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Signature *Diane C. Grape*
Date *August 3, 1972*

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION
IN COUNSELING

by

DIANE CHRISTINE WOLFE

A professional paper submitted to the Graduate Faculty
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

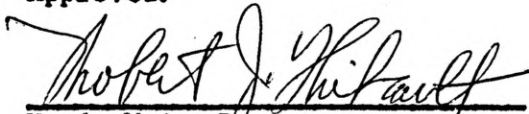
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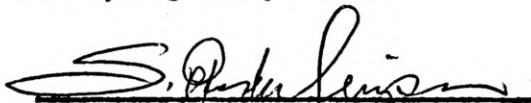
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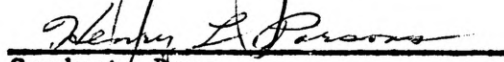
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The researcher wishes to humbly thank Dr. S. G. Simpson for his willing help and also for his teaching her to enjoy the "process." She also wishes to thank her parents who allowed their house to remain in shambles until her paper was completed.

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ABSTRACT

The researcher investigated the importance of nonverbal communication in a counseling situation. The purpose was to draw an awareness to the need for therapists to be concerned with the nonverbal behavior of their clients and of themselves. Pertinent research was lacking in this area; and therefore, the procedure used was a review of literature from many interrelated areas and also the use of personal observations.

Before attempting to study specific nonverbal behavior, the nature of the communication system was studied as to its overall structure, components, and messages. The literature reviewed indicated that the development of one's communication process is influenced by many factors from one's heredity and environment. When certain experiences are rejected or denied awareness, the organism is unable to work in harmony; intrapersonal and interpersonal communications break down.

The client should emerge from the counseling sessions with an inner process whereby he can maintain the natural congruent balance between the visceral and cortex. Because a troubled client is often unable to express himself verbally, a skilled counselor depends heavily upon his perceptions of that client's nonverbal behavior in order to describe accurately the client's predicament.

It was noted that the experienced therapist should realize that a client's nonverbal behavior is unique unto him; the therapist must keenly train his senses to deal with the stimuli from the client that are relevant to that particular client. The context within which a certain nonverbal behavior is used, and also the consistency with which it is used, are important factors for the therapist to consider. Also changes in a client's nonverbal behavior within a counseling session and from one conference to another could provide valuable information to the therapist as to whether or not the client was improving.

The therapist's nonverbal and verbal communication must work harmoniously together; any discrepancy perceived by the client may be seen as a threat and hinder any possible growth within the relationship. The higher the degree to which the therapist is perceived by the client as being congruent, showing positive regard, and being empathic, the higher the degree of growth resulting from the relationship.

The researcher recommended that extensive study be done with nonverbal communication applicable to a counseling situation to aid in the training of new counselors and in the effectiveness of established counselors.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Communication is considered to be one of the main elements in an effective therapeutic relationship. The counselor or therapist needs to be equipped with an awareness and experience in the use of the tools of verbal and nonverbal communication before approaching a client. With an understanding of the communication system, particularly his own congruent behavior patterns, the counselor will be better able to empathically understand, to identify, and to sensitively evaluate the interdependency between what the client says verbally and what the client communicates nonverbally.

One of the goals of the counseling session, as perceived by the investigator, is for the client to emerge equipped with a process within himself whereby he comes closer to being congruent verbally and nonverbally in communicating with himself and with others. In a disturbed and troubled client, many times the verbal and nonverbal forms of communication are contradictory; one completely buries the other. The counselor must be able to determine if he is perceiving the same as he is hearing and to effectively reflect this to the client in an appropriately timed manner.

It also becomes important for the therapist to be legitimate in terms of being congruent in his own communication behavior. This creates an atmosphere of genuineness which will be perceived and trusted by the

client (27:185). "It is the task of the therapist to choose words and gestures which, when combined in the head of the patient, will produce something that is alive" (33:30).

This investigation was concerned with the nonverbal aspects of communication within a counseling situation. Much of what goes on in a counseling session is nonverbal, which means that the counselor must be responsible for descriptive reflection of the client's nonverbal as well as verbal behavior. It is as though the client's total being is expressing in a total dimension that a skilled counselor must be sensitive and prepared to clarify effectively.

One has only to consider the problems of relating to the silent client to realize the importance of striving for total awareness of the meaning of nonverbal behavior in working with that client. What is done and not said can be more important than that which is verbalized. The old saying, "Actions speak louder than words," has much relevance in a counseling situation; nonverbal signs usually seem to speak for themselves. One cannot communicate nothing. Even silence says something about an individual. Often, according to Dr. S. G. Simpson (35:Interview), a client's expression indicates, "Please listen and understand what I cannot say."

Purpose of Paper

More emphasis needs to be directed in the area of nonverbal awareness; and the purpose of this professional paper was to draw, from the many interrelated areas, an integrated acuity toward the importance of nonverbal communication in a counseling session. Nonverbal communication must be recognized as a unique language - communication in a peculiar manner - but nevertheless a distinct and frequently congruent language. Nonverbal communication is a very essential and important entity of the conference.

Words are frequently found wanting in terms of expressing a human dilemma or predicament. In seventeen years of counseling, Dr. Simpson found that bizarre behavior was most often observed in people who simply could not express themselves adequately (35:Interview). Bizarre behavior was an expression, frequently an angry expression, that if the person were verbally adept would not have been necessary; he might have, with greater effectiveness, used a verbal form of communication (35:Interview). Because so many times a client is unable to verbalize his feelings, the counselor must rely on nonverbal communication to grasp the essence of what the client is experiencing at that very moment.

The area of nonverbal communication was only investigated with a study of the relationship between verbal and nonverbal communication. "Nonverbal cues may reinforce, contradict, complement, substitute for, accent, or help to regulate the flow of verbal communication" (19:247).

In effective interpersonal relations, verbal communication and nonverbal communication work in harmony - one lacks the ability to completely replace the other.

According to Dr. Carl Rogers, the visceral and the cortex are physiologically in harmony (25:510). He further clarified this point by indicating (25:510):

"Psychological maladjustment exists when the organism denies to awareness significant sensory and visceral experiences, which consequently are not symbolized and organized into the gestalt of the self-structure. When this situation exists, there is a basic or potential psychological tension."

Rogers continued by proposing (25:513):

"Psychological adjustment exists when the concept of the self is such that all the sensory and visceral experiences of the organism are, or may be, assimilated on a symbolic level into a consistent relationship with the concept of self."

A need is apparent for a congruent balance throughout a person's system of communication. One of the functions of the counseling relationship is to help the client strive toward this natural congruent balance.

Procedure Used

The investigation of the uses of nonverbal communication in a counseling situation was presented in the following manner:

1. A review of literature pertaining to the nature of communication in man and his interpersonal relations with others.
2. A review of literature investigating some aspects of observing and examining nonverbal behavior in a client.

