



DOI 10.12738/SM/2015.2.007

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Sanitas Magisterium • Autumn 2015 • 1(2) • 5-29

Received | January 17, 2015

Accepted | May 2, 2015

OnlineFirst | September 15, 2015

A Program Based on the Guilford Model that Enhances Creativity and Creative Psychological Counseling

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Abstract

In the psychological counseling context, some of the most important skills for today's counselors include producing a significant number of solutions and hypotheses to solve problems and developing technical or intervention tools appropriate for the needs of individuals and families. One of the most effective ways of developing these skills is using creative thinking. Therefore, the present study tests the effectiveness of an 11-week program that aims to enhance the creativity and the creative counseling skills of counseling candidates. The program was implemented in the academic years 2012-2013 (24 students) and 2013-2014 (23 students). This program was based on Guilford's creative thinking model, and it scored from four perspectives: (1) the perspective of fluency, based on the ability to produce definitions and explanations related to being a creative counselor; (2) the perspective of flexibility, based on the ability to handle creative counseling in different categories; (3) the perspective of originality, based on the ability to produce original ideas or techniques; and (4) the perspective of elaboration, based on the ability to use more details, metaphors, and poetic language. As a result of analyzing the qualitative data, it was concluded that the implemented program was effective in terms of all its dimensions.

Keywords: Creativity • Creative counseling • Creative psychological counseling • Creative counselor • Psychological counselor education • Creativity program • Guilford

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For the counselors of the 21st century, creative thinking is an important skill that paves the way not only for dynamic and humanistic understanding but also for eclectic studies. Due to its openness to innovation, creative thinking is also important since it facilitates the understanding of individuals' and families' needs (as well as their subjective realities), and it can be applied to culture- and ethnic-sensitive studies. Previous studies have suggested that counselor candidates have difficulty realizing the functions of certain counseling skills or applying these skills. Thus, implementation and training is necessary to improve their skills. Especially in crowded countries, where the ethnic structure is dense and the socioeconomic distresses and the number of students are high, counselors have difficulty gaining social support, and their job perceptions are negatively influenced. These problems have increased their level of burnout (Aladağ, Koç, & Yaka, 2014; Gündüz, 2012; Özyürek, Çam, & Atici, 2007; Sangganjanavanich & Balkin, 2013; Thompson, Amatea, & Thompson, 2014). The enhancement of creative thinking and the fostering of counselors' creative counseling skills can provide them with a framework that allows for solution-oriented, concrete, innovative, and effective interventions which can be employed during counseling sessions. In addition, using creative techniques can help counselors cope with the following problems: burnout, vicarious trauma, compassion fatigue, and secondary traumatic stress conditions. Counselors can also benefit from creative techniques to improve their own mental health (Bradley, Whisenhunt, Adamson, & Kress, 2013).

Although creative counseling has not yet been completely defined, according to Gladding (2011), for a counselor to be creative, he/she must be playful, collegial, communicative, culturally sensitive, and encompassing. Additionally, from Gladding and Wallace's (2012) perspective, one of the most pressing responsibilities of today's counselors is learning how to provide counseling via humor, dance, music, action, and conversation. According to Jacobs and Schimmel (2013a), counselors are creative in terms of maintaining a connection with their clients and using various visual and experimental techniques beyond speech-based therapy. However, despite the increased efforts to increase creative counseling and enhance counselors' creativity, according to Gladding (2011), there is still limited research on creativity. In fact, less than one-half of one percent of all research studies in counseling and psychology have been conducted on creativity.

Therefore, the purpose of the current study is to investigate the effectiveness of a program designed to enhance the creative thinking and creative counseling skills of counselor candidates. This program not only aims to improve students' creative thinking, but it also seeks to help them understand what creative counseling is and how it can be applied as a counseling skill. The enhancement of creative thinking is based on the following sub-dimensions of Guilford's (1966) creative thinking model: fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration. Moreover, the implementation of these skills into the counseling context is discussed.

Divergent thinking means that there is no single answer to a question and it refers to the inclination of employing different methods to solve a problem (Guilford, 1966; Wantz & Morran, 1994). Creative people's patterns of thought preclude the dependence of finding a solution to the problem based on a single condition, and it paves the way for producing more alternatives. Conversely, focusing on a single solution can cause individuals to perceive that the problem is unsolvable, especially when the solution does not occur. Thus, a creative counselor with divergent thinking tends to create more hypotheses in the face of any problems and this ability can increase his/her possibility of providing effective interventions (Fasko, 2001; Guilford, 1966; Richards, 2001; Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2001; Wantz & Morran, 1994).

Divergent thinking in the counseling context especially requires fluency, which is described by Guilford as a sub-dimension of creative thinking. Fluent thinking can be defined as a person's ability to unceasingly produce numerous ideas and solutions (Runco, 2007; Torrance, 1973). The possibilities of reaching a solution will only increase when the person gains the ability to think fluently and his/her mind is not rigid in the face of problems. In addition, a counselor thinking fluently in terms of hypothesis, solutions, and intervention production is the one who can provide his/her client with better solutions.

