



EXAMPLES OF IMMEDIACY IN COUNSELLING

CPCAB (2017: 1–2) suggests using immediacy in two key situations.

1. Addressing Patterns of Relating

It may be that you have noticed a pattern of how the client relates to you that you feel may explain or link to difficulties they are experiencing outside the counselling room.

Using immediacy to draw their attention to this can be really helpful to the client, serving as a real-life, here-and-now example of how they impact others.

Examples of Therapist Interventions Using Immediacy

'I notice that you are responding very defensively to what I am saying even though I feel very accepting of what you are telling me.'

'You say that you never get angry – and it's true your voice is very quiet – yet I am sensing that you are feeling very angry with me.'

2. Dealing with Difficulties

Examples of possible situations in this category include when the client may be struggling with a lack of trust, when there appear to be boundary issues, and when issues of difference seem to be getting in the way of building a therapeutic relationship.

Example: Lack of Trust

'You told me in our very first session that you have always found it really hard to trust people. I wonder whether this is affecting how you feel towards me – because I'm sensing that you might not be finding it easy to trust me.'

Example: Tackling Boundary Issues

'I am finding it hard to concentrate on what you're saying because I have just realised that I know the person you are talking about ... I'm wondering if you noticed my reaction, and this is making it harder for you to talk freely.'

Example: Highlighting Issues of Difference

'I'm aware that you are a black female and I am a white male – and I wonder if this is affecting how easy it is to tell me about your experience of racial discrimination at work.'

References

CPCAB (2017) *Immediacy*: http://www.cpcab.co.uk/Content/Publicdocs/immediacy_levels_2-4_18-19.pdf

Kelly K (2017) *Basic Counselling Skills: A Student Guide*