

## **Developing a Competent Practitioner: Use of Self in Counseling Psychology Training**

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Fostering the development of the therapeutic use of self on behalf of another in counseling trainees involves multiple elements. This article focuses on three domains central to achieving this aim within a particular counselor education program, focusing on our program philosophy of “self as instrument” and the program’s dual role of individual student development and professional gatekeeping responsibility. The article describes, first, the development of students’ use of self and capacities for empathy, attunement, and self-awareness in the clinical skills course; second, academic support for critical thinking and multiple perspectives in the co-curricular “transition to graduate school groups”; and third, the consolidation of relational, cognitive, and theoretical skills in the capstone learning experience of field training, demonstrating trainees’ ability to use these skills judiciously, ethically, and beneficially.

Being able to be present therapeutically on behalf of another person requires a range of skills and abilities, including the intentional and

disciplined use by the counselor of his or her “experience, identity, relational skills, moral awareness, knowledge and wisdom in the service of the therapeutic benefit of the client” (Reinkraut, 2008, p. 15). All counseling psychology education programs include theory and research, clinical skills training, and field experience. In the Division of Counseling and Psychology at Lesley University in Cambridge, Massachusetts, U.S., we emphasize the use of “self as instrument” across all aspects of the training curriculum, including clinical, academic, and professional behavior/fieldwork arenas. In our view, effective counseling psychology training emphasizes the development of self so that students become competent practitioners who feel well, think well, and act well. Feeling well indicates the ability to relate or attune well to clients, using empathy and relational connection. Thinking well includes the ability to think critically, conceptualize the client in theoretical terms, and to demonstrate academic skills in research, oral presentation, and writing. Acting well refers to professional competence and conduct in the service of the client, the community, and the field of counseling psychology. Research has demonstrated the relationship between counselor competence and personal and professional development (Hensley, Smith, & Thompson, 2003). This article highlights the developmental, relational, and contextual perspectives that we incorporate into the training of a competent counseling practitioner and addresses the centrality of the development of the use of self within a master’s degree counseling and psychology program.

Focusing on the use of “self as instrument” necessitates both a respect for individual development and the meeting of our responsibilities as professional gatekeepers. Our philosophy of “self as instrument” entails facilitating trainees’ self-awareness, reflection, and understanding of themselves within their social-cultural context and the application of this knowledge in the service of their clients and the community. The encouragement of personal growth and perspective

transformation (Mezirow & Associates, 2000) is balanced with the gatekeeping responsibility of the assessment and evaluation of students' competence. Ethical standards and the foundational principle of "do no harm" require that counseling educators identify and evaluate problem students who may not be capable of meeting the requirements of counselor competence in academic, clinical, or professional behavior domains (Hensley et al., 2003; Lumadue & Duffey, 1999). The American Counseling Association (ACA) Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice clearly speaks to gatekeeping responsibilities in Section F: Supervision, Training, and Teaching (ACA, 2005), noting the obligations of counseling supervisors to monitor the welfare of clients served by students, to appraise the limitations of students that might impede performance, to assist students in seeking remedial assistance when needed, to seek consultation and document decisions regarding the dismissal of students, and to insure due process considerations for the student.

Trainees often bring a focus on empathy toward others and a desire to be of help. However, "feeling well" or empathy and attunement is only one component of counselor competence. Counseling skills training is intended to foster the growing awareness of the components of helping and the aspects of self that may facilitate or impede the counseling process. We describe first the way that our clinical skills course facilitates the use of self in counseling and encourages a more complex understanding of "feeling well" or "relating well" within our program.

Academic competence at the graduate level depends upon critical and complex thinking. New graduate students need the academic tools and strategies to negotiate the learning environment of a counseling psychology education program. "Thinking well" includes more than knowledge of theories and research; it is the ability to integrate that knowledge critically with personal experience, introspection, and

reflection. We illustrate next the use of self within academic areas and the programmatic supports offered to students with a discussion of our program's Transition to Graduate Study Groups.

