



Exploring Beliefs, Values and Attitudes

Lecture Transcript

Hi everybody, and welcome to this Counselling Tutor lecture. I've done a couple of these, so it's a real privilege to be invited back to do them again. I'm especially excited about looking at beliefs, values and attitudes, because I think it's absolutely essential for us as counsellors to be exploring this as part of our counsellor training, exploring of our own internal beliefs, values and attitudes. It's also really useful to understand beliefs, values and attitudes so we can support our clients as well, because often we will be working with some of their less conscious edge of awareness, beliefs and values and attitudes in the counselling room. It can be really helpful to think about the work in that way as well.

Here's our learning outcomes. We're going to be aiming to understand how to gain an awareness of our internal core beliefs, values and attitudes and why this is essential for personal development in counsellor training. We should be able to describe what beliefs, values and attitudes are and how they differ from each other, because although they're all related, they're all quite separate things. We also need to be able to recognize the importance of exploring our own beliefs, values and attitudes for self-awareness and personal development. Why do we as counsellors need to be able to do that? We need to be able to explain and understand why it's so important for us to understand and uncover sometimes our beliefs, values and attitudes. We're going to be exploring a little bit of how beliefs, values and attitudes develop, where they come from, what influences our beliefs and looking at culture and family and those things. We're going to explore what might make it more difficult for you to gain awareness of your own beliefs, values and attitudes, because time and time again, in personal development groups in the ones that I did when I was a student and some of the ones that I've led, we find that with training counsellors it can be a really difficult process and it can be a really difficult process sometimes uncovering what your beliefs are and where they've come from. We're going to just have a look at why it might be so difficult to go through that process

as well. Hopefully you might be able to approach it in a slightly different way in your training.

We're going to start off just by looking at the difference between beliefs, values and attitudes. Like I said at the start, they are all related, but they are all quite separate so we're going to start off looking at beliefs. I found this lovely definition, which is "a belief is when we have a feeling or thought that something is true". It's quite an abstract thing, isn't it? A belief. It's not something concrete. It's just a feeling or a thought that something's true and that could come from a number of different places. It can just be that we believe it's true because our parents have said it's true or it can be for a lot of different reasons and like I said, we will explore that a bit later on. What's really interesting about our beliefs is that we can hold internal beliefs even if we don't have any evidence that they're true. Like I said at the start, though we are focusing on counsellor development and our training in this particular lecture, that can be really true for our clients as well. Really, it's what some of the CBT techniques are based around, uncovering those unconscious beliefs that are affecting the way that we behave. If we can hold that in mind as well while we're going through this, I think that you will get an awful lot from the session.

The next part is values. "Values are important and lasting beliefs about what is good or bad, desirable or undesirable". My values will be different from your values. You will have a different idea of what's good or bad or desirable or undesirable than I will. That will be based on your beliefs. Depending on what your beliefs are, that's how your beliefs feed into those values and we'll look at a few examples in a minute so you can get your head around that a bit more. Our beliefs feed into our values and our values are the things often guide the way that we live our lives. The things that we think are important guide the way that we live our lives and that's how our values then feed into our attitudes. Attitudes. The way that I think about is attitudes are the thing that people can see. We hold our beliefs and we hold our values and our attitude is the way that we express or apply our beliefs and values through three different strands, through our thoughts, our emotions and our behaviour. Those are the things that people out there will see when it comes to are beliefs and values. That's how we express them. I hope that makes sense about how they are different. I suppose it's not absolutely essential that we know the exact differences between them, but we need to see how they feed into each other. I think sometimes if we can start with an attitude and then work our way down and think, "okay why do I behave that way?" We can work our way then down to a value and then down to a belief. Like I said, that's a lot of what CBT is based on. Getting really down to that core belief. It's only when we get down to that core belief that we can start to maybe challenge it a little bit and do something a little bit differently and change those attitudes in the way that we behave. We'll look at a few examples to help you get your head around it a little bit more.