3. A review of literature acknowledging the various kinds of nonverbal behavior of a therapist.
4. Some conclusions regarding the use of nonverbal communication in counseling.
5. Perceived recommendations for further research in the field of nonverbal communication that generally apply to the counseling situation.

Limitations

This professional paper was limited to an investigation of nonverbal communication in individual counseling relationships. Much of what was reported could be applied to group therapy; but of necessity, the scope of this paper was restricted to individual counseling.

One of the goals of this paper was to relate the importance of a balance between verbal and nonverbal communication. The age group of clients was limited to adolescent and older people whose ability to verbalize showed some degree of verbal maturity.

Another limitation was that of culture. As nonverbal communication varies from one culture to another, the observations and conclusions were limited to the American culture.

The final limitation was in research material. The resources used were confined to those available through the Montana State University Library including professional journals and general library literature.

Definition of Terms

In order to speak of communication, nonverbal and verbal, and its application to a counseling situation, the terms will be defined in the way they were used in this paper. Subsequent terms will be defined in the text as they are used by a particular author.

Communication Communication is defined as "that human function which enables people to relate to each other. By means of signals and signs, human beings exchange views, express inner thoughts and feelings, make agreements, and state disagreements" (30:173).

Counseling Counseling is defined as "a definitely structured, permissive relationship which allows the client to gain an understanding of himself to a degree which enables him to take positive steps in the light of his new orientation" (26:18). Counseling and therapy are used interchangeably.

Nonverbal Communication Nonverbal communication involves "any message we send or receive outside of words" (20:231).

Verbal Communication Verbal communication refers only to what is said in terms of words.

Summary

The purpose of this paper was to direct special attention, by reviewing literature from many related areas, to the importance of nonverbal communication in a counseling situation.

One of the goals of a therapeutic relationship is to help the client achieve a higher degree of congruence in his verbal and nonverbal communication. The nature of the communication process, the client's

nonverbal behavior, and the nonverbal behavior of the therapist are important components discussed to help the therapist accurately understand and effectively relate to a client in a counseling situation.

The procedure, limitations, and definitions used by the investigator in reviewing the literature were also presented.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF PERTINENT LITERATURE

Introduction

The intricacies involved in communicating verbally and nonverbally with a client can be partially understood by investigating the development of the communication process in and between human beings. Chapter two of this paper will examine, first of all, the nature of communication in man and his relations with others. Secondly, it will outline some specific aspects of man's nonverbal communication.

The Nature of Communication

From birth, many factors contribute to the maturation of an individual's complex communication system. Dr. Jurgen Ruesch, a noted authority on human communications, found through his work that:

"The human functions of communication evolve gradually and are dependent upon the biological development of the human being. The communicative abilities of the individual must be properly exercised if they are to reach maximum effectiveness, and the social surroundings of a human being are counted upon to provide an appropriate matrix for the gradual unfolding of the communicative skills of the individual. Cultural determinants are therefore responsible for the choice of language, the nature of the techniques used to manage people, and a host of other factors bearing upon attitudes toward laws, persons, and things and shaping beliefs about birth, death and religion. But even in a homogeneous sociocultural environment the life experiences of people differ; not all persons have an equal chance to attain full mastery of communicative skills, nor do they all develop in the same direction" (31:15).

A communication system involves the development of an intricate process which relates what is inside an organism to the outside and which also relates what is outside the organism to the inside. This process allows communication to take place intrapersonally and to take place interpersonally with another individual, a small group of individuals or a large society of people. The following three functions of communication enable a person to express and to receive information:

1. The first function of communication is concerned with perceiving all incoming stimuli. Physiologically, the senses are the receptors of what is outside the organism (31:6).
2. The second function of communication is the process of evaluation. Incoming signals are assimilated and decisions are made in terms of appropriateness regarding the organism's responses. Evaluation also accounts for an individual's memory and for the retention of past experiences (31:6). The more an experience appears to our emotional "set," the more readily it is retained and recalled.
3. The third function of communication is the transmission and expression of information. Messages transmitted intrinsically within the organism are verbally and nonverbally expressed extrinsically (31:6).

These three functions do not develop at the same rate or in the same manner for all individuals. Rather, the ability to communicate

verbally and the ability to communicate nonverbally appear to grow and blend as a person matures. "In individual development, the nonverbal precedes the verbal for many years, and the integration of the two forms of language gives rise to highly individualistic patterns" (30:178).

From birth until at least the first year, nonverbal behavior is the prime source of communication. Infants have a sense of perception and a very limited sense of action. After a decade or so, a sense of coordination has been adequately mastered which allows a child to express himself physically. Evaluation is the slowest function to mature and is not thought to be fully developed until after about forty years of age (30:176-177). Learned values, attitudes and beliefs along with a personal trust of one's own response mechanisms are essential components of the evaluative process.

The maturation of this uniquely complex procedure enables a person to communicate intellectually and emotionally, verbally and nonverbally. "Emotions thus express the appraisal of existence from the inside out, while intellectual functions represent the view of the same events from the outside in" (30:14).

In evaluating a person's communicative ability, the counselor must view the three functions of perception, evaluation, and transmission and expression as a unit and with an awareness of the limitations of the functions according to age-group and maturity. How effectively this unit operates in a client while in a counseling session

can reveal much of what may go on in his outside environment. Ruesch felt that:

"Information about an individual's specialization in perception, evaluation, and transmission, his skills in attending to these functions, and the distortions he produces enables the examiner to predict future communicative behavior with regard to these functions in specific situations" (30:177).

With a relatively sophisticated command of the communication functions, a person begins to code the information he wants to relay. Messages are coded by the sender in a way he hopes will effectively communicate what he wants the receiver to perceive and hear. "The process by which one set of events represents another set of events is referred to as codification" (30:177). Depending upon what is to be communicated, codification comes about in one of two methods:

1. Analogic codification refers to a "series of symbols that in their proportions and relations are similar to the thing, idea, or event for which they stand" (31:8). It involves the continuous use of nonverbal communication. Emotions are coded in this way (30:14).
2. Digital codification refers to man-made signals that are previously agreed upon. It involves discrete step intervals such as the numerical system and the phonetic alphabet (31:8). The intellectual and logical phases of existence are coded in this way (30:14).

These two processes develop in different ways but work simultaneously. Ruesch wrote, "Inside the organism, signals are coded in terms of nervous impulses traveling along certain pathways. Outside the organism, people use spoken language, gesture, and action to signal to each other ..." (30:177). Ruesch further felt that schooling supplies people with the tools for digital codification, and the family and social interaction supply the basis for learning analogic codification (30:177-178).

After examining the foundation of how one sends and receives information, the information sent can now be researched. The non-verbal messages and the verbal messages are of prime importance in the communication process. "In communication, the assumption is made that information controls behavior and that by studying information and its exchange one can obtain a better understanding of human behavior" (30:173).

