

The self experience health and social care essay



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I have gained level of acceptance, understanding and knowledge of the person I am, however it is a continuing and evolving journey for me, extremely complex, stressful and difficult at times, further (Becket & Taylor 2010) forwards personal, emotional, spiritual growth is a lifelong development process, and will therefore contain both gains and losses for the individual. Most importantly is the development and practice of self-care programme, incorporating acknowledged boundaries, to further protect any individual in preparation for a career as a counsellor. Professional Self: Being self-employed, I deal with customers by telecom or face to face regularly, having always made myself available to strangers, clients, work colleagues, family or friends who wish to explore their feelings, thoughts, worries or anxieties. I possess an empathic, sensitive and understanding nature which has been evident part of my development from childhood, not to be mistaken for a people pleaser; moreover people find it easy to talk to me commenting feelings of un-judgemental, safe and relaxed with me. Therefore have been drawn to organizations which offer guidance, assistance, aiding people and their mental wellbeing for that reason I am aspiring to become a qualified counsellor/therapist. On one hand (Reay et al 2005) states regarding careers and education, life can reflect a game of monopoly, some players start with pennies while others start with hundreds. Depending on your socioeconomic status there will be enormous differences of life choices available to you. However on the other (Rotter 1996) my locus of control is internal with self-determination and effort will focus on obstacles and achieve my life's goal; this is where I am meant to be. Emotional style, I feel able to cope with a certain amount of stressors; the majority of cases I have awareness of emotional feelings of others and the reasons why these

emotions are present. My personal aspirations are emotional detachment from the client's story, although being there for them, not emotionally attached thereby able to assist and help my client. I would work between various models firstly person centred, core conditions also (Warner 2000) one tribe many nations study incorporating other modalities when necessary into the session. On occasion I experience prangs of self-esteem or self-worth issues this is a psychodynamic problem, these thoughts come from my past relating to experiences, thoughts and feelings. When these emotional anxieties arise I acknowledge, challenge and reflect on these feelings (Gibbs 1998) reflective cycle being aware of these personal vulnerabilities is critical when counselling a client, (Johns 2009) client does not expect counsellor transference or a sense of you missing from the room, been inattentive during a session, including negative influences and risk to their autonomy. This would be the height of incompetence and extremely counterproductive for the client. Stress can affect us at times when we are not coping well, our defences are low or battery energy levels are down and emotionally we are not in a good place, fatigue, lack of exercise, bad dietary habits, disturbed sleep, will all cumulate to heightened stress levels and lessen tolerance levels. On a personal level an individual may cope without inflicting damage on his environment, but a professional with stress may cause undue damage to client or work colleagues, this would be unprofessional. However stressors are unavoidable emotions and not harmful in moderation, one has to accept these experiences, I would have also to acknowledge my personal normal limitation function levels. To limit effects I would have to consider options and tactics to cope with this stress, such as, re-evaluate working hours, family time, relationship issues, financial situation, time management,

hobbies, personal pleasure, activities etc. as it affects all facets of life. Self-

Experience: What are my emotional demands and what stresses me?

Emotional demands for me are very personal needs that hopefully can be fulfilled when inter personal engagement occurs, things that sometimes are kept protected by my ego defences and out of the public domain. However being honest I feel disappointed by others if these demands are not met even though the other person may not realise they guilty of any transgression. I need to be appreciated, loved, accepted, valued and respected by others, my self-esteem and self-esteem are always out there and I feel vulnerable, exposed at the mercy of opinions and behaviours of others. Stressors that can be frustrating to me are time management, not relaxing, letting people down, these can be extremely problematic for example (Barry 2007) running late for important appointments/meeting with people due to completing a prior commitment not wanting to disappoint or violate a promise. Others stressor anxieties are financial, family, failure, employment issues to name a few. If I commit to a project for an individual then no matter what happens during that project I feel honour bound to complete it fully. However should circumstances intervene and I failed then emotionally would feel discouraged, annoyed and guilty. On occasion in the past I have over committed myself took on to much at one time, to the detriment of my physical health and wellbeing. I recall feelings of conflict and anger internally as the overall responsibility lies with me, when working double shifts until the early hours, neglecting adequate sleep or meals, justifying these irrational behaviours to suit the urgency of the task. I would therefore be irritable, cranky, take it out on those around me or withdraw within myself and take on the role of martyred for the cause, unwavering

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loyalty is commendable but not always the desirable outcome. Unmanaged Stress with may lead to eventual burnout (McLeod 2009) mood swings, irrational behaviour, maladaptive thinking will affect you both physically and emotionally. Stress has the power take control of your ability to function or focus adequately on everyday activities; it alters your perceptions to your environment and those within it, family, friends and colleagues. Stress can cause physical symptoms such as palpitations and breathing problems, hypertension, insomnia, loss of appetite, muscle aches, stomach issues, and severe headaches etc. Uncontrolled may cognitively and mentally incompetent of making rational decisions, withdrawn, feelings of being under constant pressure, lack of motivation, negative anxieties and attitude, insecure, isolated, grumpy, and short tempered. My worst fear or nightmare is not able to pull myself out of that dark place which eventually leads to depression and despair, shutting out and hurting those I love most and exposing them to an undeserved world of insecurity, confusion and discomfort. Self-care: Physically: Self -care involves nourishment or maintenance of the whole self, health, body, mind and spirit. Primary is physical health as it is the engine room for all functional activity, finding a healthy balance is critical, managing and reducing stressors, anxieties and developing coping strategies where possible. Breaking it down to categories (Nutrition for Everyone 2012) eating a good nourishing balanced diet, three regular meals per day, plenty of fruits and vegetables, reduce food intake of cholesterol, sugar, salt and fats. Drink plenty of water and eliminate over consumption of fizzy drinks of caffeine, try not to miss meals due to heavy schedules and avoid unhealthy snacks whenever possible. Sleep is important component as your body needs at least 7-8 hours' sleep, failure to monitor

