



Middle School

National FFA Organization

Lesson MS.25

SEEKING COUNSELING

Unit.

Stage One of Development-ME

Problem Area.

What Foundational Skills Do I Need for Leadership?

Precepts.

K6: Seek appropriate counsel.

National Standards.

NPH-H5-8.5 - Demonstrate healthy ways to express needs, wants, and feelings.



Student Learning Objectives. As a result of this lesson, the student will ...

- 1 Identify situations where counseling may be needed.
- 2 Identify various types of counselors.
- 3 List benefits of appropriate counseling.



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Time. Instruction time for this lesson: 50 minutes.



Resources

American Academy of Child Psychiatry

Educational Council: Safe and Drug-Free Schools Consortium

National FFA Organization's Essential Learning, 2003.



Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

- ✓ MS.25.TM.A
- ✓ MS.25.TM.B
- ✓ MS.25.TM.C
- ✓ MS.25.TM.D
- ✓ MS.25.TM.E
- ✓ MS.25.TM.F
- ✓ MS.25.TM.G
- ✓ MS.25.TM.H
- ✓ MS.25.AS.A—one per student
- ✓ MS.25.Assess—one per student
- ✓ Overhead projector
- ✓ Counselor stick-ups for the walls



Key Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in bold italics:

- ▶ Seek counseling
- ▶ Informal counselors
- ▶ Formal counselors



Interest Approach

Place MS.25.TM.F, featuring the pictures of political figures, on the projector.



Look at the individuals pictured here. On your own, identify each person and what the three people have in common. Write your answers on a sheet of paper.

Next, place MS.25.TM.G on the overhead projector.



Identify these people as well and list what they have in common. Continue to record your answers.

Place MS.25.TM.H on the projector.





Finally, identify this last group of people. What unique talent do they share? Take a few minutes to compile your responses.

What did the first group of people have in common?

Correct response: political figures



What about the second group?

Correct response: comedians



Finally, what did the last group have in common?

Correct response: musicians

A small prize such as a fun pencil or some candy may be presented to the students who share the correct answer.



Great job! Whoever can answer one final question will receive the last small prize! Looking at all of the prominent figures placed before you, what one thing do they all share in common? Raise your hand if wish to take an educated guess.

Seek three or four responses from the students.



Good guesses! Even though these well-known figures have provided us with political leadership, humor, and music, they all share a common secret. These extremely successful people have all suffered from some form of depression, and several have even battled alcohol and drug addictions. Who would have ever guessed? Many famous politicians, comedians, musicians, actors, writers, and composers have suffered from some sort of stress, mental disorder, or dependency problem. However, many of them have been able to overcome their disorders through counseling and other forms of help.

Oftentimes when we hear the word "counseling," we associate it with formal, clinical counselors. Today, we are going to look at that word differently. We are going look at its informal side. Set aside common social stigmas and think openly about the various ways that emotional and psychological struggles and problems can be dealt with.

SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1. Identify situations where counseling may be needed.



We are going to look deeply into problems that may require us to ask for help. There are numerous mild to severe adversities and stresses that can cause people to develop conditions for which they may have to seek counseling. Pay close attention to the information presented and record it in your notebooks. Later, you are each going to play the role of counselor! Let's begin with a simple definition for "seeking counseling."



Use MS.25.TM.A to display the following information or transfer it onto a clean writing surface.

I. Counseling

- A. What does it mean to seek counseling? To seek counseling means to obtain help from one or more individuals when one is faced with an overwhelming problem or long-term situation that one can't seem to solve on his or her own.
- B. When is it appropriate to seek counseling? Counseling may be appropriate when one's inability to deal with feelings and emotions becomes long-term.
 - 1. Guilt, anger, frustration, nervousness, and loneliness are just a few emotional situations that may be resolved by counseling.
 - 2. Long-term stress may also produce an onslaught of mental and physical health problems that could benefit from counseling.

Use a Hieroglyphics Moment as you continue the next step in your notes and discussion. As you cover the material on MS.25.TM.B, allow students to individually draw small icons of the problems listed next to the words they have written.



As you capture this list of common conditions that can be prevented through counseling create an icon that will help you remember each condition.

- C. Common conditions that can be prevented or treated through counseling
 - 1. Alcohol and drug abuse
 - 2. Anxiety disorders
 - 3. Bipolar disorder-also known as manic-depressive illness
 - 4. Conduct disorders
 - 5. Depression
 - 6. Eating disorders, including anorexia nervosa and bulimia
 - 7. Hyperactivity
 - 8. Physical, mental, or sexual abuse
 - 9. Suicidal thoughts

Objective 2. Identify various types of counselors.



Great drawings! Looks like we have a good understanding of conditions that may benefit from counseling. Where can individuals with these and other problems find help?

