



**ASSOCIATION FOR BIBLICAL
COUNSELLING AND EDUCATION**

**BIBLE BASED
COUNSELLING**
Course 1
SEMESTER 1

WEEK 8

STUDY SCHEDULE FOR SEMESTER 1

The schedule provides guidelines for the maximum time to be spent on studying the material. Each student is unique, and this also applies to their circumstances. You may study in your own way and at your own pace. It is, however, in your own interest to study all the material and assignments thoroughly. The word, **Textbook** refers to Chapters 1 – 6 on this CD.

8	Chapter 3	3.2 3.2.1 3.2.2	Understanding phase Aim of data collection Conceptualisation	Textbook
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**Week 8
Chapter 3
Units 3.2.1 – 3.2.2**

Learning Outcome:

After studying this chapter, you should be able to describe this important component of the counselling process.

The main learning points in the understanding phase are:

1. Collection of data is getting to know a particular person.
2. Conceptualisation, collection of data and evaluation through Biblical principles have to be in the right balance.
3. Collection of data is a movement to the heart: the route to the heart can be described as follows: (structure) and finally the spirit (treasure), that which drives the counselee.
4. The types of questions that are asked give specific information to the counsellor.
5. The listening skills build the relationship and give important information.
6. The data must be organized Biblically: roots and fruit/thorns.
7. Collection of data is getting to know a particular person.
8. Conceptualisation, collection of data and evaluation through Biblical principles have to be in the right balance.

