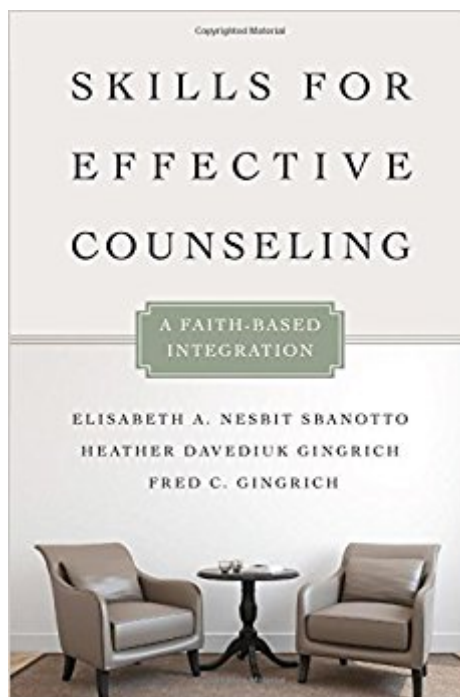




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# Skills For Effective Counseling: A Faith-Based Integration (Christian Association For Psychological Studies Books)



## Synopsis

Anyone in a helping profession—including professional counselors, spiritual directors, pastoral counselors, chaplains and others—needs to develop effective communication skills. But learning these skills is like learning a new language: it takes time and practice to communicate effectively, and lack of practice can lead to the loss of one's ability to use this new language. Suitable for both beginning students and seasoned practitioners, *Skills for Effective Counseling* provides a biblically integrated approach to foundational counseling skills that trains the reader to use specific microskills. These skills include perceiving, attending, validating emotion and empathic connection. Chapters include textbook features such as sample session dialogues, role plays and a variety of both in-class and out-of-class exercises and reflection activities that will engage various learning styles. Strategically interwoven throughout the chapters are special topics related to: multicultural counseling/biblical/theological applications/current and seminal research related to microskills/diagnostic and theoretical implications/clinical tips for using skills in "real world" counseling settings/the relevance of specific microskills to interpersonal relationships and broader ministry settings. This textbook and the accompanying IVP Instructor Resources include all of the activities and assignments that an instructor might need to execute a graduate, undergraduate or lay course in foundational counseling skills. Professors teaching within CACREP-accredited professional counseling programs will be able to connect specific material in the textbook to the latest CACREP Standards.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"Professionals often zero in on disciplinary differences in approach, but in this excellent text Elisabeth Nesbit Sbanotto, Heather Davediuk Gingrich, and Fred C. Gingrich transcend disciplinary differences and get to the heart of being a better people-helperâ€”the interpersonal helping skills shared across people-helping disciplines. This is a comprehensive, readable text that is a fully integrated Christian and psychological model for being an effective helper. Regardless of your discipline or theoretical approach you'll love it." (Everett L. Worthington Jr., coauthor of *Couple Therapy*) "Every day I look for resources that will help me and others become more effective in helping counsel and minister to others. Whether you are a beginning student, seasoned clinician, or pastor, *Skills for Effective Counseling* is a must-add to your library. It is clinically excellent, biblically anchored, and easy to understand yet filled with immense wisdom and understanding." (Tim Clinton, president, American Association of Christian Counselors) "Wow. What a delightful surprise. This biblically sound, research-based, therapeutically relevant, and easy-to-read book is a unique, fresh, rich, integrative, and practical resource. Regardless of your therapeutic orientation, you'll find some practical tools to help you to become even more effective. It's a breath of fresh air for the practicing clinician and will be a resource that you'll turn to often. There are several chapters alone that are worth the price of the book. If you want to upgrade your therapeutic toolkit and increase both your confidence and effectiveness, read this book. It's that good." (Gary J. Oliver, executive director, The Center for Healthy Relationships, professor of psychology and practical theology, John Brown University) "Skills for Effective Counseling is well written, comprehensive, and very helpful for training counseling skills, covering essential microskills with the integration of Christian faith and counseling. This is a much-needed book for the effective training of Christian professional counselors as well as lay counselors. Highly recommended!" (Siang-Yang Tan, professor of psychology, Fuller Theological Seminary, author of *Counseling and Psychotherapy*) "Finally! We have been given a competent textbook that tackles the need for training graduate students in skills for effective counseling that also addresses faith-based integration. Sbanotto, Gingrich, and Gingrich have given us an excellent tool to understand the relationship of faith-based counseling to secular approaches in a way that will guide us in effective helping processes with those of varied spiritual beliefs." (C. Gary Barnes, licensed psychologist, professor of biblical counseling, Dallas Theological Seminary) "Skills for Effective Counseling is a comprehensive yet accessible textbook written from decades of professional practice by the authors. It is for people helpers across a variety