Another advantage of creative thinking for counselors is the increase of producing original ideas. Originality, described by Guilford as another sub-dimension of creative thinking, can be regarded as positing rare ideas (Torrance, 1973). In general, the initial answers to questions about any topic include ordinary ideas that immediately come to mind, even though there is the possibility of formulating more original, rare (Guilford, 1967). Therefore, it is recommended that exercises that encourage fluency should be used so that counseling students can

think about and continue generating original ideas to not only reach a solution, but to enrich the overall counseling context.

Flexibility, another important dimension of Guilford's model, augments possible solutions and fluency by preventing the mind from being trapped in a single dimension. Flexibility refers to an individual's ability to approach a problem or its solution from different perspectives and to create categories that will lead one toward a solution (Runco, 2007; Torrance & Goff, 1989). Familiarizing individuals with the ability to think within multiple categories by means of successful models, such as the SCAMPER model, increases the possibility of finding a solution and enables them to handle events or situations from a multi-dimensional perspective (Gladding, 2011).

Another important feature of creative thinking is its linking ability. That is, creative individual reaches a conclusion by establishing links between known objects and events (Rawlinson, 1995). Establishing connections is actually a natural tendency of our brains, and the use of metaphors and analogies in the counseling context may not only help the client understand his/her experience, but it also increases the chances of gaining insight, breaking any resistance, and focusing on a solution. In addition, the use of metaphors as a learning tool can facilitate the client's expression of him/herself, which can enhance the harmony in therapeutic and support cooperation (Karairmak & Güloğlu, 2012). Furthermore, the use of metaphors, imagery, and stories during counseling sessions can contribute to the client's self-awareness and pave the way for a creative, non-intrusive, and non-confrontational atmosphere. It has been shown metaphors can serve as effective tools in counseling training (Alvarado & Cavazos, 2006; Jacobs & Schimmel, 2013a; Lyddon, Clay, & Sparks, 2001).

All of these aforementioned approaches can increase the therapeutic effectiveness and enrich the counseling environment. Moreover, the application of various materials into the counseling context also necessitates the development of the elaboration dimension of Guilford's model. Elaboration, in this regard, means the enrichment of ideas, which ultimately increases their effectiveness (Jacobs & Schimmel, 2013b; Runco, 2007; Torrance & Goff, 1989).

In terms of contents presented to the participants of the current study, a creative counselor can be defined as a person who can perform any of the following in the

counseling context: produce numerous hypotheses to solve problems and think about different methods of intervention; approach problems from different angles and provide this awareness to the client; create original solutions for any problems; utilize all types of materials in a creative manner when defining a problem; intervene; help the client gain insight and awareness as well as break any resistance; and possess the ability to effectively use metaphors and analogies. Therefore, the question that this study seeks an answer to is whether the implemented program can enhance counseling candidates' creativity and creative counseling skills by increasing their fluency, flexibility, originality and elaboration skills.

Method

This program was designed for the Creative Thinking and Techniques (PCG 312) course at Marmara University in order to enhance the creative thinking and creative counseling skills of third-year students in the Psychological Counseling and Guidance Department. It was implemented in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 academic years. Qualitative analysis methods were applied to evaluate the effectiveness of the implemented program.

Participants

A total of 32 students were enrolled in the Creative Thinking and Techniques course in the 2012-2013 academic year. However, out of the 32 students, only 24 (3 male and 24 female) attended all of the classes, including the first and the final implementation of this study. Thus, they were accepted as participants of the present study. Similarly, in the 2013-2014 academic year, only 23 (14 female and 9 male) of the 30 students registered for the course were accepted for this study due to their regular attendance. The average age of the students for both years was 22.

Data Collection

Firs, a program was designed by this researcher for the Creative Thinking and Techniques course offered to third- year students in the Psychological Coun-

seling and Guidance Department at Marmara University. The final version of the program was determined in line with expert opinions and it was piloted with 35 students in the 2011-2012 academic year. At the end of that year, the program was re-evaluated by collecting the students' opinions regarding the program's strengths and weaknesses. The first implementation of the program was performed in the 2012-2013 academic year for 11 weeks. At the end of that year, the students were asked about what factors were required to make it a more effective course. The data from the students revealed that there was the need for more creative counseling application techniques and more support to overcome the obstacles blocking their own creativity. As a result of this evaluation, the program was finalized with the addition of more case examples and techniques as well as different action plans that facilitate self-actualization. The program was reapplied in the 2013-2014 academic year and the data obtained in each semester was analyzed qualitatively. The effects of the implemented program on students' creativity and their creative counseling skills were revealed by asking the students the following open-ended questions one week before the final implementation and at the end of the implementation: (1) what is creativity? and (2) what does creative counseling mean to you?

