimately? It seems to me that although much of our present practice of supervision was spawned in higher education training programs, the immediate future of supervision will be greatly impacted by state credentialing laws. Training programs may have been the family of origin, but legislation that controls the entry into the profession within each state is the real world. (Notice how this metaphor is starting to feel like the Eveready Battery?) As a result, standards for the practice of supervision will become more important, as will ethical guidelines and curriculum expectations (e.g., Borders et al., 1991).

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Clinical Supervision
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Clinical supervision has already become less of a private matter; this will only continue as regulations dictate certain types of documentation and particular conditions for supervision. In short, supervision will become more standardized, supervisors will become more accountable, there will be more agreement about what constitutes the major theoretical and practical underpinnings of supervision, and there will be more institutional support of clinical supervision outside of higher education because licensure or certification will become a necessity.

It is no accident that my first comment regarding the present leans toward the law. We are in a very litigious frame of mind in the professional literature (as a reflection, I suppose of the larger culture). While we inch along in terms of research to develop our knowledge base about supervision, we seem to be obsessing over issues of due process, informed consent, impaired supervisees, duty to warn, dual relationships, etc. Of course, all of these are critical topics. However, in some cases, we seem to be manifesting the rigidity of adolescence (i.e., looking back) rather than looking forward to the generativity of middle age. Lists of do's and don'ts to assure responsible practice have sometimes been substituted for mature thoughtfulness. These miss the mark if they do not keep an eye toward where we are headed.

And where is that? Yes, toward middle age, real adulthood and generativity. The marvelous thing about lifespan theory in general, and its application to supervision in particular, is that it really does come full circle. The first and only legitimate motive to supervise others is a generous one. Clinical supervision requires not only that we be our best but also that we give away our best, thus completing a contract that began when we were fledgling counselors and benefitted from the generosity and knowledge of others. Supervision is the special conservation that connects us to our history and our future, a conversation we can’t do without!

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Lifestyles and Career Development (Continued from page 12)

assertiveness skills because of the workaholic behavior of their partners). In many of these cases, if not most, career and personal counseling fuses in order to untangle the emotional overlay (e.g. depression) from the underlying roots of the career or lifestyle problem (e.g., losing one's job and one's sense of self-worth. Feelings one's skills are undervalued, being at odds with the values and expectations of others). Sometimes family counseling or support groups or psychoeducation models or other types of interventions need to be wedded to career counseling since the problem at issue is likely multi-dimensional in its origins and its resolution.

Commitment to Career and Lifestyle Development

Space available here does not permit an extended treatment of career and lifestyle theories or of the various ways they can be applied to understand and intervene in the problems associated with such topical areas. However, the general point to be made probably does not require such analyses. Rather, at issue is the attitude that graduate students take into their counseling practice and the lenses through which they view client problems. Unless one listens carefully and develops hypotheses that allow for a wide spectrum of interactive relations between difficulties in decision-making, emotional distress, and lifestyle and career development issues, one has effectively blanked out a large portion of counseling content. To dismiss career counseling as only a simplified “test ‘em and tell ‘em” exercise unworthy of a professional counselor is to stereotype and to diminish the complexity of career and lifestyle issues as major sources of anxiety, depression and other forms of emotional distress, on the one hand, or, on the other, maturity, identity, purpose, and satisfaction. Hopefully, the new professional counselor will implement career and lifestyle development as a central commitment which gives rise to her or her practice relevance and authenticity.

To the New Counselor

I believe it is essential to find peace within yourself before attempting to help others find their peace. If you cannot accomplish this, you risk bringing your own prejudices into counseling sessions that could eventually hurt the client or destroy your relationship with that client.

Jennifer, 24 years old
Counselor's Personal Growth and Development

Samuel T. Gladding
Wake Forest University

Personal growth and one’s development as a counselor are easier to talk about than accomplish. The reasons are numerous and involve the interrelated factors of time, energy, motivation, and ability. The process is complex and realistically never ending. The essence of personal growth and development was illustrated to me shortly after I completed my formal education. At that time a friend gave me a card that read: “Just when I changed all the questions.”

