

The Application of Interpersonal Communication Concepts in Pastoral Care Counseling

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Received Date: June 08, 2023; Accepted Date: July 17, 2023; Published Date: July 28, 2023

Citation: Jim Schnell (2023), The Application of Interpersonal Communication Concepts in Pastoral Care Counseling, *J. Clinical Cardiology and Cardiovascular Interventions*, 6(6); DOI:10.31579/2641-0419/322

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Abstract

This report focuses on the application of interpersonal communication concepts in pastoral care counseling. Such conceptual applications will stress perception, listening, nonverbal communication, cross-cultural dynamics, power and conflict. These conceptual orientations are, in turn, applied to pastoral care counseling contexts. These applications result in enhanced understanding for how diversity and pluralism elements are inherent within these contexts and related circumstances.

This report will focus on the application of interpersonal communication concepts in pastoral care counseling. Such conceptual applications will focus on perception, listening, nonverbal communication, cross-cultural dynamics, power and conflict. These conceptual orientations will be applied to pastoral care counseling contexts. The reader will observe how diversity and pluralism elements are inherent within these applications.

Keywords: attribution theory; rationalization; stereotyping

Perception

The perception process is fundamental to the pastoral care counseling context in that the pastoral care counselor and counselee are going to be interacting based on their perceptions of phenomena central to their interaction. How we perceive the world around us, including those we interact with, affects how we respond to that world and those in it. It is easy to assume others perceive as we do but history is full of incidents where different people will perceive the same event in very different ways—even when the same event is directly observed.

In basic terms perception is the process by which we use our various senses (sight, smell, taste, touch, & hearing) to interpret sensory stimulations. The perceptual process is both simple, as the aforementioned definition indicates, and complex. It is complex because each of us has a unique filter through which we interpret sensory stimulations. This filter, or frame of reference, is constructed through our life experiences and how we interpret those life experiences. Perceptions having to do with rationalization, attribution, stereotyping and fact-inference misinterpretation offer illustration for the role of perception.

Rationalization

Rationalization occurs when we interpret sensory stimulations so they fit into our frame of reference. Rationalization is, at times, seen as a short-circuiting of the reasoning process. That is, our interpretation of events can be weak logically but this down-side can be balanced by the palatability of what we've chosen to believe.

A mid-life crisis can occur when you see through the rationalization fabricated to legitimize your life. That is, one day an adult can get up in the morning and realize her lifestyle and aspirations are without merit and that radical changes are needed. This process oddly enough can be complicated by additional rationalizations regarding what courses of action should be adopted.

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory focuses on the process through which we try to understand behavior of others and ourselves and speculate on the intentions behind the behavior. Periodically we encounter people whose actions do not make sense to us. Through attribution we seek to understand why they do what they do. There are two basic types of attribution circumstances: coercive circumstances and intentional circumstances. Coercive circumstances exist when the behavior is due to a cause outside of the individual. Intentional circumstances exist when the behavior is committed purposely and of free will by the individual. Such circumstances can indicate the difference between hero and villain. A pastoral counselor would understandably be seeking to help a counselee determine attribution within scenarios he/she is confronted with.

Stereotyping

Stereotyping occurs when we have an oversimplified view of a designated group of people and interpret members of the group based on this limited perspective. We judge the person based on which group she belongs to. Typical groups affected by stereotyping include racial groups, ethnic groups,

occupational groups, societal groups and religious groups. Stereotyping is difficult to avoid as a type of perceptual shortcut. It allows us to attribute traits and motivations to an individual because of the group he belongs to. The lessened probability of interpretive accuracy is a significant drawback that results from stereotyping. The pastoral care counselor can help the counselee recognize her/his faulty emphasis on stereotypes.

Fact-Inference Misinterpretation

This misinterpretation is a common problem in communication. To understand this misinterpretation and the ramifications the reader must differentiate between fact and inference. A fact is something that is provable. An inference is a hunch or guess that occurs when we speculate on what the facts of a situation are. Problems arise when we treat our speculation, of what the facts of a situation are, as fact. That is, when we treat our guesses as truth. Misinterpretation of facts and inferences can be problematic both ways. That is, treating a fact as an inference or treating an inference as a fact. Understanding can be enhanced when we consider how much of our perception in a situation is based on observable fact or speculative hunch. The pastoral counselor can offer objective assessment in this regard.

