

Sixth Canadian Edition

# Choices

Interviewing and Counselling Skills for Canadians

**Bob Shebib**

*Faculty Emeritus  
Douglas College*

**PEARSON**

Toronto

**Editorial Director:** Claudine O'Donnell  
**Acquisitions Editor:** Kimberly Veevers  
**Marketing Manager:** Michelle Bish  
**Program Manager:** John Polanszky  
**Project Manager:** Richard Di Santo  
**Developmental Editor:** Alanna Ferguson  
**Production Services:** Garima Khosla, iEnergizer Aptara®, Inc.  
**Permissions Project Manager:** Sarah Horsfall  
**Photo Permissions Research:** Lokesh Bisht, iEnergizer Aptara®, Inc.  
**Text Permissions Research:** Phyllis Padula, iEnergizer Aptara®, Inc.  
**Interior Designer:** Anthony Leung  
**Cover Designer:** iEnergizer Aptara®, Inc.  
**Cover Image:** Rawpixel/Fotolia  
**Vice-President, Cross Media and Publishing Services:** Gary Bennett

Credits and acknowledgments for material borrowed from other sources and reproduced, with permission, in this textbook appear on the appropriate page within the text.

If you purchased this book outside the United States or Canada, you should be aware that it has been imported without the approval of the publisher or the author.

---

**Copyright © [2017] Pearson Canada Inc. All rights reserved.** Manufactured in [the United States of America]. This publication is protected by copyright and permission should be obtained from the publisher prior to any prohibited reproduction, storage in a retrieval system, or transmission in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or likewise. To obtain permission(s) to use material from this work, please submit a written request to Pearson Canada Inc., Permissions Department, 26 Prince Andrew Place, Don Mills, Ontario, M3C 2T8, or fax your request to 416-447-3126, or submit a request to Permissions Requests at [www.pearsoncanada.ca](http://www.pearsoncanada.ca).

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 [VODO]

#### Library and Archives Canada Cataloguing in Publication

Shebib, Bob, author  
Choices: interviewing and counselling skills for  
Canadians/Bob Shebib.—Sixth edition.

Includes bibliographical references and index.  
Issued also in electronic format.  
ISBN 978-0-13-400514-0 (paperback)  
1. Counseling—Textbooks. 2. Interviewing—Textbooks.  
I. Title.

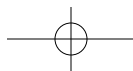
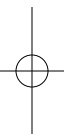
BF636.6.S48 2016      158.3      C2015-908493-8

**PEARSON**

ISBN-10: 0-13-4005147  
ISBN-13: 978-0-13-4005140

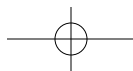
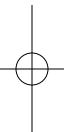
# Dedication

*For my children and grandchildren,  
Kevin, Jodie, Eli, and Audrey.*



# Brief Contents

<b>Chapter 1</b>	Professional Identity: Ethics, Values, and Self-Awareness 1	<b>Chapter 6</b>	Empathic Connections 152
<b>Chapter 2</b>	The Skills, Process, and Pitfalls of Counselling 31	<b>Chapter 7</b>	Supporting Empowerment and Change 183
<b>Chapter 3</b>	Relationship: The Foundation for Change 63	<b>Chapter 8</b>	Difficult Situations: Engaging with Hard-to-Reach Clients 224
<b>Chapter 4</b>	Listening & Responding: The Basis for Understanding 90	<b>Chapter 9</b>	Mental Disorders and Substance Abuse 259
<b>Chapter 5</b>	Asking Questions: The Search for Meaning 120	<b>Chapter 10</b>	Cultural Intelligence 293



