□報告□

Five-stage interview for a jobless client with social anxiety

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Abstract

SUBJECT AND METHOD: The client was a 43 year-old man who experienced anxiety when he was around other people (social anxiety). As a result, he had quit his part-time job. Also, the client had difficulties in deciding whether he should become a novel and illustration writer. The five-stage interview based on Ivey's microcounseling method was used as an intervention. This interview consists of five parts: (1) relationship, (2) story and strengths, (3) goals, (4) restory, and (5) action. To assess the efficacy of the intervention, the Hildreth Feeling and Attitude Scale (F-A Scale), the Time Perspective Scale (TP Scale), and the Kumamoto University Competence Scale (KUCS) were used at the beginning, the mid-stage, and the end-stage of interviews.

RESULTS: At the end-stage of the interview, he had decided to become a novelist. His general self-esteem as measured by the KUCS, which assesses emotional stability and self-confidence, was improved. More positive scores were indicated in the F-A Scale during the later stages of the interview, in comparison to the beginning. The TP Scale at the end-stage showed that the client's thinking was predominantly focused on the present and the future, and the score for the past also changed to positive.

CONCLUSION: The client developed enough confidence to work, and his social anxieties became a small concern for him. The five-stage interview was very useful in clarifying his goals and to increase his competence.

Keywords: microcounseling，the five-stage interview，competence，social anxiety，lifework

社会不安をもつ無職のクライエントに対する5段階面接

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方法：対人不安からパート職を辞めた43歳の男性クライエントの面接を行った．面接ではアイビイのマイクロカウンセリング法に示された5段階面接法を試みた．この面接法は，1) 関係性，2) ストーリーと強み，3) 目標の明確化，4) ストーリーの再構築，5) アクションで構成される．面接の介入効果を見るために，熊本大式コンピタンス尺度，ヒルドレス感情－態度尺度，時間的展望尺度を用い，面接開始期，中間期，終了期に実施した．

結果：クライエントは，小説やイラストの作成を生涯の仕事としてやっていくかが最大の悩みであった．面接の最終段階に，クライエントは小説家として生きていくことを決心した．このとき，情緒安定と自信で構成される総合的自己評価のコンピタンスは高まり，ヒルドレス感情・態度尺度の得点は開始時と比べよりポジティブを示し，時間的展望尺度では現在と未来の優位な思考が見られた．

結論：クライエントは自分の人生目標に自信を持ち，対人不安についてもさほど気にならなくなっていた．5段階面接法は，クライエントの目標設定の援助とコンピタンスの活性化に大変有効であった．

キーワード：マイクロカウンセリング，5段階面接法，コンピタンス，社会不安，人生目標

Ⅰ. Introduction

Many young people in contemporary Japan have no regular employment. Some have resigned from their jobs and are unable to find regular work. They give

various reasons for leaving, such as that their former job did not suit them, but they cannot specify a job that would be suitable. Under these conditions, certain people that are psychologically vulnerable experience increased anxiety and become depressed and the more anxious people become socially withdrawn. This condition is known in Japanese as *hikikomori*. Here, a case study of a *hikikomori* client is presented and the treatment is described.

The number of *hikikomori* individuals in Japan is estimated to be about 696,000[1]. Organizations such as "HellowWork (the public employment service)" assist them in finding employment. Other non-profit organizations with varying degrees of abilities are also available to help *hikikomori* individuals. These organizations are a secondary step for helping such people, whereas individual therapy remains the first step. The main purpose of individual therapy is preparing for the secondary step. In addition, the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare[2] has also established *Hikikomori* Regional Support Centers that aim to provide guidance to organizations that train secondary professionals.

Saito et.al.[3] reported on problems related to the second step of treating *hikikomori people*. They have pointed out that in spite of the available treatment, there are many people in contemporary Japanese society that are unable to find employment. Therefore, Saito et al. indicated that the focus of support for *hikikomori* individuals had been only on returning to school, entering a school, or getting a job. Counseling staffs might not be able to grow the will and desire of *hikikomori people*. It is suggested that the role of therapy for them should be reexamined, so that the therapy would lead clients towards their goals. Individual therapy has a significant role to play in this context.

