



Innovations in Counseling (Part 11 Session 5)

Mental Health and Cyberbullying

Webinar Follow-up Question and Answer Session with Carlos Jesus Castañeda Jr., MA, NCC, LPC

Question from M. Ellison:

What has changed in our lives that drives people to engage in sneaky attacks on others?

Answer from Presenter:

Great question! I will have to agree with some of our audience members who reported the following:

1. Gaining a sense of power over another individual while safely hiding behind a screen.
2. Being completely anonymous online.
3. Perhaps we have not changed and the virtual world has made it easier for others to engage in sneaky attacks on others.

Question from A. Vosburg:

What is a great first step in assisting a client in addressing cyberbullying issues?

Answer from Presenter:

I would first recommend a pre-step in continuing to expand knowledge and training in cyberbullying as it continues to evolve quickly. The first step would then be sure to provide a warm and safe space for your client when empathizing with them. This means NOT playing investigator and NOT using blame-language on the client.

Question from A. Perry:

I don't have EMDR training but want to learn more. What is a good first step?

Answer from Presenter:

Find an EMDRIA accredited trainer in your respected town/city. I have provided the EMDRIA Link below:

<https://www.emdria.org/about-emdr-therapy/>

Question from Anonymous:

How can mental health professionals effectively create a safe space for clients to share their experiences with cyberbullying and its impacts?

Answer from Presenter:

Be aware of any “isms” you may have.

Learn any blame-based language or questions you may have.

Expand your knowledge on cyberbullying and mental health.

Question from Anonymous:

In cases where clients are both perpetrators and victims of cyberbullying, how can mental health professionals address this dual role and promote positive behavior change?

Answer from Presenter:

Similarly to treating clients who have challenges associated with pedophilia, it is our ethical duty to treat our clients with unconditional positive regard and empathy. The audience was able to tie in how individuals can be bullies due to their potential abuse by another bully or family member. Do not forget to recognize any “isms” you may have with bullies as well. The more you can sharpen these skills, the better your treatment can be for your client that can promote potential behavioral change.

Question from Anonymous:

Could you share some success stories or best practices of practitioners who have effectively helped clients overcome the psychological effects of cyberbullying and regain their emotional well-being?

Answer from Presenter:

This was mentioned in the presentation, but I worked with a client who had severe trauma from the virtual world. I cannot go into specifics but after appropriate treatment they were able to regain control of their lives and not let cyberbullies continue to control them.