
Biases I May Face: My Personal Values and Morals

According to Mashla (2016) values is what we believe about what is right and wrong and what is most important in life, and that which controls our behavior. My personal value system is one that is built strongly on Christian principles. I am a person who believes in the golden rules and loving my neighbors as I love myself. I believe in living an upright life and abiding by the laws that govern us. I am also a Utilitarian because I believe in the greater good for the greatest number. I am person who likes to be open and frank. I prefer to be shattered by the ugly truth than to be graced with a beautiful lie.

Counseling according Sheppard (2016) is the facilitation with clients to work in ways that applies values and morals to make choices that help them resolve problems, manage crisis, work with inner conflicts and improve relationships with one's self and others. Being counselors mandates several key factors such as confidentiality, genuineness, support, promoting growth, wellness and meaningfulness of life. This paper seeks to highlight some of the biases I may face as a counselor due to my personal values and morals. A bias according to Cambridge Online Dictionary (2018) is the action of supporting or opposing a particular person or thing in an unfair way, because of allowing personal opinions to influence your judgment. Not only will it shed light on my biases but it will indicate what my professional code of ethic mandates me to do.

Some ethical issues that would cause conflict with my ethical and moral values would be counseling a student who is a homosexual. In regards to 1Corinthians 7:2 NIV "But since sexual immorality is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband." In my stance as a Christian person this verse refers to woman and man and not same sex partners, so I regard homosexuality as something wrong. I also consider findings from The Center for Disease Prevention and Control (2016) which highlights some of the negative impact of being a homosexual such as:

Affect your income, whether you can get or keep a job, and your ability to get and keep health insurance. Limit your access to high quality health care that is responsive to your health issues. Add to poor mental health and poor coping skills, such as substance abuse, risky sexual behaviors, and suicide attempts. Affect your ability to have and maintain long-term same-sex relationships. Make it harder for you to be open about your sexual orientation, which can increase stress, limit social support, and negatively affect your health.

As much as I would want to tell this person how I truly feel I must have respect for one's choice and avoid discrimination. According to American Counseling Association "Counselors do not

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condone or engage in discrimination against prospective or current clients, students, employees, supervisees, or research participants based on age, culture, disability, ethnicity, race, religion/spirituality, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, marital/ partnership status, language preference, socioeconomic status, immigration status, or any basis proscribed by law.” Therefore I would choose to be professional with persons who are homosexuals because they lack support and acceptance and all they need is to feel accepted so being supportive to them is vital in counseling. Counselors may see clients who are very depressed and negative about their homosexual tendencies and also about their whole worth as human beings. In this light I must bear in mind that homosexuals are humans who need support and I would not want to see a client do something irrational when I can be a channel of assistance.

Another ethical dilemma that would negatively impact my counseling is when it comes to issues of relationships. If a person comes to me seeking guidance on the basis of working out a marriage or relationship issues, due to my past experience with relationships I would want to tell a female that she doesn't need a man to function. I believe that women can be independent and tolerating a relationship is draining and a waste of time. Counselors are aware of and avoid imposing their own values, attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. To eliminate this bias I would focus listening to my client and finding research that would aid this person to find balance in such disparity. However, I feel that there is also positive side to this. I would be able to guide my client in seeking education and avenues to be self-reliant. I must also consider the circumstance and if there are children involved I would regard the findings of Schofield, Mumford, Jurkovic and Bickerdike, which indicates that high rates of relationship breakdown have been consistently associated with negative health consequences for both adults and children following divorce/separation. In this regard I would try my best to find studies that appropriately mediate such cases because the duty of a counselor indicates that “the primary responsibility of counselors is to respect the dignity and promote the welfare of clients.” In this regard I must ensure that the welfare of all involved is taken into consideration. In that same regard I can look to the approach taken by Gunther (2011) and inform my client about Hostile Venting, Mean Phrases that Scar Intimate Relationships such as Character assassinations, Threats of abandonment, Threats of exile, Invalidations, Challenges, and Preaching, so that my client can search avenues to define the root cause of their problems. If the case becomes one that I am not competent enough to deal with then I must abide by the American Counseling Association, which states, “If counselors lack the competence to be of professional assistance to clients, they avoid entering or continuing counseling relationships.” Hence I would refer the case in the most professional manner possible.

When it comes to cultural issues such as interracial marriages or relationships, the dilemma here would be that if a client comes to me with such a dilemma I would encourage the person to intermarry because I don't look at a person's race. However, I must bear in mind that as a counselor there must be anatomy which according to Counseling Collection (2018) is that the

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counselor's ethical responsibility to encourage client independent thinking and decision-making, and to deter all forms of client dependency. I must also bear in mind the age of my clients and the legal ramifications that goes along with being intimate and marrying within the laws of our country.

In whatever case as a counselor my morals and values must in no way hinder my professionalism and code of ethics. In light of these new found information there are several step according ACA (2014) which I must take when working with a client, which are:

Identify and describe the problem (legal, ethical, and professional) and potential issues involved. Refer to the ACA Code of Ethics to see what's fit. Consider law and regulation that may apply. Determine the nature and dimensions of the dilemma and consult with colleagues, literature review. Identify possible courses of action. Consider potential consequences of each course of action and choose the best one. Then evaluate the selected course of action and Implement the course of action.

In this regard I hope to expeditiously execute my duty as teacher and as counselor to whomever I come in contact with.

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