Application Summary

Hope can be a relevant variable in pastoral care counseling contexts. "Hoping is the perception that what one wants to happen will happen, a perception that is fueled by desire and in response to deprivation." As such, the concept of hope is going to hold varied meanings depending on how it is perceived and expressed. At times a person may not have much more than hope to cling to.

Belongingness and perceptions associated with belongingness can impact how the counselee interprets his/her sense of placement on the interpersonal continuum. "When there is no sense of connection, the expected common reaction is indifference, which leads to abandonment. Without relationship we lose a sense of responsibility to the other." In such cases where there is minimal sense of responsibility to the other then this can lead to societal dysfunctionality.

Perceptions associated with aging offer illustration for how a single phenomenon (aging) can represent different meanings. There are four common dimensions associated with aging: the biological, the psychological, the spiritual and the social dimensions. As such the concept of age can be perceived differently and these dimensions are further delineated in that each purports a continuum rather than merely an either/or construct. Cultural context will play a significant role.

Listening

Listening is certainly relevant within pastoral counseling for both the pastoral care counselor and the counselee. On a primary level we think of the pastoral care counselor as needing to listen to the counselee so the latter can be understood by the former. On a secondary level the counselee will be listening to the pastoral care counselor for guidance and also as means to ensure the pastoral counselor understands the counselee's perspectives. Processes associated with active listening are going to be helpful on these primary and secondary levels.

Active Listening

The intensity of listening can range from hearing (at the weakest extreme) to passive listening to active listening (at the strongest extreme). Active listening is listening to understand and provide feedback. A common technique in active listening is to react to the speaker's content and feeling (what they say and how they say it). If you yawn as you say "I'm not tired" the active listener would acknowledge this contradiction in statement and action. Another common technique in active listening is paraphrasing (repeating) statements, made by the speaker, to ensure understanding (i.e. when given driving directions you can typically paraphrase them back to the speaker). Paraphrasing ensures the listener understands the message and,

when the paraphrasing is done accurately, ensures the speaker knows the listener received the conveyed message as intended.

Hearing, at the other extreme, does not ensure understanding. It merely indicates the listener is aware of sound in the environment. Hearing is more of a physiological process whereby sound waves are transformed into auditory nerve impulses. Passive listening, located in the middle of the "Hearing-Active Listening Continuum", occurs when you listen only because you happen to be present. There is no commitment by the listener. Examples of hearing include overhearing a conversation between two people seated near you on an airline flight or passively listening to the radio as you read a book.

Active listening is a useful technique to enhance understanding but it is not appropriate in all listening situations. A casual small-talk conversation about the weather, with a friend on an elevator, does not require intensive efforts to ensure you understand if your friend enjoys the warm weather. The interaction outcome is not very important in that case. However, the more important the interaction outcome the more beneficial active listening can be (i.e. if you're discussing, with the same friend, plans to start a business together). Thus, a pastoral care counseling session would qualify as being worthy of active listening practices.

Application Summary

For active listening to occur there needs to be common ground for establishing and maintaining foundational understanding. "For communication to be effective, the counselor and counselee must get through two kinds of barriers. The personal barriers refer to the values, attitudes and perspectives that are held by the individuals who are communicating. The cultural values refer to the values, ideas, and viewpoints that are accepted by most people in the culture." Thus, it should be clear that listening is simple on one level (just attending to the other) but complex on another level (being able to establish understanding).

Nonverbal Communication

Much of the relationship between the pastoral care counselor and counselee is going to be negotiated via the nonverbal communication plane. That is, words carry literal/explicit meanings but relevant contextual meanings are conveyed through nonverbal channels. Such nonverbal channels include proxemics, objectics, chronemics, kinesics, facial communication, eye behavior and silence. Taken together these channels provide significant framing for the words that are expressed in the counseling relationship.

Proxemics

Proxemics deals with physical space and how it is used in our personal interactions, home designs, and community designs. Regarding personal interactions and space, in most situations we tend to maintain an invisible personal bubble that we consider to be "my space". In the United States this space extends about 2 1/2 feet in diameter around us. In some cultures this space is larger and in other cultures it is smaller.

There are times when we disregard our "personal bubble" space. For instance, if you are crowded into an elevator, on a crowded bus, on a dance floor or at a crowded football stadium. These are situations where we realize it is not functional for personal space to be respected because there is too little space and too many people. All things considered, the spatial arrangement between the pastoral counselor and counselee will impact the dialog.