Pause for discussion. Anticipated responses - friends, guidance office, teachers, doctors.



Wonderful ideas! Here are some of the agencies we just mentioned, as well as several others. Copy these down in your notes so we can successfully complete the next task.

Display transparencies MS.25.TM.C and MS.25.TM.D for learners to obtain the following information.



II. Where to seek counseling

A. A variety of sources may provide counseling, ranging from friends to formal agencies

1. **Informal counselors:** individuals who have not had formal training, but who have firsthand experience with, and can relate to, many minor problems. Could be:

- a. Close friends
- b. Immediate family members
- c. Extended relatives
- d. Teachers
- e. Coaches

2. **Formal counselors:** individuals who have received training for intervening in a wide range of stress and emotionally related problems. Includes:

- a. Anonymous and teen help-line counselors
- b. Mental health center counselors
- c. Drug and alcohol abuse agency counselors
- d. Physical abuse center counselors
- e. Physicians
- f. Religious leaders
- g. Guidance counselors

►Activity:

Use MS.25.AS.A (give one to each student), along with the Go Get It Moment for the following activity. Make sure MS.25.AS.B has been cut into strips and posted around the room.



Channel your knowledge and expertise to complete your next task. Along the walls, you will notice there are many labeled offices where you will find the various counselors. You will act as the manager of all of these counseling agencies. You will be given a list of six teenagers and a description of their individual problems. Analyze their problems and determine the most appropriate counselors for dealing with them. Once you receive your list of clients, work diligently to direct each one to the most appropriate source for help.

Carefully travel around the room to choose the counselor who would most benefit your patient and write it on your paper, you should find two or three counselors for each situation. Once you have gathered your answers please return to your seat.

Call on volunteers to give their analysis for each problem. Initiate discussion, emphasizing that more than one counseling resource may apply to any given problem.

Objective 3. List benefits of appropriate counseling.



Good problem solving! Let's take the last activity a step further. All of the previous scenarios were solved. Imagine that everyone met with success in the resolution of his or her problems. Let's consider what positive outcomes could occur from counseling. Work with a partner to determine at least two positive outcomes of seeking counseling for each of the six scenarios. You will have only several minutes to gather your answers. Begin now!



Allow several minutes to pass. Then call on volunteers to share their answers. Use MS.25.TM.E to solidify student responses.

III. Seeking assistance can help to:

- A. Reduce stress
- B. Provide awareness and solace that one is not alone
- C. Prevent anticipated health and mental problems
- D. Treat current stress-related mental and physical conditions



Review/Summary

Use the Dickens Moment for the review activity.



Using the ideas gained in class, develop a short story about the benefits of seeking counseling. Include a situation in which counseling led to a positive outcome, describe the type of counselor used. Be creative and different. Create characters who seem real and that interact with one another. When you complete your short story, be ready to share it with a small group of your classmates.



Application

►Extended Classroom Activity:

Have students compose at least five questions relating to counseling that can be used to interview a counselor. Then have them conduct a brief interview with the counselor of their choice. Students should record their answers and write up their interview in paragraph form. Their final interview write-up must be at least one page in length.

►FFA Activity:

Have students donate time, supplies, or money to a local non-profit counseling agency.

Or, invite a teen counselor to speak to your FFA chapter to address the common problems teenagers face within your community.

►SAE Activity:

Gather a panel of third- and fourth-year FFA members to address problems they have faced in choosing and/or conducting their SAE programs.

Or, use older FFA members to interview and determine the SAE interests, availability, and needs of the first-year members. Allow them to assist the new members in the choosing and planning of their SAE program.



MS.25.Assess

Answers to Assessment:

1. b
2. a
3. Close friends, immediate family members, extended relatives, teachers, and coaches
4. Anonymous and teen help-line counselors, mental health center counselors, drug and alcohol abuse agency counselors, physical abuse center counselors, physicians, religious leaders, guidance counselors
5. Alcohol and drug abuse; anxiety disorders; bipolar disorders-also known as manic-depression; conduct disorders; depression; eating disorders-anorexia nervosa and bulimia; hyperactivity; physical, mental; and sexual abuse; suicidal thoughts
6. Reduces stress; provides awareness and solace that one is not alone; works to prevent anticipated health and mental problems; helps to treat current stress-related mental and physical conditions

Answers to Activity Sheet:

Many answers may be interchangeable, use own discretion.

1. mental health centers, guidance counselors, anonymous & teen help-lines
Sally is showing signs of dissatisfaction and possibly depression.
2. mental health centers, physicians, eating disorder specialists
Jan exhibits signs of an eating disorder, such as bulimia.
3. friends, teachers, coaches, religious leaders
Jon simply has a fear of public speaking, one of the most common fears people hold.
4. drug and alcohol abuse agencies
Tom shows signs of substance abuse.
5. mental health centers, physicians
Nick may be showing signs of manic depression.
6. family, relatives, coaches, teachers, guidance counselors
Erica is feeling alone, as she has moved to a new area and is a shy person in general.