The Creative Thinking and Creative Counseling Development Program

Attention was paid to the colorful, eye-catching, and moving nature of the educational materials used in the program. In addition, visual and written materials, such as relevant video clips, musical pieces, and real-life stories were used in the presentations. In regard to the latter, the life stories of famous individuals and their discoveries were also emphasized in the program. Furthermore, culture-specific content (i.e., heroic stories, historical characters, and fairy tales) was also incorporated into the course. The important points that frequently appeared in all of the presentations were highlighted by short sentences, imperatives, and stimulating words, such as "think" and "attention" to make these points more memorable. Each part of the course included a generic name that raised attention and represented the section metaphorically. At the beginning of each class, the basic rules of the course (i.e., "Do not criticize, think crazily and absurdly or share irrelevant thoughts and ideas") were repeated to the students. The classes regularly ended with the students writing in their Creative Counseling Journals

and answering the question of what they had learned in class that day and/or working on the assigned creative thinking “question of the week.

The Content of the Program and its Characteristics

Class 1: The New Me in Myself: This lesson basically defines creativity and examines the characteristics of creativity and creative individuals as well as the relationship between creativity and intelligence.

Class 2: I Think, Therefore I am: In this lesson, various issues are discussed such as the positive influences of creative thinking on problem solving skills, divergent thinking and its implications, and the importance of forming hypotheses in the counseling context. The influence of divergent thinking on various intervention methods are also the subject of debate.

Class 3: Have You Ever Imagined that You can Fly? This lesson focuses on being aware of the thought patterns that prevent creativity and developing an action plan to overcome hindrances that block creative thinking. Study groups are formed so that students can openly discuss how to overcome any obstacles that block their creative thinking through solution-focused logic.

Class 4: Two Heads are Better than One: The purpose of this lesson is to provide students with the awareness that being stuck in a single pattern of thought can prevent creativity and negatively influences the counseling context. At the end of this class, students are asked to create relevant plans that avoid a single-solution approach. During this discussion, today’s logic of postmodern therapy is underlined (with reference to case examples) in order to illustrate the mental patterns that can be formed by deterministic psychology as well as the benefits gained from these patterns.

Class 5: How Do You Climb to the Top of a Tree? In this lesson, the advantages of the fluency nature of creativity and the development of the students’ creativity for the counseling context are the subjects of focus. In addition, the meaning of counselor creativity is the subject of debate. It also highlights how presenting various ideas can be possible by forming numerous hypotheses that support multiple ideas and solutions.

Class 6: Imagination is Freedom: In this lesson, the importance of using imagination, the reasons why the flexibility category of creative thinking is important in the counseling context, and how flexibility can be applied are discussed. After these explanations and practices, a case example is presented to convince the students that it is possible to create different solutions to problems, especially when the problems are approached from different perspectives.

Class 7: Think about Something that No one Else is Considering: In this lesson, original thinking and what originality can offer to the context of counseling are discussed. Examples of original approaches, such as sandplay, externalization from narrative therapy, the miracle question from solution focused brief therapy (SFBT), the grape exercise from the mindfulness approach, dance, music, and poetry) are provided to the students to support their understanding of such thinking in the counseling context. In addition, some examples are dramatized by means of demonstrations and role-playing with the help of volunteer students and video recordings.

Class 8: My Tool Box: This lesson discusses what elaboration, as a dimension of creative thinking, can offer to the counseling context. The use of metaphors and analogies in creative thinking training and their use in the counseling context are also the subject of focus. Moreover, the students are assigned to work on a project that is due in the final lesson of the academic year. In this project titled, *Who am I?*, the students are asked to create a collage in which they express themselves and explain who they are by using any type of materials.

Class 9: Melting Watches: In this section, synectics (a problem-solving methodology), the use of metaphors, analogies, and their applications in the counseling context are covered. The lesson continues with the Personal Analogy Exercise, which helps students perceive themselves as a part of the event in which they are involved. Three general discussion activities are incorporated into the lesson in order to reinforce the topic. Then, the Direct Analogy Exercise is introduced as an activity that requires the students to focus on the similarities between two events and objects so that they can better understand the two different events in the lesson. Finally, the use of metaphors and outsider-witness practices¹ are highlighted through Narrative Therapy.

¹ Outsider-witness practices is a technique that allows outsiders to participate in the therapy process and to share their observations with the clients. As a result, it helps clients look at their own stories from different perspectives and angles. While witnesses share their observations, they may use metaphors to explain their problems, with the encouragement of the therapist.

Class 10: Follow your Imagination: In this lesson, examples of verbal creativity, the use of writing, and how to use imagination in the counseling context are emphasized. Some examples are provided regarding the use of written materials in narrative therapy and students have the opportunity to read sample letters written by counselors to their clients (Hoffman, 2008).

Class 11: Creative Thinking and Creative Counseling Exhibition: The purpose of this lesson is to ensure that all of the knowledge and materials are acquired from the lessons and from the *Who am I?* collage project. The students are asked to arrange their *Who am I?* collages, Creative Thinking Journals, and related written works in an exhibition-type format.

Reliability and Validity

The conduction of this study for two consecutive years and the similar findings obtained during this time period increase its reliability and validity. Moreover, the codes used in the study were reached as a result of the data analyses by three researchers. Furthermore, in order to ensure the transferability and confirmatory of the research, the process and its details are comprehensively explained.

