



Innovations in Counseling (Part 13, Session 8)

From Burnout to Balance: Helping Counselors Build Sustainable Caseloads

Webinar Follow-up Question-and-Answer Session with Juan Santos, PhD, CRC, LCMHC-S

Question:

If we know that a gap exists between the classroom and being an actual therapist, what type of research is out regarding ways to close the gap?

Answer from Presenter:

This article focuses on how different models of training impact the counselor's knowledge.

Frank, H. E., Becker-Haimes, E. M., & Kendall, P. C. (2020). Therapist training in evidence-based interventions for mental health: A systematic review of training approaches and outcomes. *Clinical Psychology: A Publication of the Division of Clinical Psychology of the American Psychological Association*, 27(3), Article e12330.
<https://doi.org/10.1111/cpsp.12330>

Question:

Sometimes, self-care can feel like one more thing to do. What do you do then?

Answer from Presenter:

The presentation discussed burnout in connection to organizational elements while also bringing attention to self-care practices. If self-care is not proving effective, consider exploring a metric that allows you to measure the effectiveness of self-care being used. This can give you an idea of how to engage in modifications. In addition, explore how you can connect with your organization to expand on the topic of burnout and identify if there is space for communication. This can include identifying if there is space for gaining supervision, modifying the caseload, and other areas.

Question:

Can you explain the difference between ethical gatekeeping and an unhealthy work environment?

Answer from Presenter:

Ethical gatekeeping in counseling may include limiting caseloads or requiring additional training when necessary. For example, rather than having the counselor who holds more advanced training be the only one who can see specific clients, provide other counselors with the opportunity to grow and gain competence to be able to work with those clients. An unhealthy work environment associated with burnout can be seen as holding factors like excessive workloads, lack of support, and inadequate supervision.

For more on this topic, I suggest the following articles:

Cook, R. M., Fye, H. J., Jones, J. L., & Baltrinic, E. R. (2021). Self-reported symptoms of burnout in novice professional counselors: A content analysis. *The Professional Counselor, 11*(1), 31–45.

<https://doi.org/10.15241/rmc.11.1.31>

Franco, G. E. (2015). Supervision and MFT burnout: Overcoming the challenges therapists face in the workplace. *Frontiers in Psychology, 6*, Article 1644. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.01644>

Question:

How do you start to strengthen individual resilience to benefit both you and the client?

Answer from Presenter:

In essence, this practice can be engaged individually by the counselor. The counselor can also provide support to the client, focusing on the area of resilience. This process can focus on self-awareness, developing healthy boundaries, self-care as a habit (not as a task), and engaging in peer support or a foundation.