# Contents

*Preface xi*

*Acknowledgments xxiii*

## 1 Professional Identity: Ethics, Values, and Self-Awareness 1

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES 1

#### Counselling Professionals 1

Social Work and Social Justice 2

#### Ethics 3

Dual Relationships 5

Professional Boundaries 5

Confidentiality 6

#### Values for Professional Practice 8

Belief in the Dignity and Worth of People 8

Client Self-Determination 9

#### CONVERSATION 1.1 Gallows Humour 11

Rights of Children 11

#### Ethical Dilemmas 11

#### BRAIN BYTE Ethical and Moral Decision Making 12

Types of Ethical Dilemmas 12

Resolving Ethical Dilemmas 13

#### BRAIN BYTE Ethics and Neuroscience 13

Objectivity 16

#### CONVERSATION 1.2 Personal Feelings Get in the Way 16

#### CONVERSATION 1.3 Personal Involvement with Clients 18

#### The Competent Counsellor 18

#### CONVERSATION 1.4 I'm Just a Beginner 20

#### Self-Awareness 20

The Importance of Self-Awareness 20

Increasing Self-Awareness 21

Who Am I? How Do Others See Me? 22

Personal Needs 23

Personal and Cultural Values 25

Summary 27

Exercises 27

Weblinks 30

## 2 The Skills, Process, and Pitfalls of Counselling 31

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES 31

#### What Is Counselling? 31

#### BRAIN BYTE Counselling and the Brain 32

#### CONVERSATION 2.1 Counselling and Psychotherapy 33

#### Choices: The Need for Versatility 34

#### BRAIN BYTE Music 34

Brief Encounters 36

#### Trauma-Informed Practice 36

#### BRAIN BYTE Trauma 37

#### BRAIN BYTE Strengths-Based Counselling 38

Relationship Issues 38

#### Skill Clusters 39

Relationship-Building Skills 40

Exploring/Probing Skills 42

Empowering Skills 43

Challenging Skills 43

#### The Phases of Counselling 44

#### CONVERSATION 2.2 Helpful Friends and Counsellors 47

The Preliminary Phase 47

#### CONVERSATION 2.3 Should I Read the File? 49

The Beginning Phase 50

The Action Phase 52

The Ending Phase 53

#### Counselling Pitfalls: Barriers to Success 54

Client Variables 54

Counsellor Variables 54

Common Mistakes 56

#### CONVERSATION 2.4 Rescuing and Supporting 59

Summary 61

Exercises 62

Weblinks 62

## 3 Relationship: The Foundation for Change 63

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES 63

#### The Counselling Relationship 63

Definition 64

#### BRAIN BYTE Oxytocin 64

Relationship and the Phases of Counselling 65

#### Carl Rogers and The Core Conditions 66

#### CONVERSATION 3.1 Unconditional Positive Regard 68

Core Conditions: Implications for

Counsellors 69

#### CONVERSATION 3.2 Genuineness 69

#### Counselling Contracts 70

Purpose of Contracting 70

Relationship Contracts 71

Anticipatory Contracts 73

Work Contracts 74

#### INTERVIEW 3.1 Contracting 76

#### Sustaining The Counselling Relationship 78

Immediacy 78

Transference and Countertransference 79

#### INTERVIEW 3.2 Immediacy 80

#### BRAIN BYTE Transference 81

#### BRAIN BYTE Childhood Abuse and Intimate Relationships 82

#### CONVERSATION 3.3 Counsellor Self-Disclosure 82

#### Ending The Counselling Relationship 83

<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Endings <b>85</b>	Questions to Define the Counselling Relationship 125
Dealing with Endings 85	Questions for Exploring and Understanding 125
<b>INTERVIEW 3.3</b> Endings <b>86</b>	Questions for Problem Solving 127
Summary 87	Questions for Evaluating 128
Exercises 87	<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> The Impact of Questions <b>128</b>
Weblinks 89	<b>Questioning Pitfalls 129</b>
<b>4 Listening &amp; Responding: The Basis for Understanding 90</b>	Leading (Biased) Questions 129
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES 90</b>	Excessive Questioning 130
<b>Listening For Understanding 90</b>	<b>CONVERSATION 5.1</b> Alternatives to Questions <b>130</b>
The Importance of Listening 91	Multiple Questions 132
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Listening <b>92</b>	Irrelevant and Poorly-Timed Questions 133
<b>Listening Barriers 92</b>	Why Questions 133
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> The Auditory Alarm System <b>92</b>	<b>Tailoring The Interview to The Client 134</b>
Overcoming Listening Barriers 93	When Clients Do Not Answer Questions 134
<b>Active Listening 96</b>	Managing the Rambling Interview 135
<b>Attending 98</b>	Interviewing Youth 136
Selective Attention 99	<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> The Adolescent Brain <b>137</b>
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Multitasking <b>99</b>	Cross-Cultural Interviewing 138
<b>Nonverbal Communication 101</b>	<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Neural Development and Marginalization <b>139</b>
<b>CONVERSATION 4.1</b> Problems with Listening and Responding <b>101</b>	<b>Beyond the Surface: Interviewing for Concreteness 139</b>
Meaning of Nonverbal Communication 102	The Need for Concreteness 139
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Nonverbal Processing <b>103</b>	Strategies for Achieving Concreteness 142
Working with Nonverbal Communication 105	Making Choices 144
Metacommunication 106	<b>Interview Transitions 145</b>
<b>Silence 106</b>	Natural Transitions 145
The Personal Meaning of Silence 106	Strategic Transitions 145
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Silence <b>107</b>	Control Transitions 146
Silence in Counselling 107	Phase Transitions 147
Nonverbal Cues and Silence 110	Connect (Linking) Transitions 147
<b>CONVERSATION 4.2</b> Learning to Deal with Silence <b>111</b>	<b>CONVERSATION 5.2</b> Note-Taking <b>148</b>
Encouraging Silence 112	<b>INTERVIEW 5.1</b> Interviewing Skills <b>148</b>
<b>Paraphrasing 112</b>	Summary 149
Paraphrasing and Empathy 113	Exercises 150
<b>CONVERSATION 4.3</b> Effective Paraphrasing <b>114</b>	Weblinks 151
<b>Summarizing 114</b>	<b>6 Empathic Connections 152</b>
<b>INTERVIEW 4.1</b> Listening, Silence, and Summarizing Skills <b>117</b>	<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES 152</b>
Summary 118	<b>Emotions 152</b>
Exercises 118	<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Emotional Memories <b>153</b>
Weblinks 119	<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Mirror Neurons <b>154</b>
<b>5 Asking Questions: The Search for Meaning 120</b>	The Language of Emotions 154
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES 120</b>	Individual Differences and Cultural Context 156
<b>The Art of Asking Questions 120</b>	Ambivalence 157
Questions Support Counselling Goals 120	Affect 158
Types of Questions 121	<b>Empathy 159</b>
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Memory <b>121</b>	Empathy Defined 159
<b>Essential Questions: Some Options 124</b>	The Importance of Empathy 160
Questions for Establishing Purpose 125	<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Location of Empathy <b>161</b>
	<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Selective Empathy <b>162</b>
	Client Reactions to Empathy 162
	<b>CONVERSATION 6.1</b> Increasing Empathic Vocabulary <b>163</b>
	<b>Types of Empathy 164</b>
	Invitational Empathy 164
	Basic Empathy 166