Despite the inherent difficulties in staying balanced and growing as a counselor, I think such a lifestyle is possible. In this article, I will discuss means I have employed over the years to keep focused toward the goal of what Gordon Allport described as “always becoming.” Hopefully, the uniqueness that I report has some universal qualities that you may use also.

Four Principles

Although I was not extremely aware of it at the time, there were two principles that guided me initially in my formative years. They were the “golden mean” (i.e., all things in moderation) and the “golden rule” (i.e., do unto others as you would have them do unto you). Two later axioms that influenced my thinking and behavior were my father’s admonition to me as a youth that “you can’t be a promising young man forever” (i.e., you will get old) and my first counseling supervisor’s advice to me: “Don’t take your clients home with you in any way, shape, or form.” Let me elaborate on each of these.

The Golden Mean

As a counselor and a person, I realize that moderation is a key to health. Overdoing or underdoing is unhealthy. For example, I feel uncomfortable when I come out of a counseling session with a headache. Almost always when such an event occurs I realize I have been working too hard and probably trying to do the client’s work of bringing about change. Likewise, if I am anxious about a client after a session, chances are I have not worked hard enough. (My worst example of this was literally taking a reflective posture for most of a counseling session in the hope my client would take the initiative). Therefore, keeping my clinical work in balance is crucial.

Likewise, in my personal life, if I am under or over involved with my commitments, headaches or anxiety develop. Therefore, one way I apply the golden mean is to listen to my body and brain on a regular basis and make strategic shifts in my behaviors when needed. Being off balance in terms of growth can only lead to a fall.

The Golden Rule

Being sensitive to one’s self is the essence of the golden mean. Being sensitive to others, as well as self, is the main focus of the golden rule. As counselors we want to invite our clients into settings where there is hospitality instead of hostility. Likewise, if we seek help for ourselves we would hope for the same type of welcoming environment. I am amazed in my daily life about the insensitivity of many people. There is a lot of focus within American society on accumulation and “me-ness.” All too often people complain they do not have enough and aggressively strive to get what they want and get it now. Such a philosophy does not take others into consideration and me-ness can lead to meanness.

As a way of avoiding the trap of not setting up such a lifestyle, I practice trying to be empathic in life by literally putting myself in another person’s place — the beggar, the small child, the deformed, or the store clerk. Such an exercise, which I strive to do regularly, helps keep me sensitive to my surroundings and not only to my needs but also to the growth needs of others as well. It is a win/win way of living.

Being Promising

In my heart of hearts I am probably an existentialist. The reasons are many, but one relates to my father’s message that I mentioned earlier and to my own realization that “now” is the best time to live. I plan ahead and remember good times with fondness. Yet, what I can do the most about is in the present. Therefore, I choose to prioritize whether I will read, write, exercise, play with my children, talk with my wife, mow the lawn, or take a walk. After the decision, I am always conscious that I have a choice to change either my mind or actions depending on developments within the immediate environment. If I do change, I will often come back to the activity I started — especially if it is high priority. For example, in the last few years I have written a number of books. The reason is that I realize I cannot wait to do otherwise. Experiences may fade with time in regard to their relevance, or opportunities to write may not always

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Transcending Obsolescence

Richard L. Hayes
The University of Georgia

Having spent considerable time, energy, and money preparing to become a professional counselor, you may be surprised to find yourself “more confused than ever.” Despite possessing an extensive body of knowledge regarding human development, individual and group interventions, and a set of skills in effective communication, assessment, and research, you aren’t quite certain that you know enough yet actually to be a counselor. Still ahead for you lies the recognition that when you graduated, you were just the “latest model” in a succession of models, each of which carved the edge of a new future for the counseling profession. In time you will come to appreciate that you are also becoming obsolete.

That is, of course, unless you also learn how to change. If you haven’t already, you will come to recognize an increasing need and consequent demand for life-long learning. If I have any advice for you as you prepare to move from training to practice, it is that you learn how to transcend your own current limitations—that you learn to embrace change, especially in and for yourself.