Ruesch defined a message to be "a series of statements which originate in one place and terminate in another ..." (30:173). To relay a message a sender and a receiver are required; a completed message must be acknowledged by the sender as having been received and acknowledged by the receiver.

Ernst G. Beier, who has written extensively about the use of communication in psychotherapy, felt that to interpret communication behavior a person must understand the two major types of messages that

are sent (3:10-14). One type, the persuasive message, includes contextual and nonverbal cues and is sent with the intention of creating an emotion in the receiver without his knowledge of the intent (3:10). "He must be made to feel, not to think" (3:10). An example might be a gentleman who sends his lady friend a box of candy. The main purpose of this type of message is "to impose a condition on the respondent under which he behaves as the sender wishes without becoming aware that he has been led to that particular choice with a certain message" (3:11). The gentleman's persuasive message would be, "Please feel kindly toward me."

Repetitious persuasive messages can unconsciously form some type of value system in the receiver (3:12). This is particularly evident in the rearing of a child, whose focal center is already one of feeling rather than of thinking. Persuasive messages easily influence his ideas of what he considers to be "good" and "bad." This method of conditioning can be used in a positive direction in counseling. Using persuasive messages, a skillful counselor may help a client alter certain ineffective values and reinforce those that are meaningful to him (3:12). Feelings, then, must be acknowledged as a form of internal communication that can be descriptively interpreted in a perceptive manner.

The second type of message is the evoking one which is sent with no conscious intent of the sender to create an emotion in the receiver (3:12). However, while the sender's intent is not to provoke a response

from the receiver, the sender's message does elicit a response even though the sender may be unaware of the content of the message; and therefore, he may not feel responsible for the effects of his message. A hypothetical example of this type of message might be seen when a popular girl cannot understand why all of the boys, even the nice ones, try to take advantage of her. She doesn't realize that through her subtle nonverbal and verbal cues, she is inviting sexual aggressiveness and exploitation.

"The evoking message is probably one of the basic tools used by individuals to maintain their consistency of personality" (3:13). The responses received by the individuals from their evoking messages constantly confirm the individual's view of the way he perceives things to be. An individual has an extremely difficult time accurately identifying and effectively evaluating his own evoking messages. In his book, The Silent Language of Psychotherapy, Beier wrote that an emotionally disturbed person "creates a world in which he typically feels victimized by others, in which he experiences great unhappiness, though he has little awareness that he is often the creator of this world" (3:13). The therapist who carefully studies the messages from his client may gain valuable insight into some of the client's interpersonal problems. The counselor can also help to correct the client's ineffective pattern by not responding to the client in the client's expected behavior-response pattern and in the way that has been reinforcing for him in the past.

An illustration might be a client saying, "I have so much work to do and no one will help me." Instead of an expected sympathetic response such as "Oh, you poor thing," an experienced counselor might simply express an interested concern of "Hm, hm," inviting the client to continue. The counselor thus opens up new choices for the client in a way that the client can react maturely and responsibly.

Of relevance with regard to the process of exchanging messages is the concept of metacommunication. "Any message may be regarded as having two aspects: the statement proper, and the explanations pertaining to its interpretation" (31:192). Metacommunication involves messages about communication - nonverbal behavior that gives instruction to the verbal statement. Metacommunication is an integration of verbal and nonverbal codification that is learned by an individual through exposure and interaction within a particular culture (29:43). Metacommunication may either support or negate the verbal expression. A client may say, "I'm angry" while she is smiling. The smile is the metacommunication about the message; it is another message about the verbal words which in this case does not reinforce the verbal communication. Metacommunication can be a significant factor in perceiving a troubled client's world.

Basis of Nonverbal Communication

From the time within the womb where the embryo is aware of feelings from the mother, an individual is involved in nonverbal communication. Throughout history, attempts were made by men in varied areas to describe adequately this complex process of man's nonverbal communication.

Sigmund Freud in his book, Psychopathology of Everyday Life, wrote of the significance of man's contradiction between what he says verbally and what he expresses nonverbally (9:1-342).

One of the first systematic attempts to study nonverbal communication in man was done by Charles Darwin, the evolutionist. From personal observations, Darwin introduced three general principles of expression displayed by man and lower animals resulting from emotions and sensations. These general principles were:

1. "The principle of serviceable associated Habits. - Certain complex actions are of direct or indirect service under certain states of the mind, in order to relieve or gratify certain sensations, desires, &c.; and whenever the same state of mind is induced, however feebly, there is a tendency through the force of habit and association for the same movements to be performed, though they may not then be of the least use" (5:28).
2. "The principle of Antithesis. - Certain states of the mind lead to certain habitual actions, which are of service, as under our first principle. Now when a directly opposite state of mind is induced, there is a strong and involuntary tendency to the performance of movements of a directly opposite nature, though these are of no use; and such movements are in some cases highly expressive" (5:28).

3. "The principle of actions due to the constitution of the Nervous System, independently from the first of the Will, and independently to a certain extent of Habit. - When the sensorium is strongly excited, nerve-force is generated in excess, and is transmitted in certain definite directions, depending on the connection of the nerve-cells, and partly on habit: or the supply of nerve-force may, as it appears, be interrupted. Effects are thus produced which we recognize as expressive" (5:29).

Darwin's research gives support to the idea that motions and changes of the body can be expressive. His search for a biological theory laid the foundation for further study.

The development of the body has been researched in relation to the development of a person's nonverbal behavior. As an individual gains mastery of his body, his nonverbal behavior becomes more integrated and complex. Ruesch wrote, "The expression of emotions, the ability to make statements, and the transmission of any kinds of signals are implemented by the muscles" (31:16). Nonverbal communication is thus very dependent upon the development of the neuromuscular system of an individual.

The field of nonverbal communication was divided by Ruesch into three main areas according to how messages are analogically codified (32:485) (31:189-191):

1. Sign language includes different codifications such as gestures and signals that have replaced words, numbers and punctuation. This area varies in different communication systems. An example of a particular sign language might be

Winston Churchill's famous V for victory sign made by holding the index and middle fingers upright.

2. Action language involves motions that are not used as signals. Emotions are conveyed in this manner.

3. Object language may take on the form of symbols or it may be specifically designated as a particular symbol. This area encompasses deliberate and nondeliberate shows of material objects. Road signs are a common example of object language. Object language also includes the human body and the way it is dressed.

The three areas of nonverbal communication have separate, but equally important, functions. Temporally, object language is usually a longer lasting occurrence than either action or sign language. Action and sign language have to be perceived immediately when they occur.

The sensory modalities also differ between the types of nonverbal expression (31:189-190). Sign language is restricted to vision. Action language uses the eye, ear, some degree of touch, temperature, pain and vibration. Object language uses long and short distance receivers and a limited amount of smell and taste.