Inferred Empathy	167
Preparatory Empathy	168
<b>CONVERSATION 6.2</b> When Not to Use Empathy	<b>169</b>
<b>Four Generalizations about Empathy</b>	<b>170</b>
Empathic Response Leads	172
Why Achieving Empathic Understanding Is So Difficult	172
Poor Substitutes for Empathy	173
<b>INTERVIEW 6.1</b> Poor Substitutes for Empathy	<b>174</b>
<b>CONVERSATION 6.3</b> How Can I Be Empathic If I Have Not Had the Same Experience?	<b>176</b>
Tough Empathy	176
<b>INTERVIEW 6.2</b> Effective Use of Empathy	<b>177</b>
Summary	178
Exercises	179
Weblinks	182
<b>7 Supporting Empowerment and Change</b>	<b>183</b>
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>183</b>
<b>Empowerment: Mobilizing Strengths for Change</b>	<b>183</b>
How Counselling Promotes Empowerment	184
Anti-Oppressive Practice	185
<b>The Strengths Approach</b>	<b>185</b>
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Stress & Crisis	<b>187</b>
<b>Crisis Intervention and Empowerment</b>	<b>187</b>
<b>Motivational Interviewing (MI)</b>	<b>189</b>
Empathy	191
Developing Discrepancy	191
“Rolling with Resistance”	191
Support Self-Efficacy	192
<b>Stages of Change</b>	<b>192</b>
Risk Taking	192
<b>CONVERSATION 7.1</b> Working with “Lazy” Clients	<b>193</b>
<b>Cognitive Behavioural Counselling</b>	<b>197</b>
Helping Clients Recognize Thinking Patterns	198
Unhelpful Thinking Patterns	199
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> The Emotional Brain	<b>200</b>
Perfectionism	201
Helping Clients Increase Helpful Thinking	201
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Mindfulness	<b>204</b>
Reframing	204
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Cognitive Behavioural Counselling	<b>206</b>
<b>INTERVIEW 7.1</b> Cognitive Behavioural Techniques	<b>206</b>
<b>Helping Clients Make Behavioural Changes</b>	<b>208</b>
Goal Setting	208
Developing Effective Goal Statements	208
<b>INTERVIEW 7.2</b> Goal Setting	<b>212</b>
<b>The Problem-Solving Process</b>	<b>213</b>
Step 1: Identify Alternatives	213
Step 2: Choose an Action Strategy	214
Step 3: Develop and Implement Plans	214
Step 4: Evaluate Outcomes	215
<b>CONVERSATION 7.2</b> I've Tried Everything	<b>216</b>
<b>Brief Counselling</b>	<b>216</b>
Selected Brief Counselling Techniques	217
Summary	221
Exercises	222
Weblinks	223
<b>8 Difficult Situations: Engaging with Hard-to-Reach Clients</b>	<b>224</b>
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>224</b>
<b>Resistance</b>	<b>224</b>
Signs of Resistance	225
Understanding and Responding to Resistance	226
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Resistance	<b>229</b>
<b>CONVERSATION 8.1</b> Working with “Involuntary” Clients	<b>231</b>
<b>INTERVIEW 8.1</b> Dealing with Resistance	<b>231</b>
Resistance and Counsellor Self-Awareness	232
<b>CONVERSATION 8.2</b> Saying No	<b>233</b>
<b>Confrontation</b>	<b>233</b>
Types of Confrontation	234
The Misuse of Confrontation	235
Principles for Effective Confrontation	235
<b>Aggression and Violence</b>	<b>237</b>
Risk Assessment for Violence	239
Violence and Mental Illness	242
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Head Trauma and Violence	<b>242</b>
Violence Risk Assessment: Key Questions	243
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Aggression	<b>243</b>
Managing Angry and Potentially Violent Behaviour	244
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Flight or Flight	<b>244</b>
The Phases of Violence	245
Critical Incident Debriefing	251
<b>INTERVIEW 8.2</b> Follow-up to a Violent Incident	<b>252</b>
<b>Counselling Angry and Violent Clients</b>	<b>254</b>
Prevention	254
Assertiveness Training	254
Cognitive Behavioural Counselling (Therapy)	254
Anger Management	254
Substance Misuse Interventions	255
Psychiatric Intervention	255
Reduction of Stressors	255
Counselling Victims	255
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Children and Abuse	<b>256</b>
Summary	256
Exercises	257
Weblinks	258
<b>9 Mental Disorders and Substance Abuse</b>	<b>259</b>
<b>LEARNING OBJECTIVES</b>	<b>259</b>
<b>Mental Health in Canada</b>	<b>259</b>
Mental Health Assessment	260

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM)	261
Major Mental Disorders	265
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Neurotransmitters and Mental Illness	<b>268</b>
<b>CONVERSATION 9.1</b> How to Respond to Hallucinations	<b>269</b>
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Depression	<b>270</b>
Child and Youth Mental Health	274
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Adolescent Marijuana Use	<b>276</b>
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Adolescent Drug Use	<b>277</b>
Working with People Who Have Mental Disorders	277
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Psychotropic Medication	<b>279</b>
<b>CONVERSATION 9.2</b> When Clients Don't Take Their Medication	<b>280</b>
<b>Substance Use Disorders</b>	<b>281</b>
Substance Use Disorders and the DSM	282
Brain Plasticity and Addiction	283
Supporting Recovery from Addiction	283
<b>BRAIN BYTE</b> Pleasure Pathway	<b>283</b>
Co-occurring Disorders	285
<b>Suicide Counselling</b>	<b>286</b>
Warning Signs and Risk Assessment	286
Summary	290
Exercises	291
Weblinks	292

## 10 Cultural Intelligence 293

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES 293

#### Diversity in Canada 293

**BRAIN BYTE** Culture 294

#### Canadian Immigration 296

Problems Faced by Immigrants/Refugees	297
Sociopolitical Realities	299
Ethnic Minorities and Counselling	300

### Key Elements of Cross-Cultural Understanding 301

Worldview	301
Personal Priorities, Values, and Beliefs	302

### BRAIN BYTE Culture and the Pleasure Centre 303

Identity: Individualism vs. Collectivism	303
Verbal and Emotional Expressiveness	305
Communication Style	306
Language	307
Relationship Expectations	307

### Counselling Immigrants and Multicultural Clients 309

Controlling the Tendency to Stereotype	309
Diversity and Individual Differences	311
Learning from Clients	311

### First Nations Clients 312

First Nations Worldviews	313
Working with First Nations People	314
Traditional Healing Practices	315