A Changing World and Profession

Like everyone else today, counselors find themselves experiencing not only rapid change but a rapidly changing rate of change. Social change surrounds us in the form of greater multiculturalism, a shrinking middle class, increasing domestic and youth violence, an expanding immigrant population, and rapidly expanding technology. These changes are altering communication patterns, expanding the workplace, and creating a shift in the basic values held by members of different ethnic and cultural groups. Within the counseling profession, these changes have been accompanied by shifting paradigms that are challenging counselors to reconceptualize their research and practice.

Remaining Current

Nonetheless, as a newly-minted counselor, you are likely, in some ways, to know more than each of your professors, i.e., you know something from each of them. Yet how can you combine the best of what you’ve learned into a coherent whole that will serve you well in your work as a counselor? And, even if you can find some consistency in what you’ve learned, how long will this hard-won sense of self-assurance last? What are the issues that are likely to demand your attention as a counselor? And how can you continue to remain current in a world that is currently changing?

Need for Group Work

Consider this set of issues: collaboration, team work, participatory decision-making, multiculturalism, family systems, community building, total quality management. What do they have in common? They represent several emerging trends within the counseling field that point to the growing need for effective group work. Following a generation of efforts at self-help, assertion training, personal empowerment, and the proliferation of individual therapy models, there has been a growing appreciation of the need for people to learn to work together more effectively.

Development in a Social Context

In addition to the growing demand for effective group work is the movement by researchers and clinicians alike away from pathologizing and objectifying people. Instead, the trend is toward a more positive approach where people are viewed as social creatures who are capable of creating what they want. Increasingly, counselors are coming to recognize that humans actively create their own particular reality through social interaction. Further, counselors are coming to appreciate that development takes place in a social context, i.e., humans are creatures living in a time and place with other creatures. Taken together, these two principles suggest that the process of knowing emerges in the light of interaction between ourselves and our surroundings, that objects are defined (in part) by their relationship to each other.

Become an Active Participant in Groups

Now what does this discussion of constructed reality have to do with group work? And how does the answer to this question help counselors to transcend obsolescence? The notion that reality arises out of one’s social experience in the world leads to the conclusion that individual knowledge is necessarily incomplete. As a consequence, it is very difficult to be certain one knows the truth even if a knowledge of truth were possible. Likewise, this perspective implies that development represents successively more complex attempts to make meaning of the facts of one’s social experience. If development expands the basis upon which one’s present reality is constructed, then each of us should seek social relationships that will support such expansion/liberation most fully. In effect, we should become active participants in groups. But what kinds of groups are more likely to

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**If You've Asked a Question**  
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Based in their experiences as a counselor, and they talk about those questions, these wanderings, with some energy, passion, and earnest need to find answers. Most, at the same time, express apprehension about the statistics courses they will be required to take. The need to find answers, however, outweighs the apprehension—a critical ingredient for success.

Statistics courses are not easy for many counselors; our interests and natural abilities often lie in other technical areas. As our doctoral students learn, however, studying statistics is much like learning a foreign language, and this language of Greek symbols and numbers can be learned. (We are blessed with outstanding faculty in this area at UNC at Greensboro, and students are encouraged to take full advantage of available tutors, form study groups, and think about how a particular statistical approach could be used to answer their questions.)

**Research Agenda**

Hopefully, along the way, out of a student's list of questions a research agenda is born. In contrast to the one-shot studies students often begin with, a research agenda refers to a broad, systematic, and cohesive set or series of studies. A research agenda is rather like a large puzzle of the researcher's general area of interest. To gain this big picture perspective, researchers must be knowledgeable of the literature specific to the area and related areas. This knowledge provides the context for any individual study within the research agenda; so that the researcher has some sense of how the various research questions are related to each other. At any one point of time, researchers can't know all the possible questions within their research agenda; some of the most exciting questions are generated by unanticipated results from one or more studies. Long-term, the research program is aimed toward building an empirically-based model or theory for a particular area of interest.

