

Week 9 Discussion: Ethical Dilemma

Student's Name

Institutional Affiliation

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In the counseling session, the client, a 30-year-old bisexual woman, discloses her participation in a consensual non-monogamous relationship. She expresses distress over her family's conservative views, fearing their disapproval could lead to estrangement. This situation poses an ethical dilemma: supporting the client's autonomy in her relationships while considering the potential impact of familial alienation.

In handling the ethical dilemma presented by a client involved in a consensual non-monogamous relationship, the counselor must first ensure a non-judgmental, supportive environment. This approach is pivotal for exploring the client's feelings and concerns without bias. Counselors should employ empathetic listening and affirming responses, allowing the client to express her thoughts fully and explore her own emotions regarding both her relationship and family expectations (ACA, 2014). This step is crucial in building trust and facilitating open dialogue, which is the foundation for effective counseling.

The counselor must also demonstrate multicultural awareness by recognizing and respecting the client's unique cultural background and its impact on her relationships and familial expectations. This involves understanding the specific cultural norms that may influence the client's situation and applying this knowledge to guide the counseling process sensitively (ACA, 2014). By integrating cultural competence, the counselor can help the client navigate the complexities of her identity and relationships in a way that honors her values and cultural heritage, fostering a deeper understanding and acceptance of her choices.

Finally, developing and discussing potential strategies for managing familial relationships and personal happiness is essential. The counselor could explore various communication strategies the client might use if she chooses to disclose her relationship style to her family.

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Role-playing sessions can be beneficial here, providing a safe space for the client to practice conversations and prepare for possible reactions. Additionally, the counselor should equip the client with resources and coping mechanisms to handle potential outcomes, ensuring she feels supported regardless of her family's response. This comprehensive approach not only addresses the immediate ethical dilemma but also empowers the client to make informed decisions about her life and relationships.

Peer Response

Your approach to integrating multicultural awareness into the counseling process is insightful and well-articulated. I appreciate how you emphasize the importance of cultural competence in understanding the client's perspective and guiding the counseling process. This is crucial in ensuring that the client feels respected and understood. Your suggestion of role-playing as a preparation tool is particularly valuable as it can significantly enhance the client's confidence in handling difficult conversations. Your holistic approach not only addresses the ethical dilemma but also supports the client in her autonomy and relationships.

Reference

ACA. (2014). *ACA Code of Ethics*.

https://www.counseling.org/docs/default-source/default-document-library/ethics/2014-aca-code-of-ethics.pdf?sfvrsn=55ab73d0_1