



What to Do with All That Information? Case Reports, A Tool, Not a Chore

- 1) **Gather Data - Significant Background information** (ACBC Q#1)
 - a) Add structure to the recording of her life story
 - i) Include PDI information
 - ii) Information gleaned from session - I write down more than I really need, “just in case”
 - iii) After session – change font color of words about big events
 - (1) In the left margin or column categories of info
 - (a) Salvation
 - (b) Family information
 - (c) Abuse
 - (d) Major issues.
 - b) Example:
 - i) 34 yr old, married 10 yrs (Jim), mom of 2 children (4, 6), homemaker
 - ii) Sexually abused from 6-8 yrs old by uncle, never told anyone
 - iii) Had no significant problems with her parents, no siblings
 - iv) Parents divorced (16 yrs old)
 - v) Verbally bullied in HS, became sexually active, abortion @ 17, never told anyone
 - vi) College, no other issues
 - vii) Husband watching porn, discovered 2 months ago, ongoing. No one else knows.
 - viii) Answered salv q’s w clarity, loves serving in children’s dept.

Additional help - see resource below “EXCEL Case Report (includes Data Gathering suggestions)”

- 2) **DISCERN PROBLEMS**
 - a) **Presentation Problem – Summary of reasons he came for counseling** (ACBC Q#2)
 - i) Personal Data Information (PDI) (For a blank form - see resources below – PDI)
 - ii) What you gleaned from your session, just recording important information that you heard.
 - iii) Example:
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- (1) Anxiety about husband's porn
- (2) Depression, hard to get out of bed
- (3) Angry husband won't leave porn, give her more attention
- (4) Conflict with husband argue about kids, responsibilities,
- (5) Parenting problems, kids run rampant

b) Preconditioning Problems – What unbiblical habits of thinking and /or behaving are you seeing in the counselee? (ACBC Q#9)

- i) What did she say she is doing/thinking that is causing problems?
- ii) Example:
 - (1) She does not use Scripture to interpret her problems
 - (2) Does not think about God much during the day
 - (3) Gets counsel from unbelievers as to how to handle problems
 - (4) She does not know her pain has purpose
 - (5) Uses "Love and Respect" and "Boundaries", "His Needs, Her Needs" principles
 - (6) Yells in her anger or withdraws to bedroom
 - (7) "wait til you dad gets home" parenting
 - (8) Spends 1 – 2 hrs daily on social media
 - (9) "The house is a wreck"
 - (10)Tries to hide problems rather than handling them biblically (child sex abuse)
 - (11)Abortion guilt
 - (12)Bitterness about parents' divorce

c) Idolatry: What ruling thoughts, desires, and/or convictions of the heart are emerging or still present? (ACBC Q#10)

- i) What does she think she "must have" in order to be satisfied/happy/fulfilled outside of Christ alone?

Has a nation ever changed its gods? (Yet they are not gods at all.) But my people have exchanged their glorious God for worthless idols.
¹²Be appalled at this, you heavens, and shudder with great horror," declares the Lord. ¹³"My people have committed two sins: They have forsaken me, the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

Jer 2:11-13

- ii) Looking for what the counselee has gone to the world to get, that God already has provided for him through Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
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- iii) What I see I need to teach about God so she will go back to God instead of the world.
 - (1) Affection
 - (2) Security
 - (3) Refuge (escape)
 - (4) Peace
 - (5) Attention
 - (6) Approval,
 - (7) Pleasure, etc.
 - iv) Example: Idolatry
 - (1) Security from husband rather than security in the promises of God of provision for her if her husband leaves her. (result – her anxiety)
 - (2) Affection from husband rather than remembering that she is already perfectly loved by God. (result – her anger at husband, depressed feelings)
 - (3) Approval – never told anyone about the abortion for fear of being rejected. People pleasing.
 - (4) She goes to her circumstances for escape/peace–
 - (a) retreats to bedroom to avoid conflict, staying in the room – instead of finding her refuge in God and resolving conflict biblically. (Result – conflict not resolved, children not disciplined, responsibilities not completed “house is a wreck”)
 - (b) never told anyone about the sexual abuse to “keep the peace” (result – guilt that she has left others in harm’s way)
 - d) **What are you seeing (or not) about the counselee’s faith in who God is, about their relationship with Jesus, and/or about the role of the Gospel in their daily life and problem?**
(ACBC Q#8)
 - i) How gospel centered is your instruction? Are you looking for gospel centered responses?
 - ii) Where is God missing in the equation? What is she ignorant of concerning God? What is she doubting about God? What does she “dislike” about God? How often does she cry out to God? Why doesn’t she cry out to God? Is this improving?
 - iii) Example:
 - (1) She doubts God will be good to her and provide for her.
 - (2) When she reads her Bible, it is not meaningful to her.
 - (3) She never brings up the cross
 - OR –
 - (4) She has begun to see the goodness of God in her heartache.
 - (5) She is growing in thankfulness to God.
 - (6) She reminds herself of His great love shown at the cross a few times a day.
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- (7) She remembers He suffered before her and lives within her to help her and finds peace in this.
- (8) She is very sad about her own sin being the reason Christ died on the cross.
- (9) She is sharing her Bible study truths w/ a hurting friend/child/coworker.

