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Mr. Speice

Independent Study Mentorship

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Introduction into Child Psychiatry

Assessment 9- Interview

Name of Professional: Dr. Amir Abbassi

Title: Introduction into Child Psychiatry

Company: New Horizons Center for Healing

Date of Interview: 11/12/18

Works Cited:

Acquatella, Camille, and Amir Abbassi. "Introduction into Child Psychiatry.." 11 November 2018.

Assessment:

This interview was with Dr. Amir Abbassi who works as the clinical therapist and supervisor at New Horizons Center for healing, a place where patients with mental health struggles go to receive treatment and therapy. During this interview, I hoped to gain insight on the field of psychiatrics and focus in on the child patients aspect of it. Dr. Abbassi was able to answer all my questions thoroughly and in a detailed manner, as well as was able to give his own insight and tips on my original work. As this was my first interview with a professional in the psychiatric field, I broadened my questions to get a better feel of the field initially, and in future interviews, will plan on narrowing into detailed questions.

Interestingly enough, Dr. Abbassi did not begin his career as a clinical therapist with a degree in psychology, instead, he started out studying anthropology and sociology. His journey into the field of psychiatrics was impressive to me as I was not aware of the variety of degrees one can obtain to reach this career. In addition to being a therapist, Dr. Abbassi is also a professor at Texas A&M for psychotherapy, therefore making him an expert in the realm of all different kinds of therapies for all types of mental disorders of all ages. One of the highlights of my interview with him was finding out the most effective type of therapy in his opinion, he responded with saying CBT (Cognitive Behavioral Therapy) as what he uses most often on patients and specializes in. I learned the basics of this type of therapy which essentially works by asking the patient a series of questions and based on the way they answer, the therapist can analyze the cognitive distortions and change the perception people have on different things to help them overcome their problems.

In attempts to focus the interview on child-centered therapy, I asked him what the most frequent psychological issues he sees in child patients. Surprisingly enough, many children have begun to come in with anxiety disorders and different behavioral issues that begin emerging in early on childhood. The problems these children face are often misconduct within the family, at school, and trouble socially interacting with their peers. This, therefore, brought us into the topic of play therapy, which is what I am focusing my original work on. It was very interesting to find out that Dr. Abbassi actually reinforces play therapy onto his child patients and informed me that he has seen a high success rate among them. I also learned that during a play therapy sessions with a child, it is important to verbally ask them what they are doing with the given toy, why they are doing what they are doing to the given toy, and how they feel while they are using the

given toy. This creates a sense of self-awareness for the child to realize if they are misbehaving or reacting inappropriately to certain situations. With Dr. Abbassis insights on play therapy and his thorough explanation of how it works, I feel more comfortable with my original work topic and am definitely more knowledgeable on how to go about this type of therapy. This will help me in creating my product to make sure it can address all types of play therapy strategies used in these therapy session. The next step to take in the research for my original work will be to focus the topic of the next interview on different ways play therapy strategies can be integrated into my product, with the help of a professional.

Interview Notes:

- Professor of psychotherapy at Texas A&M
- Clinical Supervisor and therapist
- Started with degrees in sociology and anthropology
 - Treats patients during the day and teaches psychotherapy late nights/afternoon
- Uses mainly CBT (cognitive behavioral therapy) on patients
 - “People perceive things in a problematic way” CBT helps them overcome these problems
 - CBT can also be used on families, using a systematic approach assessing the relationship with each other NOT each individual
- Child patients
 - Mainly come with anxiety
 - Also with behavioral issues- use symptom control to fix
- Original Work: Dollhouse
 - Play our with what happens at home
 - Focuses on natural tendency-child centered therapy
 - Used to track behavior over time and changes
 - Also treats patients through play- tell them what they are doing, sympathize with them and let them know their feelings are heard
- Most complicated case
 - Preteen who refused to participate in play therapy or any type of therapy

- Defiant behavior