Data Analysis

The data collected from the students was analyzed through content analysis, which is a scientific approach that includes an objective and systematic investigation of verbal and written materials (Tavşancıl & Aslan, 2001). By means of content analysis, this researcher determined the concepts and relationships by justifying the collected data. In addition, this researcher processed the qualitative research data, coded the data, found the themes, and arranged the codes and the themes in order to interpret the findings (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2006).

First, the data collected in both years was reviewed and the responses (suitable for inclusion in the data analysis) were evaluated. Then, based on the predetermined coding list and the relevant literature, the images were investigated (in terms of semantics) by three researchers in order to ensure coding reliability.

Coding List: For this coding list, the production of fluent, flexible, original, and rich ideas that can be found in Guilford's (1966) definition of creative thinking were employed for two different categories; creativity and creative counseling.

Fluency: Fluency is the ability to produce numerous ideas and associations (Runco, 2007; Torrance & Goff, 1989). The basic scoring criteria was based on how many ideas the students produced and how many sentences they could make in the creativity and creative counseling categories. In this case, the students had a good command of the subject area and they could define creativity and creative counseling with relative ease. This is an expected result since individuals trained in a specific subject area generally have higher fluency due to their prior knowledge of the subject at hand.

Flexibility: Flexibility can be defined as the ability to produce different ideas and use different approaches about the same stimulant (Runco, 2007; Torrance & Goff, 1989). This skill requires producing ideas in different categories and shaping the thinking process from different perspectives. The ability to handle creativity and creative counseling from different angles is accepted as the basic criterion for this category. It can also be thought that the increase in flexibility means that the students had prior knowledge of approaching issues from different perspectives.

Originality: Originality refers to the production of new, uncommon, and rare ideas (Runco, 2007; Torrance & Goff, 1989). The Torrance Test of Creative Thinking (Torrance, 1973) includes a list of common responses, and the appropriate responses from this list were considered as original. In the data analysis, a similar approach was used, and a separate table (including the most commonly encountered definitions of creativity) was formed to perform the scoring in this section. The criterion was the ability to produce a rare and original definition out of the ideas included in the table. Another table was formed regarding creative counselor/counseling, and the ability to generate original ideas, techniques or proposals out of most commonly encountered expressions was taken as the basis.

Elaboration: Elaboration can be described as the process and development of a specific stimulant in a detailed manner (Runco, 2007; Torrance & Goff, 1989). Elaboration also refers to the act of elaborating ideas, enriching them,

strengthening their meanings, and increasing their impacts. The accepted criterion includes the ability to produce enrichment expressions when defining creativity. In addition, elaboration from the perspective of creative counseling is scored on the basis of using more details in the explanation of ideas and using metaphors and poetic language. The use of poetic language was not considered to be a criterion before the implementation of the program, but it was realized that, after the two-year program, the students displayed noticeable poetic language in many of their papers. Thus, poetic language was included in the assessment of elaboration.

Finally, the B1 codes in the sample extracts (found in the following Findings section) represents the papers assessed at the end of the 2012-2013 academic year, while the B2 codes represent the papers assessed at the end of the 2013-2014 academic year.

Findings

The results of the students' fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration scores were examined and tabulated from the perspective of the creativity and creative counseling categories during the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 academic years. However, the table presenting the increase in the total scores was not included due to space constraints:

Table 1
A Comparative Table of the Total Scores regarding Fluency, Flexibility, Originality and Elaboration from the Perspective of Creativity/Creative Counseling

— X	2012-2013 Creativity Total Scores				2012-2013 Creative Counseling Total Scores				2013-2014 Creativi- ty Total Scores				2013-2014 Creative Counseling Total Scores			
	Pre		Post		Pre		Post		Pre		Post		Pre		Post	
	<i>f</i>	\bar{X}	<i>f</i>	\bar{X}	<i>f</i>	\bar{X}	<i>f</i>	\bar{X}	<i>f</i>	\bar{X}	<i>f</i>	\bar{X}	<i>f</i>	\bar{X}	<i>f</i>	\bar{X}
Fluency	39	3	386	31	64	5	304	24	123	10	310	26	108	9	194	16
Flexibility	35	3	282	23	61	5	166	13	69	6	253	21	46	4	122	10
Originality	13	1	35	3	17	1	104	2	20	2	82	7	6	1	49	4
Elaboration	6	1	25	2	5	0	52	4	21	2	76	6	2	0	15	1

When considering the fluency scores, there is a noticeable increase in the number of ideas that the students produced from the perspective of both creativity and creative counseling. A similar increase can also be found for the definition of cre-

ative counseling. In addition, it was shown that the definitions obtained after the final implementation (see Tables 2 and 3) included responses that can be given by individuals who know what creativity is and are knowledgeable about creative counseling. As mentioned earlier, this is an expected result since those trained in a specific subject area are generally more adept at the subject at hand.

