

**UNIVERSITY OF SWAZILAND  
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES  
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND SOCIAL WORK  
MAIN EXAMINATION QUESTION PAPER, DECEMBER 2016**

**TITLE OF PAPER: SKILLS IN INTERVIEWING AND COUNSELING**

**COURSE CODE: SWK 225**

**TIME ALLOWED: TWO (2) HOURS**

**INSTRUCTIONS: 1. ANSWER ANY THREE (3) QUESTIONS  
2. ALL QUESTIONS CARRY EQUAL MARKS**

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THE INVIGILATOR TO DO SO**

### Question 1: Case study: Stan

At the present time I work in construction. I like building houses, but probably won't stay in construction for the rest of my life. When it comes to my personal life, I've always had difficulty in getting along with people. I could be called a "loner." I like people in my life, but I don't seem to know how to stay close to people. It probably has a lot to do with why I drink. I'm not very good at making friends or getting close to people. Probably the reason I sometimes drink a bit too much is because I'm so scared when it comes to socializing. Even though I hate to admit it, when I drink, things are not quite so overwhelming. When I look at others, they seem to know the right things to say. Next to them I feel dumb. I'm afraid that people don't find me very interesting. I'd like to turn my life around, but I just don't know where to begin. That's why I went back to school. I'm a part-time college student majoring in psychology. I want to better myself. In one of my classes, Psychology of Personal Adjustment, we talked about ourselves and how people change. We also had to write an autobiographical paper.

He brings her the autobiography, which reads as follows:

Where am I currently in my life? At 35 I feel that I've wasted most of my life. I should be finished with college and into a career by now, but instead I'm only a junior. I can't afford to really commit myself to pursuing college full time because I need to work to support myself. Even though construction work is hard, I like the satisfaction I get when I look at what I have done.

I want to get into a profession where I could work with people. Someday, I'm hoping to get a master's degree in counseling or in social work and eventually work as a counselor with kids who are in trouble. I know I was helped by someone who cared about me, and I would like to do the same for someone else.

I have few friends and feel scared around most people. I feel good with kids. But I wonder if I'm smart enough to get through all the classes I'll need to become a counselor. One of my problems is that I frequently get drunk. This happens when I feel alone and when I'm scared of the intensity of my feelings. At first drinking seemed to help, but later on I felt awful. I have abused drugs in the past also.

I feel overwhelmed and intimidated when I'm around attractive women. I feel cold, sweaty, and terribly nervous. I think they may be judging me and see me as not much of a man. I'm afraid I just don't measure up to being a real *man*. When I am sexually intimate with a woman, I am anxious and preoccupied with what she is thinking about me.

I feel anxiety much of the time. I often feel as if I'm dying inside. I think about committing suicide, and I wonder who would care. I can see my family coming to my funeral feeling sorry for me. I feel guilty that I haven't worked up to my potential, that I've been a failure, that I've wasted much of my time, and that I let people down a lot. I get down on myself and wallow in guilt and feel *very depressed*. At times like this I feel hopeless and that I'd be better off dead. For all these reasons, I find it difficult to get close to anyone.

There are a few bright spots. I did put a lot of my shady past behind me, and did get into college. I like this determination in me—I *want* to change. I'm tired of feeling the way I do. I know that nobody is going to change my life for me. It's up to me to get what I want. Even though I feel scared at times, I like that I'm willing to take risks.

What was my past like? A major turning point for me was the confidence my supervisor had in me at the youth camp where I worked the past few summers. He helped me get my job, and he also encouraged me to go to college. He said he saw a lot of potential in me for being able to work well with young people. That was hard for me to believe, but his faith inspired me to begin to believe in myself. Another turning point was my marriage and divorce. This marriage didn't last long. It made me wonder about what kind of man I was! Joyce was a strong and dominant woman who kept repeating how worthless I was and how she did not want to be around me. We had sex only a few times, and most of the time I was not very good at it. That was hard to take. It made me afraid to get close to a woman. My parents should have divorced. They fought most of the time. My mother (Angie) constantly criticized my father (Frank Sr.): I saw him as weak and passive. He would *never* stand up to her. There were four of us kids. My parents compared me unfavorably with my older sister (Judy) and older brother (Frank Jr.). They were "perfect" children, successful honors students. My younger brother (Karl) and I fought a lot. They spoiled him. It was all very hard for me.

In high school I started using drugs. I was thrown into a youth rehabilitation facility for stealing. Later I was expelled from regular school for fighting, and I landed in a continuation high school, where I went to school in the mornings and had afternoons for on-the-job training. I got into auto mechanics, was fairly successful, and even managed to keep myself employed for 3 years as a mechanic.

I can still remember my father asking me: "Why can't you be like your sister and brother? Why can't you do anything right?" And my mother treated me much the way she treated my father. She would say: "Why do you do so many things to hurt me? Why can't you grow up and be a man? Things are so much better around here when you're gone." I recall crying myself to sleep many nights, feeling terribly alone. There was no talk of religion in my house, nor was there any talk of sex. In fact, I find it hard to imagine my folks ever having sex.

Where would I like to be 5 years from now? What kind of person do I want to become? Most of all, I would like to start feeling better about myself. I would like to be able to stop drinking altogether and still feel good. I want to like myself much more than I do now. I hope I can learn to love at least a few other people, most of all, a woman. I want to lose my fear of women. I would like to feel equal with others and not always have to feel apologetic for my existence. I want to let go of my anxiety and guilt. I want to become a good counselor for kids. I'm not certain how I'll change or even what all the changes are I hope for. I do know that I want to be free of my self-destructive tendencies and learn how to trust people more. Perhaps when I begin to like myself more, I'll be able to trust that others will find something about me to like.

Using Stan's case examine the following answers to questions

- a) What themes in Stan's life merit special attention in therapy?
- b) What concepts would be useful to you in working with Stan on his problems?
- c) What are the general goals of Stan's therapy?
- d) What possible techniques and methods would best meet these goals?
- e) What are some characteristics of the relationship between Stan and his therapist?
- f) How might the therapist proceed?
- g) How might the therapist evaluate the process and treatment outcomes of therapy?

#### **Question 2**

Using Stan's case critically discuss the personal characteristics of an effective counselor.

#### **Question 3**

Create a verbatim using Stan's case, paying attention to the following:

- i. Assessment and diagnosis
- ii. Treatment plan
- iii. Goals

#### **Question 4**

Discuss the role of play therapy and expressive arts when working with children.

#### **Question 5**

Discuss the attributes of effective active listening. Use a verbatim to illustrate your points.

#### **Question 6**

"The process of communication is what allows us to interact with other people without it, we would be unable to share knowledge or experiences with anything outside of ourselves. Common forms of communication include speaking, writing, gestures, touch and broadcasting" (Corey, 2012). Critically discuss effective communication skills and barriers to effective communication.