Beliefs; I've put 'I don't believe that I'm kind', an interesting one there, because the things that we don't believe are just as important as the things that we believe. They also form our values and our attitudes. 'I don't believe I'm kind' is also a belief about ourselves and we hold beliefs about ourselves. We also hold beliefs about the world around us and we hold beliefs about other people and the belief 'I don't believe I'm kind' could really be quite a damaging belief, couldn't it? Again, that can really affect things like self-esteem and the way that we behave. That's why I put that one in there because I thought it was a really interesting one. Another example of a belief, 'I believe that children should be seen and not heard'. Again, I think that's a real cultural one, maybe for people of an older generation. Maybe I'm stereotyping a bit there, but certainly I think in this country, in the UK, we have a bit more of an attitude towards children that they should be seen and not heard as opposed to other countries that I've been to. It's really interesting to see that we might have these beliefs and think of them as truths, but actually, when we go somewhere else, we start to notice that these beliefs aren't necessarily a truth. It's just a belief and it's all fed into this belief by our culture, by our surroundings. Another one, 'I believe that real man shouldn't cry'. I think that's a really common one. Again, I'm only really speaking for the U.K, it's toxic masculinity and this attitude that men shouldn't have emotions in order to be strong and really men shouldn't be human, which is quite a damaging belief. It's, again, a belief. I think a lot of us, if we really looked in to our beliefs with probably a lot of us hold that in this country in particular and I'm not sure about elsewhere, but I'm sure these male and female differences really persevere, I suppose, in other countries as well. 'I believe in God'. That's a really good example of us believing in things that maybe we don't always have evidence for, or we can't absolutely and definitely say that it's true, but we have a belief and we have a feeling, we have a faith that that's true. I hope those examples have made it a little bit clearer for you.

Values. Again, some of these beliefs feed into these values. 'I value my family. I think my family's really important' is what I'm saying there. I think my family's really important it's one of the things that I value in my life. 'I value honesty'. That's a characteristic, isn't it? If you value honesty, it's really interesting maybe to think about why do you value honesty, where does that come from? These things will be a seed where this was planted and whether that's a belief that people who lie aren't nice people if that's come from childhood. It's really interesting to start unwrapping these, I think. 'I value efficiency'. That's one that I certainly uncovered when I was doing my counsellor training and I value efficiency. I really think I should be efficient, and I think other people should be efficient and when they weren't efficient, it used to really upset me and maybe I would show irritation and my attitude to that person would be quite negative. My attitude towards myself when I wasn't efficient was quite negative. That comes from a belief that, I suppose that we should do everything well. If we're going to do something, do it well. That's my belief. I really had to challenge that, because let's be honest, if we always have

to be totally efficient, then we probably wouldn't take many risks in our life so that's an example of one. 'I value optimism'. That's one I see all of the time and it makes me a little bit sad, but it's one that I see all of the time. People really value optimism above all else and sometimes, again, it means that we don't allow ourselves to be human because we're always expecting ourselves to be so positive all the time, but we might value optimism again because of a belief that we have had negative people, a boss or something that we might have had from when we were younger. Values can be things that we don't value as well, so education might not be important to us. I use that particular example because that feeds into the example I've got for attitudes as well. Like I said earlier, attitudes can be broken down into three different things. Attitudes are the way that we express our beliefs and our values and attitudes can be broken down into thoughts, feelings and behaviour. If we are somebody that doesn't really believe that education is important, doesn't really believe that we need an education to have a good life, we're not going to value education. We don't think education is important so it's not something that we value highly and that might come across in the way that we behave. While thoughts are 'I hate school' or 'I hate college' or whatever it might be, feeling 'I feel angry when I have to go to school. I just see the point; it feels like a waste' and behaviour when I'm rude to my teacher and I might just play up. I put that one down as a teacher, it's certainly something that I've seen in the classroom and it comes down to the fact that actually there's no value there in an education system that it's never been taught to a young person to value the education system. I hope that that makes it a little bit clearer, the difference between the three and those examples were useful to you.