The use of the senses becomes very important in one's relations with others, particularly in a therapeutic situation. Working with clients is a three-dimensional activity calling for complete openness and awareness to the experiencing of that client; to relate what the

client is experiencing demands concentration. While at the same time he is creatively experiencing what he is perceiving, the therapist must come across without judgment or evaluation. The therapist must be able to semantically describe his perceptions to the client at an appropriate time. This procedure is not altogether easy, and often times the counselor must rely on all of his senses for accuracy in his perceptions. "The therapist might 'sense' that he is intimately in touch with his client. But this kind of impression is a matter of inner sensitivity not easily crystallized in words and therefore difficult to verify" (18:22).

One of the nonverbal behaviors most important in a helping relationship that relies heavily on the senses is the presence of empathy. Robert L. Katz, in his book Empathy: Its Nature and Uses, defended the importance of empathy by writing, "The case for empathy rests on the fact that however similar human beings may be, there is something distinctive and unique about each" (18:15). Empathy is a type of sense which helps us to "feel" with another person. Gardner Murphy described empathy as "experiencing within oneself what actually belongs to other perceived persons or objects" (23:496). Katz defined the use of empathy as "a somewhat odd and elusive skill, a divinatory art, a sixth sense, an instinctive and primitive form of penetrating to the core of another person" (18:1).

In interpersonal communications, benefits are received by both parties when empathy is present. One profits in understanding the other

person's world, and the other person feels good that someone cared enough to enter that world. The difference between empathy and sympathy is that with empathy one loses himself in others, while with sympathy one focuses only on himself and on how he is affected by the other person. (18:8-9).

There is a difference between simple empathy and empathy used as a technical process such as in a therapeutic situation. The latter will be explained more fully in Chapter three.

In an empathic relationship, "there must be an exchange of messages, of cues, both verbal and nonverbal, as well as some elusive sense of presence or person confrontation" (18:40). Otto Fenichel depicted the empathic process as consisting of: "(a) an identification with the other person, and (b) an awareness of one's own feelings as the identification, and in this way an awareness of the object's feelings" (7:511).

Theodor Reik expands Fenichel's idea in his book, Listening with the Third Ear, by describing four stages of the empathic process.

Identification is the first stage. The empathizer loses himself and feels his way into the other person. It is a highly emotional phenomenon which is, for the most part, nonverbal. Identification is a projection into the other person, experiencing what that other person feels.

The stage of incorporation involves the empathizer "jumping back" into himself to understand the other person's experience. It is an intro-

jection of that other person into oneself feeling the other's experience as if it were one's own.

Reik wrote of the stage of reverberation that:

"what is essential in the psychical process going on in the analyst is - after the stage of observation - that he can vibrate unconsciously in the rhythm of the other person's impulse and yet be capable of grasping it as something outside himself and comprehending it psychologically, sharing the other's experience and yet remaining above the struggle ..." (24:468).

An important aspect of the reverberation stage is that a person does not have to actually experience every experience in order to empathize with another person. Early in life a person has experienced every emotion to some degree and is capable of imaginatively combining different degrees of different emotions to "feel" with another person (18:45).

Max Scheler supported this idea by writing:

"Given the range of emotional qualities of which man is intrinsically capable and from which alone his actual feelings are built up, he has an equally innate capacity for comprehending the feelings of others, even though he may never on any occasion have encountered such feelings (or their ingredients) in himself, as really unitary experiences" (34:48).

The final stage of detachment uses the methods of careful inspection and reason. The empathizer draws upon all available resources to carefully analyze what the person is saying.

In their work with communication, Ruesch and Bateson observed that:

"Each person must at least have some notions about himself and the other; he must, for example, think of both as alike in being alive and capable of emitting and receiving communication. Indeed, if misunderstanding leads to hostility, it is immediately clear that there must exist common premises regarding anger and pain. The beginnings of a common codification system are latent in our biological nature, our common anatomy and common experience of bodily functioning and maturation" (29:203-204).

Empathy is a facilitator for one needing to share feelings with another in order to overcome loneliness (18:97). Katz related empathy and communication in the following way:

"The sense of directness and immediacy of communication derives from the dramatic quality of empathy in which one person seems to participate in the inner life of another and also from the automatic nature of the skill of recognizing nonverbal cues, bypassing, as it does, the more elaborate process of communication via linguistic symbols arranged in logical sequence" (18:97).

The more a person lacks empathy, the lonelier he feels. His inability to reach out lends itself to a high state of anxiety (18:111). Through observing a client's nonverbal communication, an adept counselor recognizes that the client's anxiety may be resulting from his inability to reach out to others.

Summary

The study of a person's communication system can be looked at from three different viewpoints: the overall structure, the components, and the messages (15:22). This study can be examined historically, biologically, culturally, socially and individually.

Nonverbal communication often becomes the only effective way of relating what one is experiencing; its importance in intrapersonal and interpersonal relations cannot be denied.

"When certain things cannot be said out loud, when facts are denied or actions prohibited, nonverbal expression and symbolic elaboration become the only means by which pressing problems can be handled" (30:126).

Nonverbal communication is of importance in understanding what a person is saying at all times. It becomes particularly important to a counselor when a person cannot adequately verbalize what he is experiencing or when the client's verbal and nonverbal languages are contradictory.

Through an investigation of verbal and nonverbal communication, the skilled therapist can understand how something is expressed as well as what is expressed. The presence of empathy in interpersonal relations can promote a person's emotional growth.

CHAPTER III

OBSERVATION AND EXAMINATION OF NONVERBAL BEHAVIOR

Introduction

The investigator found that research in nonverbal communication applicable to the area of counseling was, for the most part, neglected. There were two probable reasons for this.

First of all, many times expensive, technical equipment, such as motion picture cameras and television cameras, needed to record meaningful nonverbal data is not available.

Secondly, the nonverbal data collected is hard to quantify in a manner that will permit its use in research based on a scientific approach. In the evaluation of nonverbal data, the information gathered is so highly subjective that in viewing such an individualized phenomenon, it is hard to make generalizations.

These limitations, however, do not stop the counselor from making personal observations. Many ideas can be drawn from personal experience and from such related areas as communication, physiology, evolution, and psychology.

Chapter three will investigate the observation and examination of a client's nonverbal behavior and will study the nonverbal behavior of the therapist.

Observation and Examination of Nonverbal Behavior in a Client

According to Charles Galloway, in observing and examining a particular client's nonverbal behavior, three basic problems occur (11:313):

1. When to look? Should observations occur only when the nonverbal behavior of the client is incongruent with what the client says verbally, or should observations occur all of the time?
2. What to look for? Should emphasis be on a particular action or on the movements of the whole individual?
3. How to observe? Is it possible to watch for clues in a client's behavior without his feeling every movement is being recorded and analyzed? Ruesch emphasized that the very fact someone knows he is being watched may influence his behavior (31:46).

