

Appendix G: Practical 6A

Role-play 1: Part A: Fourth Session with Simon Leung

Participant's Briefing Instructions

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Instructions for Role-play Volunteer (Simon Leung)

You are Simon Leung, a 19-year-old man working with the counsellor for a few weeks. You were initially referred to counselling by your GP to assist you with issues related to social anxiety. You have always thought of yourself as an anxious person, but you have found this to be more and more problematic since you started university last year. You are very anxious around new people and are concerned that you will say something stupid and that they will judge you. This has meant that you tend to withdraw from social situations, which you find frustrating because you would like to be outgoing and popular.

Over the last few weeks, you have been working with the counsellor regarding your anxiety. In your previous session, the counsellor introduced you to a specific approach to counselling called acceptance and commitment therapy (ACT). You were pretty intrigued by this approach and indicated that you would like to continue working with some ACT techniques in your next counselling session (this role-play).

During the role-play:

Some specific instructions about things you must say/do during the role-play:

- At the beginning of the role-play, the student will greet and welcome you – you should respond naturally to any small talk they make.
- If the student asks you whether you are interested in continuing to work with an ACT approach/technique during today's session, you should indicate that you are interested.
- The student will introduce a particular ACT technique called the 'Leaves on a Stream' exercise. This is a 'mindfulness' exercise in which you must relax and not allow yourself to be distracted by your thoughts. You are to imagine a stream and let any thoughts drift off down the stream.
- You must listen to the student's introduction/explanation of this exercise and ask any questions that come naturally to you (i.e. if you don't understand something they have said, ask them to clarify it). You should listen to the student's instructions during the exercise and try to complete the mindfulness exercise.
- After the 'Leaves on a Stream' exercise is finished, the student will explore your experience of this exercise with you. For example, they might ask questions such as "What was it like to let the thoughts come and go without holding on?" and "Was it hard to let go of any thoughts in particular?" You should combine your experiences and the "background character information" information to help flesh out your responses. For

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example, you can discuss your own experiences/difficulties/realisations while completing the exercise. Still, at some point during the discussion, you should indicate that you “kept thinking I’m a loser and I’m probably doing this wrong.”

- After discussing the ‘Leaves on a Stream’ exercise, the student will propose a particular homework exercise for you to complete before your next session. You should indicate a willingness to complete any homework suggested. Listen to the student’s explanation of the task and ask any questions that come naturally to you (i.e., if you don’t understand something they have said, ask them to clarify it). The role-play will conclude once you fully understand the homework task the student asks you to complete.