The Application of Group Psychological Counseling in the Practical Course of Mental Health Education for College Students

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Keywords: Group Psychological Counseling; College Students; Mental Health Education

Abstract. The purpose of this paper is to introduce the connotation of group psychological counselling and its relationship with mental health education curriculum, the role of group psychological counselling in mental health education practice curriculum, and the application of group psychological counselling in mental health education practice curriculum. We have chosen the application of group psychological counseling in the self-awareness, learning psychology, emotional management, interpersonal communication and love psychology as the subjects and used the overview of the papers that have published. Research shows that group counseling activities consolidate and verify the knowledge and theory of mental health education, and enhance students' ability to combine theory with practice, and test the effect of teachers' theoretical teaching.

1. Introduction

As the competition of the society getting fierce, the college students are suffering more anxiety from their future jobs. To educate the students more comprehensively, most of the colleges have set up a course named the mental health education for college students. Students are forced to learn it but the effect is so little. Some researchers have contributed to research this topic, but they mainly focused on the theoretical research, the practical of the research was less. This paper has proposed the practical application of group psychological counseling to the mental health education. We can effectively manipulate the craft in the practical teaching.

2. Connotation of Group Psychological Counselling and Its Relationship with Mental Health Education Curriculum.

Group psychological counselling aims at to guide individuals in groups and to assist participants to develop their personal potential through group activities, and learn to solve problems and overcome emotional and behavioural difficulties through group activities. Group psychological counseling is a kind of counseling that contraposes to the groups with common psychological needs, through mutual sharing, support, interaction between the members of the group, to understand and solve the problems. Therefore, the problems of group members are solved through the communication and interaction of members in the groups. Practice has proved that group psychological counselling is an effective educational activity.

In the practical courses of mental health education for college students, teachers mainly formulate a series of group counselling programs suitable for college students, such as “paper and pen practice”, “expansion training”, “role-playing”, “imitation learning” and other group activities, so that students can better understand the theory, knowledge and methods of psychology, and improve the abilities of self-awareness, interpersonal communication, and self-psychological adjustment in an experiential, participatory and interactive atmosphere, and then develop the mental health level.
3. The Function of Group Psychological Counselling Activities in Mental Health Education Practice Curriculum

*Change the traditional teaching mode and truly realize the teaching concept of "student-centered".*

The traditional teaching mode is a kind of indoctrinating, closed, passive teaching mode, lacking experience and reflection. It is unpopular for students because of single teaching form, outdated teaching methods and poor teaching effect. Under the guidance of advocating "student-centered" teaching concept, group psychological counselling activities can improve students' learning initiative, enthusiasm and creativity and truly realize the teaching concept of "student-centered" by formulating a series of group counselling programs closely related to college students' life and study.

*The activity can create a more harmonious learning atmosphere, shortening the teachers-students relationship.*

Traditional teaching is a teaching mode that teachers speak on the stage and students listen in the seats without interactivity. The atmosphere of this study is tense. At the same time, the relationship between students and teachers is distant. Nevertheless, group psychological counseling creates a more harmonious learning atmosphere by introducing participatory, interactive and experiential activities. Teachers and students sit together to share the experience and attainment of the activity, creating an equal, warm and harmonious communication environment, which shorten the relationship of teacher-students.

*Mobilize students' multiple senses to participate in study and increase the efficiency of learning.*

In group activities, students should not only listen with ears, look with eyes, take notes and think with brains in traditional teaching, but also speak with mouth, perform with body as well as experience with heart. In this dynamic and static learning atmosphere, students can stabilize their attention in the learning process and enhance the learning efficiency by mobilizing their multiple senses.

*Meet freshmen's interpersonal communication needs and increase the sense of belonging and honor to the class.*

College students' mental health course is a compulsory course for freshmen in the first semester. Under the background that freshmen live alone away from their parents, their communication needs want to be satisfied more strongly. Organized diversified forms of group counseling activities, freshmen can increase the sense of belonging and honor to the class while eliminate the sense of alienation to the strange environment in the activities of the team.\[2\]

4. The Feasibility and Necessity of Group Psychological Counseling in College Students’ Mental Health Education

*Group counseling can effectively eliminate loneliness and prevent mental health problems.*

In the process of group counseling, the feedback of others to themselves becomes a "mirror" of self-evaluation in the process of communication among members, so that they can understand that others have the same situation as themselves, and then their sense of inferiority and loneliness will be weakened accordingly. In the meantime, it can provide members an achievable reference goal, which can encourage each other, make progress together, and enhance the confidence and courage of our own development.