Field training is the capstone experience that integrates a student's academic knowledge base and counseling skills training into a developing professional identity, resulting in competence in professional behavior or "acting well" in the service of the client. Our program provides learning experiences that allow students to achieve both initial professional competence and growing personal authenticity. We discuss also the balance between fostering the development of self as instrument in students and gatekeeping responsibilities that counseling educators have to the profession and to the future clients of their students.

## **Feeling Well and Relating Well**

What is required to be present on behalf of the therapeutic benefit of another person? It is the answer to this question that informs the design of *Clinical Skills and the Counseling Process*, a foundational course in our program, the passing of which is a condition for continuation in the program. This course provides the basic skills for counseling practice, including listening, reflection, interpretation, diagnostic interviewing, and crisis intervention. Students participate in role plays and engage in a process of self-understanding and self-assessment.

The *Clinical Skills and the Counseling Process* course functions in large measure as an experientially focused learning laboratory. In a series of audio-taped practice counseling sessions, counseling triads are formed that are comprised of a "client," a counselor, and an observer. The purpose of the sessions is for the counselor to establish a therapeutic alliance with the client in order to gain a shared understanding of the issues/concerns that have resulted in the client coming to counseling. As

counselor, the student's challenge is to focus on alliance building, not problem solving, and to expand their perspective-taking abilities.

For the student who is in the role of counselor, the challenges are: the development of the skills necessary to be an increasingly astute participant-observer, thus increasingly diminishing the likelihood of doing harm; the co-creation with the "client" of an alliance in which clarity grows regarding the nature of the client's presenting concerns; and the expansion of the counselor's capacity for being present, attentive, empathic, respectful, trustworthy, multi-culturally competent, and capable of conceptualizing the client's concerns from within a psychologically meaningful framework.

Peers in the role of observer, along with the instructor, provide feedback for students to address strengths and challenges affecting their engagement with their clients. Giving feedback in a way that another can receive and hear is a necessary skill for counselors. We focus on relational skills in students' role play practice. As Rubin (2003) writes: "the heart of therapy is in the relationship. It's what happens between two thinking, feeling people in the room — how well the therapist is able to understand not just the patient's conflicts but her own, how the transference-counter transference feelings that every relationship stirs are attended to — that makes therapy work" (p. 12).

In our commitment to the development of the self of the practitioner, we believe that increasing one's awareness of the self that one brings to each therapeutic encounter is a professional responsibility of a competent counselor. The ability to be present on behalf of another can be encapsulated in the phrase *therapeutic relational competence*. Wachtel (2008) states, "Interest in the therapeutic alliance has increased exponentially in recent years, as has well-conducted research pointing to the central importance of the relationship in the outcome of therapeutic

work” (p. 1) (see also Lambert & Barley, 2001; Whiston & Sexton, 1993). The importance of the dialogic exchange between counselor and client cannot be overstated. It is in consequence of the therapeutic conversation that the counselor gains increasing understanding of the points of meeting and points of difference between themselves and the client. This understanding is necessary to enhance the likelihood that the world of meanings of the client is recognized and respected (Christopher, 1996, 2006). The development of one’s ability to attune to the experience of the client while at the same time being able to access and be aware of one’s own experience is the hallmark of increasing competence in a counselor.

Viewing the counseling relationship as intended to serve an empowering role in the lives of people, we believe that the nature of power warrants attention and understanding. Honoring the agency of another person is predicated on a respect for that person as the owner of his or her own choices. The ability to recognize when one is imposing one’s values on another rather than being facilitative is an important capacity that is part of therapeutic relational competence. This ability is also predicated on the capacity to be an effective participant-observer (Sullivan, 1970). Being able to be a clear-eyed witness to one’s relational engagement is a form of discipline that is at the heart of clinical competence. We are each always making choices regarding which aspects of ourselves we choose to make manifest in any particular situation. There are also aspects of ourselves that are expressed without our conscious awareness. It is these latter aspects that particularly challenge our skills as participant-observers, and underscore the importance of on-going consultative relationships with supervisors and peers to help us monitor how we are present in relation to our clients.