We'll move on to have to think about why counsellors need to be aware of their beliefs, values and attitudes. Like we said at the start, it's absolutely essential that we are aware of our beliefs, values and attitudes and I've given some reasons here and we'll go into a little bit more detail. If we are going to be going out there working with our clients, we have to really believe in what we do. We have to believe that there's some point to sit in talking about our feelings and our attitudes and the way that we behave and trying to unpick it all and understand it a little bit better. We have to actually believe that. We advocate that for our clients that they need to accept themselves in order to, if we're using Roger's language, self-actualize, but actually if we don't do that ourselves how can we sit there in front of our clients and say, 'this is what's good for you. This is what you need to do'. We need to experience it ourselves. The next part of that really is this idea that we are our own tool and in counselling we don't use any other tools. I have talked about this a little bit when I did the lecture on journaling. If you saw that, I'll be repeating myself, because in there we actually we talked about why self-awareness and personal development is so important. This is what we're doing here. When we're looking at our beliefs, values and attitudes, we're exploring ourselves. We're getting to know ourselves. We are developing our self-awareness and we're saying, 'okay we want to understand ourselves so that when we are sat in front of a client, that stuff that we carry around with us is not muddying our work with our client'. Many of our beliefs and values will be at, what Rogers called 'edge of awareness', other therapist might call it an

unconscious, maybe psycho dynamic therapists will talk about it being in our unconscious or subconscious, but we don't always know what our beliefs and values are. They are so deeply ingrained in us and our culture and our families that we don't always know what they are. We need to really get to know ourselves better so that we aren't going to respond differently to our clients who are maybe in a different situation to us or come from a different culture, we aren't going to judge them unconsciously. We are aren't going to have an unconscious bias. We're going to be able to sit with them and be with them and accept them as they are. I'm thinking in particular of the BACP guidelines in terms of their ethical framework. You will sign up, if you're a student counsellor, chances are you signed up to a particular ethical framework. It might not be the BACP, which is British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists for anybody that is not in the UK, but you'll be signed up to something hopefully to say that 'I'm going to work ethically and I promise to do that and if I don't do that, you're going to hold me accountable'. They say, I've written this down that we need to give our clients fair and impartial treatment. How can we say we can hand on heart sit with our clients and we're giving them fair and impartial treatment when we haven't even looked into our beliefs and our values? We're going to explore that a little bit later because it's quite a hard thing to get our head around, the idea that we don't always know what they are. We'll put a pin in that and come back to that in a little bit more detail. Again, I go on to talk about the fact that we are the tool used in counselling. How can we trust ourselves to offer that unconditional positive regard if we haven't explored our own unconscious bias?

I'm not saying that we can't have particular beliefs that maybe make it difficult for us to treat everybody equally. I think it would be impossible, absolutely impossible for all of us to be totally unbiased, to not hold tricky beliefs sometimes about certain things and certain situations, that's impossible for us to get rid of that totally. We need to challenge that, of course we do, but I'm not saying you can't hold those. What we need to be able to do is consciously bracket those. What I'm saying is when we're sat with a client, we need to be able to say, 'okay I am aware that that bias is coming up inside me, that belief is coming up inside me. It's maybe going to change the way that I behave in the counselling room and it's going to come out in my thoughts and maybe some of the things I might say, so I'm going to say okay I've seen that and I've heard that in my own mind and I'm going to put it to one side and I'm going to be there with my client in the best way that I can. I'm going to stay with them and I'm going to stay in their frame of reference'. I hope that makes it clear why we do need to really explore our beliefs, values and attitudes as counsellors. I think I've got an example coming next. Yes, here you go. This is an example of how maybe not exploring them, not knowing what our beliefs, values and attitudes are, how that might impact a counselling session. Imagine we are in a counselling session with a man who begins to cry. If we hold a belief that we don't know about, which says 'real men don't cry', we might not really know that that's there. It might be on the edge of our awareness, but we've been brought up with this belief. We just know that we feel a bit uncomfortable when men cry or just makes us feel