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this will affect mind and body, increase stress levels and produce a negative impact on health and energy. Regular exercise is necessary to improve physical wellness; this will decrease stresses and have positive effects mentally and reduce fatigue, increase energy levels. Recommended at least 30mins per day, walking, cycling, swimming, jogging etc. Your body needs to function to maximum performance for the advancement of your physical being. Intra-personally: I tend to self-reflect and dissect emotional and cognitive responses to others or their responses to me, I am sensitive to others feelings and would not intentionally hurt or upset another person. I am very deep, extremely loyal which can be a fault and will not share my inner thoughts or anxieties with just anyone; I will chose a close friend basically someone trustworthy in my circle of acquaintances. I allow people the right to be wrong, and consider my responses or options prior to decisions, however having chosen a course of action I will see it through to the end. I score towards visual method of learning (Vak Learning Styles 1998) close second auditory I try to get as much information and details from various sources before making an informed decision which is beneficial in counselling. Inter-personally: I believe that I have developed good communication and people skills over time, these attributes will stand to me during me counselling career. These skills cover areas such as (Whiston 2012) listening skills, empathy, and assessing clients presenting problems, developing a therapeutic alliance, activating Rogers's three core conditions. While talking with a person I am sensitive to their feelings, anxieties, non-verbal body language, respect, I have good observation of my clients emotional state offer assurance with my presence and control the environment were possible with positive affirmations and energy. Spiritually:

not to be confused with religious identity however is another important area and incorporates the spirit, inner wisdom or as others call the soul, as you spend so much time listening and caring for others, you can become spiritually drained and is it critical to replenish this battery periodically.

There are various methods and techniques which can be put into practice to achieve this re-balancing, (Lin 2009, & Mayo Clinic Staff 2009) make time for reflection, you can make a connection spiritually to nature, church or community. Meditation, prayer, singing, yoga, tai chi, mindfulness, reflective writing or various breathing methods, these are employed to harmonise the body and mind, heighten the senses of awareness. Many of these methods have been practiced in the east for thousands of years here in the west we are now becoming aware of their therapeutic benefits. These techniques enable us to detach from our hectic life styles and allow the time out to become one with our life force, or soul and to recharge our spiritual being.

Psychotherapeutically: self-care here is of utmost importance, when in therapy I would need share my inner thoughts, feelings and fears with another individual (Bond 2010) in the hope the it will result in a positive therapeutic experience one that will upkeep the counselling moral principles of autonomy, beneficence, non-maleficence, justice, fidelity at all times.

Counsellor must continually check in and reassess with me ensuring goals, interventions, treatment plans are achievable and appropriate to match my individual requirements. Supervision is significant, it there to protect, guide and advice counsellors, (McLeod 2009) it is designed to develop the counsellor not only during training but through their professional career. My notion is supervision is not a managing role, rather an assisting role.

Collaboration with my supervisor will benefit me greatly in numerous areas

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such as feedback on client dilemmas, personal dilemmas, treatment plans, and quality of therapy provided. Therefore I must be accurate in my report to bring actual information to my supervisor to assess whether my interventions, approach or techniques are suitable to the therapeutic requirements of my client. Clinical practice will incorporate all of my professional knowledge, ability and competence as a counsellor when with client. Therefore I will implement self-care within the practice, protections for my benefit leading to a better quality of therapy for client such as, time out for breaks during work hours, boundaries, time management, positive support of colleagues and peers, regular supervision sessions, time for reflection and completion of paperwork between sessions. Most beneficial for me would be physical self-care, and a plan to balance my life's energy needs. The question arises what exactly living a healthy and physical life means to me, what I can do to achieve this. I need to review and improve areas such as diet, sleep and rest, exercise and activities which will enhance my mental and physical energy thereby reducing the risk of burnout. Greatest challenge in my self-care having completed the (Wheel of Life, 2009) test was a score of 2-3 out of a possible 10 marks in the section of fun/recreation and self-care. It indicates that I put others and their problems in front of my own needs and meeting these needs must now give priority to my psychological/emotional/spiritual self-care. My attitude and behaviour towards self-care have change over time, since I began my counselling training I have reflected on this area of my life which was unacknowledged and not given the attention deserving to it. I feel I was unaware of the true pretence and benefits to my wellbeing, similar to having a tailor made diet but snacks and junk food between meals eliminating all positive effects. I am

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activating various possibilities to improve my life in self-care i. e., emotional, spiritual, physical, and psychological, affirmations of positives with self-reflections of negatives. Factors that may restrict/impact self-care are my self-esteem and self-worth values. I took a questioner (Life Map 2003) in which out of the nine sections you include words and reflect on the outcome. Out of these six were positive, however three turned out to be extremely negative, (i). What defences do you use? (ii). what are your underlying fears? (iii). what are your blocks, weaknesses, challenges? Words I selected and included into these sections were criticism, defiance, insecurity, arrogance, rejection, loneliness, causing me to be aware of these emotional unworthiness's. I must reevaluate these responses replacing more self-encouragement and affirmations are needed changing negatives into positives.