

Discuss personal
therapist variables



The literature on therapist effectiveness had found support for the importance of the personal experience and background of the therapist. This would imply that counseling effectiveness does not rely only on the theoretical orientation and academic training, but also on the values, principles, emotional stability, self-awareness, and optimism of the therapist (Seligman, 2006).

As a student of the counseling process, I am fairly certain that being optimistic, open-minded and emotionally mature are what I consider my strengths and which will help me become a more effective therapist. Counseling is a helping profession and I believe that we could not give to others what we do not have. As a therapist, one must be able to reserve judgment, to accept clients unconditionally and have the willingness to help.

Emotional maturity is said to be borne from experience and age (Sperry, Carlson & Kjos, 2003), and although I am not advanced in age, I know that I am emotionally mature because I have already experienced a number of difficult situations in my childhood which also gives me an insight into the feelings and thoughts of my clients, I am in a better position to understand them, because I have experienced what they are going through.

However, this advantage may also have its own flaw since transference can easily occur in this situation. I have a good grasp of who I am as a person, but I think that I still need to work on my inner self-awareness as well as determining what values are predominant in my life and how I can deal with how my values might influence my relationships with my clients. Nevertheless, I am confident that through this course and in the coming terms, I would be able to deal effectively with the said limitations.

I had always been a firm believer of man's capacity for growth, and I have to say that my counseling approach would be evocative or client-directed (Seligman, 2006). I think that when people are given the opportunity to think and confront their own issues and problems, they would be able to realize the solutions to their problems. As a therapist, it is my responsibility to help clients become more self-aware, define their identities, become independent and confident. Thus, I am more inclined to use listening skills, empathy, and genuineness in my counseling sessions.