A TELEOANALYTIC APPROACH TO COORDINATE COUNSELING: TEACHER AND COUNSELOR

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The Problem

The purpose of this article is to state some of the ways that teachers can work with counselors as dynamic participants in the counseling process. While the teacher's role in counseling and guidance programs in the schools seems generally ambiguous and undefined, the need for teacher involvement in these programs is essential.

The traditional practice of counselors in school counseling programs has often been to generally isolate the teacher from the diagnostic and counseling process. The outcome of this isolation has resulted in gross fragmentation of functions, vague divisions of labor, and undefined roles for teachers and counselors. These are some factors that have led to misunderstandings and friction between counselors and teachers.

Friedland (1969) concluded that a major cause of friction between counselors and teachers is a lack of communication. The expectations for counselors from the teacher's point of view may be very different from their own or the administration's expectations. It is when teachers and counselors function independently of each other that false impressions, faulty assumptions, and gross breakdowns in the continuity of counseling services are created. The need for counselors and teachers to work together is apparent. Koeppe (1964) stated that teachers cannot serve as both teacher and counselor. Brown and Pruett (1967) conducted a teacher survey concerning guidance functions and found that teachers recognized a need for guidance counselors although these teachers were emphatic in their belief that teachers should play an important part in the guidance programs.

Teleoanalytic or Adlerian Theoretical Concepts

A brief description of the teleoanalytic or Adlerian theoretical framework seems appropriate since the counseling process described in this paper is based on those concepts. Teleoanalytic or Adlerian theorists (Adler, 1927; Ansbacher

and Ansbacher, 1956; Dreikurs, 1950) maintain that man is a social being and that his behavior is purposive. Man, as a social being, is strongly motivated to belong and can more fully realize his potential when he feels adequate in his social interactions. If he doubts his place in the group, it is because of inadequate or inferior feelings about himself.

An individual's personality is based on his interpretations and conclusions about his experiences during his formative years. The inability of a child to find his place among peers stems from his inability to find his place in the family group. If a child cannot find his place through useful means, he will usually begin to pursue fictitious goals as a means to compensate for his feelings of inferiority.

The fictitious or mistaken goals (Dreikurs, 1950) are: (1) The Attention-Getting Mechanism–Prevented from gaining status through constructive means, the child seeks confirmation of his acceptance by trying to make himself the center of attraction and to keep others busy in his service; (2) Power–Efforts to control the child lead to a deadlock in a struggle for power and superiority between the child and adults; (3) Revenge–The child no longer hopes merely for attention or even power; he can see his place in the group by retaliation and by his success in making himself hated; (4) Withdrawal–A child who is passive or whose antagonism is successfully beaten down may be hiding behind a display of real or imagined inferiority.

The counselor in the school setting is primarily concerned with redirecting fictitious goals of children. The steps in conducting teleoanalytic counseling (Dreikurs and Sonstegard, 1968) are: (1) Relationship–Developing the counseling relationship requires cooperative interaction between the counselor and student that is characterized by mutual trust and respect; (2)Psychological Investigation–Among the general objectives of the psychological investigation is a study of the student's problem, his past or formative experiences, and the nature of his interpersonal relationships with his family, peers, teachers, and other significant people in his life; (3) Interpretation–While insights may be gained into the nature and purpose of his behavior simultaneously during the psychological investigation, a student usually requires a more specific interpretation of the purpose for his mistaken behavior. The counselor should confront the student with his mistaken goals and help him to understand the logic of his misbehavior; (4) Reorientation or Redirection–After the client has gained an understanding about the purpose of misbehavior, he can effectively begin to redirect his goals toward more useful ends. The counselor provides encouragement and helps the student to restore faith in himself which leads to significant changes in his behavior.

Developing Coordinate Counseling Teams

The combining of the teacher and counselor as a counseling team will be referred to herein as **coordinate counseling.** There are many ways to involve the teacher as a coordinate counselor. The procedure may vary somewhat depending upon the background and experiences of the teacher. The teacher's knowledge of the child's classroom behavior, achievement progress, and interactional patterns with peers is an invaluable resource to the counselor who seeks clues that may reveal the purpose of misbehavior. The social-psychological implication of the child's behavior may not be apparent to the teacher, however. So, the teacher initially provides the counselor with a description of what a child does and the corrective measures she has attempted while the counselor strives to interpret the purpose of the child's behavior. After the behavior has been defined and the purpose of the behavior is apparent, the coordinate counselors agree on a plan of action designed to redirect the misbehavior of the child. The purpose of coordinate counseling is not to educate teachers to be counselors, but to create cooperative relationships between counselors and teachers that will lead to greater continuity between the counseling programs and the classroom activity.