Group counseling plays a more important role in eliminating loneliness. Because of the mutual participation and cooperation between members in the process of group counseling, there will be an infectious atmosphere and supportive effect, which is helpful for people with social disorders to bravely walk out of fear and loneliness, and learn to communicate and get along with others. It is conducive to enriching the interpersonal experience of members and changing their unappreciative behavior.

*Group Counseling saves time and effort then individual cases*

The number of group counseling members is more than that of individual cases. Accordingly, the corresponding total time is less. The efficiency is high. Save time and effort at the same time and also
can solve the problem of less staff to a certain extent. Compared with the one-to-one help of case counseling, one-to-many form saves manpower and time more economically and effectively.

**Group counseling can effectively imitate the social reality**

In the first place, counseling provides members with a real environment in a simulated circumstance, which is conducive to the application of the effects of counseling to real life. As Lifton said, "Group counseling provides members with situations that similar to real life, receiving multiple stimuli to learn, face, and deal with their own difficulties and problems." The similarity between group counseling and real life makes the effect of counseling easier to consolidate.

And then, the environment from group counseling is propitious to the promotion of personal physical and mental development. In the learning theory of Bandura pointed out that learning is the synthesis of direct and indirect experience. The group psychological counseling provides a guided social learning situation, promoting the of personal physical and mental health development through the experience of the group and the wisdom of modern psychology.

What’s more, it can build a network of social support for energy enhancement. Most of the members of the self-cognitive group feel helpless, powerless and pessimistic about their environment because of the lack of social support. However, in the self-cognitive group, because it gives equal consciousness and sense of community belonging, affirmed social environment and learning opportunities to help each other and grow together, it has created or improved the social support network in which members are energized in fact.

**Group counseling is contagious and has a extensive influence**

The members of the group can find a sense of belonging to the community. Because members have the same experience or wish in a group, they have a sense of equality, a strong sense of acceptance, they are no longer marginalized, and feel the value of their own existence, and then have a sense of belonging and identity to the group. It also can create learning opportunities to help each other and grow together. By responding honestly to the growth of other members, members express their acceptance and affirmation of others which make members willing to learn and help mutually, so as to achieve common growth. [2]

5. **The Methods of Group Psychological Counseling Commonly Used in the Practical Course of Mental Health Education**

**Group discussion method**

Group discussion refers to the members of the group to face the common problems or confusion, mutual analysis, and do in-depth discussion. In the process of group discussion, we should express our opinions, listen to the others, and then perfect our own views, help members to clearly understand their own and others’ views, develop the attitude of respecting others, and form a correct world outlook, outlook on life and values. Freshmen adaptation counseling, interpersonal counseling, self-growth counseling, career planning counseling and other aspects can be put to use. For example, “a trust activity”, an exercise method that leaders take to build trust in a group. The common trust activities are as follows: ① trust circle speaking ②trust lift ③trust fall ④blind people trust walking and so on. During the activity, everyone circle around and ask one to sit in the center, and then others take turns to say his strengths. (Character, appearance, and work).The the person who is being complimented then says that the advantages what he or she was previously aware of and not .The rules must be sincere about their advantages and should not baseless boast , such will hurt others. Finally, students learn to trust each other, accept, appreciate and praise mutually in this activity.

**Game coaching method**

Game coaching is to carry out some meaningful psychological games, mobilize students to participate in the initiative, experience the fun of the activity, at the same time, trigger students to think, arouse the students’ passion for life, the attention for the people around and the love for parents. For
example, mood graffiti game. Each member uses the color pen wanted, draws recent mood and shares work, then guess what the mood is mutually, and tries to understand the feelings expressed by others. In this activity, we should pay attention to that we do not ask students to show their painting skills, but let students perceive their emotions in the graffiti process, express their emotions with the brush, and release their emotions in sharing with others. At the same time, they can also understand others' emotions, so as to adjust their way of getting along with others.

**Psychodrama method**

Psychodrama is a kind of group psychological counseling which takes real life as the mode. It uses a special dramatic form to allow participants to interpret roles through exaggerated forms of artistic expression, experience some previously unaware emotions and attitudes in ideological collision and spiritual resonance, finally achieve the purpose of catharsis and relieve stress. For example, campus Psychodrama let the students take the psychological conflict, trouble, confusion and so on from the life, the study or the communication into the “a small play” in a way of comedy show, role play, scene dialogue and all that. According to the needs of the students, choose the corresponding repertoire and arouse the enthusiasm of each team member. In the process of interpretation, students will have a profound understanding of the emotion and feeling in the play, get more understanding and introspect of themselves, make the emotion and feeling tend to be stable, and gradually establish good habits of behavior.