something. So, we have that belief deep down, but we don't know about it. We value, our value is we value a man who is strong and don't show emotions and actually we hate men crying, that's our attitude. That's what we project onto the world. If a man cries, we might, in a counselling session without really understanding why, feel irritated, feel awkward. We might think, 'oh, Gosh, they've been a bit pathetic'. That might come into our mind and we might try to stop them from crying or try to avoid emotional content so it could really impact the work that we do with that particular client. That's all done unconsciously. I don't think it's done on purpose, but it's done unconsciously because we've never really uncovered that belief. We've never really explored that. We've never really said, 'okay. I know now that if a man cries in a session, it makes me feel uncomfortable and I know why because I've been brought up with this idea that real men shouldn't cry. What I'm going to do, is in a session I'm going to notice that, put it to one side and try and notice when that's coming out and when I'm showing it to my client. When there's those may be subtle or subconscious' (what's the word I'm looking for? I think I wrote it down somewhere) oh body language, that's the word I'm looking for. So, we've got that subtle body language that maybe they're picking up on. That's one example. Another example that came into my head and again, I've done a lecture for Counselling Tutor on suicide awareness and I talked about it in that, this idea that particularly in the U.K. and I'm sure in a lot of other countries, suicide is seen as this thing that we shouldn't talk about. We shouldn't really mention that. We shouldn't talk about it. We're going to make it worse. We're going to put ideas in people's heads and holding in that belief, can you imagine how damaging that would be if we held that belief and we haven't uncovered it and looked at it and thought 'this is making me uncomfortable'. We might sit in a session and not ask about suicide. We might sit in a session and not really explore that with a client or we might, worse, project that a client can't bring that to us or can't have that conversation with us because when they go there we start to look a little bit worried or again that sort of body language might come out. The attitudes that we put out in the world really are as a result of these beliefs, which is why it's so important that we get to know ourselves well enough so that we can notice the beliefs coming up in ourselves and put a pin in there, I suppose. Be able to say, 'bracket them' is the term that Burns and Thawne use in their book. Bracket them and put them to one side, put a pin in them, and then maybe come back to them later and take them to supervision and say, 'that thing came up again and can we look at that because it's not something I've worked through or how am I going to make sure that stays to one side when I'm in a session'? It's that awareness. We're not perfect as counsellors. None of us are, but we need to be aware of the things that trigger us so we can take a step back and say, 'okay, I saw that trigger and I made a decision about what to do about it rather than I was just triggered and I behaved a certain way'. Again, I hope that explains why it's so important for us as therapists to really uncover that. You can see as well just looking at this, that it could really impact the way that our clients behave towards other people as well. Even in relationship with us, we might start to see some attitudes being shown to us that might be quite damaging without them even really knowing. Again, bear that in mind while we're talking about this.

Where do beliefs, values and attitudes come from? We've talked a little bit about this, but the first one I've put down is family culture. Obviously, our parents, the way we've been brought up, our carers play a large part in development of our beliefs, attitudes and values. They reinforce our behaviour. The stuff that they like, they enforce. That's conditioning. I don't know if you've looked into that with them, Pavlov, behavioural conditioning, again, there is CBT stuff there. They will model for us. The way that they are in the world is what we think is normal and what we think is normal will form a belief system within us and a value system within us without us even really knowing it, because to us it's just normal. Again, that's what I'm talking about when I say sometimes, they are really hard to uncover these beliefs because they're just normal to us. They just feel like truths that we hold because that's the way it's always been for us. Wider culture. This includes things like the culture of the country we were born in and I'm going to go into these in a little bit more detail in a minute, because I think we can explore them a little bit more. Also, our experiences. Our experiences of the world either confirm or challenge our beliefs and values. That makes a lot of sense, doesn't it? When we start to really look at that, it's really interesting to see that perhaps it's not always challenged in the way that we think. We'll move on and look at that in a minute. I'm getting ahead of myself.