Students of counseling study the general principles explicated by Carl Rogers. Rogers emphasized the three basic process skills for counselors: listening closely, empathy, and congruence, which form the basis of Client Centered Therapy. Psychotherapy in Japan has been influenced by the Client Centered Approach that emphasizes the development of a good relationship between the client and the therapist based on goodwill, which is called the counseling mind[4]. In addition to this general principle, Rogers aimed at achieving the growth of the client, to become 'a fully Functioning Person' with the ability to solve his own problems. However, the therapeutic goals of counselors in Japan, although based on the principle of the 'counseling mind,' may not be focused on developing 'a fully Functioning Person,' which may have resulted in ineffective treatment. Katsumata[5] has discussed Client's Centered Therapy, which has been adaptable to various problems and has an important role in the education of counselors and students of clinical psychology. However, Katsumata has questioned the practical effects of Client Centered Therapy in Japan, where school refusal, as well as *hikikomori people* are still common and continue to be a social problem.

Ivey, introduced the microcounseling method[6, 7] in his lecture at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Japanese Clinical Psychologists in 2009. He insisted that the most basic skill in therapy and counseling involves not only listening closely and showing empathy, but also developing wellness and positive psychological helping skills. He noted his thoughts in his book,[7] 'the strength and resource-oriented *relationship – story and strength – goals – restory – action* model.' This has come to be known as "the five-stage interview." In the process of the five-stage interview, a client tries to clarify goals and think one's actions with the therapist. The interview may effectively contribute to activating a client's problem solving abilities and challenges. This is the reason for

adapting the five–stage interview with this client.

The purpose of the present study was to confirm the effectiveness of this interview technique in therapy, by using evidence from validated measurement instruments.

Ⅱ. Participants and Method

1. Participant's Description

The client was a 43 year-old man. He has a Master's degree in art and design. He was unmarried and had no regular employment, because, as he explained that he was "not good at speaking with others." He had worked as a newspaper deliveryman and a part-time factory worker for these past few years.

During the past 16 year, the client had often experienced severe anxiety about other people. He had attended the psychological clinic for eight years, and then stopped, because he thought that psychotropic agents were not effective. He felt that his condition was getting worse. Recently, he had experienced severe anxiety about a female co-worker and had quit his part-time job as a factory worker. When his pet cat got sick, he talked about his own problems with the veterinarian, who recommended that he should meet a psychological counselor.

Before the start of the first interview, the basic ethical standards for psychologists[8] were explained to the client and the client's agreement was obtained. At the end of the interview, the client gave his evaluation on the treatment and if it had been conducted according to ethical standards.

2. Description of the Therapy

The therapy sessions were conducted during five months, from July to November 2009; using Ivey's microcounseling method, in nine 45-60 minute once weekly sessions. Therapy consisted of the following five stages:

(1) *First stage for the "Relationship:" Session 1*

The counselor listened closely, developed rapport, and got information.

(2) *Second stage for the "Story and Strength:" Session 2 to 4*

The counselor got more information about the client's competences, and determined his constructive resources.

(3) *Third stage for "Goals:" Session 5 to 7*

The counselor listened to what the client wanted to do or to be, and discussed the requirements for achieving the client's goals.

(4) *Fourth stage for "Restory:" Session 8*

The counselor discussed possible ways of achieving his goals.

(5) *Fifth stage for "Action:" Session 9*

The counselor helped the client using role-play.

3. Evaluation of the Therapy

To assess the efficacy of our intervention, we used three self-report questionnaires: the Kumamoto University Competence Scale (KUCS)[9,10], the Hildreth Feeling and Attitude Scale (F-A Scale)[11] and the Time Perspective Scale (TP Scale)[12].

The KUCS was used to assess the client's ability to deal with the environment. It consisted of five competence factors (cognitive, physical, social, survival, and general self-esteem) and 24 components, and asked person 35 questions. The validity and the reliability of the scale have been confirmed[13,14]. Scores on this scale could range between 1 and 4, with a mid-point of 2.5. Higher scores indicated more constructive competences. Competences were assessed at the second, third and fifth stages of the therapy. A follow-up assessment was conducted after one year.

The F-A Scale was used to evaluate the client's resent mental condition. This scale consists of eight items including those that assessed feelings, mental

activity, future perspectives, mental state, attitude to work, and attitude toward other people. Scores could range between 0 and 10, with a mid-point of 5.0. Higher scores indicate a more positive state.

The TP Scale (feedback and feed-forward type) inquires about a client's thinking about the past, present, and the future. People who are depressed and anxious tend focus on a negative past, rather than the future. Scores on this scale could range between 1 and 5. The TP Scale also assesses the predominant mode of thinking about the past, the present and the future.

Ⅲ. Results

1. The change of client's story through stages

1) *First stage for the "Relationship" (Session 1) and Second stage for" Story and Strength" (Sessions 2 to 4)*

At the first stage, the therapist showed the client the attitudes of affection, acceptance, and approval. The session was spent on listening to his problems.