SEEKING COUNSELING

Instructions: Answer each question with the correct response.

1. The best description of when people normally seek counseling is:
 - a. Only when they have a life-threatening problem
 - b. When they have an overwhelming or long-term stress or problem
 - c. Only if they have a mental condition or drug abuse problem
 - d. Whenever they feel an unwanted emotion
2. Informal counselors are best described as:
 - a. Individuals you trust, but who do not necessarily have specialized training
 - b. Individuals you trust who do have specialized training
 - c. Individuals you do not know and who do not have specialized training
 - d. Individuals you do not know but who have specialized training
3. List three types of informal counselors.
4. List three types of formal counselors.
5. List three problems that may require counseling.
6. List one benefit gained from seeking appropriate counseling.



COUNSELING

◆ **What does it mean to seek counseling. To seek counseling means to obtain help from one or more individuals when one is faced with an overwhelming problem or long-term situation one can't seem to solve on his or her own.**

◆ **When is it appropriate to seek counseling. Counseling may be appropriate when one's inability to deal with feelings and emotions becomes long-term.**

◆ **Guilt, anger, frustration, nervousness, and loneliness are just a few emotions that may benefit from counseling.**

◆ **Long-term stress may produce an onslaught of mental and physical health problems that could benefit from counseling.**



COMMON PROBLEMS THAT CAN BE PREVENTED AND TREATED THROUGH COUNSELING

- ◆ **Alcohol and drug abuse**
- ◆ **Anxiety disorders**
- ◆ **Bipolar disorder—also known as manic-depressive illness**
- ◆ **Conduct disorders**
- ◆ **Depression**
- ◆ **Eating disorders, including anorexia nervosa and bulimia**
- ◆ **Hyperactivity**
- ◆ **Physical, mental, or sexual abuse**
- ◆ **Suicidal thoughts**



WHERE TO SEEK COUNSELING

A variety of sources may provide counseling, ranging from friends to formal agencies.

Possible informal counselors: individuals without formal training, but who can relate to many minor problems. Could include:

- ◆ **Close friends**
- ◆ **Immediate family members**
- ◆ **Extended relatives**
- ◆ **Teachers**
- ◆ **Coaches**



COUNSELORS

Formal counselors: individuals who have received training for intervening in a wide range of stress and emotionally related problems.

Includes:

- ◆ **Anonymous and teen help-line counselors**
- ◆ **Mental health center counselors**
- ◆ **Drug and alcohol abuse agency counselors**
- ◆ **Physical abuse center counselors**
- ◆ **Physicians**
- ◆ **Religious leaders**
- ◆ **Guidance counselors**



SEEKING ASSISTANCE CAN HELP TO:

- ◆ **Reduce stress**
- ◆ **Provide awareness and solace that one is not alone**
- ◆ **Prevent anticipated health and mental problems**
- ◆ **Treat current stress-related mental and physical conditions**



Abraham Lincoln

Winston Churchill

Queen Elizabeth



Drew Carey

Jim Carrey

Ben Stiller

Damon Wayans



Axl Rose

Ozzy Osbourne

Janet Jackson



- I. Sally has recently lost interest in many things she used to enjoy. She now pushes away her friends and family and spends most of her time alone. Sally has also told a good friend that her life is just too hard to handle.

To whom should Sally turn.

- II. Jan has been eating a lot of food lately but only a couple of times a day. She also seems to be losing weight but still insists she is not in shape. Oftentimes, Jan is in a sad or depressed mood.

To whom should Jan turn.

- III. Jon hates to speak in public. He becomes nervous and overwhelmed when talking to groups of people, including his classmates. Jon has just been informed he must complete a project that requires him to present his results to the entire class.

To whom should Jon turn.

- IV. Tom used to be a straight-A student. He was always concerned with his academic and extracurricular performance. Lately, his grades have dropped dramatically, and he even misses classes or shows up late to school and after-school activities. His circle of friends and overall attitude have also changed. Physically, Tom's eyes are often red, and he has a persistent cough.

To whom should Tom turn.

- V. Nick has been suffering from wild mood swings. One minute he seems happy and full of energy. He becomes involved in many activities. Then all at once, he seems to drift away from everything as if he is depressed. This cycle has occurred several times.

To whom should Nick turn.

- VI. Erica has just moved into a new neighborhood and knows no one outside her immediate family. She is shy and finds it hard to begin conversations with new people. Lately, Erica has felt pretty lonely.

To whom should Erica turn.