The choices we make regarding the aspects of self that we bring into the particular therapeutic relationship should be a function not only of what is authentic about ourselves (Rogers, 1957) but also and crucially

of what we can offer that addresses the psychological needs of the client. As one of us has written recently: “There are many aspects of ourselves that are relevant to how one is present with a client. Each of these aspects must be used consciously and purposefully on behalf of the client. With this in mind I propose that therapist use of self be understood to mean the intentional use by the therapist of his or her abilities, experience, identity, relational skills, moral awareness, knowledge and wisdom in the service of the therapeutic benefit of the client” (Reinkraut, 2008, p. 15). Central to our goals as counselor educators is the commitment to fostering the intentionality of our counseling trainees to use their selves to the benefit of their clients. Student evaluations of the *Clinical Skills and the Counseling Process* course indicate that this approach is successful in increasing participant-observation skills and in developing relational competence; many students note that this course is a turning point in their self-perception as novice counseling practitioners. This is supported by research showing that counseling skills courses (as well as field experiences) contribute most effectively to students’ increases in cognitive complexity, a necessary component of effective counseling practice (Buser, 2008; Choate & Granello, 2006).

In addition to being clinical teachers, clinical skills instructors have the responsibility to assess the readiness (conceptually, emotionally, ethically, and relationally) of a student to move on to field training. The foundational course in clinical skills development challenges counseling psychology educators to be simultaneously supportive teachers and gatekeepers to the profession of counseling, who have the responsibility for “monitoring the competency of student counselors” (Lumadue & Duffey, 1999, p. 101; see also Hensley et al., 2003). As gatekeepers, we are obligated to look, metaphorically, over the shoulders of students to the future clients with whom they will work and make judgments regarding our confidence in the student’s ability to be present on behalf of the well-being of another.

## **Thinking Well**

The use of “self as instrument” in counseling psychology training is not limited to training in clinical skills or fieldwork. An essential component of developing a competent counselor is academic competence, which includes the ability to integrate theory into practice, conceptualize cases and client issues, analyze and synthesize theory and research, and reflect critically on both academic content and personal understandings of self and the world. The development of cognitive complexity is critical in competent counseling. Thus, programs need both curricular and co-curricular opportunities designed to promote cognitive complexity in trainees (Choate & Granello, 2006). The use of self in counseling is predicated not only on the capacity to “feel well” and the use of clinical and relational skills, but also on the ability to “think well,” conceptualizing and applying theory while integrating understandings of self in the therapeutic relational alliance.

Transition to graduate study, like many life transitions, is daunting and exciting for students as they enter a new environment, with challenging expectations for self-exploration and academic competence. Transitions, unlike one-time external changes, are gradual, internal, and psychological processes that occur over time (Bridges, 1980/2004). Communicating the developmental nature of counselor training is critical for entering students, as they are often highly anxious about the rightness of fit between themselves and professional counseling (Choate & Granello, 2006; Davis, Bissler, & Leiter, 2001). Students develop their use of self in diverse and individual ways, but all must develop a professional identity that includes both academic prowess and an enhanced capacity for reflexivity. While our admission process is designed to screen for an adequate academic foundation and the potential for introspective self-awareness and clinical sensitivity, we communicate to students our understanding that they are professional novices and that the development of appropriate academic and clinical



skills occurs over time and through training experiences. In addition to responding to academic performance or impairment issues, a proactive philosophy of “wellness” is urged as a preventive measure (Roach & Young, 2007). One of the ways our program supports students proactively in this transition is by offering optional, small-group conversations that are facilitated by a faculty member with the focus on supportive topics related to expectations of graduate work in counseling. These sessions are intended to facilitate students’ transition into graduate study and support the development of their use of self, voice, and reflection in their academics.