While the students were creating definitions in the flexibility category, the basic criterion was the ability to approach creativity and creative counseling from different perspectives:

Creativity is

“Thinking about something that no one else is considering” (score of 1);

“Not stopping to think” (score of 1);

“Thinking in various ways” (score of 0);

“Group work” (score of 1);

“Catching the originality” (score of 0);

“The stripping away of mental patterns.” (score of 1); (B1-15)

In the example above, six statements are provided and the flow of ideas can be found in each of them. However, the flexibility score was accepted as 4 since ideas could only be produced in four different categories. For instance, both “Creativity is thinking about something that no one else is considering” and “Creativity is catching the originality” include the definition of originality. Thus, they were not scored again. Similarly, “Creativity is not “stopping to think” and “Creativity is thinking in various ways” were placed under the same category. Other examples of the definition of creative counseling are as follows:

“A creative counselor knows that there is no single correct answer to a problem” (1 score);

“A creative counselor knows that a problem can be solved in many different ways” (0 score);

“A therapist who can use creativity can create an enjoyable environment.” (1 score); (B1-16)

Since the statements “A creative counselor knows that there is no single correct answer to a problem” and “A creative counselor knows that a problem can be solved in many different ways” fall under the same category (multiple solutions), both of them receive a total score of 1, whereas, the definition including “an enjoyable environment” was given a score of 1.

In this context, it was found that the students’ definitions of creative counseling during the first implementation of the program in the 2012-2013 academic year included many different categories compared to the final implementation. It can also be argued that the remarkable increase in flexibility at the end of

Table 2
Most Commonly Encountered Definitions of Creativity in the Final Implementation

	2012-2013	2013-2014
	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>
Thinking differently from anyone else, getting out of the judgment mode, originality, thinking about what no one else is considering	17	19
Unlimited thinking, thinking independently, not giving up, widening the horizons	16	18
Crazy and absurd thinking	15	5
Producing or discovering a new idea	14	12
Generating many solutions, solving problems, believing that a problem has more than one solution and nothing is unsolvable	12	8
Positive definitions (having fun, happiness, pleasure, joy)	13	8
A potential everyone has: latent power. The power within ourselves, the power that can be developed.	11	3
Not being afraid of being criticized, making a mistake, not thinking what others would say, breaking the rules	11	11
Flexibility, multi-dimensional thinking, establishing different connections, using objects differently from what they are normally used for	10	6
Using the right brain	8	5
Divergent thinking	7	2
Original, flexible, rich and fluent thinking (four of these are listed together)	7	3
Fluency, not stopping to think	6	3
Looking at the world from the opposite perspective	4	1
Rich imagination, dreaming	4	6
Elaborating, refinement, detailing	4	3
Humor	3	2
Making mistake	3	0
Ushering in a new epoch and making the ships float on land	3	0
Taking risks	2	6
Reduction, enlargement	2	3
Curiosity	2	0
Far association	1	1
Positive definitions	3	21

both academic years means that the students had reached a level in which they were able to approach issues from different perspectives.

Before the assessment of the originality scores, the most commonly encountered creativity definitions were first analyzed in line with the definition of originality as the production of rare ideas (Table 2). Then, the most commonly encountered definitions of creative counselor/counseling were taken into account (Table 3). Designed for two different purposes, the tables not only illustrate the students' understanding of creativity and creative counseling at the end of the program, but it also makes the assessment of originality possible. The originality scores include various ideas and productions, excluding the responses presented on these tables. When more than one definitions in each box were written by the students, they were not scored separately. That is, all such definitions were only given a score of 1.

In the final implementation, the most commonly encountered positive definitions included: "having fun," "being happy," "pleasure," "joy," "looking at life positively," "hope," "eternity," "freedom," "taking a deep breath," "enjoying life," "surprise," "magic wand," "relaxation," "shining," "lighting," "amazing," "peaceful," "new horizons," "adding color to life," and "precious treasures."

Aside from these definitions, original definitions that were given scores are illustrated with the following examples:

"Creativity means talking to a note." (B1-16);

"Creativity is writing a scenario of life." (B2-1);

"Creativity is likening a point on plain white paper to a lahmacun² with meat." (B2-1);

"Creativity is the difference between and iphone and a phone by Samsung." (B2-4);

"Creativity is writing a poem without using words." (B2-7);

"Creativity is the ticket allowing us to tell stories that no one knows." (B2-8);

"Creativity is taking the blinders off." (B2-16);

"Creativity is a parallel universe where all of us have a nice garden." (B2-21)

2 *Lahmacun* is Turkish cuisine made by covering pizza-like dough with ground beef.

Conversely, the table below presents the most commonly encountered definitions of creative counselor/counseling in the final implementation.