### Spirituality and Counselling 316

#### CONVERSATION 10.1 Praying with Clients 319

### Achieving Cross-Cultural Competency 319

#### Awareness of Self 321

Multicultural Involvement	322
---------------------------	-----

Summary 323

Exercises 323

Weblinks 324

*Appendix Brain Basics* 325

*Glossary* 328

*References* 334

*Tables, Figures, Conversations, Interviews and Brain Bytes Index* 346

*Author Index* 348

*Subject Index* 351

# Preface

*“We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used  
when we created them”*

*Albert Einstein*

**HERE’S GOOD NEWS!** Emergent neuroscience research is confirming the validity of counselling by demonstrating in dramatic ways how counselling changes the brain. Counselling works! We have learned how positive brain growth is possible from the use of counselling basics such as listening, empathy, asking questions, and the establishment of relationship. It’s exciting, and we are still at the beginning stages of what is certain to be an avalanche of profound developments in coming years. Our brains are “plastic” and in a constant state of change. Life experience, adversity, trauma, risk taking, and learning shape and reshape the brain in ways that help us cope with the challenges in our lives, or, alternatively, they may drive us to depression, anxiety and substance abuse. Neuroscience is providing answers to the question, “how can counselling help create conditions that promote positive, empowering brain growth or repair?”

Since the 1990s new technologies have spawned an explosive interest in the brain. Functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) uses magnets to produce pictures of the brain showing active areas in real time, computerized tomography (CT scan), and positron emission tomography (PET) scan, uses radioactive material to identify parts of the brain that are active during certain tasks. These imaging technologies have resulted in enormous progress, and our neuroscience knowledge base has continued to grow exponentially.

Clearly, this is the era of the brain, and everyone is interested in learning more. Booksellers feature entire sections on the topic, and as I write this edition, one of the bestselling nonfiction books in Canada is a book on the brain. In the near future, I anticipate that college and university counselling programs will have required courses on the brain and neuroscience.

In this sixth edition of *Choices*, a new feature, BRAIN BYTES, presents brief and relevant connections to emergent neuroscience. Although this book cannot do justice to this vast topic, my hope is that BRAIN BYTES will motivate readers to make neuroscience an ongoing part of their professional development plan.

There is a scarcity of Canadian textbooks, which forces university and college teachers to rely on textbooks that are written by American authors. These books are designed to meet the needs of the American market, so the Canadian context is rarely referenced. Canadian professional counsellors are governed by their own codes of ethics, as well as federal and provincial legislation that differ from the laws in the United States. Health and social service structures and policies further define the uniqueness of the Canadian counselling environment. The Canadian cultural context is markedly different from that of our American neighbours. Until *Choices* was published, there was no Canadian counselling textbook option. The tremendous success of the first five editions underscored the need for a “made in Canada” book. *Choices* has now been widely adopted throughout the country as the required text for many introductory and advanced counselling courses.

I continue to benefit from the feedback provided by reviewers, readers, colleagues, clients, and students. In the sixth edition, all chapters have been rewritten to improve clarity and include current research, with updated references and weblinks. This edition continues my commitment to producing a readable and practical text. As much as possible, I have avoided the use of unnecessary jargon, and I have tried

to be transparent and explicit regarding my assumptions, a practice that parallels my approach to counselling.

The sixth edition of *Choices* maintains its basic format, which has made it the preferred textbook for a wide range of social work and social service educational programs in Canada. Cognitive behavioural counselling and the principles of motivational interviewing, two approaches that have demonstrated evidence-based best-practice empirical data, continue to be featured in the book. In this edition, the important theme of trauma-informed practice is strengthened. Throughout the sixth edition, references have been updated to include current thinking and research. New success tips have been added to many of the chapters. Significant content additions or enhancements include the following:

- Integration of content related to trauma-informed practice
- Expanded content and examples related to interviewing and counselling skills with children and youth, including youth with substance misuse issues
- Inclusion of relevant connections to recent neuroscience with a new feature, BRAIN BYTE
- Alignment of mental health content to the recently released DSM 5, including a critical analysis of this controversial document
- Significant update to content on Cognitive Behavioural Therapy
- Inclusion of material on recent advances in Motivational Interviewing
- Discussion of “The Truth and Reconciliation Commission” report and its implications for counsellors
- Strengthening of concepts related to understanding resistance
- New material on counselling angry/potentially violent clients and victims of domestic violence.
- New Appendix featuring basic information on the brain.

## PURPOSE

*Choices: Interviewing and Counselling Skills for Canadians, Sixth Edition*, is a practical guide to assist Canadian professionals in developing knowledge, skills, and attitudes for effective interviewing and counselling. Although the book is intended primarily as a textbook for introductory counselling and interviewing courses, it is also designed as a reference text for more advanced practitioners. The book is targeted at students of counselling and professionals in disciplines such as social work, youth justice, child and youth care counselling, addictions, and psychology. Previous editions have also been used by students and practitioners in allied disciplines such as teaching, general nursing, and psychiatric nursing.

This book aims to contribute to the development of professional competence in five ways:

1. It introduces basic concepts and models to help learners understand the theory and philosophy of effective counselling intervention skills.
2. It provides realistic examples to illustrate concepts in action.
3. It contains challenging exercises that promote skill development, conceptual understanding, and self-awareness.
4. It emphasizes the importance of a range of skill choices for interviewing, rather than rules and recipes.
5. It presents links to relevant neuroscience research.