There is very little literature on how students experience master’s programs, especially the impact of their academic experiences on their personal and professional growth (Conrad, Duren, & Haworth, 1998). Conrad et al. (1998) conducted several studies of master’s degree students and found that students generally characterized their master’s experiences as beneficial in three domains: learning experiences, professional development experiences, and leadership experiences. The most powerful components of highly beneficial learning were programs that emphasized a community of learners and critical dialogue — interactive, dialogical inquiry that encourages students to “develop and critically refine new understandings of knowledge and professional practice” (Conrad et al., 1998, p. 68). These elements are core to our sense of mission and to training in our program. In programs with these components, the researchers concluded, “for a surprising number of students, the master’s experience was a ‘rite of passage,’ in which they were transformed” (Conrad et al., 1998, p. 69). The Transition to Graduate Study Groups that we offer contribute to this sense of transformation because they provide an opportunity for students to increase their academic competence and confidence within a community of learners. This is primarily achieved by providing challenge and support, which are classic components of development (Kegan, 1994;

Perry, 1970). Developmental models of cognitive complexity have been applied to counseling psychology training (Fong, Borders, Ethington, & Pitts, 1997; Granello, 2002; Lyons & Hazler, 2002) and reflect our program's use of challenge and support to facilitate development of the self at key milestones within the degree program: upon entry, in clinical skills courses, and in field placement (Choate & Granello, 2006).

One of the themes in adult development and learning is students' ways of knowing. Based on the study of adult development (e.g., Baxter Magolda, 1992, 1998; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Kegan, 1982, 1994; King & Kitchener, 1994; Perry, 1970), it has been observed that students entering graduate study often have not achieved the requisite level of critical thinking and reflective judgment. Self-authorship, or one's way of making meaning of one's experience, may be in its beginning stages for students in a graduate program (Baxter Magolda, 1998). To develop one's use of self effectively, developmental growth in one's capacity for self-authorship is needed. Students in undergraduate school are commonly viewed as *consumers* of knowledge. In graduate school, students are expected to become *creators* of knowledge (Fischer & Zigmond, 1998). This is a new role, where students do not simply memorize facts or describe theories and ideas, but critically analyze and evaluate theories and the literature in their discipline.

Students in graduate groups often find the critical writing discussions extremely helpful; they agree that analysis, synthesis, interpretation, application, and reflection are needed, but are stymied about how to achieve these goals. One student commented that she was an excellent "regurgitator" of material — she could describe theories or ideas effectively, which had won her much praise in undergraduate study, but she felt unable to go beyond this skill. Students discuss the expectation within our training program that they will incorporate

their understanding of self within their papers and assignments. The development of voice within academic discourse and the ability to integrate insight and reflection while maintaining a respect for one's own privacy and appropriate boundaries are popular topics in these conversations.

Supporting students' development of self-authorship as well as critical and reflective thinking necessitates that students gain the understanding of "knowledge as existing in a context, constructed by individuals, from multiple perspectives" (Baxter Magolda, 1998, p. 51). The Division of Counseling and Psychology at Lesley University endorses these assumptions about knowledge and recognizes the developmental process involved in encouraging the evolution of student thinking and the use of self within this process. Our Transition to Graduate Study Groups explicitly discuss these assumptions and expectations, and thereby prepare students to engage with these issues in their coursework and learning environments. They also prepare students for one of the most difficult aspects of the transition, which is "adjusting to heavier workloads and increased expectations" (Davis et al., 2001, p. 457). Fischer and Zigmond (1998) advocate for graduate programs to prepare their students with "survival skills" needed in graduate school and beyond. Successful programs include a combination of lectures, discussions, and applicable exercises, which are the elements used in the Transition to Graduate Study Groups.

Students entering the Counseling and Psychology programs at Lesley University come from a wide range of backgrounds. The Transition to Graduate Study Groups were originally developed as a response to common anxieties of entering students and to the needs of students who were academically challenged or marginalized, due to racial, economic or academic disadvantage, learning disabilities, age, language, or cultural differences. Women, racial/ethnic minorities, and

immigrants/international students may be faced with additional demands, such as financial and time constraints, functioning “without an ethnic support group,” without “knowledge of how to negotiate the academic system” or without “access to informal networks” of information (Fischer & Zigmond, 1998, p. 39). Different levels of undergraduate preparation contribute to student and faculty concerns about academic competence and adjustment (Davis et al., 2001). It was hoped that these supportive groups on graduate study would help to level the playing field by providing students with both academic skills and a better understanding of the use of self within the program. Unfortunately, some of the students who most need this support do not or cannot attend, often due to the multiple role strains of work, family and school that consume their time and energy. Those who do, whether struggling or performing well academically, consistently express their gratitude for this opportunity.