of rolesâprofessional counselors, pastoral care providers, spiritual directors, and life coachesâand features a wealth of training activities, exercises, and transcript analysis. This is a welcome addition to the counselor education fields." (Gary W. Moon, executive director, Martin Institute and Dallas Willard Center, Westmont College, author of *Apprenticeship with Jesus*, editor of *Eternal Living*) "Skills for Effective Counseling strives to equip a new generation with listening skills and a constructive framework to counsel with love in service of Jesus Christ. Forty years ago, Gary R. Collins demystified counseling and connected basic helping principles with Christian discipleship in *How to Be a People Helper*. In *Skills for Effective Counseling*, Sbanotto, Gingrich, and Gingrich honor the heart of that pioneering quest. This is a foundational text that is accessible, intentional, integrative, systematic, and reflective. It is accessible in that it is multiculturally aware, jargon free, and adaptable to ministry. The intentional design to promote quality-helping encounters is evident in its sequential approach, dialogue samples, and plentiful learning activities. The faith-integrative component is found in comparative tables and discussion. Contemporary counseling links to Christian soul care. Each chapter systematically bridges pivotal empirical findings with elevated conversation. The reader is shown how to increase communication habits that deepen interpersonal relationships and motivate growth. There are countless opportunities for self-reflection with scales to obtain insightful feedback. This book unfolds a helping process that is realistic, hopeful, and, most importantly, biblically faithful. Finally, a faith-sensitive, microskills text for the next generation of people helpers." (Stephen P. Greggo, professor of counseling, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School) "This book combines clarity and reader-friendliness with an academically solid, up-to-date approach to counseling skills. Unusual in drawing on the three perspectives of its authors (a counselor, a marriage and family therapist, and a psychologist), it will be a great text for students and a wonderful resource for practitioners, whatever their people-helping roleâincluding pastors and other church-based workers. The Christian integrative perspective is woven throughout, as well as having its own chapter. A chapter on the systems perspectiveârare in such counseling skills booksâis an important, welcome addition." (Bradford M. Smith, associate professor of psychology, Belhaven University)

Elisabeth A. Nesbit Sbanotto (PhD, University of Arkansas) is a consultant, speaker, writer, counselor, and educator. She is assistant professor of counseling at Denver Seminary and the coauthor with Craig Blomberg of *Effective Generational Ministry*. A licensed professional counselor, she maintains a private practice in Littleton, Colorado. Heather Davediuk Gingrich is a counselor, scholar, teacher and former missionary. She is professor of counseling at Denver Seminary and

maintains a small private practice working with complex trauma survivors. She is the author of *Restoring the Shattered Self: A Christian Counselor's Guide to Complex Trauma*. She began working in this field over twenty-five years ago in Canada, and continued to develop this specialization in the Philippines where she counseled, taught and completed her doctoral studies on complex trauma. She continues her international involvements with Care and Counsel International, as well as adjunct teaching at the Asia Graduate School of Theology in the Philippines and seminaries in Guatemala, Sri Lanka and Singapore. She also conducts mental health assessments for missionary candidates. Gingrich is a member of the International Society for the Study of Trauma and Dissociation (ISSTD), the Trauma Psychology Division of the American Psychological Association, and the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy. Her scholarly work focuses on understanding and working with those who have histories of child abuse and other forms of relational trauma, particularly as they relate to issues of Christian faith and spirituality. She has been married to her husband Fred for twenty-nine years and has two young adult sons. Fred C. Gingrich is professor of counseling at Denver Seminary and served as division chair from 2007 to 2015. He practiced and taught in Ontario for fourteen years prior to directing MA and EdD degrees in counseling at seminaries in the Philippines.

*Skills for Effective Counseling: A Faith-Based Integration* is a recent book (late-2016) published by IVP through their connection with CAPS (Christian Association for Psychological Studies). Its textbook style aims to break counseling down into skills, and it offers a clinically oriented presentation of 'microskills.' The first two chapters operate as an introduction by explaining the microskills approach and the person of the counselor. The authors expect the reader to progress linearly through the book as each chapter and section build on the last. The microskills approach understands that much of counseling and the counseling relationship can be broken down into specific skills. Beginning with target 1 "establish relationship and exploring" the reader will find a helpful introduction before setting off. The authors operate on the basis that the relationship between counselor (helper) and counselee (helpee) is the most important factor. Therefore, Rogerian client-centered principles are at the forefront. Chapters 3 and 4 explain nonverbal skills. Robert Carkhuff's language of the helping process and skills, found in *The Art of Helping* permeates chapters 5-7 which seek to build reflecting skills. A major problem: they do not cite him in these chapters. They take directly from his language as he uses the language "You feel \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_." (Carkhuff, 2009, p. 120). In addition to this, the levels of empathy (p132-3) are similar to the levels of helping found throughout Carkhuff's book. Carkhuff teaches to separate