## THEORETICAL MODEL

*Choices* promotes an eclectic approach that encourages counsellors to draw techniques and ideas from various theoretical models depending on the specific needs of the client and situation, not the comfort level of the counsellor. Insofar as possible, decisions about which skill to use are based on best-practice techniques that are supported by research. Among the models that have heavily influenced this book's content are the following:

- Person-centred counselling, pioneered by Carl Rogers
- Trauma-informed practice
- Cognitive behavioural therapy/counselling (CBT)
- Motivational interviewing
- Short-term and solution-focused counselling

## PHILOSOPHY AND ASSUMPTIONS

The model of practice in this book is based on the following beliefs and values:

- Counselling should empower clients and strengthen their self-esteem, not that of their counsellors.
- Counselling expertise does not mean knowing what is best for people; consequently it has very little to do with giving “good advice.”
- The counselling relationship creates the conditions for change to occur and the motivation for change to proceed. The counselling relationship nurtures the natural need that everyone has to grow and change.
- Effective counsellors are self-aware, open to feedback, and willing to learn.
- Counsellors may need to become deeply involved in a relationship with their clients, control their own biases, and constantly monitor their feelings and thoughts so that they are able to separate their experiences and feelings from those of their clients.
- Effective counselling honours the inherent strength, capacity, and resilience of clients.
- The counselling relationship and active listening, particularly empathy, are the cornerstones of counselling.

## CENTRAL IDEAS

### Choices

Every interview requires intelligent choice of skills and strategies. To make wise choices, counsellors need to develop a wide range of practice skills based on supported theory (science) and proven practice (evidence-based best practice). When counsellors have a repertoire of skills, they can make intelligent choices based on the unique needs of clients and situations rather than their own personal comfort levels or established routines.

Counsellors negotiate purposeful working relationships with clients to help them make decisions, deal with painful feelings, solve problems, or learn new skills. Counselling is a complex blend of skill, attitude, and art. Although core skills can be learned and practised, they are not recipes. The ideas in this book are presented as a starting point only. Counselling is also an art. On the basis of context, high-level professionals create, adapt and customize skills and strategies to fit individual counsellor–client interactions.

Skill and technique can be impressive, sometimes even appearing to be magical, but alone they are insufficient. Counsellors need to be genuine, maintain warm and

caring regard for their clients, and recognize the inherent worth of people. Kadushin (1990) discusses the important mix of skill and feeling:

Many might say that if they had to choose between feeling and technique they would choose feeling as the more important prerequisite. Perhaps so, but if one has to make a choice between these qualifications, an injustice has already been done to the client. It should be possible to offer the client an interviewer who is both attitudinally correct and technically proficient. (p. xii)

The counselling model featured in this book rests on the assumption that counselling and interviewing are most effective under these conditions:

- Interviews and counselling relationships have a clear contract and purpose.
- Working relationships with a clear understanding of roles have been established.
- A climate of trust and safety in taking risks has been established.
- Counsellor responses are genuine, based on real feelings and attitudes.
- Clients have inherent strength and capacity for growth and change; effective counsellors recognize and mobilize strengths
- Counsellors respect their clients' independence and their right to self-determination.

This book divides the counselling relationship into four phases: preliminary, beginning, action, and ending. Each phase involves common as well as unique tasks and skills. For example, the beginning phase focuses on relationship development and problem exploration. Predictably, skills for developing relationships, like active listening, are most useful in the beginning phase, whereas skills such as confrontation are not recommended. But the subsequent action phase focuses on helping clients develop new perspectives, set goals, and implement change strategies; thus, skills such as reframing and confronting are used extensively in this phase. Therefore, each phase has its own tasks and relevant skill sets.

The four phases are developmental, with success at one phase dependent in part on success at previous phases. For example, clients are more willing to accept confrontation in the action phase if a solid relationship or trust has already been established in the beginning phase. In general, reference to the four-phase model allows counsellors to make some predictions about the climate of the interview and to determine which skills and tasks will be needed. However, practitioners must be cautious in applying the model too rigorously to every counselling interview because there are always circumstances for which the sequence of events will differ sharply from the model.

## Values and Ethics

*Ethics* are principles of acceptable conduct. Professional associations such as the Canadian Association of Social Workers and the Canadian Counselling and Psychotherapy Association have formal statements that define ethics and standards of practice for their members. Similarly, *values* are ideas and principles that individuals and groups consider important or worthwhile. The behaviour of counsellors in their interviews is influenced largely by their values, including their philosophical view of people and the way they are motivated. Counsellors who see people as good and goal-directed will behave very differently from those who believe people are selfish and lazy, needing to be controlled. In counselling, certain core values are of particular importance:

1. Belief in the dignity and worth of people
2. Respect for the client's right to self-determination (i.e., for freedom of choice and the right to control one's own life)
3. Commitment to work for social justice



By respecting the dignity of people, counsellors try to be nonjudgmental in their work and treat all clients with respect and caring. The second core value, the self-determination principle, values the right of clients to be involved in decision making and to control decisions that affect their lives. The social justice principle requires counsellors to work to alleviate unfair social or system conditions.

Best-practice counselling draws on the expertise of clients to participate in decisions related to the goals and process of counselling. For this reason counsellors should demystify their work through open discussion of their methodologies, assumptions, and intentions. Moreover, commitment to client self-determination restrains counsellors from unhelpful behaviours, such as advice giving and abuse of power or control. By promoting client self-determination, counsellors use a strengths approach that empowers clients by assuming their capacity to cope and change.

Although the topic is beyond the scope of this text, counsellors should also consider their responsibility to extend beyond their role as counsellors to social and political action. As advocates for social justice, they should strive to reduce gender, cultural, and other forms of discrimination. They should also promote changes in social policy as well as modification in the functioning of formal organizations and institutions to meet the needs of clients.

## Respect for Diversity and Culture

Diversity includes differences in such major variables as race, religion, age, sex, sexual orientation, physical and mental ability, economic capacity, language, culture, values, beliefs, preferences, and ways of thinking and behaving. The diversity of today's counselling caseloads requires that counsellors develop a range of interviewing and counselling skills. Competent counsellors are able to vary their style depending on the unique needs of different clients and situations. In simplest terms, the more choices counsellors have, the greater their ability to match their work to the needs and wants of their clients and the less their need to repeatedly use the same skill. Effective counsellors are wise enough to know when and when not to use particular skills. Similarly, the goal of counselling is to help clients achieve versatility in their capacity to solve problems and achieve goals.