Table 3

Most Commonly Encountered Definitions of Creative Counselor/ Counseling in the Final Implementation

	2012-2013	2013-2014
	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>
Generating new and original ways of solving a problem	18	7
Looking at the problem from a new window, creating a different perspective, looking at the problem from a wider perspective	16	13
Beneficial sessions, facilitating the session and the role of the counselor	14	6
Producing many hypotheses, believing that there is no single solution and there might be other solutions, producing many solutions for a problem	9	15
Making the counseling context more enjoyable/positive, preventing monotony, making it interesting	9	8
Facilitating empathy, thinking like the client, self- disclosure of the client	8	4
Self-discovery of the clients about themselves, understanding their problems, helping them change their perspectives, enabling them to see the positive sides of the problem	7	16
Using metaphors, concretizing the problem, clarifying	7	14
Developing appropriate activities for the client's problem	7	10
Using various techniques, performing activities, utilizing different materials in the sessions	7	8
Creativity can also be taught to the client and thus, the client can solve his/her problems	6	9
Dealing with the problem, not giving up, believing that the client can solve his/her problems, not regarding the problem as unsolvable	5	16
The client's understanding and identification of the problem	5	2
Deterministic thinking, not getting stuck with basic rules	4	2
Assigning homework	4	0
Reframing	3	2
Facilitating insight	3	2
The active involvement of the client in the counseling process, finding his/her own solution	3	8
Providing love, comfort, hope to the clients, healing their wounds, and improving their motivation	2	8
Thinking quickly during the sessions	2	0
The facilitation of gaining awareness	1	8
Visuality, using shapes, pictures, drawings	1	8
Adding humor to the counseling context	1	1
Using the context for projective purposes	1	0
Using music during the sessions	1	0
Increasing the clients' self-confidence	0	9
Facilitating the breaking of resistance	0	2
Developing specific methods appropriate for the individual's needs	0	6
The interesting/different design of the counseling context	0	2
Using the body during the sessions	0	1
Using stories during the sessions	0	2
Using decorations during the sessions	0	2
Positive definitions	1	13

The definitions including the positive content about creative counselor/counseling in the final implementation of the following: “essential,” “indispensable,” “a must,” “the most precious treasure of the counselor,” “the most valuable skill,” “a treasure chest,” “the greatest assistant to the counselor,” “a tool bag,” “golden information,” “additional skill for the job,” “like taking a deep breath,” “magic wand,” and “a colored box.”

Therefore, for the original thinking scores for creative counseling, producing and proposing original ideas and techniques (aside from the most commonly encountered expressions presented in Table 3) were taken as the basis. As seen from the table, there was a considerable increase in the production of original ideas over the two-year period. The increase in the averages of “thinking about something that no one else is considering” and proposing a technique or intervention, which can be considered as important criteria from the perspective of creative counseling, can be regarded as an indicator of the program’s effectiveness.

Examples of ideas including original thinking from the perspective of creative counselor/counseling are illustrated below. After the identification of the samples of ideas put forward by the students, they were invited to an interview in which they were asked to reflect upon their ideas in more detail:

“I would ensure that my clients would not consider their problems too seriously by adding humor to their lives” (B1-13);

“When I come across a client who has difficulty explaining his/her problems, I would help him/her by providing a small notebook, a pencil or even a flower.” (B1-14);

“I would create a solution box in which I can place a limitless number of techniques.” (B1-1);

“I would ask the clients to sit in such a position that they can see their faces in a mirror and realize their body language. I would raise their awareness by helping them see the unhappiness on their faces and encouraging them to visualize their desired facial expression. Through this approach, I can help them improve their negative outlook on life (B1-3);

“I would give them a half-completed story and listen to how they would continue the story in order to better understand their problems.” (B1- 6);

“By implementing a program that enhances their creativity, I would enable anti-social or timid individuals to deal with their problems.” (B1-9);

“When I come across a pre-school child with eating disorders, I would place toy food and kitchen utensils on the table and eat imaginary bread with the child. In the following session, I would play the same game with the child with real food and gradually add the food that the child does not like to our game menu.” (B1-17);

“I would ask the client to turn his/her chair upside down, stand behind it, and make him/her imagine that the chair is a shield, thus assuring that he/she is safe behind the chair. Then, I would give the client an assignment in which he/she can feel safe behind this chair in case of troublesome situations.” (B1-21);

“I would provide a blanket to a client in need of love to make him/her feel that I understand him/her.” (B1-1);

“I would ask my client to write down his/her problems and place them in a jar on my table marked ‘very important’ and ‘less important. By this means, the client can categorize his/her problems him/herself and we can begin working on the problems placed into the ‘very important’ jar.” (B2-16);

“I would ask the client to create a collage that represents him/her and bring it to the session.” (B2-16)

Regarding the definitions of creativity, the elaboration of enrichment expressions and the ability to make explanations with enriched content were accepted as the criteria. In addition, elaboration from the perspective of creative counseling was scored on the basis of using more details to explain ideas and making explanations using metaphors and poetic language. As shown in the tables, while the students produced fewer ideas in their creativity definitions in the first implementation, the number of ideas increased in the final implementation. Moreover, although no definitions of creative counseling were observed in the first implementation, they were able to produce (on average) one idea, metaphor, concretization, rich expression or poetic expression in the final implementation. It was also observed that many students felt the need to make explanations using poetic language as a result of the program. The inversion sentences in the students’ responses were rec-

ognized as a reflection of poetic language use. A surprising finding of the study is that these emerging poetic expressions resulted from the right brain and thus, these expressions are considered important indicators of their creative development. Such poetic language is also thought to be an indication of the students' pleasure with the creativity exercises.