3) PROVIDE INSTRUCTION

a) Make a Plan.

i) **An overall plan - What is your “Tentative Counseling Plan”?** (ACBC Q#15)

- (1) Look back over what you have listed above from discerning problems. What teaching/principles/resources would be helpful for this counselee? Plot a course ahead.
- (2) Plan to address one “**Main Problems**” (ACBC Q#5) in each session.
- (3) Example: (Order may change over time)

- 3 Key Statements
- Trusting God pamphlet
- Attributes of God Bible Study
- Y Chart
- Christ and Your Problems pamphlet
- How to Handle Trouble, pamphlet, MV A-F pg 54
- Idolatry, handout review, Jer 2:11-13, Emotion Log review
- 1 Peter Bible Study
- Anxiety, Scott’s pamphlet, circle of responsibility
- Role of wife – Handout,
- Role of the Husband
- Anger, Scott pamphlet
- Godliness Through Discipline handout
- 4 Rules of Communication
- Parenting (and handout)

For additional help - see Resource below “Possible Goals/Tentative Counseling Plan”

Many of the above studies and handouts can be found at cfcjax.com/hopecenter

ii) **A Next Session Plan - What is your goal for the next session? Why? If you are past the 3rd session, does it follow your Tentative Counseling Plan?”** (ACBC Q#15)

- (1) Look over your overall plan/Tentative Counseling Plan and think about which of these Main Problems/Principles, etc., would be most helpful to work on next.
- (2) Examples:
 - (a) Next session: Main Problem – Anxiety (because of her anxiety concerning husbands desire for porn over her)



- Pray
- Review Eph HW to help her see what God has done in her, for her.
- Review Pamphlet HW - Scott's Fear, inserting her past into our review
- New teaching - teach Phil 4:6-9 right prayer/thinking/acting to give her biblical thinking concerning her fear about husband's porn.
- Assign HW
- Pray
- Yes, it follows plan.

For additional helps - see Resource below - "Agenda Suggestion"

iii) **What Biblical solutions did you give? (ACBC Q#6) Tie in with "Main Problems"**

- (1) Stuart Scott's Fear pamphlet, Eph 1-3 review
- (2) Phil 4:6-9, right prayer, right thinking, right actions. Put off/Put On strategy sheet for replacing her specific desires, thoughts, words and actions (result – peace not fear)

iv) **What Scripture did you use? (Tie in with "Main Problems"). (ACBC Q#6)**

- (1) Phil 4:6-9

v) **Application - What specific applications to the counselee's life from Scripture did you discuss?" (ACBC Q#7)**

- (1) Plan how you will use her background information to connect her specific challenges to your pamphlet review and instruction. Help her see the application of the principle in her specific situation.

(a) Be sure to include:

- (i) "Why" – right motive: Cross, God's love, promises of God, His history with His people etc.
- (ii) "What" – what does the Bible instruct her to do in this circumstance?
- (iii) "How" – how will she live that out this week.

1. Use what you know about her.
2. Be specific.

(2) Example:

Memorize Phil 4:6-9. When anxious thoughts come to mind about talking to husband about porn, recall this verse, pray right, think right and do right in the situation. Bring up the porn graciously, full of mercy as God responds to you. (We practiced actual responses such as "Honey, I know I have sin in my own life that I need your help with. I think I need to bring to your attention something that does not honor God. I saw you last night watching porn on the computer. I know you have tried to quit, so now I think it is a good time to get our family group leader to help us with this.)