I'll use my focus area, counseling supervision, as an example. When I began my doctoral studies, my general research question was "How do students learn to become counselors?" in terms of knowledge, skills and self-awareness. My dissertation was the first in a series of studies investigating some basic tenets of the then newly-published developmental models of supervision. Early studies were focused on implications of ego development theory for supervision. Theoretically, counselors at various ego development levels should behave and think differently about their clients, the counseling process, and themselves as counselors. First, I set out to discover if this was true and what the differences were. Once I had some answers to these questions, I could begin contemplating what types of supervision approaches were needed for supervisees at various levels of development. A model for group supervision grew out of some years of contemplating these early studies, the developmental models, and related bodies of literature (e.g., learning theory, cognitive psychology, developmental psychology). Recently, I helped a student with a dissertation study investigating the effectiveness of the model with practicing school counselors. Experiments in other settings are needed to know how the model needs to be adapted for various groups of counselors, how many sessions are needed to achieve any impact, etc. Now I'm wondering how the same developmental principles may apply to supervisors-in-training and what training methods will facilitate their development. First, however, I must figure out how to measure supervisors' cognitions and behaviors and their effectiveness (few measures currently exist).

When working with doctoral students then, I ask them not only to talk about their dissertation study but also to explain the broader context of the study and where the study seems to fit in terms of a research agenda. I want them to leave UNC at Greensboro for their first academic post with a folder of ideas, research questions, and the skills to continually revise and update their research agenda. A dissertation study can get you a degree; a research agenda offers the potential for creating new knowledge that will make a real contribution to the field.

**Collaborative and Interdisciplinary Approaches**

Over time I've come to believe that research probably should not be a solitary vocation. My best work, I believe, has come from collaborative efforts in which two or more researchers challenged each other's ideas, debated about what research design would offer the most insight into the questions, and brainstormed together possible explanations of the results. I was fortunate to have such a collaborative working relationship with my dissertation chair, Peggy Fong; I learned not only from her questioning of my work but also grew from her expectation that I would contribute to collaborative projects she initiated. It's a collaborative process I continually seek to recreate, for myself and for students, and one that has broadened to include colleagues from other fields.

Currently, I am intrigued by the prospects of interdisciplinary research teams and fascinated by the new insights colleagues in other academic disciplines can offer to a research idea. They often start with very different assumptions, and thus have different explanations for the same behavior, emphasize a different set of variables, and give priority to different kinds of questions. They point out my biases as they reveal their own.

My attempts to build a new research agenda about adoption-related issues have provided several opportunities for interdisciplinary work. This work also has brought me face-to-face with how personal, in addition to professional, biases can affect our research work. These biases have been particularly evident in a research team formed to study adult adoptees at midlife. Our work together has made me aware of my intent to produce findings that debunk unfounded statements that adult adoptees suffer more relationship

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Counselor's Personal Growth
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be available. Thus, late at night, almost every night, I sit down at the computer and compose. Similarly, my wife, Claire, has reminded me that the average American couple talks only about seven minutes a day. Therefore, we strive for at least 15 minutes of conversation after the children are asleep. If we miss our time, there is no going back and really no way to make up what was lost. Therefore, we are committed to keeping our promise of couple growth now.

Taking Clients Home

Finally, in regard to personal growth and development, I have found it best to work within realistic boundaries and limits and then quit. If I mentally bring a client home, I have less ability to relax and refresh myself otherwise. Counseling is a demanding profession, psychologically and physically. Outside of counseling, as Scott Peck wrote In the Road Less Traveled: "Life is hard." To live fully and to grow is to let oneself go as freely as possible into new experiences and tasks. Therefore, while Miss Scarlet's advice in Gone With the Wind of "I'll think about that tomorrow" is usually not germane to growth, there are times to close off the demands of clients and to concentrate on pursuing healthy activities. Therefore, unless I receive an emergency call, I leave my clients and their concerns at the office door each night.

Conclusion

Being a counselor is an exciting and fulfilling experience. It is how I identify myself professionally, and the work is something I enjoy. Yet, in order to be the best counselor I can be, I must pursue personal growth and development opportunities. Some are informal and fun, such as interacting with family and friends. Others are more structured, such as taking continuing education courses. Regardless, I try to keep myself healthy by adhering to the four principles I have outlined in this article. These are not the only ways to stay healthy, and I realize each counselor must find ways to do so on his or her own.

