

Final project argumentative essay



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The counselor I chose to interview was Amy Armstrong, MS, NC, MAC, ALP. A state licensed private practice practitioner, she was quick to respond and eager to help.

Armstrong serves a range of clients, ranging from adolescents to later adulthood through individual, family and group therapy (Armstrong, AAA). The purpose of this assignment is to gain a clearer picture on the realities of mental health counseling as a profession. By conducting an in person interview w, we are able to see a real representation of the mental health profession.

We are also better able to form a more knowledgeable opinion on whether this helping profession is where we truly want to be.

Summation of Interview After three weeks of having scheduling conflicts, followed by another two weeks of having to reschedule for unexpected work obligations on both of our parts the interview is done. Because of the time restraint, could have, and probably would have, changed my subject, but I am very pleased that did not. Amy Armstrong Eng was polite and appeared genuinely excited and interested. She was pleased to be able to help.

Armstrong is a national board certified, masters level counselor presently running a newly private practice (Armstrong AAA).

Trauma is a current and growing concern within the mental health world (Catcher, Frill, & Bell, 2007). Armstrong (Bibb) believes that most of the clients that come to her have experienced some type of trauma. This trauma can be in the form of job loss, death, loss of purpose or even safety,

areas in which Armstrong is very compatible with working with (Armstrong, Bibb). Armstrong described her practice as eclectic yet straight forward.

According to Levity, Darnel, Reform, and Vernon (2014), describe the eclectic counselor as one who has knowledge in differing approaches and applies them as he or she seems it. In reviewing her website, and during the interview, Armstrong reports that her background to be in Humanistic Psychology with a special appreciation for Gestalt (Armstrong, Bibb, Armstrong, AAA).

Some of her favorite theories and approaches include bibliotherapy, mindfulness based approaches, lexicography, and her most recent learned eye movement desensitizing and reprocessing (EMDR) (Armstrong, 2013; Armstrong Bibb).

This wide range of theoretical interest and therapy approaches has led Armstrong to claim this more eclectic style of counseling, integrating different approaches as the need arises with differing clients and situations (Armstrong, Bibb; Levity, Darnel, Reform & Vernon, 2014). For no other reason than to increase her knowledge base, as recent as this year Armstrong has trained and become certified in Eye Movement Desensitizing and Reprocessing (EMDR) for trauma survivors (Armstrong Bibb). Professional growth and development are consistent parts of her practice.

Armstrong reports her favorite conference as the annual multiculturalism conference offered by the New Jersey Counseling Association (NJCA) (Armstrong Bibb; NJCA, 2013). Armstrong started her career providing career <https://assignbuster.com/final-project-argumentative-essay/>

development and mental health services to traditional and nontraditional college students (Armstrong, AAA). In career counseling counselors serve a wide range of clients, therefore human growth and development must be of great importance. According to Vernon and Reid (2014) development is life long with ever changing biological, constitutional and cognitive dimensions.

Armstrong (AAA) insists that knowledge of the developmental changes and goal allows the professional counselor to better approach the intended issues. Having served as a career counselor in a variety of settings, with clients from walks of life, Armstrong believes multiculturalism to be an important part of counseling (Armstrong, AAA).

Armstrong has worked for the New York Public Library Science, Industry and Business Library (SIBS), bringing her in contact with New Yorkers, but also individuals originally from Jamaica, Russia and even South Africa (Armstrong, AAA).

Armstrong believes that it is professionally irresponsible to not understand the cultural differences in individuals and being prepared to learn how to help anyone makes the professional counselor most effective (Armstrong, AAA; Hays & Gray, 2014). In regards to experience in treating or referring clients for psychotropic medication, Armstrong reports most clients arrive already prescribed medications (Armstrong, AAA). Armstrong reports that fostering relationships with media professionals has proven difficult (Armstrong, AAA).

Especially the adolescence NT population, whose cases involve not only the client and the prescribing physician, but also guardians. With so many people involved, even if the process of gaining clearance to speak to the physician is granted, communication with physicians has proven challenging (Armstrong, AAA). Armstrong reports consultation and supervision as a constant process (Armstrong, AAA). Of course Armstrong has no problem reaching out as issues arise (Armstrong, AAA). In order to do so Armstrong constantly tries to stay connected to her therapist as often as possible.

This is done through supervision meetings at least monthly, to not get caught up in issues of transference, counterinsurgency or even ethical questions (Armstrong, AAA). An essential part of being an effective counselor is self-care. To not overwhelm yourself with the trauma and issues of others in a way that hinders your ability as a counselor (Cummins, Massey & Jones, 2007). As a note, Armstrong emphasizes that all sessions and groups are not all heavy (Armstrong 2014). For self-care, Armstrong exercises 23 times a week (Armstrong, AAA).

She also enjoys spending time with her family, though when events are not structured she often has to be reminded to relax and not return emails (Armstrong AAA). Story: A Day in the Life of a Mental Health Counselor As I might imagine, a day in my life as a mental health counselor varies. The daily functions of a professional counselor would change dramatically depending on the setting and years of experience. For the purpose of this narrative, we examine what I believe a day in my life as a professional counselor five years after completing supervision.

Idealistically, by this time will have established not only a client base, but all the foundation for a youth center. My office is part of a complex of mental health professionals serving a variety of populations including children and adults. Services provided within the complex include individual therapy, family therapy, and group therapy covering a plethora of differing specializations including substance abuse, family dynamics, behavioral issues and career counseling to name a few. Each day begins greeting my partners in the office.

After settling in I review my schedule and plan the day accordingly.

With no early appointments, I check messages received, and return phone calls and emails. I review client files so I am up to date on who I have scheduled for the day. As clients arrive I provide constructive and well thought out advice. I provide a comfortable environment by adjusting the air conditioning or even the flow of lighting through the window if a client asks.

Between sessions work on case notes as much as possible. After 3 or 4 sessions break for lunch. May use this break to meet a friend, colleague or family member.

If not a social lunch hour, I may use the break to take a walk to simply sit and relax with myself.

This is my time to regroup before completing the rest of my workday in office. When return to the office I again review my schedule. Will again work on returning phone calls, emails or other necessary paperwork including that needed for insurance purposes. Again, I work on client notes between

sessions to keep the amount of paperwork that carries over down. Will offer two late nights a week to accommodate the working clientele.

If it late hours night may see another 34 clients before ending my day.

If not, I will have maybe 12 more sessions then leave the office to finish my workday at the youth center. The youth center is my time to give back to the community. The idea is to have safe place for teens and young adults to go where they can improve themselves socially and academically, while promoting mental health. Here I will work closely with adolescents, some with mental illness others without.

Two days a week will facilitate a group or life skills workshop.

The close of my day will always be the same regardless of whether end in office or at the youth center. Each night will end my work day by checking and returning messages or emails if appropriate. I will also finalize my schedule for the following day. No day will end unless I am prepared for the next. Reflection This assignment has shown me just how much work goes into being a professional mental health counselor.

In just trying to secure an interview subject I was presented with numerous emails and returned phone calls of professionals who wanted help, but just did not have the time.