

# Counselling Case Study Pack

## Counselling Modality Fit in a South African Context

### **Case 1. Thabo**

Client: Thabo M, Age: 16, Male, Soweto, Gauteng.

Presenting concern: Referred for behavioural issues including fighting, skipping classes, and defiance. Reports feeling angry and disengaged from school.

Background: Lives with mother and younger sister. Father absent. Mother works long hours. New peer group involved in petty crime. Previously did well academically and enjoyed soccer.

Presentation: Anger, emotional suppression, mistrust of authority, hopelessness about the future.

Cultural factors: Masculinity norms, exposure to community violence, respect for elders.

Student task: Determine the most appropriate counselling modality and justify therapeutic goals, techniques, and cultural considerations.

### **Case 2. Ayesha**

Client: Ayesha K, Age: 23, Female, Durban, KwaZulu Natal.

Presenting concern: Severe anxiety and panic before exams despite strong academic performance.

Background: Final year medical student, first in family to study medicine, strong family expectations, avoids social life.

Presentation: Catastrophic thinking, perfectionism, emotional exhaustion, somatic anxiety.

Cultural factors: Family honour, collectivist values, stigma around mental health.

Student task: Identify the most suitable modality and explain how intervention should be structured.

### **Case 3. Siph**

Client: Siph N, Age: 38, Male, Rural Eastern Cape.

Presenting concern: Nightmares, withdrawal, and hypervigilance after a violent hijacking.

Background: Married, two children, increased alcohol use, feels ashamed for being afraid.

Presentation: Sleep disturbance, intrusive memories, avoidance, emotional numbing.

Cultural factors: Masculinity expectations, limited mental health access, financial pressure.

Student task: Determine the most appropriate modality and outline trauma - informed treatment priorities.

#### **Case 4. Lerato**

Client: Lerato S, Age: 27, Female, Pretoria.

Presenting concern: Low self worth, fear of abandonment, unhealthy relationships.

Background: Raised by grandmother, emotional neglect, recently left emotionally abusive partner.

Presentation: Emotional dependency, fear of rejection, difficulty with identity.

Cultural factors: Relational identity, attachment disruption.

Student task: Select the most suitable modality and explain therapeutic focus and change process.

#### **Case 5. Johan**

Client: Johan V, Age: 49, Male, Stellenbosch.

Presenting concern: Loss of purpose and identity following retrenchment.

Background: Worked 22 years in same role, strong provider identity, social withdrawal.

Presentation: Existential distress, worthlessness, identity confusion.

Cultural factors: Traditional male provider role, stoic emotional style.

Student task: Identify the most appropriate modality and describe counsellor stance and indicators of progress.