*Choices* emphasizes cultural competence. Since everyone is unique, each with his or her own mix of values and beliefs, culture is a variable for work with all clients. When working with clients from visible minorities and those who are marginalized by poverty or discrimination, counsellors must examine the sociopolitical realities that frame the clients' circumstances. They also need to develop sufficient self-awareness to escape or manage any tendency to be culture-bound—the assumption that all clients share their values, perspectives, and ambitions or, worse still, that client differences represent deficiencies. By sustaining a multicultural perspective that recognizes and prizes diversity, counsellors can avoid the pitfalls of ethnocentrism (the belief that one's own views and culture are superior). Culturally competent counsellors view cultural differences as opportunities to widen their horizons and deepen their versatility. They remember to be humble enough to learn from their clients.

## Self-Awareness

Knowledge of self, including consciousness of one's values and beliefs and the impact of one's behaviour on others, is a prerequisite for effective counselling. Counsellors who lack self-awareness may confuse their clients' feelings with their own. When counsellors are unaware of their own needs, including those that are unmet, they risk unconsciously using their counselling relationships to meet personal goals instead of

client goals. In addition, without self-awareness counsellors will be ignorant of those areas of practice in which they are competent and those in which it will be difficult for them to work with objectivity.

Competent professionals know themselves, and they ensure that their values and beliefs do not become a burden to their clients. They accept that exploring and reflecting on one's competence and the limits of one's role and expertise are fundamental to professional practice. For counsellors, this process of self-examination continues throughout their careers.

## STRUCTURE OF THE BOOK

The book is divided into 10 chapters.

Chapter 1 explores professional identity and introduces readers to the basic concepts of ethics, values, and self-awareness.

Chapter 2 explores the basic nature of counselling skills and strategies. In this chapter four major skill clusters are introduced: relationship building, exploring/probing, empowering, and challenging. The four-phase model of counselling (preliminary, beginning, action, and ending) is proposed as a model for understanding the evolution of the counselling relationship. As well, the important components of a trauma-informed approach are introduced and discussed.

Chapter 3 examines the helping relationship and considers the core conditions of effective counselling. Sessional and relationship contracting are featured in this chapter.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 explore the active listening skills of attending, silence, paraphrasing, and summarizing (Chapter 4), questioning (Chapter 5), and empathy (Chapter 6). Specific ideas for interviewing and working with youth are discussed in these chapters.

Chapter 7 is concerned with action-phase skills that motivate clients to think differently and make changes in their lives. Two important theoretical models, cognitive behavioural counselling and motivational interviewing, are featured.

Chapter 8 presents information on working in difficult situations, such as when clients are resistant or potentially violent.

Chapter 9 looks at concepts for working with various populations, including those who are dealing with mental disorders, contemplating suicide, or who have addictions. The sixth edition has been reworked to align with DSM-5.

Chapter 10 explores important concepts and issues related to counselling clients from different cultures. This chapter includes a discussion of spirituality and counselling, reflecting a growing interest in and acceptance of spiritual issues in counselling. In this chapter, multicultural competencies for Canadian counsellors are introduced.

In addition to the **Appendix** entitled “Brain Basics,” a **Glossary** of key terms and concepts and the **Reference List** complete the text.

## Features

People learn in different ways, so this book includes a range of features designed to assist learners in understanding at the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural levels. Each chapter contains the following elements:

- **Learning Objectives:** key concepts that will be addressed in the chapter
- **Summary:** a short review at the end of each that summarizes important ideas
- **Conversations:** a unique feature presenting teacher–student dialogues of frequently asked questions



- **Sample Interviews:** annotated interview excerpts that illustrate and explain chapter concepts
- **Success Tips:** short, practical ideas for counselling success
- **Illustrative Figures:** diagrams that support or embellish chapter concepts
- **BRAIN BYTES:** short links to interesting and relevant neuroscience
- **Exercises:** end-of-chapter reflective questions to give readers practice developing self-awareness, practice skills, and conceptual knowledge.
- **Weblinks:** links to websites related to the chapter's material.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR STUDENTS

If you are studying this book as part of a course on counselling skills, you will probably have the opportunity to develop skill competence in a number of different ways:

- Watching instructor demonstrations
- Conducting practice interviews using role-played or (preferably) real-life scenarios
- Completing the chapter exercises
- Receiving feedback and evaluation from instructors and student colleagues who observe your work
- Using audio and video recordings to understand and assess your verbal and non-verbal responses
- Working with clients in practicum field settings

In most counselling skills courses, learning groups are used to practise skills. Usually, these learning groups use classroom simulations and practice interviews in which you assume the roles of client, counsellor, and observer. Each of these roles offers unique challenges and opportunities for learning.

### Practice Interviewing: When You Are the Client

The client's role offers a powerful opportunity for you to understand client feelings and expectations. You may find that your reactions are similar to those that clients experience:

- Ambivalence about sharing feelings or details about personal issues
- Feelings of vulnerability and fear of being judged, embarrassed, or ridiculed

As a client, it will be up to you to control how much you wish to disclose; however, by taking reasonable risks, you can enhance your learning opportunities and insights.

### Practice Interviewing: When You Are the Counsellor

When you are asked to practise your newly learned skills as a counsellor, you may feel clumsy and insecure as you take risks to change established communication patterns or experiment with new skills and strategies. As a student with limited training, you may be reluctant to ask questions that seem to invade the privacy of your colleagues. Moreover, when dealing with sensitive issues you may fear that your lack of experience will damage your clients. You may also fear that your colleagues will judge you as inept. As well, when you are being observed by others, the intense focus on your work can be

unsettling and anxiety-provoking. But all these reactions are common, and you will probably find that your colleagues feel the same way. Most professional counsellors take many years of practice and study to become competent and comfortable using a full range of skills. What is important is that you persist and avoid the natural temptation to stick with familiar patterns of communicating. Skills that are awkward in the beginning will, with practice, become part of your natural and preferred style.