Statements with enriched content, metaphors, imagery, and poetic expressions used by the students to define creativity in the final implementation were as follows:

“Creativity is not the chaining up of one’s mind, but it is the ability to move freely in the labyrinths of the mind and the heart.” (B2-22);

“Creativity is not being able to see the water in the sea; instead, it is realizing that there is no fire in the sea.” (B2-9);

“Creativity is the way of opening the door of our mind to eternity and it is the vehicle that takes us from our travel in the stars to the bottom of the sea.” (B2-8);

“Instead of expecting someone to let us free, we should turn our minds into kites and let them fly with the help of creativity.” (B2-3)

In addition, some students enriched their ideas by means of drawings while other students made definitions by writing poems.

The enriched sentences, metaphors, imagery and poetic expressions of the students regarding creative counselor/counseling are exemplified as follows:

“I would provide some rubber tape to a stressed client and ask him/her to take a piece from it. Then I would say, ‘This rubber represents you. Now pull this tape from two sides. The pulling represents the stress that you feel.’ Next, I would ask the client to pull it until it is torn. When the rubber is torn, I would use a metaphor and say, ‘If you do not make an effort to stop such extreme stress, then this will similarly tear you up’”(B1-5);

“I would be sure to include gentle water or ocean sounds into my counseling environment. This can help soothe the client and create a different atmosphere in which it feels like he/she is sitting in a glass house surrounded by the sea.” (B2-20);

“I would ask my client to choose an object in the room that he/she thinks best represents his/her problem and ask why he/she chose this particular object.” (B2-13).

“Creative counseling is the ability to hear words hidden under the client’s silence, find the happiness under his/her sadness, catch the meaning in his/her words, and recognize his/her experiences by the wrinkles in his/her eyes. Then, I can help the wounds and help him/her to stand up once again.” (B2-7)

Taking the most commonly encountered definitions of creativity and creative counselor/counseling from Tables 2 and 3 into consideration, one can notice that, in the group subjected to the 2013-2014 implementation, many hypotheses were produced and more expressions were created for the following issues: being able to change the client’s viewpoint, using metaphors and concretizing the problem, developing activities in line with the client’s problem, dealing with the problem and not giving up, enabling the active involvement of the client into the session, increasing the client motivation and soothing, raising the self-confidence, increasing awareness, using more visual materials in the sessions, and producing solutions in line with the individual’s needs. It is believed that the increase in such issues is due to the revisions based on the results of the interviews with the students at the end of the first academic year. As a result of these interviews, more creative counseling techniques and specific case examples were included in the second implementation.

Discussion

It has been shown that there is the need for more educational content in order to increase the effectiveness of counselors, help them to feel more competent, and reduce their level of burn out (Aladağ, 2013; Bradley et al., 2013; Gündüz, 2012; Özyürek et al., 2007; Sangganjanavanich & Balkin, 2013; Thompson et al., 2014). Creativity, which is one of the most important factors shaping both lives and society, is also one of the vital skills as far as counseling is concerned. Counselors can enrich their sessions by resorting to different creative ways and increasing their chances of success in their profession (Gladding, 2008). Thus, it would be wise to suggest that creative counseling should be regarded as a vital part of counselor training. In addition, it can be stated that, through the

process of training counselor candidates, it is important for them to discover their own creativity and provide them with the awareness that creativity can be an effective tool both during their education and in their subsequent supervisions (Carson & Becker, 2004).

Csikszentmihalyi (1996) emphasized that creative individuals are the ones who are open to new ideas, can think flexibly and divergently, and possess imagination. Considering the data collected by the present study in the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 academic years, it can be concluded that the counselors' skills of fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration were well- developed within the categories of creativity and creative counseling.

The increase in the fluency of the counselors in terms of producing ideas shows that their problem-solving skills and the ability to create different approaches to solve problems improved. Such ability can allow counselors to create more alternatives and hypotheses to solve their clients' problems without getting stuck in a single-solution approach. In their experimental study involving 40 graduate counseling students, Wantz and Morran (1994) implemented a convergent training module in one group and a divergent training module in the other. After the training, it was found that the trainees who received convergent training were able to create only one hypothesis while the trainees of the divergent strategy cited many more units of evidence and posed more questions to test their hypotheses than their counterparts.