4) **Evaluate your counseling**

a) **Was your agenda accomplished? If not, why not?** (ACBC Q#5)

Example:

- i) Agenda: Review HW and Scott's Fear pamphlet, then teach on Anxiety
- ii) Accomplished?
 - (1) Yes
 - (2) OR - No, I allowed myself to get sidetracked by her conversation and went to several Scriptures to address several issues she brought up rather than making these new issues future "goals" for future sessions.
 - (3) OR - No, she was assaulted after our last session, so I spent my instruction time on the comfort of God.

b) **If asked after the session, "What did you learn that you needed to change," what would you want him to say?** (ACBC Q#12)

- i) In most scenarios, this would be a shortened version of your advance plan/agenda. But what would the counselee actually say she learned?
- ii) Good evaluative question. In putting this in just 2 or 3 sentences, we can discern if we were careful to make our instruction purposeful to the problem at hand. Did we give a gospel motive? Did we teach "how" to apply it? Did we teach what change looks like specifically?

c) **Thinking back on/listening to this session, what could you have done better?** (ACBC Q#16)

Example:

- i) Better time management (look at my watch, plan timing ahead and put in agenda notes)
- ii) Use HW to structure the session
- iii) Use gracious "hard turn" phrases to get us back on track.
 - (1) "Oh, that must have been so painful, will you stop right there and let me write that down so that we can talk about that in a future session? I have some important principles I want to help you with today, but I do want to get back to that in a future session."
 - (2) That sounds like a good topic for us to discuss next week, but I do want to be sure I get you this very hope giving information today."
 - (3) I am sorry, in order for me to help you best today, I need to get us on a different track, but I will make note of that for the future.
- iv) Be more specific in my applications. Use what I know about her.
- v) I was shallow on much rather than deep on one main problem. I need to stick to my plan.

5) **GIVE HOPE - How was hope or encouragement given?** (ACBC Q#13)

- a) Plan to explain how the passages you teach give her hope
 - b) Look for changes she has made and celebrate those with him.
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c) Example of Giving Hope - Used HW review of Father's Love Letter to give hope

6) GIVE HOMEWORK

a) **What Homework was given, and how did it apply to the problem you addressed in this session?** (ACBC Q#11)

- i) Plan HW ahead with the goal of the sessions in mind.
- ii) What do I plan to teach the next session that a good pamphlet will facilitate good conversation next week?
- iii) OR What will be taught this session? What will help her understand this more deeply?
- iv) with specific applications being required (such as "record 3 times you showed love to the person you are in conflict with as we discussed")
- v) Include the 7 categories of homework:
 - (1) Written summary of the session and 3 ways you applied it.
 - (2) Prayer assignment
 - (3) Church attendance and notes
 - (4) Bible reading
 - (5) Memory verse/review verses
 - (6) Theological reading (pamphlets/handouts)
 - (7) Serving

(For additional help, see resource below - "Homework Template")

b) **What was gained by performing the homework from last session? What change?** (ACBC Q#3)

Example: When she discovered porn again, she chose to remember Christ's suffering for her sin, thanked Jesus for His continuing mercy to herself, chose not to sin in her anger, and brought it to husband with gentleness and respect. (Christ and Your Problems)

7) What have you sufficiently addressed since counseling began? (ACBC Q#14)

- a) Cut and paste from "Tentative Counseling Plan" (see 4.a. above) into this heading once taught.
- b) If you are thinking more may be needed in future sessions, or you are waiting to see if she is applying it well, then add "(in progress)"
- c) This can help you see if there is cause for concern over time.
 - i) Why is she not changing after all this truth?
 - ii) Is it possible she is not saved after all?
 - iii) Is the problem lack of knowledge? Lack of skill? Lack of gospel motivation? Or just rebellion? What is she doubting about God that she would rebel against Him?



Use case reports to be strategic in your weekly planning, to record sessions, and to prayerfully evaluate how you can grow to be a more effective counselor to help the hurting and rebellious in your service to Christ.

Resources:

Case Report ACBC Template <https://biblicalcounseling.com/certification/phase-3-supervision/>

Dropbox link to resources below:

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/lml64q1mllj7i31/AAACOVfNVT6Ebsevqv6hd72ca?dl=0>

- Case Report Excel Formatted Template (includes Data Gathering suggestions tab)
- Homework Template
- Agenda Template
- 3 Key Statements
- Y chart
- Possible Goals/Tentative Counseling Plan

Christian Family Chapel, Hope Counseling Ministry - Link for Resources below:

www.cfcjax.com/biblical-counseling-resources

- Idolatry, A Dangerous Exchange
- Put Off/Put On Strategy Sheet
- Parenting Principles
- Many others

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