CHAPTER 3: METHOD OF COUNSELLING

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

3.1 RELATIONSHIP BUILDING PHASE

3.1.1 Three relationships

3.1.2 The relationship of the counsellee/counsellor with God

3.1.2.1 Being a child of God enables counselling

3.1.2.3 Acceptance by God

3.1.3 The relationship between the counsellor and counsellee

3.1.3.1 Empathy

3.1.2.2 Identification

3.1.2.3 Realism

3.1.2.4 Solidarity / closeness

3.1.2.5 Distance

3.1.2.6 Patience

3.1.2.7 Friendliness

3.1.2.8 Trust in God

3.1.2.9 Respect

3.1.2.10 Trust between counsellor and counsellee

3.1.2.11 Hope

3.2 UNDERSTANDING PHASE

3.2.1 Purpose of data collection

3.2.2 Conceptualisation

3.2.3 Data collection as movement towards the heart

3.2.3.1 Understanding the counsellee's situation

3.2.3.2 Understanding the counsellee's strategy

3.2.3.3 Understanding the counsellee's structure

3.2.3.4 Understanding the counsellee's treasure

3.2.4 Asking questions

3.2.4.1 Open and closed questions

3.2.4.2 Intensive and extensive questions

3.2.4.3 Information and the nature of the question

3.2.4.4 Pitfalls to be avoided

3.2.4.5 Three steps to clarify understanding

3.2.4.6 Listening skills

3.2.4.7 Organizing information

3.2.5 Summary of the understanding process

3.2.5.1 Situation

3.2.5.2 Strategy

3.2.5.3 Structure

3.2.5.4 Treasure

3.2.5.5 The link between situation, strategy, structure and treasure

3.2.6 The position of emotions

3.3 CONFRONTATION PHASE

3.3.1 Introduction

3.3.2 What confrontation is not

3.3.3 Awareness as basis confrontation

3.3.4 The perspective of the counsellee: Experience or Scripture

3.3.5 Procedure for change according to 2 Timothy 3:16-17

3.3.5.1 The purpose of Scripture

3.3.5.2 The process of Scripture

Phase 1: Teaching the standard

Phase 2: Rebuking and comparison

Phase 3: Correcting / change

Phase 4: Training in righteousness

3.3.6 Setting a Biblical agenda Case study: Benny

3.4 ACTION PHASE

3.4.1 Applying God's agenda

3.4.2 The connection between the counsellee's and God's responsibilities

3.4.2.1 The nature of the responsibilities

3.4.2.2 Drawing up concrete lists

3.4.2.3 Providing applicable Scriptures

3.4.2.4 Formulating a plan of action for situation, structure, treasure and strategy based on Scripture

3.4.2.5 Continuous evaluation of the success of the plan of action

3.4.2.6 Decision to terminate counselling

3.4.2.7 Friendship with the counsellee

3.2. UNDERSTANDING PHASE

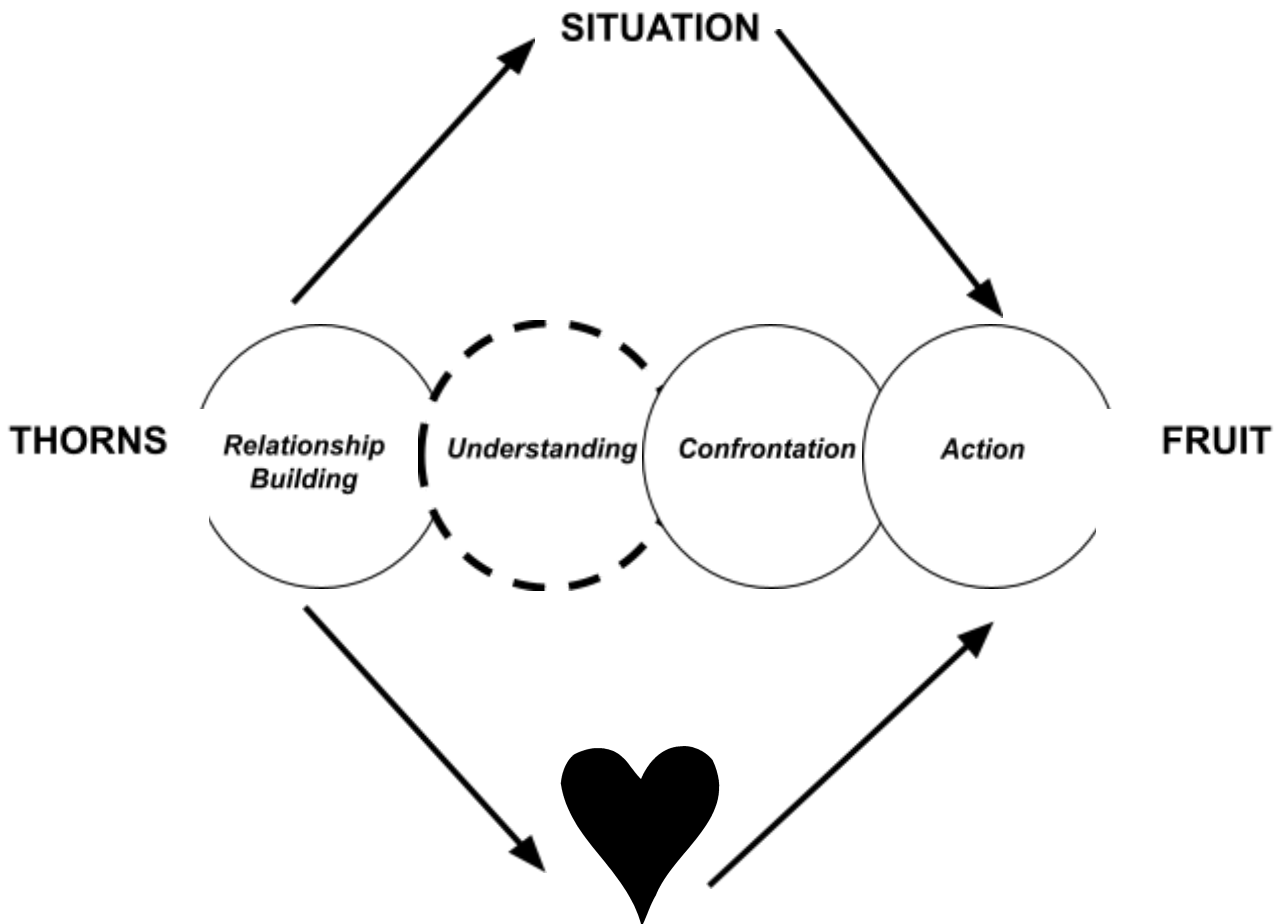


Fig. 5

This phase is extremely important, because most of what the counsellor knows about the counsellee will come from the data collection. One can only provide counsel for things that are known to you. Information is required to provide wise counsel.

It is essential to know how to gather data. Your information and your explanation of the information will determine your counselling. Even if you know the Bible well and are a wise person, you will not be able to do counselling if you do not understand the counsellee and his/her problems.

The counsellor is dependent upon God's revelation for understanding. He/she should open up to enlightenment by the Holy Spirit in order to see what God wants him/her to see. The counsellor should pray for discernment, knowledge and wisdom. He/she

should allow the lenses of his/her “understanding spectacles” to be continually polished by the Word.

