

PARTICIPATION IN COUNSELLING EXERCISES INFORMATION

Many counselling programs are rather theoretical. They may give students a great idea about issues and how to understand the psyche, but often graduates express their very real apprehension to work with the general public at the end of their course as they don't feel equipped to do this. In Vocational Education and Training the emphasis is on practical learning. In most VET programs students do this through volunteer or paid work placements. In counselling however, there is a requirement in most organisations that counsellors have professional indemnity insurance to counsel members of the general public, so this means that a workplace placement is not useful as insurance is not available for students. Insurance companies only cover people who have already graduated. This provides a real catch 22 for a VET counselling course. As such this course leans heavily on practice sessions with scenarios, 'what if' situations and practice with other students. In order to really train students for the real world of emotions, one of the best ways to do this is obviously with people with 'real' issues. Through the course therefore we ask for our students to work with each other on their own personal stories. Students are free to share only those things that they feel comfortable with. For example in grief and loss, perhaps a student has lost their mother recently and feels too 'raw' to share this with other students, they may however remember a time when their cat died which was a genuinely upsetting event. In this case the student may decide to talk about that, so that a fellow student can practice their counselling and helping skills. Students will be supported at all times with a trainer who is a qualified counselling professional. Referral for further counselling may also be encouraged if issues of a painful nature emerge through the course for students. This is an opportunity for healing and growth. It also means that as a professional counsellor your own issues are not triggered when you talk to clients who have had a similar life story.

This course is practical as well as theoretical and we hope that you will enjoy all of the counselling exercises and feel your privacy is protected. We now ask for your permission to participate as a 'client' within the counselling course for other students.



Participation in Counselling Exercises Permission

Student statement:

I have read the **Participation in Counselling Exercises Information** above and understand that to really prepare myself for working with the public that it is best for me to practice with real emotions and real stories from time to time as well as through role play scenarios. I therefore agree to participate in helping other students with their personal stories and am prepared to share some of mine to assist other students in my class. I understand that I don't have to talk about anything that I am uncomfortable with.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: __/__/____

