

# Attributes of Effective Counselors



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## Counselor

- Aware of Changes in The Field and That It Is Constantly Evolving
- Integrate “New” Information Into Their Treatment As Needed
- Stays Fresh



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## Counseling Is Not

- For Us To Hide Behind Professional Role
- Clients Will Hide Also
- To Become Self-righteous, Critical or Judgmental
- Clients Will Become Defensive, Guarded and Hostile



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## Counseling Is Not

- To Develop A Puffed Up Attitude
- To Become Overly Analytical
- Allow Therapy To Become Sterile



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## Have An Identity

- Know Who They Are
- What They Can Become
- What They Want Out Of Life
- What Is Essential



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## Have An Identity

- Have The Capacity To Ask Questions
- Seek Guidance & Supervision From Others
- Understand Counseling Is A Continuous Process For Self and Others



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## Lacking In Identity

- Feels Insecure In Their Role
- May Isolate
- Become Opinionated, Judgmental, Jealous
- Is Disgruntled With Agency, Self and The Profession



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## Ability To Recognize And Accept Their Own Power

- In The Eyes of Clients We Are Experts, Gurus and Some Feel We Are Magicians
- Sensitive To The Feelings Of Others
- We Assist In Making Decisions



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## Recognition of Power

- We “Assist” In Making Decisions
- We “Assist” Or Clients To Make Choices
- At Times We “Berate, Belittle and Chastise”
- Feel The Client Has To Take It



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## Recognition of Power

- Counselor uses Power Role To Deal With Therapeutic Frustrations
- Misinterpretation of Confrontation
- Remain Open To Change And Learn
- Avoid Complacency and Becoming Stagnant



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## Misuse Of Power

- To Berate, Belittle And Chastise: Thinking That The Client Has To Take It.
- Using Your Power To Deal With Therapeutic Frustrations
- Denial/Minimizing Own Shortcomings



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## Expand Self Awareness

- Worst Fears and Secrets Played Out In Each Session
- You Will Examine Your Own Motives And Behavior



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## Able To Expand Awareness of Self And Others

- Victims of Our Own "Enigma"
- All Powerful (Omnipotent)
- All Knowing (Omniscient)
- It's a Trap
- Come face To Face With What We Don't Know



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## Able To Expand Awareness of Self and Others

- Develop Your Own Counseling Style
- Know The World of Your Client
- Do Not Become Possessive
- Develop A Sense of Humor



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## Burn Out/Frustration .

- Loss of Energy, lethargic, Depressed
- Anxiety and Feelings of Anxiousness
- Engaged in Self Defeating Behaviors



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## Dark Secrets

- Keeping Secrets With Clients
- Being Attracted To A Client And Keeping It “Hush,Hush”
- Going Out With A Client

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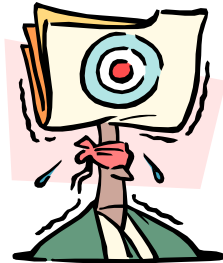
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## Vicarious Trauma

- Accumulative Exposure To Clients Stories of Trauma & Abuse
- Transformation That Occurs Within The Therapist Due To Emphatic Engagement With Clients Trauma



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## Vicarious Trauma – Risk Factors

- Work With Clients in Settings Where Success is Minimal
- Work Without Adequate Supervision & Consultation
- Empathize With Clients Pain



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## Vicarious Trauma – Risk Factors

- Bear Witness To Stories of Trauma & Abuse
- Clients Who Re-enact Pathological Relationships
- Feel You Cannot Help Clients/Meet Your Own Expectations



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## Vicarious Trauma – Belief System

- Poor Self Esteem
- Loss of Sense of Control
- Loss of Sense of Safety



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## Vicarious Trauma – Belief System

- Loss of Trust
- Loss of Connection To Others
- Despair
- Cynicism
- Incapacity For Intimacy



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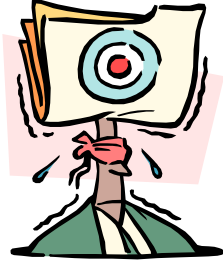
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## Vicarious Trauma - PTSD

- Sleep Disturbances
- Intrusive Thoughts
- Intrusive Images



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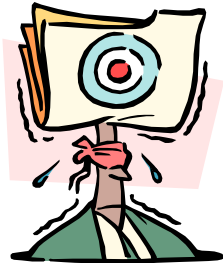
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## Vicarious Trauma - PTSD

- Generalized Anxiety
- Numbing
- Overwhelmed
- Poor Coping
- Anger
- Nightmares
- Irrational Fears
- Addictions



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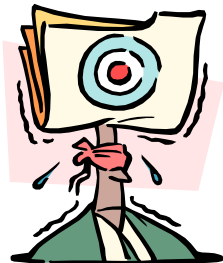
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## Vicarious Trauma

- Accumulates Over Time & With Different Clients
- Produces Symptoms of PTSD
- Changes View of Self and The World



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## Prevention and Solutions

- Recognize VT As An Occupational Hazard
- Accept Reaction as Normal
- Limit Exposure to Trauma Material(e.g. Books, Conferences, Discussions, Movies)
- Develop A Support Network
- Balance Your Work Load As To Types of Problems

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## Prevention and Solutions

- Set and Maintain Clear Limits on Therapeutic Relationships
- Build A Network of Professional Connections
- Develop A Balance of Professional Skills
- Work Within A Supportive Organizational Context

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## A Sense Of Humor

- Laugh and Have Fun
- Do Something Strange
- Acquire a Hobby



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## Personal Strategies

- Take Time To Laugh, Have Fun, Socialize
- Seek Spiritual Renewal However You Define It
- Consider Personal Counseling
- Take A Sabbatical From Work (if possible)
- “Switch Up/Share The Load”
- Take A “Mental Health Break”

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## Personal Strategies

- Develop Hobbies, Sports and Creative Interests
- Develop Restful, Meditative Activities (Yoga, Music, Reading, Gardening, Painting)
- Guard Against Addictive Behavior
- Get Rest, Eat Well, Drink Water

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## Personal Strategies

- Seek Out Experiences Which Instill Comfort & Hope
- Set Clear Boundaries Between home and Work
- Whistle, Sing, Do Something Strange and Out of The Ordinary

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## Organizational Strategies

- Supervisors/Administrators Should Develop Sensitivity and Empathy Towards Staff
- Policy and Procedure That Supports The Agencies Support of Handling Stress With Staff
- Support For Continuing Education
- Supervision and Consultation

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