The creation of the Transition to Graduate Study Groups was one way we attempted to provide support and encouragement to students from differing backgrounds while offering specific strategies for achieving competence. The topics typically include “Graduate School Expectations and Life/School Balance,” “Managing the Readings — Tips and Strategies,” “Critical Thinking and Writing,” and “Graduate Level Writing and APA Referencing.” Nearly all students experience some anxiety about their professional identity and how their particular sense of self fits within the expectations of the field. In fact, recent research indicates that many counseling students view their training as a journey filled with self-doubt (Woodside, Oberman, Cole, & Carruth, 2007). Many students struggle with how to determine what is a “good enough” counselor, clinically and academically, just as we as counselor educators struggle with the companion goals of supporting student development and upholding our gatekeeper responsibilities (Hensley et al., 2003).

The transition to graduate study sessions are designed to be partially information- and suggestion-based, with each session including faculty discussion of tips or suggestions, frameworks for thinking about the topic, and handouts of strategies or examples. Examples of exercises include a demonstration of time-limited reading strategies, a group walkthrough of a research journal article, discussion of excerpts from previous students' papers (used with permission) to illustrate integration of voice and research, and facilitating participants' analysis of citations. These sessions are also for student support, emphasizing the sharing of ideas and suggestions from peers. The intent is to reduce feelings of isolation, increase connection with other students, and encourage the establishment of stronger relationships and greater ease in seeking assistance when needed.

Despite scheduling conflicts and life demands, these graduate student groups have been quite successful. Survey results and informal feedback from students indicate that the groups are extremely helpful, supportive, and enjoyable, both in terms of the information and suggestions and as a way to gain peer support and connection to the community. The groups seem to be effective at building peer support, and in enhancing support and connection among students and between students and faculty. As the faculty member facilitating these sessions, I (Motulsky) feel that they provide an opportunity to connect with students on a deeper level outside of class in a different, non-evaluative role.

The Transition to Graduate Study Groups are only one way we both challenge and support students in their development of self in the academic realm. Critical thinking, multiple perspectives, and constructive developmental meaning-making are key components of our academic approach to counselor training. Our program has high expectations of students to bring themselves into their learning through a

focus on psychological insight, reflection, and applying the social and cultural context of their identity in all aspects of the program from academic and clinical courses to their field training experiences.

## **Acting Well**

Field training is the capstone to a counseling psychology education program. We view it as an integrative experience that brings together in supervised clinical practice the academic knowledge base and clinical skills training discussed above. It is through this transforming of theory into practice that the student develops a beginning professional identity and a sense of growing competence. It is essential that during field training, we continue our focus on the development of a counseling practitioner identity and evaluate the student's capacity to be present on behalf of another. As we seek to help the student to develop the disciplined use of "self as instrument," we observe his/her abilities to be self-reflective, to employ informed clinical judgment, and to possess psychological mindedness. How capable is the student in matters of perspective taking? How well can he/she acknowledge personal/cultural influences and blind spots? How much flexibility is demonstrated? Does the student have a theoretical base that informs his/her therapeutic interactions? Can the student engage meaningfully in supervision?

Students come with a wide background of experience, clinical knowledge, maturity, and raw talent. It is important in the evaluation of clinical competence during internship to recognize these individual differences and work from a developmental framework to assess current skills as well as the potential for growth. It is only then that the supervisory feedback necessary to foster the appropriate level of growth can be given. Several supervisory models speak to this developmental approach (e.g., Bernard & Goodyear, 1992; Holloway, 1987; Littrell, Lee-Borden, & Lorenz, 1979; Stoltenberg, 1981, 2005). This attention to developmental needs supports the uniqueness of the individual student

in crafting his/her own sense of “self as instrument” and seeks to allow each student the freedom of individual timelines to develop professional competence within programmatic policy and expectations.

