

Short term pastoral counseling final



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

My future ministry will be as Co-Pastor of a medium sized Community Church in Lewisville, Texas. Each Sunday the church will have approximately 240 in attendance of Sunday morning worship service. My overarching goal for life is to live in and teach others how to grow in the hope that comes from the redemption provided by Jesus Christ. (2 Timothy 3: 16-17; Ephesians 1: 7) I will be using the solution-based, short-term pastoral counseling model based on Kollar's (2011) Solution-Focused Pastoral Counseling, and Hawkins' Pastoral Counseling Scenario and Assessment Model.

Upon reviewing the case study Crossroads: A Story of Forgiveness, I have chosen Brody as the counselee who will be participating in the counseling process. Brody is a " S/I" personality type and exhibits " S" behaviors such relating best to a relaxed leader, being motivated by stability and support, and is uncomfortable with change and discipline. His " I" behavior is present in his artistic tendencies, he is inspiring and impressing.

Brody also seeks the recognition that was abundant from his mother.

Learning to listen better is another need from his " I" side. Brody arrives for counseling in the attending position, being withdrawn and reluctant to interact with anyone, especially his father Bruce who is frustrated with the relationship. Counseling begins as the trial is ending, bringing further frustration.

Leadership Orientation

As the name implies, Solution-Based, Short-Term Pastoral Counseling (SBSPC), is focused on solving problems with the counselee. Other types of therapy, such as Positive Psychology, spend time and resources on analyzing

causes and faults for problems in a somewhat academic approach (Banninck). Additionally, SBSPC recognizes that the counselee is actively involved in determining the solution to the problem, and the counselor is involved in guiding the process of revealing and encouraging action towards the solution.

This approach encourages positive energy towards solutions that lie within the counselee. Another aspect of this model is the fact that pastoral counseling is implemented under the guidance and counseling of the Holy Spirit, Who is already at work in the counselee (Kollar, 45). Within this context, the primary goal of any pastoral counseling will always be spiritual growth as part of the solution (Benner 2003, 35). Spiritual disciplines will appear in the process, such as prayer, worship, and Bible study; the use of which will require sensitivity to counselee's predisposition to God and religion (Benner, 39).

Overview of the Process Also, implied by the title, is the timeframe for the counseling relationship. As a general rule, the counseling is limited to five sessions, each not to exceed ninety minutes (See Appendix C). The reason for this limitation is rooted in effectiveness of this goal-oriented counseling model (Benner, 42). Additionally, leading a Christian congregation places time constraints on schedule availability for long-term counseling. The initial engagement is concerned with demonstrating "Fit" with the counselee.

Prior to the first session, the counselee will have reviewed the ethical guidelines within the Pre-session Package, in so doing there will less mystery about their manner in which they will interact with the counselor (see

Appendix C). Building rapport with the counselee is more than being friendly, it is vital that the counselor understands the problem that is presented. Equally important is that the counselor has a clear understanding of their own personality in order to recognize possibilities for disconnect with the counselee before they occur.

Once understanding is achieved, the counselor can construct an environment that encourages growth or relocation away from the problem (Hawkins, pt. 2). As stated in the beginning, this counseling model recognizes that the counselee is the source of the solution, but by establishing “Fit,” the counselor can create a context for change. This context is developed through a counseling style that conveys empathy, respect and authenticity. These elements can only be demonstrated if they already reside within the counselor, as a result of a meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ (Hawkins pt. 2).

Assessment of the problem is an element that must occur in the first session. While there many tools specifically designed for assessment, those tools require specific training and can compromise the time limitations for this model. Assessment in this process is primarily an exercise of the counselor listening well while the counselee talks (Hawkins, pt. 3). Listening techniques that can aid in this process include acknowledging and para-feeling to establish what the problem is and how it is related to feelings (Petersen, 130) In this manner the counselor does not take ownership for the counselee’s feelings, but can identify the problem.

Once the problem is identified, the process of identifying the solution begins. Hawkins refers to this as the preferred story (Hawkins, 3). The ability to execute the solution is tested with the tracking question; for example, “What is the first sign that you are on track to getting a little better?” (Kollar, 131). Getting to this point may extend into the second session. Another time related element of the relationship is break that occurs towards the end of the session. The break is short, usually ten minutes, and provides both the counselor and counselee a chance to reflect and pray over the previous discussion.

A prayer room adjacent to the sanctuary is made available to the counselee, while the counselor retreats to the pastor’s office. After the break, the counselor is able to offer feedback and to assign homework for the counselee to complete before returning for another session (Kollar, 151). This homework is an integral element of the process that leads to positive change and growth (See Appendix C). By the end of the second session and going into the third session, there should be a collaborative plan that is being executed for growth and a solution to the problem.

The homework that is given after the break, is a vital part of this phase of the counseling and in this activity the role of the counselor becomes more directive (Benner, 49). As the counseling process draws to a close, the counselor will begin to disengage and encourages commitment to a small group that can promote growth. The group should be one that focuses on accountability and confidentiality.

This type loving environment can celebrate success and offer support when missteps occur, this will result in building a Hope History of positive changes (Hawkins, pt.). All counseling sessions will take place in the Pastoral Study adjacent to the sanctuary. This room is in a well-travelled corridor with a window in the door, but still provides adequate privacy for the counseling session. Counselees of the opposite sex will have one session only, in order to facilitate a referral to a qualified counselor. Counselees who are minors must have the consent of the parent or guardian and the parent or guardian must be a willing participant in all tasks within the boundaries of confidentiality agreed upon with the counselee.