Family culture. I am a person-centred therapist and I do bring in other elements to my practice, but I do talk about Rogers a lot. I hope that's okay with you guys. Rogers believed that we are social creatures who need love and care from others. In order to get this, we begin to value things because others train us to do so. That's not just that Rogers says that, there's attachment theory. There are all sorts of different theorists that would say that. Psycho dynamic counselling and therapy is very much based on the fact that the way that our parents bring us up has a massive impact on the way that we relate to other people. He's not on his own in saying this. Here's an example. A baby might cry if she's sad. However, as she gets ignored when she cries but picked up when she's smiling and happy, she may learn that in order to be hugged and held, she needs to smile. Then she may develop a belief that being smiling and happy is good. That then leads to an introjected value of 'I value optimism and positivity'. You can see how that would change her attitudes the way that she behaves growing up. It's that whole conditioning, isn't it? It's those conditions of worth. She's learned that she needs to be smiling and happy to be loved so she then develops a belief that it's really important to be an optimist, like we said in the last one. She begins to value the optimism and positivity in herself and in others. If she's sad, can you imagine when we bring it back to working with our clients? If she's sad, can you imagine how much she's going to judge herself? She's feeling sad, how difficult that's going to be for her to hold on to. She's going to think she's bad in some way. That's a really interesting part of that. This might then lead to an attitude of irritation when others express emotions or a very solution focused attitude with people to try and stay positive. That's how the attitude is

expressed. It wouldn't be too hard for us to imagine that a child from another family might, conversely get picked up and hugged when they cry, so might develop a belief that it's okay to show emotions. That makes a lot of sense, doesn't it? I'm simplifying it because there are so many things that play a part in our development of our beliefs and our attitudes and our values. This is simplified because like I say, then we're mixed up with the culture and all sorts of other things. It still has an impact and we will see that in the counselling room, and we will see that in our personal development groups with other therapists that we're developing with and training with and we need to start to see it in ourselves as well. We also learned through modelling. For example, if our parents have traditional roles, we might believe that women should stay at home and look after the children while a man's role is to go out and work to work and earn money. That might mean that we just believe that a woman shouldn't be pursuing a career. There's a lot of things like that that we might believe. It's really interesting because I've done some research on motherhood. It's really interesting to start look at our beliefs around motherhood in relation not just to our parents, but also to the wider culture where they come from and how we judge ourselves if we don't believe we're being a good mom and how harmful that can be. That just reminded me of that in my own mind. I hope that makes sense.

Wider culture. We're constantly being bombarded with cultural messages through the media, through our families, even though our education system. I've taught in schools and I know that they have the British values that's taught to them now and it's seen as a really important thing. It made me think about the British cultural stereotypes that might inform our beliefs. I know of people from all over the world here. I'm talking about us in the U.K. and I'm sure that if you're not from the U.K., you will have heard of the stereotype that we have, which is 'we believe in general that we shouldn't make a fuss'. That we shouldn't be emotional. We should value stoicism and that's just keeping quiet and stiff upper lip, that kind of thing. We then display a keep calm and carry on attitude and that's one of the things that's come up along this whole corona virus thing. Keep calm and carry on, which we really do value in each other as a society. Again, this is a generalization. I'm talking about Britain as a population. The U.K. as a population. I think that all of us can relate to that and understand that that probably has rubbed off on us a little bit if we are from the UK.

These cultural beliefs, values and attitudes are impacted by so many different things in each culture. Things such as history, religion, economy and immigration. We're talking about wider culture. We're not just talking about countries. I'm talking about regions. We're talking about towns. I live somewhere that's well known as Jam Butty Town because it was built around the workers who worked at an ICA factory, so it has its own identity and its culture really rubs off on people here. It's fascinating. I'm thinking in particular about Yorkshire. I know there's a cultural set in fact about people in Yorkshire

which says that they're very careful with their money. I hope nobody's offended by that. It's a cultural stereotype that's out there and actually, I know a lot of people from Yorkshire that are quite proud of that cultural stereotype.