As has been emphasized, this developmental approach must be balanced by the very real needs of counseling psychology education programs to be “gatekeepers” to the profession. The freedom and flexibility to address unique “self as instrument” learning goals must occur within a structure of set expectations. Our students must have the theoretical and clinical skills necessary to “do no harm” to their future clients. They must demonstrate the abilities to be competent, beginning-level practitioners who can meet the licensing requirements and ethical guidelines set by the profession, as outlined in the American Counseling Association Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice (ACA, 2005).

This need to balance individual differences in beginning clinical competence against the standards of the field can cause significant challenges for evaluation in counselor education programs (Hensley et al., 2003). Among the challenges are: How does a program differentiate between student difficulties in field training that are developmental and therefore workable through supervisory feedback versus those that may indicate students who are ill-suited for the field? How much individual difference is acceptable? What are the critical baselines that define a competent beginning professional? What is the intersection of academic preparedness, clinical skills, and professional suitability?

As a program with a developmental perspective, we have endeavored to make transparent each “milestone” needed for a successful field training experience and the student’s responsibility to engage in the necessary work to achieve each milestone. The professional literature indicates that this approach does not exist in the majority of counseling

practitioner programs (Hensley et al., 2003). From our initial orientation course, students are made aware that they will be evaluated throughout the program on their competences in academic, clinical, and professional/behavioral domains as well as be expected to complete self-evaluations in key clinical milestone classes. Students sign a “learning goals contract” that outlines these expectations and understandings as well as makes clear the faculty’s gatekeeper responsibility.

There is an early emphasis on the need to establish “readiness” for field training through a series of requirements. All students must complete seven foundational courses before beginning a field placement and gain faculty advisor approval to begin their placement search. All students must be assessed for clinical readiness by their Clinical Skills faculty. Negotiating these “hurdles” helps students to assess their own readiness for fieldwork as well as continue to reinforce the strong expectation around the gatekeeping function the program holds. Such emphasis on readiness allows students to be more deliberate about their own internship search process, to acknowledge more fully their own needs for growth, and to begin to address how best to integrate the demands of internship into their life.

Once in internship, a number of activities are structured to continue to set expectations, build skills, and conduct ongoing evaluation. Students are assigned to a year-long Clinical Practice and Supervision class of 7–8 students that meets weekly for three hours and focuses on case presentation through audio recording and transcription, peer supervision, and clinical skill development. The case presentation focus allows ongoing opportunity to observe the student’s ability to form therapeutic alliances and to articulate their conceptualization of the counseling relationship and the client’s needs. Students work on their participant-observation skills and their ability to give and receive feedback regarding clinical casework. In this setting, a student’s ability



to put theory into practice can be assessed against the relative strengths and weaknesses of their peers. Does an individual student raise particular or troubling concerns in his/her presentation/performance in class? Or does the behavior being observed fall into a reasonable or expectable developmental range? Clinical practice instructors present didactic material that addresses the developing clinical competence needs as those needs arise organically from the experience of the classroom participants. A student's ability to incorporate such didactic material and group feedback within the ongoing class structure helps to assess whether there is a concern of "fit" for the field.

Students in internship are introduced to the concept of a "learning team." We consider the field training directors, the site supervisor, the campus clinical instructor, and the student's faculty advisor to be part of the student's learning team responsible for the student's growth and evaluation. As such, a student understands that all members of the team may have input into their program and may consult with each other openly. Students may approach any of the learning team members with concerns they may have regarding their internship placement. The learning team provides a multiplicity of "voices" and perspectives that can be very helpful when assessing a student's difficulty in the field and matters relating to professional behavior and fit. It is through the multiple perspectives of the learning team members that a consensus on an individual student's suitability for the field can be more fairly achieved.