Teachers who plan to function as coordinate counselors should undergo a basic orientation (Sonstegard, 1960) by the counselor relative to the nature of their relationship and the objectives of their joint efforts. Included in these basic ground rules are an understanding of the confidentiality principle in counseling and the basic teleoanalytic techniques that counselors follow during interviews. Further, pertinent information that teachers should bring to the counseling session about the student should be pointed out by the counselor. The writers have found that teacher seminars can be an efficient vehicle through which the coordinate counseling orientations can be achieved. These seminars usually include a live counseling demonstration by the counselor before a small group of teachers. After the counseling session is over, the counselor leads a question and answer period in an attempt to enhance the group's understanding of the counseling process. It is through this type of encounter that teachers and counselors develop mutual interests and motivations to work with and to assist each other.

In addition to an orientation session between counselor and teacher, there must also be an orientation period for students. They must understand the counselor's function in the school, the service available to them through the counseling department, the teacher's part in the counseling process, and the procedures one follows to schedule a counseling appointment.

The teacher, in coordinate counseling sessions, is directly exposed to the counselor's operational techniques and the process that ensues. The counselee's interperosnal relations and his feelings about himself, the school, students and

faculty, and his family unfold in the presence of the teacher and counselor (Adler, 1963). After the purpose of the child's mistaken behavior has been disclosed, the teacher can appreciate the logic of the redirective measures that must be undertaken and she has a vested interest in those recommendations. Follow-up counseling sessions with the teacher, to assess the child's progress and to continue to redirect his behavior can be scheduled as needed.

Coordinate Counseling with Children

Prior to the initial interview with the child, the teacher shares with the counselor, either orally or written, a report stating the nature of the child's behavior, the consequences of this behavior, the nature of the conferences with parents (if any), and a summary of the personal interaction with the child. Arrangements are then made for the first coordinate counseling session with the child.

In the initial counseling session, the teacher introduces the child to the counselor. Next the teacher relates why they have come to talk with the counselor. The interview is conducted jointly by the teacher and counselor. The collecting of the necessary information is usually completed during one session. Through coordinate counseling, the teacher is able to learn the dynamics of the child's behavior as well as the necessary reorientation procedures that she may apply in the classroom.

An appropriate illustration of coordinate counseling would be the case of Anitra. Anitra was an 8-year-old, third grade student. She had been referred to speech therapy by her teacher because Anitra persistently asked the teacher to repeat directions over and over. The teacher theorized that Anitra's hearing was impaired. The speech therapist initially brought Anitra's case to the counselor's attention. The therapist found the child to be uncooperative during the rapport-establishing session, except when games were played and Anitra was permitted to do as she pleased. When it came to the examination, Anitra hung her head in a deject fashion and began to cry bitterly. The therapist then took her back to the room. The therapist reported that Anitra cried frequently in the classroom and the teacher would put her arm around her, comfort her, and retract what had been required of the child. The teacher had remarked to the therapist that Anitra was starving for affection and that she received little love and attention at home.

The therapist asked the counselor to observe Anitra during her next therapy. Games were played which the child entered into readily and happily. When the therapist asked Anitra to follow some directions, she hung her head, letting her hair fall over her face. With the tears running down her cheeks, she became the very picture of dejection. "I want my mama. I want my teacher." The counselor interrupted with, "If you cry real hard, we'll let you go back to

your teacher." The results were astounding from the standpoint of volume. The therapist took Anitra back to the teacher.

The teacher came with Anitra to talk with the counselor the next day. The counselor had planned to involve Anitra in an exercise with pictures. She was standing near the table on which the picture were placed. Anitra was invited to be seated. Instead, she planted her feet firmly, clenched her fists at her side, and hung her head permitting her hair to fall over her face. The counselor and teacher remained silent and Anitra began to emit whining sounds.

The teacher's presence provided the counselor with a communications intermediary. He turned to the teacher and said, "Why doesn't Anitra sit down when she is invited?" The teacher suggested that Anitra was frightened. The counselor thought this was not the reason because a frightened child would not plant her feet so resolutely and clench her fists in such a determined manner. As the counselor and teacher continued to disclose the purpose of Anitra's behavior (Dreikurs, 1964), that is, that she was conducting herself in the manner to show that she would be the boss and would do as she pleased; Anitra began to move toward the chair, inching first one foot then the other forward until she reached the chair and sat down.