Objectics

Objectics focuses on the effect objects in the environment have on the communication process. Objectics gives consideration to artifacts and fixtures. Artifacts are jewelry and clothing. Fixtures are furniture and decorations. Both variables impact the nonverbal dialog realm.

The relevance of artifacts (jewelry and clothing) in American culture is manifested in how we tend to evaluate people partially by what they wear.

The book *Dress for Success*, that advises what is appropriate to wear in different situations, exemplifies such awareness. A look through old magazines and film footage from the last five decades will show how much clothing styles have changed for men and women, and how closely most people follow these trends. Designer jeans, expensive tennis shoes, and earrings on men exemplify a very minor portion of changing artifact norms. The pastoral counselor will be well advised to give consideration for jewelry and clothing being worn.

People place varying degrees of emphasis on judging a person by what they wear but even a person that tries to focus entirely on the content of someone's character can be affected by artifacts. The college student who wears his/her high school jacket, well adorned with emblems that carry no meaning to those who did not attend her/his high school, is usually interpreted to be an athlete since most people who wear emblem adorned jackets have earned such emblems via athletics. The student who wears a Greek lettered fraternity sweatshirt to class may be interpreted as somebody who likes to drink beer. The person who wears a cross around her neck will most likely be associated with Christianity. Such interpretations will not always be accurate but it is common to have these observations.

Chronemics

Chronemics deals with time and the emphasis people give it. American society, for example, is more time bound than most cultures. It is common for a person to wear a wrist watch because so much of our typical day is controlled by time. The phrase "time is money" illustrates how time can be viewed as a commodity. Lateness in the U.S. can convey disrespect but in other countries it is expected depending on the type of situation. The importance of chronemic norms will be apparent if you encounter someone from another culture who practices different chronemic habits. A pastoral counseling session that begins and ends at established times can set a pattern regarding chronemic expectations that impact counselee perceptions of other session dynamics.

An even larger chronemic consideration has to do with the timing of the pastoral care counseling session and whether or not it should be happening at a given time. The counselee should have input with this. "Always ask, as you enter, if the time is appropriate and comfortable for a visit. Sensitivity to a distraught or tiring patient is essential, and returning at a better time will be much appreciated."

Kinesics

Kinesics stresses the role of body language (hand, arm, head, and leg movements). This body language seems to receive more attention in the popular literature (i.e. nonacademic books found in book sections of drug stores) with titles such as "How to Read a Person Like a Book," implying that much about a person can be judged based on her body appendage behavior. Such a claim, though it helps sell books, is over exaggerated. Kinesic behaviors are part of the nonverbal package but by themselves they are not all-telling.

Again, cultural norms will affect the expression and interpretation of kinesic behaviors. For instance, a handshake is a common kinesic form of greeting between men in the U.S. In some Asian cultures bowing is the common kinesic expression of greeting. Some Arab cultures will kiss on the beard while a Russian kinesic form of greeting can involve a bear hug and/or kissing on the lips. The pastoral counselor should give consideration to kinesic norms practiced by the cultural background of the counselee.

Facial Communication

Facial communication conveys types of feelings and emotions (happiness, surprise, fear, anger, sadness, disgust, and interest) but we know far less about how this process works. The face is comprised of many different muscles that, in conjunction with our brain, produce readily recognizable facial configurations that convey meaning. Some facial communication is universal (innate) and some facial communication is cultural (learned). For instance, a smile is considered to be innate because even a blind child that

has never seen a smile, thus not allowing her to mimic a smile in association with happiness, will exhibit the smile facial configuration. The winking of an eye and concurrent flexing of the cheek, to communicate you are joking, exemplifies a cultural or learned form of facial communication because the same facial behavior will not have the same meaning in other cultures. There is considerable room for misunderstanding to occur so the pastoral counselor should be mindful of her/his facial expression with regard to possible unintended cues being conveyed.

Eye Behavior

Like facial communication, eye behavior conveys types of feelings and emotions. Sociologists know even less about how the eyes function as a communicative source than they know about the face. The eyes are very significant when you judge another person and the legitimacy of their message. It has been said "the eyes are the window to the soul". You hear phrases such as "love at first sight". Song titles evidence poetic reference to the eyes: "Bette Davis Eyes," "Angry Eyes," "Lyn' Eyes," "Hungry Eyes," and "Don't It Make Your Brown Eyes Blue." Thus, you can see the eyes are abundantly relevant in our communication with one another but, again, we cannot explain how.

