

# The counselor

Psychology



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## SUGGESTION AND PERSUASION ARE PARTS OF THE THERAPEUTIC PROCESS

24th, January, Suggestion and Persuasion Are Parts of the Therapeutic

Process Introduction The therapeutic process entails treatment of a condition using methods such as reassurance, and instructions. The role of suggestion and persuasion in therapeutic process is debatable. Suggestion is either defined in relation to terms of result of operationally. Operationally, suggestion is “ a process of communication in which one person attempts by use of stimuli, usually verbal in nature but exclusive of argument or direct command to induce an idea, feeling, decision, or action in another person by circumventing the critical integrative functions” (Staples, 1991, 95). On the other hand, persuasion is a “ therapeutic process in which certain effects are produced by chains of logical reasoning” (Psychopathology, n. d., 138).

Although some schools of thought try to deny the presence of suggestion and persuasion in all therapies, the two elements are inevitably involved, as therapists will always portray certain behaviors as desirable or healthier. This entails persuasion and suggestion. This essay argues that suggestion and persuasion are inevitable parts of the therapeutic process. For appropriate therapy, a good relationship must exist between the therapist and the patient. During the development of the relationship, gradual discharge of emotion and tension occurs as therapist explains different concepts. This is replaced by emotions of hope and expectancy where the patient and therapist become hopeful that the therapist’s programs will lead to improvement if followed appropriately. This is itself a form of suggestion (Corey, 2012). Moreover, the conversations between the therapist and patient yield to formal consistency in which the therapist attempts to persuade the patient by making suggestions on how the patient can start <https://assignbuster.com/the-counselor/>

viewing himself or herself differently progressively. This leads to derivation of general suggestion and persuasion in the therapy process (Staples, 1991). The therapy situation and the expectations of the therapist on the patient greatly influence the behavior of the patient. The therapist attempts to convince the patient to view himself and his problems more realistically. The therapist hopes to empower the patients to cope with their problems effectively. Therefore, the therapist will persuade the patient to believe that his/her problems can be resolved effectively. Moreover, the therapist will suggest possible ways in which the patient can deal with his/her problems (Psychopathology, n. d). Impact of suggestion and persuasion is most evident in group therapies. Group therapies involve several therapists working with more than one patient. The members in a group therapy are at different stages of healing process. Suggestion emanate since the therapist may use those in the late stages of healing as examples to demonstrate the workability of the therapeutic process. Moreover, the idea of group therapy is suggestive since it demonstrates to the patients that what they are going through is universal. Moreover, group members often share information. In the process, those who are in the initial stages may be persuaded to strive harder. Therefore, persuasion and suggestion are inevitable in group therapy and play an important role in enhancing the effectiveness of the therapy (Varma, 2008). The therapy process entails the therapist challenging the patient to substitute irrational belief system with a rational one. Moreover, the therapist often suggest ways in which dysfunctional beliefs can lead to the inappropriate behaviors that maybe exhibited by the patient. Moreover, the therapist repeatedly explains suitability of suggested solution to their patients. This is an important part of the therapy process and entails

persuasion (Corey, 2012; Psychopathology, n. d). During the therapeutic process, the therapist will interpret some behaviors or actions as healthy, immature, or neurotic. Although this may be considered as cognitive confrontations, the therapists are in the process suggesting to the patients that they should avoid such behaviors (Varma, 2008). When counsellor are offering therapy, they are likely to give direct instructions or express their values especially if they realize that their clients are unaware of the values. Moreover, if there is likelihood of improving the condition of the patient by expressing their values, therapist will often do so. This entails indirect persuasion since the therapist is motivating the client to adopt such values. This is often helpful to some patients and it is almost impossible for therapists to avoid using their own values to influence their clients since some clients will perceive the therapist behaviors as emulatable. In some cases, therapists communicate their values through direct suggestion. This is often the case for clients with low self regard. Therefore, some patients require suggestions and persuasion from the therapist to enable them identify the right behaviors expected by the society (Corey, 2012; Staples, 1991). Conclusion Although persuasion and suggestion are not the primary components of therapeutic process, they form an important part in promoting therapeutic change. When the therapist is building a relationship with the patient, the therapist often suggests to the patient the need to undergo the therapy since it will lead to improvements. Therapists tend to have self-confidence in their techniques and tend to communicate their expectations of seeing improvements on their patients. The communication maybe made directly or the therapist may use indirect expressions one of which is suggestions. After expressing their intentions, the therapists are

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likely to persuade their patients to undergo therapy. Therefore, persuasion and suggestion are inevitable components of therapeutic process.

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