When the counselor invited her to pull the chair up to the table so the picture interpretation might begin, Anitra began the "I'll do as I please," routine. The counselor and teacher continued to discuss Anitra's behavior, especially as she functioned in the classroom. As this discussion proceeded, Anitra was inching her chair up to the table, the process consuming a period of, perhaps, ten minutes.

Anitra first responded to the picture interpretation merely by pointing, but she became so engrossed that she progressed to verbal interpretations. The teacher now, for the first time, realized that her fondling responses to Anitra's behavior had merely served to aid and abet Anitra's useless goals; that is, having her own way and gaining power over people. After a discussion between the coordinate counselors as to the corrective steps that needed to be taken in the classroom, the session was terminated.

The speech therapist was briefed on the counseling that was completed with Anitra. On the basis of new insight into the dynamics of the child's behavior, the therapist proceeded with the speech and hearing examination with Anitra's complete participation.

The case illustrates several advantages of coordinated counseling in addition to facilitating learning by the teacher and the psychologically sound follow-through counseling in the classroom by the teacher. The coordinated interview offers a moving approach to a counseling session which would otherwise have resulted in an impasse because of the subject's strong determination to be master of the situation.

The coordinated counseling session helps the teacher gain an insight into the purposefulness of the child's behavior. This would not be as adequately achieved if the counselor merely briefed the teacher on the counseling session. Thus, working together the two counselors can be certain of a more accurate diagnosis, interpretation, and choice of reorientation steps.

Many children put the person who is attempting to counsel them, either the designated counselor or the teacher, in their service. These children have usually been successful in placing parents and relatives in their service. Ames would be a representative case. He was a sixth grader, the younger of two children. His sister was a high school senior. Ames had had the benefit of remedial reading for as many years as he had been in school, but still could not read functionally. His written work was never completed although he worked diligently at it. The coordinate interview with Ames revealed a dependent, overprotected boy who felt unsure of himself and constantly depended on adults, especially his parents and sister for support. The interview by the coordinate counselors with the parents revealed perfectionism, high standards, constant correction and mothering by both the females in the family with the father being frequently overruled. Ames was accustomed to his mother calling him many times in the morning, seeing that he ate breakfast, making sure he wore a clean shirt, and that he was off to school on time. During the second counseling session with Ames, his purpose for not learning to read even though he was a bright boy was disclosed to him; that is, by not learning to read he received special attention and help from his parents and teacher whom he had pressed into his service. At this point the teacher said, "And I have fallen for this strategy. In trying to be encouraging and helpful, I have done too much for him–things he should have been guided to do himself." Ames was asked how he felt about it. He smiled and replied by shaking his head in the affirmative that was "what has been happening, all right." The teacher and counselor discussed with Ames the redirective procedures to be followed and he began to make progress not only in his reading, but in writing as well.

While the above cases are individual counseling examples, group coordinate counseling and discussion sessions can be conducted in the same general way. This approach (Dreikurs, 1950) is particularly pertinent when several children are exhibiting similar types of misbehavior and the teacher can participate in the dissussion of mistaken goals as well as the ways to redirect such behavior.

Coordinate Counseling with Parents

Counseling children frequently presupposes simultaneous counseling with the parents. If the coordinate counselors feel, after the first interview with the child, that parental counseling is indicated, the procedure for inviting parents to

the school is activated. After the first session, the child is asked if he has any objection to his parents being interviewed by the coordinate counselors. He is assured that his statements will be held in confidence. Seldom does a child refuse permission when he understands the conditions. The method and rationale for interviewing parents in keeping with coordinate counseling concepts are well documented (Sonstegard, 1964).

The teacher arranges the appointment for the initial conference with the parents and participates with the counselor in the interview. After the interview is completed the teacher and counselor discuss the findings and their psychological significance with the parents, being careful that the interpretations are on the parent's verbal level. The parents are encouraged to ask questions and to discuss any points they do not understand. The coordinated counselors then make recommendations to the parents that are appropriate for redirecting the child's misbehavior. The parents may then be rescheduled for a subsequent counseling session if indicated.

Following the session with the parents, the second counseling session with the child is held. The significance of the information that was obtained from the parents is discussed, always from the standpoint of the purposefulness of the child's behavior. The child participates in the discussion and the coordinate counselors are careful to keep the interpretations of the child's behavior on his level of comprehension and understanding. The counselor then explains to the teacher what she can do to help the child redirect his mistaken goals in the classroom.

