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## THE COUNSELLOR — 1984

One of the distressing realities with which counsellors must deal is the gross discrepancy between what we know and what we are able to implement. I would hope that within the next ten to fifteen years we are able to greatly reduce this gap. Assuming that we are successful in gaining the resources to increase our impact as a profession, I see three major changes which should occur. First, the entire area of information retrieval and dissemination, specifically with respect to the occupational and vocational areas, must be re-organized and systematized; second, the counsellor's focus must move away from individual counselling towards working with the client in his home or work environment, and, third, the counsellor must begin to spend more of his time as a trainer of other professional and paraprofessional groups.

From all indications, in ten years our society will be more mobile, more technological, and much more complex than it is today. These conditions will put increasing pressure upon the occupational-vocational aspects of a counsellor's job. What will he need to cope with this situation? Much of the current methodology with respect to the dissemination of occupational and vocational and other information in the counselling process is grossly inadequate. We talk about national norms and national averages and provincial-wide unemployment, yet when it comes down to specifics, more often than not we do not know which jobs are available in our neighbourhoods. The major task that faces us in this area is the centralization of information on job openings and requirements relevant to each locale. The centralization through computerization would permit counsellors in any area to have immediate access to this information through the push of a button at an easily accessible terminal. If a system like this were operating, a man could walk in to see a counsellor and find out within a matter of minutes what jobs were available, where they were, and to which he was suited. Information within each locality could be cleared to a central location on a weekly basis to keep the information banks up to date.

The technology exists to implement this kind of system today; however, to this point it is not seen as a priority by the government or by society as a whole. If counselling is to remain a viable profession within the area of vocational guidance and job placement, the development and implementation of this kind of system would be central to our survival within the next ten to twenty years.

This type of information retrieval and exchange system could also be applied to recreational activities and be used to assist people with common interests to get together. If the trend towards alienation and isolation, which have begun to characterize our large cities, con-

tinues, then people are going to need all the help they can receive to locate activities to occupy their leisure time and individuals with similar interests. Leaving this process to chance or to each individual's initiative will prove to be quite inadequate. The computer and the services that it may provide in this area need not be viewed as a symptom of the impersonalized modern age, but could very well make a significant humanistic contribution to all our lives.

Secondly the counsellor's traditional role as a consultant or counsellor to an individual must definitely change. Within the last decade we have witnessed the advent and popularized use of groups in many different settings. The natural extension of this movement will be the focus upon natural groups within the environment. This would involve working both with an individual within his natural group at school, at work, at home, or at play and focusing upon problems encountered by groups of different sizes such as school staffs, departments within a company or larger organizational units. Organizational development activities such as these are being practiced on a limited scope today; however, many of the norms in our society operate against the implementation of this kind of approach. The discussion of feelings, personality, and personal reactions on the job is to a large extent taboo in most situations. We have been led to believe that our lives must be compartmentalized; certain types of activities and certain types of reactions are appropriate at school or on the job, others are appropriate in recreational settings, and others are appropriate only in a family setting.

Obviously, to some extent there are limits on the types of behaviours that are appropriate in different settings but at this time we err in the direction of over-compartmentalization. The counsellor's new role will become one of a consultant to work groups where an individual or a group problem will be worked out within the context in which it was generated, and in this way the probability of a counsellor having an impact will be greatly increased. His job will acquire many more risks and become much more difficult, but also much more challenging and rewarding.

The third area is an extension of the second. The counsellor's ultimate objectives should be to have a significant impact on as many people as possible. Consider the following illustration as to how a counsellor might spend his day.

Counsellor A — sees eight students for forty to fifty minutes each and is of considerable assistance to each of them.

Counsellor B — sees four students and each of their teachers and is of considerable assistance to each of them.

Counsellor C — sees eight teachers individually and helps each to solve his problems.

Counsellor D — spends the morning with a group of thirty teachers training them in effective communication and problem solving techniques in the classroom and repeats this procedure with thirty different teachers in the afternoon.

It is ridiculous to argue as to which counsellor is doing the best job because each is performing very effectively within his defined

role. In one day, Counsellor A has contact with eight people and his efforts are usually restricted to them whereas Counsellor D has had contact with sixty people with a very real potential of each of those sixty having some impact on all the students they meet. This analogy would apply in many other types of situations where a counsellor would be speaking to or conducting activities for a large group of professionals or paraprofessionals. A counsellor must maximize his contacts; individual consultation is a luxury that we will not be able to afford. The emphasis currently given to individual contact will have to shift to activities which permit the counsellor to reach more people.

If these three major shifts can be achieved, counselling will be able to make a valuable contribution to the ongoing development of our society. However, if we adhere to old models and do not attempt to change our focus with the times, we will become as outdated as the horse and buggy.

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### THE CHANGED BEHAVIOR OF BEHAVIOR CHANGERS BY 1984

What will counselors and counselor-educators be doing in 1984 that they are not doing today? Right now the counseling profession is receiving decreasing administrative, governmental, and public support (Berdie, 1972). Counselors are being challenged as inefficient and unproductive, and counseling budgets are under attack. The time is past when counselors could assume their efforts were worthwhile and expect others to agree. To continue to receive societal support, counselors must now account for what they do.

Let's eavesdrop on a conversation between two imaginary counselors in 1984:

Jean: "Hi, Bill. How was that workshop on friendship behavior? Did you pass the competency?"

Bill: "I got through the program on the first try. It was really a well-designed training package. I learned how to use video modeling and cueing procedures to increase social perceptiveness behavior. I have some clients who could really benefit from this."

Jean: "Are you going to apply to be credentialed to operate a friendship behavior learning program?"

Bill: "Well, I have to demonstrate my competency on several