## Practice Interviewing: When You Are the Observer

Student observers are responsible for watching the interview and providing feedback to student colleagues who are practising their counselling skills. At first, you may be reluctant to offer feedback, perhaps worrying that your remarks will generate anger or hurt feelings. But keep in mind that the observer's role gives you an excellent opportunity to develop the skill of and practise giving feedback.

Helpful feedback is energizing and does not detract from another person's self-esteem. As people learn and practise interviewing and counselling skills, they may feel vulnerable and awkward. Hence, it is important to remain sensitive to their emotional and psychological needs while balancing their needs for information and correction.

Observer feedback may be of two types: supportive or corrective.

- **Supportive feedback** recognizes strengths. Consider how you respond differently when your strengths are acknowledged rather than when your weaknesses are targeted. Yet despite how obvious this idea seems, many students and professional counsellors are very problem-oriented and fail to acknowledge client or colleague strengths. Supportive feedback must be genuine (true) and delivered without rescuing or patronizing. If you lie to others to avoid hurting them, your credibility as a source of feedback will diminish.
- **Corrective feedback** challenges others to examine or change behaviour. But before giving corrective feedback, consider your relationship with the other person. If your relationship is based on trust and caring, corrective feedback has the potential to be effective. However, if your relationship has unresolved conflict, corrective feedback is more likely to be perceived as an attack. If people think your feedback is harsh, demanding, or controlling, there is a higher probability that they will resist. Here are some general feedback guidelines:
  - Be specific. Avoid generalities such as, "Your interview was great." Anchor your assessment by identifying the specific behaviours and responses that you observed that contributed to the success of the interview.
  - Don't use corrective feedback as a means to control, impress, or punish. Pay attention to your tone of voice and other nonverbal behaviour. Make sure that you avoid lecturing and pointing fingers.
  - Timing and pacing are important variables. Supportive feedback is more useful when self-esteem is low. In addition, feedback is most effective when given as soon as possible, but ensure that you protect personal privacy.
  - Avoid overwhelming student counsellors by providing too much feedback. Watch for nonverbal cues or ask them to let you know when they would like to stop the process.
  - Ask people to self-evaluate before offering your opinions. You may be surprised to find that they already have insight into the problem areas. Then the number of areas where you have to provide direct feedback is reduced.
  - Feedback has the most potential for success if it is invited or targeted to perceived areas of need. Contract with others to deliver feedback. Ask questions such as

“Would you like me to offer my ideas on what happened?” or “Are there specific issues that you’re concerned about?”

- Everyone is different. Some people prefer feedback to be direct and to the point. Others may prefer it “sandwiched” between positives. Some others need time to reflect before responding, or they may profit from visual and written illustrations. Discuss their preferences, then respond accordingly.

Some people have an immediate reaction to feedback that will differ from their reaction once they have had time to ponder what you have said. For example, a person who responds defensively or even with anger may, on reflection, come to accept your input. The opposite can also be true—people who react favourably may later develop other feelings, such as resentment or confusion. Checking back during future encounters is one strategy for keeping abreast of others’ reactions.

Remember that giving helpful and caring feedback is one way of developing and strengthening relationships. If you are honest and supportive with others, you greatly increase the probability they will be honest and supportive with you when you ask for their helpful feedback.

## Developing an Effective Learning Group

When you work with student colleagues in each of the three roles, discuss your fears as well as your expectations of one another. You will need to work to develop a contract or agreement on how you will work together. Practice interviews are powerful learning opportunities when they are based on real rather than role-played feelings and issues. Consequently, it will be important to establish a climate of safety, where confidentiality will be respected. Some important principles to remember:

- Colleagues who are in the client’s role are disclosing personal issues and feelings, so it is essential to respect their dignity and right to privacy.
- Everyone has different capacities for intimacy. Do not expect that all members of a learning group will disclose at the same level. Accept individual differences.
- Learning the skills of counselling requires a willingness to give up familiar patterns of communication and attempt new approaches. Expand your limits by taking appropriate risks to try new skills, and be tolerant of colleagues who are engaged in similar risk-taking.
- Feedback from others is an important part of learning. Therefore, try to make it easy for others to give you feedback by consistently responding nondefensively. Help others give specific feedback by asking targeted questions.

### SUCCESS TIP

Expect that the process of learning and experimenting with new skills will result in a period of awkwardness and self-consciousness. For a time it may seem as though your capacity to counsel others is regressing.

## Keeping a Personal Journal

A personal “for your eyes only” journal can be a significant adjunct to your learning. The journal is a tool for introspection that provides a private means for documenting and exploring your thoughts and feelings related to the development of your counselling skills. There are no rules for journal writing other than the need to make entries on a regular basis and to try to avoid self-censorship.

## Using This Book

If you are using this book as part of a course on counselling, your instructor will propose a suggested reading schedule that structures your reading over the semester, and he or she will assign or adapt the chapter exercises to fit your learning needs. Another way to use the book is on an “as you need it” basis, using the index or chapter headings to locate specific content. As well, you are encouraged to use other books, journals, and tools, such as Internet research, to supplement your learning. However, you should read this book (or any book) critically and seek to understand and explore the ideas and try them out.

## Counselling Skills as a Way of Life

You may be surprised to discover that the skills of counselling are also the skills of effective everyday communication, and that the process of developing your counselling competence may begin to influence your personal relationships. As counselling skills become part of your style, you may find yourself becoming a little more inquisitive and more sensitive to the feelings of others. However, you may find that others in your life do not welcome the changes in your manner and style. When you change, others around you have to accommodate your changes. If you become more probing in your questions, they must be forthcoming with their answers. When you become more empathic, their feelings become more transparent. These changes move the relationship to a deeper level of intimacy, which may be frightening for some, particularly if the pace is too fast for their comfort level.