For a better understanding the counsellor is also dependent on the counsellee. They are in this process together and both are responsible to come to a Biblical understanding.

The understanding phase will now be discussed in terms of the following topics: the purpose of data collection, conceptualisation, data collection as movement to the heart, asking questions, the complete understanding process, and the role of emotions.

3.2.1 The purpose of data collection

The purpose with data collection is not to focus on the problem of the person – but on the person who has the problem. Biblical counselling is **not problem-orientated** but **person-orientated**. We want to be instruments for change in the lives of people. We are not called to hunt and solve problems. We are not God’s small mechanics who lift the bonnet and make adjustments. If this is your aim as counsellor, then you will be frustrated, because then you are trying to do what God says He should be doing.

The counsellor’s job is to work with the person, to make contact as human being and to get to know the person. The aim of data collection is to understand the specific person receiving counselling. As you do counselling you get to know various types of people, but that does not mean that you understand this specific, unique person. Every person is unique and has a unique functioning of the heart, i.e. each person thinks uniquely and desires uniquely.

Counsellors are sometimes arrogant by simply putting people in particular categories and treat them accordingly. The counsellor should not put a person in a box or deal with him/her as a category – but should be open for his/her uniqueness.

In order to really get to know and understand a person, the counsellor should develop an understanding of the counsellee at both fruit and root level.

You should ask yourself: What am I trying to understand: fruit (behaviour) or roots (thoughts, drives)? (See chapter 2)

It is crucial to understand at both levels, to ensure that you move towards the person’s heart (thinking / desires / fears). When do you know a person? Simply when you know

what his/her face looks like? If you know how he/she behaves and what his/her habits are? Or do you know him/her if you also know how he/she thinks, what his/her values are – if you get to know his/her heart (Proverbs 4:23)?

The aim of the understanding phase in Biblical Counselling is to understand both the person's behaviour and heart.

3.2.2 Conceptualisation

Counselling is associated with conceptualising: the counsellor builds a picture of the person.

You counsel based on the picture you have of the person. It is therefore important to be aware of the assumptions with which you work. Every person (counsellor) has assumptions.

Assumptions can be very dangerous!

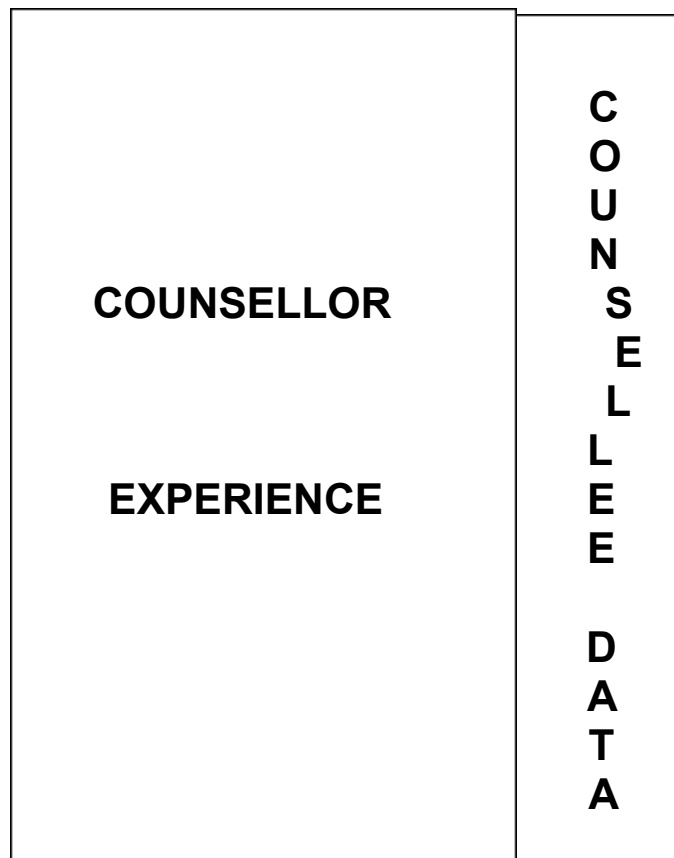


Fig. 6

When the counsellor is in a counselling situation, he/she arrives with years of life experience, but he/she knows very little about the counsellee. These experiences and

knowledge which the counsellor acquired beforehand, are accompanied by assumptions based on his/her own understanding and observation of reality.