and respond to content, emotion, and then the two together. Under target two "deepening (chapters 8-12) " there are five skills: clarifying, intuitive empathy, expanding therapeutic options, confronting, and the in room experience with a client. Target three "growing " involves implementing change, expanding the therapeutic system, and attuning to the Holy Spirit. The chapters on promoting change and extending the therapeutic system are the most helpful; the steps laid out for the process of change are also beneficial (p. 261-5). Chapter 14, Expanding the Counseling System, provides a helpful introduction to Family Systems for pastors, lay people, and even first-year therapists. After having even brief training in systems theory, a person will never see things the same way, and the authors cover the foundational material in an understandable manner. Target four has only one chapter devoted to it and is about bringing the counseling relationship to close. It is important not to do this too quickly, but have the client set up and in a place to succeed and manage on their own as situations arise. The desire for clients is they would recognize their patterns and tendencies and have resources not to repeat them. One of the things I do appreciate about Skills is its desire and attempt to recognize the historic white, middle-class nature of psychological research. The authors do not ignore the cultural differences; each chapter contains applications raising awareness of how to use the skills in the chapter with a person of another culture or how the skills might affect them. A weak point of Skills is theology and use of Scripture. Most of the book reads as though they tacked on the Scripture and theology where it furthers a point. It reminds me of the weak integration that Dr. Eric Johnson refers to in Foundations for Soul Care. Rather than building from the principles in Scripture, the reader finds a verse at the beginning of the chapter and brief section within the chapter of "Biblical/Theological Considerations." There are a few exceptions, for example in chapters where they look at the Christian foundations of confrontation and authenticity. Would I recommend Skills for Effective Counseling? Maybe. Regarding microskills, I still prefer Carkhuff's Art of Helping, which is profoundly practical. Those trained as Christian therapist will likely not need this book as I know the Marriage and Family Therapy and Counseling program at Reformed Theological Seminary (Jackson) covers these skills in detail in the program's first year. This book has more potential for pastors and lay people. Though often written for the student in a school setting, it does present valuable skills for caring. I realize a book cannot be everything for everyone and there is no single handbook for counseling. Nevertheless, if a pastor or lay person has no experience in counseling and is interested in basic communication skills, pick this book up and go through it. Even with its length (the last chapter ends at p. 345), it is an easy read. Much of it may sound like common sense, while some of it will be presented in a new light or from a different perspective.

This book may very well be the best investment an aspiring Christian counselor can purchase. The building-block teaching style used by the authors along with the helpful exercises are expertly thought out and provide a great challenge for the reader to accurately review his new found knowledge.

Specific and clear towards skillset development for a pastor as counselor. Helpful developmental exercises. Accessible personal examples. I highly recommend to enhance mental health aspects of pastoral ministry.

Skills For Effective Counseling; A Faith-Based Integration is a very unique book that really hits multiple levels of need all at the same time. It covers from a textbook-style for the professional counselor, to the Pastor or layperson that serves as in a helping ministry, and even in general relationships within the lives of everyone. It has specific learning techniques and practical exercises that allow you to practice your counseling skills very effectively. If you want to go deep, you will be focusing more toward the entire book, but specifically the Diagnostic Implications sections throughout the book. Pastors will likely focus on Ministry and Relationship Applications, and general readers will focus more on the Relationship application. This book is written very well and was done by IVP Academic in partnership with the Christian Association for Psychological Studies (CAPS). They use tools called microskills that give foundational skills that build ultimately into larger skill sets. It does use some modern psychology, but has a good blend that brings Scripture strongly into the counseling skills. There are parts of the book that are more geared toward the academic side and clinical, so some people may take a little longer to get through the contents. However, if you are someone who is going into the counseling field or a pastor, mentor, pastoral care person or in a general person-helping role, this book will be very helpful for you. I know it will be a book that I reference quite often in my personal library. I received a copy of this book in exchange for this review from IVP and all opinions are my own.

This book is a straightforward break-it-down approach to get you started on your road to counseling. Step by step the activities take you from practicing a few minutes of listening professionally (and not fidgeting!) all the way to practicing an appropriate length counseling session where you are creatively incorporating progressive skills of reflecting feelings and content, of clarifying, gentle confrontation and more. The authors incorporate faith-based perspective and diagnostic and

practical application based on appropriate research throughout the entire text. This is a user friendly, hands on text.

Meh. It's not what I expected.

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