

Appendix J: Practical 7A

Role-play 3: Part A: Sixth (not final) Session with Claire Bowman

Participant's Briefing Instructions

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Instructions for Role-play Volunteer (Claire Bowman)

These are the instructions for the person helping the student with Role-Play 3 by acting in the role of the client, Claire Bowman. You must use the following information to assist you in your interactions with the student during the role-play.

The role-play will consist of the student conducting a counselling session with you, during which they review your progress and seek to determine whether or not you could benefit from additional counselling. While you are encouraged to use your creativity and judgement during the role-play, follow the instructions below.

Please note that the gender of the volunteer doesn't need to match the gender of the character they will be playing as long as the volunteer can accurately portray the character as described in the following instructions.

Background Information

You are Claire Bowman, a 33-year-old woman. You have been married to your husband, Justin [35], for the past six years and have a four-year-old son together, Ethan, who has recently been diagnosed with Autism. You have attended five sessions of counselling so far.

In the first session, you worked with the counsellor to help address your feelings of worry, guilt and indecision about returning to work and enrolling Ethan in Kindergarten. Although you loved your old job and were keen to re-enter the workforce, you were struggling with guilt over leaving Ethan at Kindergarten 3 days a week and were worried that you were being "selfish" or a "bad mother" for wanting to return to work.

By the end of this session, you had carefully considered the pros and cons of both options [staying at home vs. returning to work] and decided to return to work. Although you were confident in your decision and were excited to return to work, you found it stressful trying to adjust to a new schedule in which you were required to balance work and parenting responsibilities.

This stress became the focus of the second counselling session. By the third, another issue had arisen: you often lost your temper with your husband and "snapped" at him whenever he tried to help you manage your son's tantrums. You could address this problematic behaviour by

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developing a Behavioural Change program with the counsellor. In the fourth session, you built on this by discussing strategies for communicating and co-parenting with your husband better, as this was becoming a concern for you.

Finally, in your last session, you realised that many of the stresses you had been experiencing were related to underlying feelings of self-doubt and inadequacy that you held about yourself. You worked with the counsellor to address these feelings using cognitive behavioural techniques. Although you found all of the interventions used by the counsellor to be very useful, you still find yourself plagued by insecurities and low self-esteem.

Overall, although you have made some good progress over the past five sessions, you do not feel you have met the goals you set out to achieve at the beginning of the counselling process. You also find yourself experiencing a profound lack of self-esteem and confidence in yourself. You want to learn to manage these feelings better and stop criticising and doubting yourself so much, so you can enjoy life more and be a better wife and mother to your family. You also want to continue working on communicating better with your husband so that you will have a stronger relationship and be able to co-parent more effectively.

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 you and welcome you back to counselling – you should respond naturally to any small talk they make.
- You should agree if the student reminds you this is your sixth and final contracted session and proposes you review your progress together.
- If the student emphasises and affirms the hard work and personal growth they have observed in you over the last five sessions, you should respond by thanking them and agreeing that you have made good progress.
- If the student asks questions about your thoughts and perceptions about your progress, you should respond naturally based on the background information and the questions the student asks. However, you must indicate that while you have made some gains and feel slightly better now than you did at the beginning of the counselling process, you do not think you have met the goals you set out to achieve. If the student asks you if there are any issues you are still struggling with, you should respond by saying that you are still struggling with low self-esteem and a lack of self-confidence. You should mention that you need further help to deal with this issue.
- If the student introduces the idea of continuing counselling work with them, you should eagerly agree that that is something you would find accommodating. If the student asks how many more sessions you believe would be helpful, you should say that another six weekly sessions would benefit you.
- Suppose the student asks which issues you want to focus on in future counselling sessions. In that case, you should respond by saying that you would like to focus on your

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self-critical thoughts, feelings of self-doubt and inadequacy, and your ongoing difficulties communicating with your husband.

- If the student asks about the specific goals you would like to work towards, you should indicate that you would like to feel more confident and capable in your abilities and engage in less negative and critical self-talk. You should also suggest that you would like to be able to communicate your thoughts and feelings more openly and honestly to your husband.
- Suppose the student asks how you would prefer to monitor your progress throughout the process. In that case, you should indicate that you would like to review your progress together at the beginning of each session and that you will keep your personal progress diary to facilitate this.
- Suppose the student seeks to arrange the next counselling session with you. You should agree with whatever arrangements the student proposes. This will signal the end of the role-play.