Then we go on to talk about our experiences. Our experiences with the world, what we come into contact with, who we come into contact with can either confirm or challenge our beliefs. As an example, if I met a few very generous people from Yorkshire, I might let go of the belief. All people from Yorkshire are tight. I don't think all people from Yorkshire are tight, by the way. I feel like I've got to put that in there. That's just an example. It just shows how our experiences can challenge these beliefs as well and that our experiences can equally confirm them. What's fascinating about this is that there's something called confirmation bias, and experiments show that we're more likely to look for and believe evidence to confirm rather than challenge our beliefs. I think that's absolutely fascinating. A cognitive psychologist called Peter Wason, I'm not sure how you pronounce that, found that people were more likely to look for facts that prove they were right rather than wrong. This might be one reason why it's so hard for us to change our core beliefs. We just see the evidence that something's right, that we believe. I'm thinking in particular about, if we believe that we're not a brilliant person, it doesn't matter how many times somebody says "but you did this, you went shopping for your neighbour. I saw the way you were with that little girl who'd fallen over. You were so lovely to her". If you believe you're not a kind person, you just look for the stuff that confirms that, you don't look for the stuff that negates that as much as you want to. It's really sad. It's fascinating stuff. I was thinking in particular of social media and how often we live in an echo chamber of people that just feed us back our own beliefs and our own attitudes and our own values because we choose to listen to them and not to the other people. I think as a country, we're perhaps becoming even more like that. We really can only listen to the people that make us feel better, that make us believe that we're right. That's an actual psychological thing that's been proven time and time again. There were a few experiments that I read about, so fascinating stuff. It does show how difficult it is for us to challenge our core beliefs and to change our core beliefs when our make-up is to confirm them. That's what we naturally would do. Interesting stuff. I hope you'll find it interesting as well.

That really brings us on to explore that a little bit more. Why is it so difficult to challenge our beliefs, values and attitudes? It's absolutely difficult. I've seen it time and time again, like I said at the start. Personal development groups where people end up feeling hurt or upset. That's all part of the process, sadly sometimes. We don't want people to be hurt and upset, but sometimes they need to face some of their beliefs, attitudes and values. It's not always an easy process. It really isn't and here's why it's not an easy process. They can be buried deep. It's hard to challenge them if we don't even know they're there. Sometimes they are buried so deep within us. Like we said, they're so

buried and ingrained and a part of what we consider to be normal, are part of what we consider to be true, I suppose that we don't even know that they're there. Many of these beliefs are reinforced often by family and culture so they start to become truths. Yeah, that's what I've just said, isn't it? For example, here, I thought this is a really interesting example. I was listening to some children when I went to pick up my kids from school. I was listening to some children; they must have been maybe six or something like that and one of the lads was watching a girl play football and he said she's good at football for a girl and was really impressed. This girl came up to him and said, "what do you mean good for a girl? That's sexist". I just thought that was absolutely brilliant and I was so pleased that the girl had challenged that a little bit. He was absolutely devastated, this little boy saying "that's not sexist. I wasn't being sexist; I was just saying she's good at football for a girl". Actually, if we dig down into that, what is underneath that is the belief that girls can't play football. There is a belief there that he holds as a truth that girls can't play football and that's what's shown in that statement. He had no idea and even when challenged, he said, "well, actually, no I'm not sexist" because that goes against everything, he wants to believe about himself. He's a good guy. He is not sexist. He doesn't discriminate against women. You can see how it can be so challenging for us to start looking at these beliefs. It's not nice, is it, to hear that about ourselves? Sometimes they are buried so deep that even when we do challenge them or when somebody points them out to us, we automatically say, "no, that's not true", because he really believed that he wasn't sexist. I think we can see that in so many of the ways that we behave. They just become so normal to us that we don't know that they're there and so many things. It's only when we go to different countries or spend time with different families and things like that, that we start to think, "okay, that's not normal. That's not the way other people behave. It's not the values that other people have. It's not the beliefs that other people have. They behave differently. They have different attitudes to me. That isn't necessarily the truth or the way". That's when we maybe start to uncover some of these things, but while we stay in whatever bubble that we might stay in, in our families, in our small cultures and our societies and our towns, we don't always have the opportunity to challenge these, to see and to know that they're even there. I hope that makes sense.