If the counsellor arrives at conclusions about the counsellee too soon, then these will be based entirely on his/her own subjective experience and then there will be the possibility counsels a person who does not exist. Therefore, be careful not to assume that you have reasons for all the conclusions you make about the counsellee.

Everybody makes assumptions, but make sure that your assumptions are based on the data coming from the counsellee and not from your own subjective assumptions.

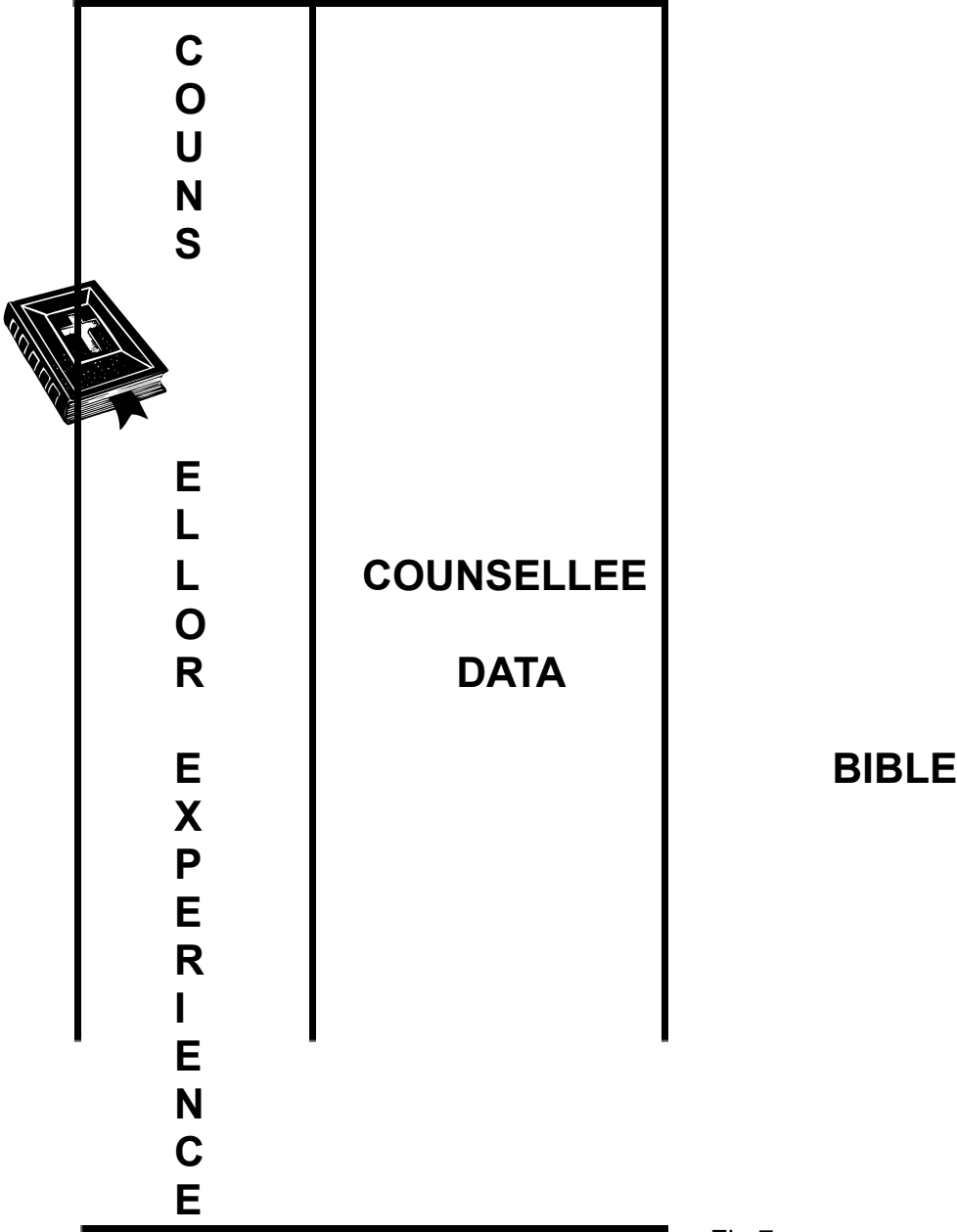


Fig 7

Figure 7 tries to indicate that the counsellor's counselling should be based on data acquired from the counsellee, seen through the lenses of the Bible. This process evaluates, monitors and legitimises the counsellor's conclusions.