Telecounselling and E-Counselling

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Telecounselling

What is it?

• Counselling over the phone
• Includes many of the same principles and approaches of other counselling modalities;
• Accessible, practical, suitable for many (not all) client groups; (individuals, couples, and some family counselling ie; parent/teen, …..
• Especially practical for individuals with mobility difficulties or visual impairments.
• Effectiveness?
Telecounselling

How new is telecounselling?

• Is it really new or just evolving?
• It has its beginnings in Crisis lines, distress centres, hotlines, support lines, etc. which have been around for awhile
• Experiences with support lines? Crisis lines?
• Short term Telephone Counselling developed as the next step because of expressed need
Telecounselling

Client Profiles...

• All ages, backgrounds, educational levels
• Life is busy for everyone these days! Arriving home later; Client may travel for work.
• Telephonic counselling provides relief from driving time, babysitters, parking problems, schedule constraints.
• Not all clients have easy access to transportation.
• Clients work schedules dictate appointment times. Demand is high for evening appointments (weekend appointments as well!).
Telecounselling

The nature of this sort of counselling...

• Shorter term clinical counselling approaches often work very well!
• Longer Term counselling? Discussion.
• The majority of calls deal with...
• Advantages & Disadvantages
Telecounselling

How is it different?

• Distractions are part of this picture (food frying, birds chirping, kids playing, door bell ringing, call waiting beeps, bath water running,) and yes, you can still respond to client needs!
• There are some client groups are not appropriate.
• A note about catchments areas.
• Use of computer during session? Note Taking?
• Tools of the Trade
Telecounselling

Intake Processes

• Thorough! Importance of full name, address (apt#) as well as the names of the people they live with. Doctor’s name and address if you have a client who is at risk of possible self harm.
• Screening for suitability. Risk? Comfort with modality. Individual, Couple?
• Know your skill level! Refer if necessary!
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First Counselling Session

• Is this still a good time? Cell phone issues!
• Statement of Confidentiality/Reporting Obligations
• Client opportunity to speak balanced with screening questionnaires
• Goal setting with single client and two clients
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Record Keeping

• Soft copy or hard copy?
• Similar guidelines to face to face counselling
Telecounselling

Reporting Issues

• The usual way....
• Telephonic three way call reporting...
• Follow-up
• Referral Issues and referral resources
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Closing with Clients

• Future sessions/arrangements?
• Referrals?
• Evaluating your service.
• Messages?
E-Counselling

What is it?

• Counselling using the computer as the medium of communication between client and counsellor
• Advantages
• Disadvantages
• Studies so far?
• Security Issues
E-Counselling

Suitability and Screening

• Privacy Statements
• Contact Numbers and E-mail addresses
E-Counselling

First Counselling Response (suggested)

• Statement of Confidentiality
• Overview of process; tone, items to include.
• Response to client
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Scheduling of Sessions

• Expectations for replies from counsellor
• Back up contact numbers (safety planning)
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Computer Issues (for client and counsellor!)

• Gathering enough information so that you have a clear understanding of the client and the issues.
• Tips
• Precautions
Telephone & E-Counselling

Current Literature

• Telephone
• Counselling
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Ethics

• OACCPP
• OAMFT
• Other professional bodies
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Most of us, swimming against the tides of trouble the world knows nothing about, need only a bit of praise or encouragement - and we will make the goal. ~Jerome Fleishman