In another study conducted by Buser, Buser, Gladding, and Wilkerson (2011), the SCAMPER model was taught to counseling students in order to develop their creative thinking skills. An 8-month- program was applied to teach the model to 54 counseling students selected from three different universities. The journals that the participants filled out at the end of each group session were analyzed through qualitative research methods. As a result of the analysis, three themes had emerged: (1) the SCAMPER model was a method used to "stretch our thinking;" (2) it highlighted the value of "structured creativity;" and (3) it indicated a shift from "right or wrong" to "flexibility" and "flow

Counselors' ability to think flexibly during counseling sessions can be regarded as a skill that helps them approach problems from a multidimensional perspective, notice different ways of solving problems, and improve their reframing ability. Thus, it

will increase the likelihood that they will reach many solutions. In their study dealing with the effects of the chaos theory on training counselors within the changing paradigm, Wilbur, Kulikowich, Roberts-Wilbur, and Torres-Rivera (1995) focused on the flexibility that counselors must have in order to cope with chaos. From their perspectives, counselors need to have the following traits: the ability to flexibly tolerate chaos and disorder in their own lives as well as their clients' real-life situations; be knowledgeable in their understanding regarding the complexity of interactions and relationships; and possess the cognitive and emotional relationship skills and flexibility necessary to assist clients in their movement from chaos, uncertainty, and disorder to the resolution of turbulent life-situations and destabilization. According to Wilbur, if counseling truly involves emotional, cognitive, and behavioral development and change, and if the development of a coherent sense of the self is developed through the integration of emotional, cognitive, and behavioral states, then counselor education programs should foster student flexibility by opening the communication channels between these states.

In the present study, originality is considered as the ability to produce original ideas during counseling sessions, generate thoughts specific to the clients, and have the expertise to properly intervene. Therefore, it would be fair to state that originality can be considered as a thinking skill that remarkably enhances counseling skills. A previous study that focused on counseling creativity was performed by Duffey, Haberstroh, and Trepal (2009), who aimed to reveal the resources resulting in the increased creativity of the counselors in their counseling sessions. Their participants consisted of 1,048 counselors who were also members of the Association for Creativity in Counseling (ACC). In this case, the counselors were asked open-ended questions, one of which included how relational competencies influenced their creativity and counseling processes". Moreover, the counselors were asked to define creativity as they perceived it in their professional work. Their responses led to the conclusion that creativity in counseling could be explained with the following four themes: 1) it deepens connections; 2) it promotes openness; 3) it enables the freedom to explore; and 4) it is central to counseling.

The counselor candidates in the present study described creativity as thinking beyond current frameworks and exploring new ways of thinking about their work and their clients. Creating original solutions can be thought as a skill that

not only increases the possibility of intervention specific to individuals and families, but it can also be effective for counseling sessions in countries, such as Turkey, where there is a wide array of multicultural and multiethnic structures.

Another finding of the present study is that, as a result of the training, the counselors' elaboration skills (one of the sub-dimensions of creative thinking) were also developed. The counselors' elaboration and concretization of their counseling contexts by means of metaphors, analogies, stories, art activities, and other related materials are factors that positively influenced the effectiveness of the counseling process. Within constructive approaches, metaphors have become more important as a part of therapeutic dialogue since they directly reflect the subjective truth. Metaphors also carry the meaning of the individuals' emotions and thoughts from their inner world to their outer one, especially when plain language becomes ineffective. As tools that enrich learning, metaphors not only help clients express themselves, but they also support the harmony and cooperation between the counselors and their clients (Karairmak & Güloğlu, 2012). Additionally, the use of metaphors, imagery and stories during counseling sessions can contribute to the clients' self-awareness and paves the way for a creative, non-intrusive, and non-confrontational atmosphere. Therefore, it would be fair to claim that metaphors are tools that can be effectively used in counseling training (Alvarado & Cavazos, 2006).

By observing counseling students' development and the increase in their skill levels during supervision, Graham, Scholl, Smith-Adcock, and Wittmann (2014) focused on the use of creative techniques and applied role-playing, storytelling, and metaphors. It was found that the counseling students felt more comfortable and they had less self-defensiveness. According to the present study, the application of such creative intervention paved the way for self-awareness, openness to feedback, flexibility, and positive change. In a similar vein, Lyddon et al. (2001) concluded that the use of metaphors in the counseling process positively contributed toward the relationship between the counselor and the client since they helped symbolize life and access emotions, uncover and confront hidden assumptions, prevent resistance, and offer new perspectives. As for the development of metaphors, counselors can play a major role by adapting existing metaphors or proposing completely new ones (Karairmak & Güloğlu, 2012). In the program designed for the present study, the use of metaphors was

emphasized and the participants were highly encouraged to use and produce them so that their creative thinking skills could be developed.

Creativity can be defined as a necessary skill for effective counseling and the training of future counselors. Using irrelevant or poor techniques during counseling sessions can harm the closeness between counselors and their clients. When coping with difficulties and resistance and converting these problems into opportunities, creativity can be used as an effective instrument (Carson & Becker, 2004). In the present study, counselor creativity was described on the basis of fluency, flexibility, originality, and elaboration and the counselor candidates were provided with a functional approach. All of these sub-dimensions were transferred to the training context as an integrated whole. First of all, the counselors' creative thinking was the subject of focus and by means of the implemented program; the participants were able to transfer this skill into their counseling sessions. By means of such transfer, the elaboration of their counseling context was targeted. Finally, one important finding is that, after the implementation of this program, the creative counseling skills of these third-year counselor candidates were also observed in their fourth year during the supervision course. For further research, it is recommended that the development of clients' problem-solving skills by means of their own creative thinking skills is an issue worth studying.

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