No set rules are laid down for observing someone effectively, but some basic precautions should be noted before placing too much emphasis on a client's nonverbal behavior.

Since nonverbal communication is unique within each individual, a particular movement is not feasibly judged in terms of previous generalizations. Each motion must be examined in its context and as it relates to the whole individual as he functions. An unremitting smile may be a reflection of a pleasant nature in one person and a defense

mechanism for hiding anger in someone else. The therapist must keenly train his senses to deal with the stimuli from the client that is relevant to that particular client.

People form their own characteristic patterns of communicating nonverbally. In accurately identifying these patterns, a counselor looks for consistency of a certain movement or behavior. An occasional incongruent movement is probably not significant, but consistency in the use of incongruent behavior could be. As a client improves, incongruent movements become less consistent, and nonverbal behavior complements verbal communication (27:64).

Research findings pertaining to a variety of nonverbal behaviors which are relevant and relatively easy to observe in a counseling situation will be described.

Body language in general can say much about a particular client's moods and emotions. Julius Fast defined body language as "any non-reflexive movement of a part or all of a body used by a person to communicate an emotional message to the outside world" (6:10-11). He felt that culture greatly influences a person's body language (6:159) and emphasized that:

"The real value of body language remains in the blending of all levels of communication of the spoken language, and whatever else is transmitted on the vocal wave length, with the visual language including body language and self-imagery, with communication along any other bands" (6:173).

Included in the area of body language, gestures are easily identified and may be meaningful in understanding a particular client. They can include movements of the hand, foot, body, head and face (20:235). Gestures may be used as emphasis for what is said, such as a nod when verbally agreeing with someone; or they may stand alone as a previously devised signal, such as the thumb of a hitchhiker. Fullmer and Bernard wrote that "a gesture or body movement may mean many things, depending on its timing, the context of the interview, the person's subculture, and the sequence of gesture and verbal content" (10:211).

Posture is another important nonverbal way the body conveys inner feelings. There are two schools of thought pertaining to the study of posture (17:406). One school involves a careful observation of movements and posture in an individual and then an identification of the feelings associated with them. The second school chooses to define emotions or instincts and then looks for movements or posture to fit these feelings. Whichever method is used, the meaning of an individual's posture is influenced by (17:429):

1. The attitude of the observer.
2. The situation in which the posture is placed.
3. The nature of the posture itself.

Given moods may have an observable influence on posture. Changes in a client's posture during a particular session and as therapy progresses could provide valuable information as to whether or not the

client is improving or in what direction the client is moving. Ruesch felt that "posture is perhaps the best index of the body's past action, and makes possible the prediction of future bodily performance" (31:38).

Robert Koch felt that one's self-image and the way one wants to be seen by others comes through in the way he dresses (20:236). The general mood of the client may be discerned in the way he dresses from one session to the next; changes from session to session and consistency in dress both indicate something of importance in what a client is saying and about the changes going on inside of the client. Closely related to dress is the client's grooming, also a reflection of self-image and values. Attention directed to such features as hair, fingernails, complexion, smell, teeth and makeup could be beneficial in understanding a client's world. The therapist should be particularly observant of changes, if any, in dress style and grooming as therapy progresses. As a client begins to feel better about himself, he tends to treat himself better; and his dress and grooming may reflect signs of self-improvement.

Proximity, the way one handles the space around him, reveals much about one's self-image, especially when he is approached by other people (20:236). Edward T. Hall, who has written extensively in the area of proxemics, described the private area surrounding a person as a "personal space-bubble" (14). The entering of one's private territory without permission may cause that person to physically or mentally withdraw,

or to revert in the other direction to aggression (6:26-27,56). The counselor needs to be aware of the effect that his present distance from the client may cause. Albert Mehrabian wrote of the closeness in distance relating to a positive attitude toward that person (32:296-308). Any changes in the distance between a client and a counselor on the client's part may be an indicator of how the client wishes to relate to that counselor.

Total facial expressions indicate many emotions. In his study of kinesics, Ray Birdwhistell found 250,000 possible different facial expressions in man (4:8). Ruesch attributed these varied expressions as "in part dictated by muscular development, in part by the appearance of the skin, and in part by the bony structure of the skull" (31:57,64). Facial expressions perform a dual role. In addition to standing alone, they act as a metacommunication to the verbal messages. An incongruent person's face might express a different message than his verbalization. He may say, "I'm not angry," while his facial expression shows gritted teeth, protruding jawbone and tightened muscles around the eyes. As therapy progresses and the client develops an awareness to what he is experiencing and a willingness to express what he is feeling, the client's metacommunications begin to complement his verbal messages.

More specifically regarding expressions of the face, in observing a client's eyes it is important to realize that the eyeball shows no emotion in and of itself. Julius Fast wrote that "the eyes are physi-

ological dead ends, simply organs of sight and no more ... never really capable of expressing emotion in themselves" (6:138). The facial components around the eyes - the eyelids, surrounding skin, and muscles - reflect the particular feeling state of the client. Messages are conveyed in such movements as blinking of the eyelids, squinting and staring.

A few studies have been done involving expressions of the eyes and emotional states. One relevant study involved observing the eye contact of sixteen depressive patients and sixteen recovered depressive patients from a particular hospital. Throughout a series of interviews, the eye contact of the patients was charted. A control group of seven surgical patients and students was used to confirm consistency in the interviewer's behavior. As the eye contact of the recovered depressives showed a more normal pattern compared to that of the depressive patients with regard to frequency and length of eye contact, the conclusion was that reduced eye contact may only be a temporary occurrence during depression (16:213-215). This study also seemed to indicate that improved eye contact may be a useful nonverbal clue in determining the recovery of clients; but because of the small size of the group observed, more research should be done in this area.

Somewhat related to the previous study was Mark Knapp's idea that steady eye contact indicates that the "communication channel" is open and that feedback is wanted (19:246). Knapp felt that "competition, dislike, tension, or a recent deception may cause a decrease in eye

contact" (19:246). Observing changes in a client's eye contact could be valuable for the therapist indicating when that client is willing to hear something he might previously have been afraid to listen to. Knapp cautioned that if eye contact is held longer than seems natural, it could be felt as aggressiveness and could make the other person feel anxious (19:246).

Although the voice is considered to be largely verbal, many non-verbal clues can be discerned by listening to specific characteristics of a client's voice. Emotions can be determined by tone, intonation, volume, pitch, hesitations, quivering, speed and silence (20:236). It becomes important for the therapist to listen to not only what is said, but how it is said. Breathing may also mirror many of the client's emotions (20:236). The rate, sound, and depth of breathing could all indicate what a client is going through at a particular time. Changes may occur in the voice and breathing patterns from the start of the session to the end of the session and from one conference to another.