**Behavior training method**

Behavior training is a kind of psychological counseling method, which is guided by the theory of behavior learning, and through a specific program, study and strengthen the behavior of the adaptation, to correct and eliminate the non-adaptive behavior. By the means of guidance and training, learning good behavior pattern, gradually grasp new behavior to change the individual’s bad behavior or attitude, form a new concept and behavior mode after that. Through a series of activities for relaxation training, self-confidence training, emotional expression training and interpersonal skills training are not only suitable for students with certain psychological confusion, but also promote the healthy growth of all students. For example, most students will have different degrees of weariness in learning, and even some of them gradually lose confidence in learning, so that as the grade increases, the difficulty of knowledge increases, learning harder and harder, slowly become underachiever, lack of willpower in learning, affecting the development of students. We can set up "learning needs willpower" theme activities to conduct behavior training. Before the activity, prepare red bean, mung bean and red flag. Take a handful of red beans and a handful of mung beans, mix them together, and then separate them. Give it a try! How much time did you spend? When the students are sorting, the teacher watches one side of the time, the red flag is inserted on the pile of the rice to be picked up, and the time he takes is reported; Those who do not finish the sorting continued until the last student finish. This activity needs patience and persistence to be completed. After the activity, let students share their experience in the activity.

6. **The Application of Group Psychological Counselling in the Practical Course of Mental Health Education**

According to statistics, mental health problems such as psychological disorders and mental illness account for about 20% of the total number of college students. The main mental health problems of college students are as follows: 1. Self-cognitive bias; 2. The psychological problems of learning are prominent, such as the adaptation of the new learning environment, the unclear learning objectives, the low motivation, the lack of interest and so on; 3. Improper handling of interpersonal relationships; 4. Emotional problems are not handled well. Therefore, this paper will discuss the application of group psychological counseling in the practical course of mental health education on students undefined self-consciousness, learning psychology, emotional management, interpersonal communication, love psychology.
Self-awareness

The teaching goal of this topic is to grasp the essence of self-consciousness, understand the characteristics and common problems of college students' self-consciousness, and focus on mastering the methods to perfect themselves, so as to improve the self-esteem and self-confidence of individuals. Activities such as “twenty who am I”, “three kinds of me”, “who shaped me”, “unique me (my merits and demerits)”, “personal shield” and “life curve” enable students to comprehensively, completely and thoroughly understand, positively accept, flexibly regulate and strive to surpass themselves.

Learning psychology

The teaching goal of this topic is to understand the concept and psychological mechanism of learning, grasp the characteristics of college students' learning, fully understand the common psychological barriers of college students' learning and acknowledge the methods of college learning. First, we asked students to do some psychological tests, such as the college students' learning motivation self-assessment scale, college students' learning interest self-assessment, college students' willpower assessment, college students' learning skills assessment, and college students' examination psychological assessment. Through these tests, students could have a basic understanding of their own learning ability. After that, students can learn how to improve their learning ability and adjust their study state by “reading method training”, “learning experience sharing”, “relaxing in the examination room” and other activities.

Emotional management

The teaching goal of this topic is to grasp the essence and characteristics of emotions, understand common bad emotions, learn the regulation methods of bad emotions and master the cultivation ways of good emotions. Activities such as “guess my mood”, “angel and devil”, “how much you know about EQ”, “mirror activity”, “discover happiness”, “happy camp” carried out can make students understand the characteristics of emotions, learn how to adjust emotions, and be the master of their own emotions.

Interpersonal communication

The teaching goal of this topic is to understand the essence and content of interpersonal communication and interpersonal relationship, clarify the types, characteristics, function and influencing factors of interpersonal communication among college students, master the principles and skills of interpersonal communication, understand the types of interpersonal relation disturbance and the methods of adjustment. Through a series of group counselling activities, such as “untie the thousand-thousand-knots”, “journey of trust”, “relaxation training”, “wearing a ‘high’ hat” and “meditation training”, letting students master the basic principles of interpersonal communication and enhance their interpersonal communication skills.

Love psychology

The teaching goal of this topic is to understand the essence and connotation of love, grasp the psychological characteristics of college students' love, understand the characteristics and deviations of college students' sexual psychological development, and learn the correct psychological and sexual concepts of love. Through self-confidence training: “request and refused”, “the growth of the chicken”, “you and I in love”, “my orange”, “role-playing”, “when my love come to an end” and other activities to make students realize the true meaning of love, understand the difference between the sexes in love, correct their own view of love, promote the development of positive and healthy love concepts in the interaction.

7. Conclusion

Group counselling activities consolidate and verify the knowledge and theory of mental health education, and enhance students' ability to combine theory with practice, and also test the effect of
teachers' theoretical teaching. Based on the above positive role of group counseling activities, we will improve a series of participatory, experiential and interactive group counseling programs in the future teaching process on the premise of fully understanding the psychological characteristics of college students, so that students can steadily improve their mental health level in group activities.

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