It is important that all the members of the learning team understand the tension between support of the developmental needs of the student and the gatekeeping role of the profession. To this end, the program engages in a number of activities to promote dialogue and understanding of this concept. The student's field training contract outlining individualized learning objectives and a field training handbook is

sent to all members of the learning team. Site visits and collaboration among the team members provides information on the readiness of our students, recommendations for program improvements, and discussion on the current state of the profession. This helps in ongoing program efforts to define suitability for the field.

Written evaluation forms set clear expectations across a range of clinical competences and may contain recommendations for further development so that the student may direct their learning and seek appropriate supervision. Field training directors also meet with the clinical practice faculty to discuss student issues, clinical pedagogy, and problematic sites. The discourse of these meetings allows both new and seasoned instructors to wrestle directly with issues of student competence, to learn new ways of intervening and supporting students' clinical development, to voice observations and concerns about the current state of the counseling field, and to gain support for dealing with problematic students. In particular, clinical instructors are supported in identifying students about whom they have concerns regarding suitability for the field. The meetings provide a barometer for assessing an appropriate range of acceptable performance for beginning professional counselors.

Because of the attention to the setting of expectations for a number of milestones throughout the program and for the field training experience, and to the multiple access points for the program to interact with the student and members of the learning team, the ability to trust in the fairness of the evaluation process is facilitated. Students who have significant difficulty in translating theory into practice in field training and present gatekeeping concerns are never easy to deal with. The multiplicity of voices and the outlining of process and expectations allows for a more concrete, direct, and helpful conversation with the student. If because of poor performance and/or impairment, a student is

being asked to leave a site or is in danger of failing the placement, he/she will be referred to a faculty evaluation committee for review. Input from members of the learning team help to frame the conversation with the student. Key to formulating the evaluation committee's recommendations for a student's remediation or dismissal is the student's ability to reflect and integrate feedback, the ability to conceptualize and articulate one's role in co-creating the present difficulty, and the ability to take academic knowledge and integrate it meaningfully with personal performance.

## **Conclusion**

In this article, we have attempted to provide a view into particular components of our counseling psychology practitioner training program that we believe are illustrative of our program's "self as instrument" philosophy. We hoped to give a snapshot of how students are encouraged to "feel or relate well, think well and act well" on behalf of clients and the community through our foundational course in *Clinical Skills and the Counseling Process*, through our adjunctive Transition to Graduate Study Groups, and through our approach to field training and evaluation. We recognize that there are many additional processes and practices involved in counseling psychology training, particularly in the areas of academic development and critical thinking as well as in therapeutic skills. Feedback from students and alumni, from internship sites, and from employers of our graduates indicate that we generally succeed in our endeavor to produce competent counseling psychology practitioners. The program has evidence of this from regular program reviews, which include employer and alumni surveys. We hope it is evident that foundational to our view of counseling psychology education is the commitment to supporting students in gaining more awareness of themselves in the service of facilitating their growth as competent, ethical, knowledgeable counselors. Our thoughts, feelings, and actions

influence how we are present on behalf of the clients and communities with whom we work. Through skills development, academic support and field training, we strive to provide the learning opportunities that foster the development of counselors who are skilled at using themselves to the benefit of others.

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## 培養勝任的心理輔導從業員：培訓學員「運用自我」

要促進輔導學員學懂「運用自我」達到治療效果，當中涉及多項元素。本文以一個特定的輔導教育課程為例，集中討論為達成這目標的三個關鍵領域。該課程的理念是「把自我作為工具」，並強調既要促進學生個人發展又要負起專業把關責任這雙重角色。首先，文章描述如何令學生懂得運用自我，以及如何如何在臨牀技巧學科上建立學生的同理心、「調頻」和自我意識等能力；接着，介紹「與研究院學習接軌」這「聯同課程」如何在學術上建立學生的批判思考能力和多元視角；最後，綜述如何在實習訓練上鞏固學生的關係建立、認知和理論運作技巧，並展示如何以審慎、合乎道德守則和以他人利益為首的態度運用這些技巧。