Although touching on the counselor's part is a controversial issue (8:215), it can be a very powerful action if it comes about in a natural way and if both parties are ready (20:236). Touching can sometimes supply the emotional involvement and connection that words cannot supply (8:231). A client's need for or rejection of touching may reflect what is inside of him.

The use a client makes of his time reflects something about his values (20:236). Is he consistently early, punctual or late? A client will often wait until the last few minutes of a session to unload his week's problems. He may feel too threatened to talk about his problems the full session. As therapy continues, the client begins to feel more comfortable talking about himself and utilizes the whole session for meaningful self-exploration.

The absence of certain nonverbal cues in a situation where they would normally be expected might indicate a disturbance in the client. This characteristic is particularly evident in a client suffering from stress (31:163-164). An example might be a client who shows no signs of grief in the death of someone very close to him. The adept therapist, in accurately describing the client's dilemma, can free the emotional constipation and restore the client's awareness of his own experiencing.

It is agreed upon by many that a client's incongruence between his verbal and nonverbal communication can be related to his emotional disturbance. According to Ruesch, "Mental disease is intimately associated with disturbances in sign behavior, language, and communication" (32:485). Ruesch continued with the idea that:

"disturbance in nonverbal sign behavior, language, and communication are associated with more severe and often longer lasting mental and nervous conditions while disturbances in verbal sign behavior, language, and communication are associated with less severe psychiatric conditions" (32:485).

Carl Rogers felt that:

"the emotionally maladjusted person, the 'neurotic,' is in difficulty first, because communication within himself has broken down, and second because, as a result of this, his communication with others has been damaged" (27:330).

The task of counseling is to deal with this problem of failure in communication. The responsibility lies with the therapist to determine where his client "hurts," because the client is usually unable to evaluate his own disturbances (27:340); many times the client can only relate where he "thinks he hurts."

If total communication behavior is incongruent, the counselor becomes the evaluator to decide which aspect of the communication system is telling the truth. Nonverbal communication tends to negate the verbal communication. Charles Galloway wrote that "all human relationships involve meanings that are more than words, and the nonverbal exposes the truth in these relationships" (12:227). Darwin was also impressed by the accuracy with which nonverbal communication expresses feelings. He wrote that nonverbal behaviors "reveal the thoughts and intentions of others more truly than do words, which may be falsified" (5:364).

In the case of emotionally disturbed clients, many times their verbal and nonverbal communication contradict. They are caught in a "double-bind" (20:235). A client may be verbally talking about the good relationship he has had with his mother while unconsciously clenching his

fists and gritting his teeth. Because of his research results, Gregory Bateson proposed that a person trapped in a double-bind for a prolonged period of time is apt to develop schizophrenic tendencies (2:251-264).

Because of his inherent need to communicate, the troubled client struggles for a balance between his need for social stimulation and his need for expression and action. Frustration is a result of not being able to adequately express oneself verbally and nonverbally, and a frustrated person may end up communicating in a disturbed manner (30:44). When intrapersonal and interpersonal communications break down, a troubled client may be seen as "tense, restless, irritable or wound up" (30:44). A skilled counselor empathically works with the client descriptively examining the client's predicament.

The therapist becomes the judge of his client's incongruence or congruence, determining if what is being expressed, verbally and non-verbally, balance. The counselor then becomes the sounding board, reflecting back to that client the counselor's perceptions when the counselor senses the client is ready.

The patient's behavior in the counseling situation reflects many cues to the way he interacts with others on the outside. Beier stated that "the therapist can assume that the patient attempts to create in the therapeutic hour the emotional climate that has been useful to him on other occasions" (3:32). The practiced therapist continually per-

ceives clues from the client and uses these clues to understand the client's immediate moment.

As a fully-functioning, relating human being, the therapist cannot avoid getting involved with the client. What the counselor perceives and hears from the client will have an impact on him. Beier cautioned that the therapist "must have the ability both to understand the social demand of the message and to disengage from it, to read and differentiate the cues designed to have an impact on him, yet withstand the impact" (3:41-44).

The nonverbal clue of a message is one of the client's ways of involving the therapist. The experienced counselor attunes himself to subtle characteristics of the client's message such as the manifest and covert cues. Usually easily discernible, the manifest cues of the message "contain information which the sender consciously wants to give and for which he assumes responsibility" (3:14). But when the client is threatened by his external world, his tendency is to shun responsibility in communicating with others and the client relies on covert cues. Responsibility is not assumed with covert clues as they "are coded to leave the respondent without recognition of the covert message but still subject to an emotional impact" (3:14). The coding of these covert cues is thought to be learned in early infancy (3:20). A baby quickly learns what behavior will elicit what response. For instance, he learns that when he cries a certain way, he will be comforted; when

he laughs a certain way, he will be appreciated. When the child learns to talk, he finds even another tool to control his environment. Children become adept at using covert cues to hide areas in which they were hurt (3:22). They do not wish to repeat a painful experience - a trait which is carried throughout life. The use of covert messages is a way the client can show his needs without verbally acknowledging their existence.

The client's dependence on covert messages becomes unhealthy when he becomes obsessed with the need to control the behavior of others, when the only way he can satisfy his needs is by restricting the responses of the receiver. A person who wants and needs affection will often act in a bizarre manner. His elicited response is attention. What he may actually be saying is, "I need affection." The bizarre behavior can elicit an emotional response rather than a judgmental one. This behavior, then, makes the person feel more comfortable. The client's bizarre action is usually an ineffective coding that can be perceived by an observant counselor. The counselor recognizes that the client cannot openly express his need for affection and uses a covert message to fulfill this particular need. The experienced counselor refuses to respond in the expected manner and carefully describes the client's difficulty in being able to express himself.

Closely related to understanding the client's coding of messages is recognition of a client's reliance on the use of nonverbal and verbal

conventions. "Convention refers to practices that have been established by general consent and sanction" (3:44). Clients can easily hide behind conventions, consciously or unconsciously, if the counselor neglects to identify them and to describe them to the client. The nature of the convention, the context within which the convention is used, and the response being elicited by the client should be noted in order to understand the client's dependence upon any particular convention.

Nonverbal Communication of the Therapist

The client's perception of the therapist's nonverbal communication can "make or break" the therapist's relationship with that client. Just as the client's nonverbal behavior strengthens or negates his verbalization, so too does the counselor's nonverbal behavior. Within his capabilities, the counselor is responsible for being aware of his own nonverbal communication and for being aware of how the client is perceiving his nonverbal communication.

The very presence of a counselor can beneficially convey to the client the feeling that someone is there specially for the purpose of helping him. In his book, The Art of Helping People Effectively, Stanley C. Mahoney wrote that "the act of being present or absent is one of the most fundamental forms of nonverbal communication, and even in our highly verbal society it is one of the chief means of granting or with-

holding approval" (21:110-111). He continued by saying that presence "communicates at a fundamental, nonverbal level our intentions, feelings, and attitudes toward others" (21:121).