1. In some cases a third party may be required to be present at any or all sessions (See Appendix C). Basic Assumptions Guiding SBSPC 1. All people are created in the image of God and as His image bearers have infinite value and worth.
2. God is already active in the counselee.
3. The counselee is the expert and defines goals.
4. Complex problems do not demand complex solutions. Small changes are all that are necessary.
5. Solutions are cocreated. The counselor's focus is on solutions.
6. The counselee is not the problem; the problem is.
7. Finding exceptions helps create solutions.

8. The counselee is always changing. Counseling must take into account the whole person: body, soul and spirit.

9. The counseling relationship is positional.

10. If it's not broken, don't fix it. A full description of these basic assumptions is available in Appendix A. Part 2: The Counselor's Relational Style As a pastoral counselor, I am equipped with personality traits and spiritual gifts that can be beneficial to the process. It is expected of me to be a "D" type, and this is understandable due to the fact that I found in leadership roles in most facets of my life.

A standard trait of being a leader is to project an image of stability so that others can function with less worry. I am perceived to be more analytical than I am, though I can successfully analyze situations. My natural tendency is to not be overly affectionate, though this can be closely associated with my upbringing. I have been known to overpower others who have a softer personality. This is an area I have dedicated much energy to managing as I do not intend to hurt others or manipulate them. Vision is something that others value in me, and I enjoy strategic planning.

Following is something that I have struggled with, which is one of the reasons our church is administered with two co-pastors. It is important to me that I am not seen as a dictator, for this reason I hold myself accountable to others in various roles and situations. I project an image of being fearless, though I do have occasional battles with anxiety (Uniquely You). In reality my personality is an "I" type. I enjoy inspiring others to make positive changes

and to take action. Though it may not always be perceived by others, I have a sensitive side and investigate the feelings of myself and others.

While I can think strategically, many times I respond to intuition and feel gifted by God to do so successfully. I can handle multiple tasks effectively, whether in the traditional multi-tasking mode or in my preferred pattern of dedicating specific blocks of time to important tasks in order to stay focused. I am comfortable behind the scenes or in front of group. Being a peacemaker is a role I am comfortable in some situations, but never as a passive participant as I am not content with the status quo (Uniquely You). My 360° interview indicated similar findings. My spouse selected the “Golden Retriever” as an image of my personality. This type corresponds to the “S” personality type that showed to a lesser degree in the, “this is me” result. My wife often comments that I am a calming influence in stressful situations and that I do not let my anger get out of control.

Worry does occupy too much energy from time to time, as an “S” would have a tendency to do. The Minister of Music, whom I currently work closely with, connected me with the image of the “Beaver. This corresponds with the “C” personality type that appeared in a minor way on the, “this is expected of me” result. I have served on planning committees for various ministries in a manner consistent with the “C” type. In ministry, I am especially concerned with encouraging those around me and communicate well in my teaching (Uniquely You). There are tendencies in my spiritual gifts that can correlate from interactions within the church body to my counseling. My gifts are primarily in the areas of teaching and leadership. Again, this can be useful in the counseling relationship.

Teaching can help reveal possible solutions, but is also prone to talking more than listening which can stifle the counseling. Leadership can help with motivation towards action items designed to promote growth but can also lead to transference, especially when counseling a younger person who might have issues with their father and/or mother (Uniquely You). Another element of my Relational Style Action Plan that indicates counseling ability is my Interpersonal Communication Skills Test. The strengths reveal in this test are my being very insightful and that I am able to communicate clearly to others.

Potential strengths include average communication skills and an assertive presentation when I talk (Queendom). My Communications Skills Rating is “extraordinarily positive” and I am able to achieve more than the average person. As an INFP type, with a subtle leaning towards introversion and a very slight inclination to intuition over sensing I am able to empathize and share feelings with the counselee, but it will be important that I do not rely too heavily on gut reactions and engage in proper assessment during the counseling relationship.

My tendency to be creative will help the counselee by being able to deliver tasks that promote growth towards the solution (HumanMetrics). The awareness of my personality, communication ability and giftedness, provides opportunities that require control in order to prevent a disconnect with my overarching life goal and with the counselee. It is important that I submit myself to the leading of the Holy Spirit so that I can avoid overworking those around me. God has taught me the dangers of pride and ego, and by His grace I am able to be more patient and cooperative.

One area that I have become more passionate about in my later years is having authentic relationships with individuals. My natural tendency is to relate to groups rather individuals; this has blocked me from investing in those around me in the past. Overuse of my strengths can result in convincing others to take on tasks they would not normally agree to. This does not take place as a result overusing power, but by exercising motivation and inspiration (Romans 16: 18).

Another area of opportunity is I can compromise on quality in order to complete a difficult task, if I can consistently plan ahead the task will improve in quality (Uniquely You). My personality type can be useful in motivating a counselee to take action, but must be used cautiously in order to avoid misusing power that makes the counselee uncomfortable. My limitations with interpersonal communications are significant in that my listening skills are somewhat lacking and I have discomfort dealing with emotion (Queendom).

By applying principles like decoding what the counselee is sharing so that I can prepare accurate assessments without the confusion of what might have been meant versus heard (Petersen, 145) Another area of opportunity is that I am not optimizing my communications with others due to compromising through excuses and rationalization (OptimalThinking). These communication skills results in conjunction with my assertive relating style could result in placing too high a priority on my own needs if overused (AboutStressManagement).