A major advantage of coordinate counseling is that the teacher and counselor can function as communication intermediaries (Dreikurs, 1950; Dreikurs, Mosak, & Shulman, 1952; Dreikurs, Shulman, & Mosak, 1952) with each other when making interpretations to parents. This technique is especially valuable with parents who are resistive to counseling. The case of Hans is one example of many where intermediaries can be an efficient means to breaking down resistance in parents.

Hans was a 6-year-old, first grade student who had not been referred to the counselor previously. Hans' mother called the teacher and requested an appointment to discuss Hans' peculiar behavior and his dislike for school. The teacher and counselor arranged to interview the parents together in a coordinated session.

Hans' mother dominated the conversation while his father sat quietly, frequently nodding his head in agreement with his wife's statements. She revealed that Hans had come home from school several times in an emotionally upset state and that he would frequently begin crying for no apparent reason.

She continued by saying that Hans began to cry and scream when he stepped off the school bus the previous day in front of their house. She related that he had taken a baby chicken to school and another child dropped a block

on the chick and fatally injured it. Hans' teacher proceeded to state that she had seen the incident with the baby chick and that the block was accidentally dropped on it. The children, including Hans, showed no prolonged signs of grief and they soon disposed of the lifeless chick. After a few minutes, Hans and the others began to play and the chick was not mentioned again all day. The teacher was confused by Hans' reactions to school and the chick incident because he seemed to like school a great deal and was a good student. She did say that Hans would occassionally not want to attempt a very difficult task.

The counselor began to ask the parents questions about their relationship with Hans. He perused very carefully the interpersonal relationships between Hans and other members of the family, especially the parents. To the questions by the counselor and teacher, Hans' mother indicated that Hans received much encouragement from them and that both parents were accepting of his school work. According to her answers, the home environment and parents' feelings toward the child were optimal for his own growth and development.

The counselor turned to the teacher and said, "You know, a child with behavior like Hans would normally result when very high expectations and standards are imposed by the parents and his crying and acting out would be his way of trying to avoid punishment and scolding by his parents when he does not measure up to their wishes." The teacher nodded agreement with the interpretation and the counselor followed with, "But this does not check out in our interview with Hans' parents." After this interchange between the coordinate counselors, the parents began to relate a different story about their expectations for Hans. As it turned out, Hans was having difficulty in meeting parental demands so he could reduce his parents' wrath over his mistakes and failures by crying and behaving in ways that would distract them from his shortcomings. The parents frequently punished him severely for making mistakes and for poor marks in school. He had anticipated punishment over the baby chick incident. The teacher related that some of the days that Hans had been upset at home, as described by his mother, were days when minor incidents occurred in school for which he had been reprimanded.

Without the help of an intermediary, Hans' parents may have been successful in defeating the counselor's purpose during the interview. The counselor, in this case, was able to interpret Hans' behavior and to provide correctional measures for Hans' parents and the teacher. Without the teacher as an intermediary in this case, a much greater skill would have been necessary for the counselor to have been successful in getting to the core of the problem.

Summary

Coordinate counseling has been found to be valuable to teachers and counselors in many ways. The most obvious advantage is the opportunity for

consultation between them. Other advantages in bringing counselors and teachers together are to:

1. provide continuity between counseling and classroom activities,
2. encourage teachers and counselors to extinguish the traditional lines that divide their functions and to reduce the fragmentation in the services they provide,
3. reduce friction between counselors and teachers by building communication structures that are conductive to mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation,
4. increase cooperation and reduce competition between counselors and teachers so instead of, "Let's see what the **expert** can do about it," either group may say, "We'll work out a solution together," and
5. eliminate the mysticism about what counselors do by exposing teachers to the counseling process.

This paper has centered on some of the techniques that can be used by coordinate counselors in counseling students and parents. Some may say that teachers do not have time for counseling activities; however, teacher-aides, student teachers, and others should usually be available to teach temporarily in the teacher's absence. Inherent in this cooperative approach to counseling is the support of school administrators.

The improvement in school counseling services necessary to meet the requests of students and teachers can be brought about most efficiently through cooperative efforts by both counselors and teachers as described herein. It should be pointed out that further research must be done to test the effectiveness of coordinate counseling. The feelings toward this approach by those who participate–counselors, teachers, students, and parents, must be further assessed as well as the long-term behavioral changes that have resulted. Empirically, the writers have found this approach most effective in working with parents, students, and teachers.

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