Next one. They often feel like part of our identity. Perhaps we're frightened to let them go. Really hard this one, sometimes our beliefs and values are so strong and if we've held them from when we were very small and we're older, they run deep. They're part of that core that is us, aren't they? They become part of us, and it can leave us asking who we are without them. I've seen this time and time again in the counselling room working with men who've retired actually generally men, because they've believed, "I've worked hard all of my life. That's what men do, now what?" Once you take that role away from them, they believe they're not a man anymore. They believe they're not the same person anymore. 'I've got to keep on working. I've got to keep on providing for my family. That's my job. That's who I am'. When you take that away, I think a lot of men in particular who retire or lose a job or become redundant, can really struggle with that. Again, that's

a stereotype and my experience. It can be really hard. These beliefs that we hold, and his belief would be, 'I believe that to be a good man, and I am a good man, I believe to be a good man. I have to work and provide for my family. All of a sudden, if I can't do that, what am I and who am I?' They just go so deep and you can see how difficult it is to take it out, look at it and change it. It's not so easy that just to do that.

Sometimes they contradict who we think we are and that can be hard to face. I used that example earlier with sexism. We all have these ideas about the type of person that we are. Actually, often we get that quite right, but it can be really hard to accept if we've got that wrong, particularly if we don't want to be that person. I'm thinking about somebody in my family and I won't use any names, but somebody in my family who if you say that they're homophobic, they just would be like "they're not homophobic". Freddie Mercury, who is the lead singer of Queen, is their favourite, absolute favourite person so how on earth could they be homophobic? When somebody kisses on a television program, two men perhaps kiss on a television program, they really can't deal with that. They want it switched off. Nobody wants to see that, but they're not homophobic. They would be absolutely gutted if they start to see that they were homophobic. What is that if it's not homophobia, what is it? They don't object to a man and a woman kissing on the television. So, what is it? If it's a disgust at that, then actually, where does that disgust come from? It comes from a belief that it's wrong, that it's a disgusting thing to do. They will be so upset if I said to them, "you're homophobic". Well, I have said that to them, and they were upset. It really does contradict the kind of people that we think we are sometimes, and it can be really hard to accept. Again, sexism, homophobia, racism, all of those things, but more subtle things as well that maybe we don't want to face sometimes we have to face it, when we're doing our counsellor training and sometimes we might uncover them with our clients as well and that can be really hard and really difficult.

I've put there how can we begin to challenge these unhelpful beliefs, values and attitudes? I think maybe that's the wrong thing. Maybe it needs to be, yes, we challenge some of them. We will challenge some of them, but other ones, it's how do we manage them? Because it might be really hard to get rid of them and to make them go away. They are such a part of us. Maybe the best we can do is say, "okay, I now know that I have that belief and it comes out in this particular attitude or it could come out in this particular attitude, which means I've got to recognize it when it starts to be heard in my own mind". Challenge, but also get to know and uncover those unhelpful beliefs, values and attitudes.

