

Peer Counseling

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Helping people achieve their goals is one of the most rewarding of human experiences. Peer counselors help individuals reach their goals by offering them support, encouragement, and resource information. This course explains the role of a peer counselor, teaches the observation, listening, and emphatic communication skills that counselors need, and provides basic training in conflict resolution, and group leadership. Not only will this course prepare you for working as a peer counselor, but the skills taught will enhance your ability to communicate effectively in your personal and work relationships.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Provide information or resources.
- Make referrals to other types of services.
- Assist with problem solving.
- Help people explore their options.
- Assist with conflict resolution.
- Provide constructive feedback.
- Describe the benefits of having emotions.
- Explain what emotional intelligence is and why it is important.
- Describe seven basic emotions, what triggers them, and how to recognize them.
- Recognize signs that reveal which basic needs are not being met.
- Describe what it means to take responsibility for your own emotions and feelings.
- Demonstrate how to communicate feelings and needs effectively.
- Discuss the many ways our earliest caregivers influence our mental and emotional development.
- Discuss the role of temperament and early environmental influences on our mental and emotional development.
- Explain the connection between our earliest influences and the development of our individual habits of thought and behavior.
- Explain how the behavior habits acquired in childhood affect our adolescent and adult choices.
- Explain why humans have developed and use defensive behaviors.
- Begin recognizing defensive behaviors in yourself and others.
- Explain what it means to listen attentively, or actively, and the benefits of having this skill.
- Describe or demonstrate how counselors show their attentiveness to peers.
- Explain the purpose of facilitative questioning.
- Understand and demonstrate the use of closed- and open-ended questions.

- Define or demonstrate the counseling skill of paraphrasing.
- Define or demonstrate the counseling skill of reflecting.
- Define feedback and explain why it is used.
- Demonstrate using feedback.
- Explain how to use a peer's body language as a therapy tool.
- Define summarizing and demonstrate its use.
- Define assessing and explain what it is used for.
- Explain what a non-judgmental attitude is and demonstrate how to practice it.
- Explain how conflict is more than a disagreement, and discuss the factors that make conflict resolution difficult.
- Define and discuss the conflict styles of competing, avoiding, accommodating, and compromise.
- Define collaboration and explain what makes it an ideal style of negotiation and what makes it difficult to use.
- Understand and explain how your personal biases and past conflict experiences affect you as you negotiate with others.
- Follow ground rules and guidelines, and utilize counseling skills to practice the art of conflict resolution.
- Exercise options for managing an impasse (stalemate) in the resolution process.
- Identify basic styles of leadership and discuss each style's strengths.
- Describe your own natural leadership style, with its strengths and weaknesses.
- Discuss the basics of collaborative leadership.
- Explain the benefits of working in teams and what the primary building blocks of successful teams are.
- Explain how a team leader encourages and facilitates effective teamwork.
- Explain the four stages teams go through as they mature.
- Educate others regarding the benefits of participating in counseling groups.
- Describe three types of peer counseling groups and the primary focus of each type.
- Provide a general job description of a group facilitator.
- Name three group stages of development and discuss the expected behaviors of group members during each of the stages.
- Define group cohesion, and name two or more ways to facilitate group cohesion during each stage of group development.
- Identify six problems that may arise during group sessions and suggest one or two ways of addressing each one.

PREREQUISITES: None

COURSE LENGTH: One Semester

REQUIRED TEXT: No required textbook for this course.

MATERIALS LIST: No required materials for this course.

COURSE OUTLINE:

Unit One: Peer Counseling Basics

Unit Two: Communicating Needs & Feelings

Unit Three: Needs, Feelings & Human Behavior

Unit Four: Listening, Questioning, Paraphrasing & Reflecting

Midterm

Unit Five: Feedback, Body Language, Summarizing & Assessing

Unit Six: Conflict Resolution

Unit Seven: Leadership & Teamwork

Unit Eight: Group Leadership

Final Exam