The counselor's presence can convey three important characteristics invaluable in a helping, growth-producing relationship. Rogers referred to these qualities as: congruence, unconditional positive regard and empathic understanding (27:60-63).

Congruence means "that the feelings the therapist is experiencing are available to him, available to his awareness, and he is able to live these feelings, be them, and able to communicate them if appropriate" (27:61). The therapist may not be capable of fully achieving congruence, but the closer he comes to being congruent and being perceived as such, the more effective the therapeutic relationship will be (27:61-62).

An interesting phenomenon about a congruent person is that he cannot talk about external facts because facts aren't experienced. Rogers stated, "Accurate awareness of experience would always be expressed as feelings, perceptions, meanings from an internal frame of reference" (27:341). How certain things are perceived will be the focus of communication for the counselor. It is not the therapist's choice to decide if his awareness and experience are congruent. The therapist's choice lies in communicating the awareness he does have of his current experiencing (27:346).

The ability and willingness of the counselor to communicate what he is experiencing can aid him when the client falls short of words to express what he is feeling. By keeping somewhat aware of his own experiencing, the counselor is able to communicate just how he perceives the client; the therapist will always have some resource to draw upon (13:121-122).

If the client can perceive the counselor's transparency which is willingly shown to him, the relationship will be more apt to be meaningful and growth-producing (28:92). Rogers hypothesized the general law that (27:344-345):

"The greater the congruence of experience, awareness and communication on the part of one individual, the more the ensuing relationship will involve: a tendency toward reciprocal communication with a quality of increasing congruence; a tendency toward more mutually accurate understanding of the communications; improved psychological adjustment and functioning in both parties; mutual satisfaction in the relationship.

Conversely the greater the communicated incongruence of experience and awareness, the more the ensuing relationship will involve: further communication with the same quality; disintegration of accurate understanding, less adequate psychological adjustment and functioning in both parties; and mutual dissatisfaction in the relationship."

A second important characteristic needed to be conveyed by the counselor to the client is unconditional positive regard for that client. Rogers described this quality as "an outgoing, positive feeling without reservations and without evaluations" (30:94). Unconditional positive regard is an acknowledgement from the counselor that the counselor truly

cares. The client may not be verbally told that this is how the counselor feels about him, rather he may feel and perceive this from the nonverbal clues of the counselor. As the client perceives that he is totally accepted by the counselor, he begins to accept himself as "he is" which in turn paves the way for him to change.

Rogers' third condition which the counselor must possess is empathic understanding. Rogers described the presence of empathy as occurring when the counselor is:

"sensing the feelings and personal meanings which the client is experiencing in each moment, when he can perceive these from 'inside,' as they seem to the client, and when he can successfully communicate something of that understanding to his client ..." (27:62).

Empathy relays the counselor's wish to get involved and to understand what the client's world is like at that very moment. The empathic counselor must skillfully convey his perceptivity back to the client so that the essence of the client's expression can be explored without the client's fear of judgment or rejection.

The client's perception of these three conditions of congruence, unconditional positive regard and empathy from the counselor creates an atmosphere conducive to change for that client. Rogers wrote that:

"when the client perceives, to a minimal degree, the genuineness of the counselor and the acceptance and empathy which the counselor experiences for him, then development in personality and change in behavior are predicted" (28:96).

The attitudes, values and beliefs a counselor holds are subtly relayed to the client verbally and nonverbally. The counselor must be aware of the influence his personality has on the client. Whether he chooses to or not, many of his values, attitudes and beliefs will be directed toward that client through the use of nonverbal communication (3:9). In his book, On Becoming a Person, Carl Rogers asked a series of questions which counselors can use to examine the extent to which they are congruent, show unconditional positive regard and are empathic toward their clients in a counseling relationship.

The first question Rogers posed was, "Can I be in some way which will be perceived by the other person as trustworthy, as dependable or consistent in some deep sense" (27:50)? The therapist needs to be aware and accepting of all that he is experiencing at that moment, whether his feelings and attitudes be positive or negative. In this way, the counselor's experiencing is available to the client if and when the counselor needs to convey it.

"Can I be expressive enough as a person that what I am will be communicated unambiguously" (27:51)? If a therapist is annoyed or bored with a client, it is important that he be aware and accept these feelings. As the therapist is probably revealing his emotions nonverbally, he must be willing, if necessary, to convey these feelings verbally to the client at an appropriate time. The inner strength the therapist

exposes, without any pretense or facade, often lends itself to the client.

"Can I let myself experience positive attitudes toward this other person - attitudes of warmth, caring, liking, interest, respect" (27:52)? The therapist must not let his professional distance prevent him from being perceived as human in the eyes of the client. He must be willing to be deeply involved with that client on a "gut-level" basis. The transparency of the therapist in revealing his own shortcomings to the client often times encourages the client to strip himself of any defenses and admit some of his own shortcomings.

"Can I be strong enough as a person to be separate from the other" (27:52)? The therapist must find strength in his own identity so that in becoming so deeply involved with that client, he does not lose himself. As he explores the depths with that client, the counselor takes the risk that he may experience something unknown to either him or the client; but he is reassuring that both he and the client will come out the better for it. A counselor's confidence in himself as a person first and then as a therapist can give courage to that client and allow the client to trust the counselor and himself.

"Am I secure enough within myself to permit him his separateness" (27:52-53)? The strength the therapist finds in himself and in his identity allows him to delegate to the client the right to be that client's own person. This delegation involves the right of the client

to make his own choices even when they conflict with what the counselor feels is best. The therapist recognizes the client's worth and ability to be responsible for himself and his actions and does not reject the client when the client dares to contradict the counselor.

"Can I let myself enter fully into the world of his feelings and personal meanings and see these as he does" (27:53)? This attitude removes a counselor from the role of a problem solver and involves him in taking a willing leap into the client's world to try to understand just what the client is going through at that very moment. Although the exploration is risky and often times frightening, the therapist is willing to "feel" his way through with the client, revealing all the ugliness and goodness that was never before permitted awareness. The counselor utilizes all of his senses to empathically describe what this client's world is really like.

"Still another issue is whether I can be acceptant of each facet of this person which he presents to me. Can I receive him as he is" (27:54)? The therapist must realize that his nonacceptant attitude toward a client in any way will prevent any personal growth for that client. By creating an accepting atmosphere, free of judgment or rejection, the therapist allows the client to search himself without the need for any defenses. The therapist's acceptance of this client does not have to mean approval; the therapist is receptive of what the client actually is.

"Can I act with sufficient sensitivity in the relationship that my behavior will not be perceived as a threat" (27:54)? The client must be made to feel as comfortable as possible about his relationship with the counselor. If the client perceives any sign of judgment or rejection from the therapist, this condition will be hampered. The client must feel a genuineness from the therapist. The client must feel that the therapist does care and that he is trying to understand how it really is from that client's point of view.