This is a really important way, and this is why we ask you as tutors to sit in groups with other trainee counsellors and we ask you to be honest with each other when it's sometimes really hard to be honest with each other. Sometimes it can just feel really

mean to do that and you could think, people think we're so unkind doing that, but we want you to do that so that you can start to uncover those things. Sometimes uncovering those things is so uncomfortable and sometimes being the person who is saying to a different person, 'I think that that shows that you hold this really difficult and ugly belief' can be really an uncomfortable place to be, but actually you're helping those people develop as a counsellor. What I think is absolutely essential is that we need to try and accept that as counsellors, trainee counsellors and we need to try and not be defensive. Really difficult, I know. Really difficult, but if we can approach feedback with curiosity, curiosity is such a useful way to approach so many of these things. If we can find a way to step back and say, 'okay, I'm going to be curious about this. Is this true or is this not true? I'm not just going to immediately be defensive'. If we can do that, instead of responding from a place of fear or judgment or fear of judgment, then that puts us in a much better position, doesn't it, to be able to really move forward from that? The feedback can come from friends It doesn't have to necessarily be in our counselling training. It can be from a lot of places because, again, Rogers talks about becoming a person. It's not like we do our training and then we are a person. We become a certain way. I think when we train as counsellors, we develop some sort of integrity where we carry this person, we stop putting on a mask with different people. We are the same person with everybody and that means our training is not just about what we do in the classroom. Our training is about listening to our friends, listening to the people that we value outside of our training and understanding why our reactions are a certain way. It's not just the classroom is my point there. Friends, partners, personal development groups and counsellor groups, teachers, feedback from placements, feedback from supervision, feedback from anywhere, take it. Try not to be defensive or be defensive if you need to be defensive, because I know that people come from so many different backgrounds. To say don't be defensive is really difficult for some people. If you are defensive, maybe after a day or two days look at that again and say, 'okay, I'm going to go back to that. Why did I respond to this in a defensive way? I'm going to go back to it with curiosity'.

Self-reflection. We talked about this a lot when we did the lecture on journaling and how useful that can be. If we can reflect on our own behaviours, on our own thoughts, on our own emotions, because that's that bit that we see isn't it? The tip of the iceberg, that bit that we see. They are our attitudes which are our thoughts and our feelings and our behaviour. If we can start to reflect on our own behaviour and our own thoughts and on our own emotions, again, it's that without judgment, then we're halfway there, aren't we? We really have to start noticing ourselves. We need to approach it with curiosity instead of fear and judgment. When we're working with our clients, if we can get our clients to start to hear themselves and have a feeling without judging it. Wow. We've done a brilliant job as counsellors; I think if we can start to have them experience a feeling and be curious about that feeling rather than tell themselves that they are bad for having that feeling. Wow, then we've done a really good job there. If we can do that ourselves, that's fantastic. We do that through that self-reflection and through personal

therapy. You use your therapist for that. I know for most courses; personal therapy is absolutely compulsory and that's the reason why it is. Supervision is a fantastic place to uncover those. I've sat with my supervisor so many times and said 'I just felt uncomfortable in this situation or I don't know why. I just don't like this client. I can't understand why'. Wow, that's fantastic, isn't it, to sit there and to uncover a belief and a value that I hold that is impacting my work. That's what I mean, we're not perfect. None of us are perfect but we need to be able to be open and curious enough to understand what might be standing in our way as therapists. It's through supervision and through journaling and other ways. Like I say, there was that past lecture on doing that as well. I was thinking about in particular; I don't know if any of you guys have seen this and I know that I've seen Rory do a lovely, quite short lecture about it, which is Johari's Window. It is fantastic and you can use it as a tool to understand yourselves really a little bit better. I won't go into it now, but I would definitely recommend looking that up and finding out a little bit more about that as a really useful tool to self-reflect and to use in your personal development.

That brings us to an end, really. Just to remember, none of us are immune. I'm a counsellor. I judge people. I'm human. That's what we do. It's actually how we survive. We have a shorthand for seeing people and often it works. Just remember, they keep coming these beliefs and values and attitudes, we keep developing them, which means we absolutely must continue on our personal development journey. We must keep meeting our clients without judgment so that we can work ethically and safely with our clients. There is some reference and further reading there for anybody that wants to have a look at this in a little bit more detail and look at personal development in more detail. Thank you very much.