## SUPPLEMENTS

The following instructor supplements are available for downloading from a password-protected section of Pearson Canada’s online catalogue ([www.pearsoned.ca/highered](http://www.pearsoned.ca/highered)). Navigate to your book’s catalogue page to view a list of those supplements that are available. See your local sales representative for details and access.

### Instructor’s Manual (ISBN 978-0-13-430342-0)

Each chapter in the textbook has an accompanying Instructor’s Resource Manual chapter that contains a Chapter Outline, Teaching Strategies and Classroom Activities, Web Resources, suggestions for Paper Topics and Research Projects, and Supplementary Material and Additional Exercises.

### Computerized Test Bank (ISBN 978-0-13-442767-6)

Pearson’s computerized test banks allow instructors to filter and select questions to create quizzes, tests or homework. Instructors can revise questions or add their own, and may be able to choose print or online options. These questions are also available in Microsoft Word format. This Test Bank includes over 400 questions. There are approximately 45 questions per chapter, including multiple-choice, true/false, short answer, and essay. Each question is accompanied with the correct answer and a reference to the section head where the answer can be found in the book.

### PowerPoint Presentations (ISBN 978-0-13-442766-9)

A collection of slides designed to complement the chapter content is available in PowerPoint format. Each chapter is covered in 10–16 slides, outlining key concepts and summarizing important terms with definitions.

## CourseSmart for Instructors (ISBN 978-0-13-430345-1)

CourseSmart goes beyond traditional expectations—providing instant, online access to the textbooks and course materials you need at a lower cost for students. And even as students save money, you can save time and hassle with a digital eTextbook that allows you to search for the most relevant content at the very moment you need it. Whether it's evaluating textbooks or creating lecture notes to help students with difficult concepts, CourseSmart can make life a little easier. See how when you visit [www.coursesmart.com/instructors](http://www.coursesmart.com/instructors).

## CourseSmart for Students (ISBN 978-0-13-430345-1)

CourseSmart goes beyond traditional expectations—providing instant, online access to the textbooks and course materials you need at an average savings of 60 percent. With instant access from any computer and the ability to search your text, you'll find the content you need quickly, no matter where you are. And with online tools like highlighting and note-taking, you can save time and study efficiently. See all the benefits at [www.coursesmart.com/students](http://www.coursesmart.com/students).

## Learning Solutions Managers

Pearson's Learning Solutions Managers work with faculty and campus course designers to ensure that Pearson technology products, assessment tools, and online course materials are tailored to meet your specific needs. This highly qualified team is dedicated to helping schools take full advantage of a wide range of educational resources, by assisting in the integration of a variety of instructional materials and media formats. Your local Pearson Education sales representative can provide you with more details on this service program.

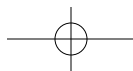
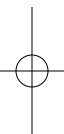
## Pearson Custom Library

For enrollments of at least 25 students, you can create your own textbook by choosing the chapters that best suit your own course needs. To begin building your custom text, visit [www.pearsoncustomlibrary.com](http://www.pearsoncustomlibrary.com). You may also work with a dedicated Pearson Custom editor to create your ideal text—publishing your own original content or mixing and matching Pearson content. Contact your local Pearson Canada sales representative to get started.

## peerScholar

Firmly grounded in published research, peerScholar is a powerful online pedagogical tool that helps develop students' critical and creative thinking skills through creation, evaluation, and reflection. Working in stages, students begin by submitting written assignments. peerScholar then circulates their work for others to review, a process that can be anonymous or not, depending on instructors' preferences. Students immediately receive peer feedback and evaluations, reinforcing their learning and driving development of higher-order thinking skills. Students can then re-submit revised work, again depending on instructors' preferences.

Contact your Pearson Canada sales representative to learn more about peerScholar and the research behind it.



# Acknowledgments

I have appreciated the help offered by the editorial and production staff at Pearson Canada have been very helpful in guiding this book through the many steps required to bring the manuscript to publication:

- Acquisitions Editor: Kimberley Veevers
- Marketing Manager: Michelle Bish
- Designer: Anthony Leung
- Developmental Editor: Alanna Ferguson
- Program Manager: John Polanszky
- Project Manager: Richard Di Santo
- Copyeditor: Susan Adlam

I am grateful to everyone who has taken the time to offer suggestions and reviews of the first five editions. Students who have used the text have offered many helpful ideas. The students of the Community Social Service Work program and the Co-Occurring Disorders Program at Douglas College offered candid and helpful recommendations when I field-tested the ideas in this edition. Over the last ten years, I have had the good fortune of traveling to Uganda, Africa with my students who go to complete their practicums in community and hospital settings. We go as learners, and all of us have been richly rewarded by the warm and generous hospitality of our African hosts and colleagues. I am grateful for their help and the lessons learned about the values that really matter. I hope this learning is adequately reflected in the philosophy and content of this book.

A special thank you to Garima Khosla and her team for their meticulous work editing and formatting the final copy. I appreciate the work of Susan Adlam for her terrific work as copy editor. I appreciate my professional colleagues who offered many helpful ideas and suggestions for the sixth edition: Alyson Quinn, Melissa Medjuck, John Fox, Doug Estergaard, Bruce Hardy, Lawrence Becker, John Fleming, Elizabeth Jones, and Colleen Murphy. My wife, Joyce Shebib, continues to support me with helpful critique of my work.

Reviews of the previous editions continued to have an impact on this edition. Thank you to Andrew Buntin, Winnie Benton, Irene Carter, Susan Davis, Karen Marr, Sheri McConnell, Sara Menzel, Karen Moreau, Neil Madu, and Robert Owens.

Reader comments and critical feedback are always welcomed. Please email me at [shebibt@douglascollege.ca](mailto:shebibt@douglascollege.ca).

**Bob Shebib**  
Faculty Emeritus  
Douglas College  
New Westminster, BC

Customized Workshops and staff training based on this book are available. Contact the author [shebibt@douglascollege.ca](mailto:shebibt@douglascollege.ca) for details.

