

Identify core counselling skills essay sample

[Sociology](#), [Communication](#)



1. 1 Identify Core Counselling Skills

Counselling skills are necessary tools used by trained counsellors to help clients through issues. At some point in their lives, people will find themselves in situations where they take on the role of counsellor without having had any training or understanding of the concept of counselling. This is quite common when a friend or family member needs some guidance.

Core counselling skills include non-verbal communication (NVC) where facial expressions, body language and gestures can be key in understanding what the client or counsellor is thinking or feeling such as showing empathy, stress or confidence. Active Listening and Paraphrasing where the counsellor is required to demonstrate that they are making sense of what the client is talking about are acquired core skills. By paraphrasing, the counsellor is repeating what the client has said, but in their own words which helps the client feel understood and valued. To be able to paraphrase, the counsellor needs to be able to listen actively. Clarifying is another tool used by the trained counsellor as a way of checking that they have understood what their client has been talking about.

Using silence is a skill that can be beneficial to the client under the appropriate circumstances. Questions being asked by the counsellor are described as 'open' and 'closed' and should be used with caution. Asking open questions can encourage the client to open up a bit more and talk a bit more about their issues but asking a closed question normally attracts a short 'yes' or 'no' answer. Empathy is a core value which can be confused often with sympathy but they are very different. Sympathy is more likely to

be used in a non-professional relationship; identifying with a friend's situation, whereas empathy is seeing the situation from the client's perspective and experience rather than the counsellor's own.

A professional counsellor is trained to use core counselling skills when dealing with clients. If a professional counsellor were to help a friend they may not feel it necessary to use all of the skills. I intend to show how core counselling skills can be used in a professional helping relationship and how using these skills may differ when helping a friend or family member.

1. 2 Describe how Core Counselling Skills can be used in a relationship and in other helping activities

Client

Friend or Family Member

Non-verbal communication

Gestures, posture, head and hand movements and facial expressions can be used to emphasise that you understand what a person is saying and how they are feeling emotionally

Eye contact is an important part of non-verbal communication. Looking away from the client can show you are not interested in what they are saying

Active Listening

The counsellor makes a conscious effort to concentrate on what the client is saying, ensuring that the client picks up that they are being understood and feeling important in this one-to-one conversation. Non-verbal communication

Gestures, head and hand movements and facial expressions will show your friend that you understand what they are saying and perhaps how they are feeling

Eye contact will be whatever comes naturally in your already-established relationship. Paraphrasing

By repeating what the client is saying in the counsellor's own words, the client can feel comfortable that the counsellor is attempting to understand what is being said Paraphrasing

Although it is not expected that you will paraphrase a friend's conversation, it is acceptable but also ok to repeat what they have said in their own words

Summarising is beneficial if the counsellor wants to return to a significant part of what was said or to help keep the conversation going. Summarising a friend's conversation is a good way of letting your friend know that you have been listening and understand what they meant.