Regardless, following a set of principles that allows you to have "up" as well as "down" time is important if you are to grow as a person and professional. Development is a gradual process, and the roads that lead to it are created over time and with focus. If you are guided by universal axioms that span unique circumstances, you are more likely to reach your goals or at least be headed in the right direction. You only go around once in life, but once is enough if you do it right.

Transcending Obsolescence
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support our continued development and that of our clients?

From such a constructivist perspective, the central focus of group work becomes the person's developmental experience and the set of relationships necessary to foster that development. Creating an effective working relationship, however, depends upon appreciating the contributions of the other and upon mutual understanding. Yet, if each person is the author of his or her own reality, then it is important that people learn to talk through their differences toward mutual understanding. The development of such a language of difference will help people to learn to live and work with one another as a social goal rather than as just a political strategy. Thus, the impossibility of objective reality supports continual expansion of forums for democratic decision making to enable new possibilities to become crystallized and to get acted upon. Acting in the context of a public decision-making process helps people to consider the opinions of others and places responsibility on each of them for the consequences of their actions.

Expanding Ways of Knowing

Expanding the forum for conversation from the individual to the group creates the proper context for empowering the individual while expanding mutual understanding. Through participating in democratic groups, members not only expand their understanding of others but create the conditions for enhancing their own social development. The means to transcend your own obsolescence, therefore, lies in your deliberate participation in democratic groups. Join professional associations dedicated to advancing group work (e.g., ASGW), co-lead groups with effective group leaders, participate in group workshops, and take an active role in democratizing the institutions that affect your life and those of your clients. By becoming an effective democratic group leader and member, you can respond as a counselor to the challenges to create more caring communities. And in your efforts to understand the world as others understand it, you will, of necessity, expand your own ways of knowing.

To the New Counselor

I have always felt that it is harder for most men to enter therapy than for women. As men we have been told to be strong, take control, that we "should" be able to just work through our problems. There has always been somewhat of a veil of weakness associated with those men who have the strength and courage to ask for help. I think you must understand that when a man comes to you for help, he is often at the end of his ability to cope with life. He needs a compassionate listener who can understand how scared he is and how hard he will hide his fear in other behaviors which he feels are more acceptable.

To be a compassionate listener, you must have had the courage to face your own fears, to have paid the price that you are asking your client to pay. This gift allows the client to borrow the courage to take the first step in the journey of recovery, not knowing that there will never be a final step. . . .

Loren, 48 years old
If You’ve Asked a Question  
(Continued from page 18)

problems, depression, substance abuse, etc., than do nonadopted adults. Clearly, I want to assure myself that my son can have a happy, productive adulthood. In contrast, the adoptee on our team, who also is a counselor, wants to find differences as a way of explaining and verifying her own life experiences and those of her clients. I am sometimes amazed at the different understandings we have of the same response to an open-ended question on our survey. We both have had to confront our biases and accept each other’s possible truths.

I’m not sure that I could have handled interdisciplinary research approaches before now. I think I first needed to be well-grounded in my own area, experience the limitations of that knowledge, and discover both similarities and differences in research questions being explored in related areas. At this point, I feel both some mastery and dissatisfaction with work accomplished to date. Perhaps there is a developmental growth in one’s career as a researcher. If so, I think I’m at some Ericksonian developmental transition, which is both exciting and disquieting. Out of this, I hope, will come richer research questions.

Conclusion

Over my almost twenty years as a counselor and researcher, I have generated some satisfactory if partial answers to a few research questions and verified some clinical hypotheses. I still have lots of questions, however, and almost every counseling and supervision session generates another. At what is perhaps the midpoint of my counselor-research career, I find myself also reflecting on the research process, seeking new perspectives to enhance my work. Some of the most fun along the way has been helping others clarify their research questions and facilitating their attempts to find answers. My payoff has been sharing the joy a new researcher experiences in choosing an intervention that really works with a client (or supervisee), in discovering a new variable that furthers our understanding of a counseling issue, and in successfully challenging long-held assumptions with clear empirical evidence. My hope is that many of us in the profession, including Chi Sigma Iota members, master’s- and doctoral-level, will continue to ask questions, pursue answers, and find some enjoyment in the process.

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