However, three meanings from eye behavior are commonly communicated. First, to acknowledge the other person. That is, when we receive a message from another person we typically give some type of eye behavior that acknowledges reception of the message (i.e. agreement, disagreement, surprise, laughter, etc.). Second, to communicate your view of your relationship with the other person. Visual cues can communicate how we feel about the other person (i.e. liking, disliking, superior, inferior, caring, hate, etc.). Sexual harassment legal cases no doubt focus on this function of eye behavior and there is considerable room for misunderstanding. For instance, one person may perceive an "interested look" from another person when no interest was felt or intended to be conveyed. Third, to indicate turn taking with speaking.

People periodically give subtle visual cues that the other person may speak. For instance, merely looking at a person can perpetuate comment from her/him/they even though no input has been requested. Thus, the pastoral counselor does not need to overthink this variable but should be mindful that our eyes do convey meanings whether they are intended or not. Mere awareness can be beneficial.

Silence

Silence is a factor in nonverbal communication. Just because an individual is silent does not mean impressions (accurate or inaccurate) are not received from her/him. Silence can occur for a number of reasons: 1) it can occur naturally as a pause in the dialog (depending on the communicative norms practiced in a culture); 2) it can indicate a sensitive or taboo subject has arisen and the individuals wish to bypass the topic; 3) it can occur because of communication apprehension; 4) it can be used to hurt others (giving someone the "silent treatment"); and 5) it can occur if individuals need time to think before responding. Confusion can arise when speculation of why someone is silent is inaccurate. For instance, someone who is silent because she/he is shy may be incorrectly perceived to be unfriendly and "stuck-up" (think they're better than others).

Cultural relativity also exists with silence. Americans tend to talk a lot and leave less time for silence while Japanese are generally less talkative than Americans and are more comfortable with silences. Even within American society there are subcultures, such as the Amish, that tend to speak less and are more comfortable with silence than the larger culture. Thus, the pastoral counselor should give consideration to what silent pauses represent during pastoral counseling sessions and if such representations are positive or negative.

Application Summary

Overall, the comprehensive emphasis regarding nonverbal communication is that "Communication is more than words. Our bodies convey a lived

theology that may not be fully integrated with what we say we believe and value—our espoused theology. Our tone of voice, facial expressions, and posture all communicate our theology to care seekers.” The nonverbal channels can convey somewhat direct meanings and/or may concurrently provide more implicit meanings. Regarding the latter, the chronemic variable of time offers illustration. “The focus of spiritual first aid is the here and now, whereas the focus on pastoral counseling is the past, present and future.”

Cross-Cultural Communication

Diversity and pluralism considerations are implied throughout the nonverbal realm. They are most clearly delineated as factors within cross-cultural exchanges. As interaction among people from different cultural backgrounds increases so will the need for improved cross-cultural understanding. World trade, educational opportunities, and the relative ease of travel have created an unprecedented situation in the world whereby cross-cultural encounters are becoming more common. Pastoral counseling offers another context for consideration. Participants in these cross-cultural encounters use their own distinctive communicative styles, based on their cultural backgrounds, and problems can easily arise when the communicative styles differ.

Cross-Cultural Communication occurs when we interact with someone from a different cultural background. Sometimes the differences between cultures is minimal and interaction is relatively unhindered (i.e. interaction between citizens of America and England). Other times the differences between cultures are more significant and there are many obstacles in the way of common understanding. Such obstacles include language differences, conceptual barriers and varied communication norms.

Cross-Subcultural Communication

Cross-cultural communication occurs when we interact with someone from a different cultural background. Cross-subcultural communication occurs when we interact with someone from a different subcultural background (i.e. a Euro-American farmer from Kansas interacting with an African-American merchant in Philadelphia). Cultures are comprised of a variety of subcultures that are geographical, economical, occupational, racial, and ethnic. In the U.S., for instance, we have subcultures grounded in different regions of the country (i.e. the Southerner), economic levels (lower, middle & upper classes), occupational (blue collar & white collar), racial (based on physical features) and ethnic (based on cultural practices).