"Can I free him from the threat of external evaluation" (27:54)? The counselor who conveys signs of approval to some aspect of the client's behavior also nonverbally implies that he has the power to show disapproval to the client's behavior. By refraining from judgment, the therapist leaves the evaluation of the client's behavior to the client, freeing the client to be responsible for himself and for his choices.

"Can I meet this other individual as a person who is in the process of becoming, or will I be bound by his past and by my past" (27:55)? The counselor and the client must deal with their experiencing in the present. Hopefully, the therapist will convey the idea that the client, because he is in a process of becoming, has the right to change, to make choices for himself and to be responsible for those choices. The counselor's confidence in the client's potential ability to be himself can render the client the courage to change.

Rogers' questions all seem to stress the importance of the therapist's verbal and nonverbal communication harmoniously working together. Any discrepancy perceived by the client may be seen as a threat and hinder any possibility of growth within the therapeutic relationship. As a human being with many shortcomings, the therapist can only work in a positive direction toward fulfilling the necessary qualifications of an effective helping relationship. The higher the degree to which the therapist is perceived by the client as being congruent, showing positive regard and being empathic, the higher the degree of growth resulting from the relationship.

Summary

An attempt was made in Chapter three to present an overall view of how a counselor's awareness of a client's nonverbal behavior can aid the counselor in understanding and effectively reflecting to the client an accurate perception of what that client is experiencing at that very moment. A careful observation and examination of a client's nonverbal behavior often gives the counselor some lead as to the direction a client may be heading. In working with a client, progress may first show through in nonverbal behavior rather than verbal behavior. The counselor's accurate perception of a patient's progress can often be therapeutic when related back to the client.

An attempt was also made to promote an awareness of the effects a counselor's nonverbal communication can have on a client, especially if the counselor is perceived by the client as being congruent, showing unconditional positive regard and being empathic. The presence of these characteristics provides a warm, accepting, nonthreatening atmosphere free of judgment or evaluation, enabling the client to let down his defenses and search his depths of meaning.

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The researcher investigated the importance of nonverbal communication in a counseling situation. Its purpose was to draw an awareness to the need for therapists to be concerned with the nonverbal behavior of their clients and of themselves. Pertinent research was lacking in this area and the procedure used included a review of literature from many related areas and the use of personal observations.

The literature reviewed indicated that the communication process develops some short time after conception and continues throughout a person's life; one's manner of communication is influenced by many factors in his heredity and in his environment. The human organism begins functioning in harmony, but when certain experiences are denied awareness, the organism is in conflict. The conflict within the organism affects one's ability to communicate congruently, both verbally and nonverbally. It is at this point where a counselor usually begins working with a client.

To effectively deal with a troubled client, the counselor must have some grasp of how harmonious transactions take place, both intrapersonally and interpersonally. A congruent, well-adjusted person is in touch with his experiencing and capable of verbally and nonverbally expressing himself when the need arises. But a disturbed person has

somehow lost or rejected the awareness of his experiencing; he relies on ineffective means of coding or on unconscious nonverbal communication to express his true feelings. "The body has a peculiar language of its own through which it conveys feelings and meanings it is unable to verbalize or healthily abstract to higher and more productive bodily levels" (1:481). When nonverbal behavior is the only way a client can relay what his inner world is like, a skilled counselor must use his awareness of this dilemma to accurately describe the client's predicament.

Observing the client as a very unique, three-dimensional individual, an adept counselor relies upon all of his senses to empathically understand the meaning of the client's expressions within the context of how that client functions. Observing the nonverbal changes of the client within a particular session and from session to session, the counselor may be able to determine accurately the direction the client is heading.

The sensitive counselor is also aware of the effects his own nonverbal communication has upon the individual. In striving for empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard, the counselor creates an accepting, nonthreatening atmosphere where the client is able to examine himself freely without judgment or evaluation. Consequently, the client is unrestrained and able to move in a positive direction.

Conclusions

The importance of an awareness to nonverbal behavior in a counseling situation cannot be denied. When a counselor is faced with a silent period or with an incongruent message from the client, he must be prepared with an understanding and an awareness of what is involved in the client's nonverbal behavior.

Successful communication in a therapeutic relationship depends upon two conditions:

1. The counselor accurately perceiving what the client is relating.
2. The client accurately perceiving what the counselor is relating.

Emphasis is needed on the counselor's nonverbal behavior; the counselor must first be aware of his own experiencing in order to sensitively examine that of the client. The climate the counselor sets for the client through his nonverbal behavior must be receptive enough to enable the client to take the risk of looking at himself openly and honestly. Mark Knapp wrote, "The amount of sensitivity to nonverbal cues is related directly to the amount of interpersonal feedback a person receives and his receptivity and sensitivity to that feedback"(19:247).

The client's behavior must be viewed as being unique unto him. In observing and examining a client's nonverbal behavior, the context within

which it is used, and also the consistency with which it is used, are important in determining the value.

As one of the goals of counseling is for the client to emerge as a congruent organism in his verbal and nonverbal communication, the counselor must be adept at recognizing the client's incongruence and at carefully describing this incongruence back to the client to provide accurate feedback. The manner in which feedback is presented will often times determine the success or the failure of the therapeutic sessions. The timing of the appropriate feedback is very important. The researcher feels that accurate descriptions presented at an appropriate time within a warm, accepting atmosphere free of judgment and evaluation will be most effective in helping the client grow. A nonthreatening climate created by the counselor's empathy, unconditional positive regard and congruence will allow the client freedom to lower his defenses and to objectively search himself.

Recommendations

The investigator feels much research is still needed in order to understand the effects of nonverbal communication within a counseling situation. The effects pertaining to both the counselor and the client need to be studied extensively.

In studying the influence the nonverbal behavior of the counselor has on the client, the characteristics present in the counselor that

help or hinder the relationship need to be systematically examined, possibly from a field of successful and unsuccessful counselors and possibly from the viewpoint of clients.

The presence of certain nonverbal characteristics are helpful only if the client accurately perceives them. Research is needed to determine if and how the client perceives the counselor. Information as to "if and how" the client perceives the counselor's nonverbal behavior differently as therapy progresses would be valuable.

Additional study is also needed as to what changes take place in a client's nonverbal behavior as therapy progresses. Do some characteristics change more rapidly than others? Do some characteristics remain the same?

As nonverbal communication is such an individualized study, the researcher recommends the use of case studies and interviews to find a possible general trend of changes that might take place throughout therapy.

Intensive training, experience, and research findings are necessary requisites for improving the effectiveness of the counseling profession. Counseling theories and applications are in constant need of updating and improvement. Results found in any of the recommended studies could be appropriately applied to the training of new counselors and also to the improvement of established counselors.

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