Cross-subcultural communication can be, at times, more difficult than cross-cultural communication. For instance, the author (as a European-American elderly professor in the social sciences) can interact more clearly with an Australian middle-aged professor in the social sciences, than the author can with a Vietnamese fisherman from New Orleans whose primary language is Vietnamese and who speaks very little English. This phenomenon is especially true in the United States because of the many groups that comprise the American culture. Cross-subcultural communication is best remembered as a form of cross-cultural communication since the dynamics and problems are the same. The pastoral care counselor can easily be involved in counseling sessions that involve such cross-subcultural exchange.

Application Summary

There are times when the cross-subcultural context is a primary concern rather than merely a contextual variable. Cedric Johnson posits that “As an African American pastoral psychotherapist, the impetus for much of my work arises from one central question: How can we effectively care for the souls of black folks, and other oppressed, exploited and commodified communities?” This author adds that this dynamic is exacerbated by those who are not commonly associated with such communities but perceive themselves (real or imagined) as sliding toward membership in such oppressed, exploited and commodified communities. Desperation can be foundation for a range of irrational responses.

Power

The pastoral care counselor should practice awareness for how power dynamics are part of the pastoral care counseling session. Expressions of power and control can be overt or evidence themselves more in the abstract. Regardless, such expressions of power will often be grounded in one of the foundations of power. From such foundations there can be varied blends of considerations.

Four Foundations of Power

Sanction Power

Sanction power is exercised through the use of rewards and punishments. Reward influence is exhibited in scenarios where a person has been influenced to do something because of a reward offered for that behavior. Parents who offer their children five dollars for every "A" on their report card are influencing through reward. Many relationships carry some type of reward dimension. The rewards are sometimes tangible (giving a person \$20. for mowing your yard) and sometimes they are less direct (teachers conveying affirmation to students who do as instructed).

Punishment influence is exemplified in situations where a person is influenced via fear of punishment. Person X is influenced to do something because Person Z has threatened a punishment if the action is not taken. Parents have different types of power over children. Coercive power is exemplified, in the parent-child relationship, when the parent threatens the child with a spanking if she does not clean-up her bedroom. The pastoral care counselor should be sensitive to how unintended perceptions of sanctioning behavior can enter into the counseling relationship.

Charismatic Power

Charismatic power occurs when we are influenced to do a course of action due to the behavior of a person we admire and want to imitate, with hopes of being like them. A pastoral care counseling relationship can create such a climate whereby the counselee feels compelled toward an action or orientation because of the perceived charismatic appeal of the pastoral care counselor. Intention for such a dynamic by the pastoral care counselor is not essential for such a perceptual variable to exist.

Formal Power

Formal power exists when Person X can influence Person Z because of the position X holds. If the author is walking down the street and a voice directed at him says "stop right there," and that speaker is dressed as a police officer, the author will stop because he views police as having the position to make such a request. Similarly, military ranks provide formal designation of legitimate power regarding who should carry the most influence based on the ranks of those involved. A pastoral care counselor can be perceived as having such formal power based on his/her professional standing in the counseling relationship.

Similarly, this legitimate power includes influence one has that grows from the influencer's expertise or recognized knowledge level in a given area. If the author is experiencing the symptoms of a heart attack he will allow a physician to have expert power over him rather than a car mechanic. If his car breaks down the author will allow the car mechanic expert power in influencing his decision making process regarding what he should do with his car whereas, in that situation, the physician would carry little influence. Perceptions having to do with a pastoral care counselor can be part of such a mix.

Personal Orientation Power

This type of power is grounded in the personal orientation of the individual. Influence can be exercised over a person when attributes and concerns of that person are addressed and manipulated. For instance, if the author knows a student has a vivid anxiety about academic failure he can exercise influence over that student by couching his messages to that student in ways that stress his intent to grade performance in the class. There is obviously room for unethical manipulation with such types of influence and an individual is well

advised to gauge her/his responses to messages to ensure she is not being unduly influenced. It should be clear this obviously holds true for the pastoral care counselor.

Application Summary

These power dynamics can play out in varied ways with varied effects. All things considered there is reason for optimism and the pastoral care counselor should remember that. "Even though we have been shaped by the intellectuals, thinkers and counselors who have gone before us, we are not helpless victims of the past. Just as that past has shaped where we are now, so we can have an impact on the future." The point being we have impact over the directions we take in the present and future. The pastoral care counselor will be a key determinant in such pastoral care counseling sessions.

Conflict

Conflict is often thought to be a negative phenomenon in human affairs but to think we will not have degrees of conflict in our lives is folly. A more realistic approach is to offer insights with regard to variables associated with conflict and how they impact relationships. This allows the pastoral care counselee to recognize conflict as an evitable part of life and to work toward constructing her/his perspective for addressing conflict rather than employing conflict avoidance strategies.

Three Conflict Approaches

Conflict exists at all levels of human interaction (intrapersonal, interpersonal, small group, organizational, and societal). It exists in different forms. For instance, there is actual conflict (where the parties involved accurately understand the nature of the disagreement) and perceived conflict (where the parties involved perceive disagreement exists but where, perhaps, no actual disagreement in perspectives does exist). Conflict can vary in its expression from minor anxiety about an issue to full-force physical confrontation. A general understanding of conflict can be developed using three common conflict approaches.

Avoidance Approach

The avoidance approach is exemplified by the individual who expresses little concern for her own objectives and the objectives of others. The person using this approach basically withdraws and offers minimal input to resolution attempts. This style can have a negative impact on conflict situations because the lack of commitment to resolve the issue can convey subtle disagreement with any resolution ultimately reached.

Aggressive Approach

The aggressive conflict approach is based on the belief that achieving your goal is the most important consideration. The person using this style will typically be aggressive in her approach and have little concern for the welfare of others regarding the particular conflict being addressed. However, it should not be said the person using this conflict style does not have concern for the welfare of others overall. In a conflict situation this person typically identifies what she wants the outcome to be and assertively works toward that end. The pastoral care counselor can call the counselee's attention to such behavior when it is exhibited.

Conciliatory Approach

Significantly different from the aggressive conflict approach is the conciliatory conflict approach. The person using the conciliatory conflict approach will often show more concern for the objectives of others in the conflict situation than she will for her own. A typical conciliatory approach will be cooperative and unassertive, very much following the leads taken by others. The person employing the conciliatory approach will be working toward outcomes that reflect equally concerns of herself and others. This style seeks a middle ground that achieves the objectives of all parties involved in the conflict. Moderate amounts of assertiveness and

cooperativeness can exist depending upon the circumstances and the conflict styles employed by others in the situation.

Functional and Dysfunctional Conflict

Conflict is typically thought of as a negative phenomenon. It connotes disagreement, opposing forces, and behavior that results in winners and losers. However, there are times when conflict is helpful in clearing the air (allowing individuals to express, perhaps otherwise, unspoken grievances). This clearing of the air is beneficial in that it allows people to better understand positions of others. Often times the functional and dysfunctional aspects are recognized, not so much by what the issue is, but by how the issue is resolved. The pastoral care counselor is going to be in a position to recognize such orientations and address them as needed.

Functional Conflict

Functional conflict is characterized by efforts to acknowledge and clarify opposing views, ensuring an accurate understanding of all positions. A common benefit is to be realized by the mutual resolution of the conflict. The individuals seek to acknowledge the objectives of individuals involved and also the dignity of the individuals involved. The resolution should be an outcome embraced by all parties, not out of coercion, but by the realization the outcome is the best possible solution for all involved. Lastly, after the conflict has been resolved an agreeable framework should be in place, as a result of the functional conflict resolution, for the resolution of future conflicts.

Dysfunctional Conflict

Dysfunctional conflict is characterized by little regard for acknowledgement of common objectives shared with the opposing forces. That is, participants in a conflict can have objectives that are contradictory but they can also have objectives that are in agreement. Dysfunctional conflict tends to ignore similarities while stressing dissimilarities. Thus, dysfunctional conflict promotes "we" versus "they" or "me" versus "you" thinking. Dysfunctional conflict results in one party (or parties) feeling coerced into taking a course of action. The course of action is not one they can jointly claim ownership of.

Application Summary

The aforementioned approaches to conflict are not exhaustive but they are representative. There can be a wide range of considerations that enter into the occurrence of conflict. One foundational consideration has to do with birth order. "Birth order theory has much to say about our marriages, our way of parenting, who we have as friends, how these friendships develop, and even the kind of job we have and the way we do the job." As illustration, the pastoral care counselor might consider how such dynamics can have relevance for the counselee.

Conclusion

This report has focused on the application of interpersonal communication concepts in pastoral care counseling. Such conceptual applications have focused on perception, listening, nonverbal communication, cross-cultural dynamics, power and conflict. These conceptual orientations have been applied to pastoral care contexts so as to stress their relevance. A secondary benefit of these applications are implications for how diversity and pluralism elements are inherent within such contexts.

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