In the entry form prepared for counseling, the client had stated that his present problem was, "hypersensitive feeling and lack of emotional stability." He also wrote that, "He punished his pet harshly for trifling matters."

The client said that he resigned from his job mainly because of "feeling cold eyes" from those around him. He thought his job as a part-time factory worker, as temporary. He had been thinking about a suitable lifetime employment.

In the second stage, more information of the client was collected. He became able to speak a lot of things freely and easily. His stories had included high intelligence, rich sensitivity, and the high spirit as his strength.

2) *Third stage for "Goals" (session 5 to 7)*

In the past, the client had been inclined to talk about negative topics, but at this stage of counseling,

the therapist asked him positive events around him. He described an antique dealer that had visited his house. He thought that he also wanted to work and live a free and easy life, like the dealer. The therapist pointed out that the client had been able to successfully communicate with another person and that there was no need to avoid other people. When the therapist asked the client to describe his best times, he responded that his pleasant times were hours spent on writing illustrations and novels. After he said about his desire, the therapist proposed him to consider the subject to achievable goals.

3) *Fourth stage for "Restory" (Session 8) and Fifth stage for "Action" (Session 9)*

The client stated: "I could clarify my real desire. Writing novels will give me a feeling of satisfaction and accomplishment. That would be a real reason for living. When I am writing a novel, I feel relaxed and I do not get worried about relationships with other people as much as before". The therapist talked with him about the way of publishing novels in low cost as an achievable goal.

He began to prepare to publish his novel on the Internet. He has to find part-time jobs to get money.

2. Change of scores in each scale through the stages

1) *The result of the KUCS*

At the second stage of therapy, his mean KUCS score for cognitive, physical, social, survival and general self-esteem competences were 2.6, 1.9, 1.7, 2.4 and 1.7, respectively. As the mid-point score on the KUCS is 2.5, the client had scored low on social (1.7) and general self-esteem (1.7) competences. The client's responses to social competence items indicated that he had strong likes and dislikes to people, was timid, had few friends, had no consideration for others, and that he was not liked by others. In response to the general self-esteem competence items,

he indicated that he was unstable and was not needed by others.

Figure 1 shows the result of the KUCS at each stage. Although his KUCS scores for social competence, which consists of self-disclosure, friendliness, cooperation, social interchange and leadership, were still at a low level, the scores for general self-esteem competence, which consist of emotional stability and self-confidence, had increased gradually from the second stage (1.7) to the third stage (2.4) and to the fifth stage (2.9). The changes were remarkable for the items, "Some people are stable," and "Some people feel that they are needed by others." He had responded to these items with: "Sort of true for me."

After one year, the follow-up assessment using the KUCS was conducted. Competences at follow-up were nearly identical to those at the 5th stage. Namely cognitive, survival and general self-esteem competences were in a positive state. The client was trying to publish a private magazine. He talked to the therapist about a new activity that he had begun with elderly people in his neighborhood. He was doing voluntary work to clean the walkways to a shrine. His social competence seemed to be enhanced.

2) *The result of the F-A Scale*

The mean score for feeling in the F-A Scale at the second stage, at the third stage and at the fifth stage was 4.9, 5.7 and 6.7, respectively. That for attitude

was 2.8, 4.1 and 4.8. The score for feeling was near the mid-point (5.0), but that for attitude was especially low. These relevant items were "I am irritated by most people (2.1 points)," and "I always get angry with everyone (1.3 points)."

Client's feeling and attitude scores showed an increasingly positive trend. The responses to items, "I am irritated by most people (2.1 points)," and "I always get angry with everyone (1.3 points)," had changed to "I am unconcerned with most people (3.8 points)," and "When I like the person, I have relationships with him. When I dislike the person, I have no relationships with him (5.6 points)," at the fifth stage, respectively.

3) *The result of the T-P Scale*

This questionnaire uses a 5-point Likert scale. The mean scores of Past Perspective in the T-P Scale at the second stage, at the third stage and at the fifth stage were 2.4, 2.2 and 3.0, respectively. Those of Present Perspective were 3.0, 2.8 and 3.8. The scores of Future Perspective showed 2.6, 3.2 and 3.6. At the 2nd stage, the Present state was predominating. The client checked "really true for me" for the item, "I have experienced many unpleasant events in the past." At the 3rd stage, the scores for Past and Present Perspectives were slightly lower than at the 2nd stage, because of a one-point decrease in each total point. At the 5th stage, however, he scored high points for
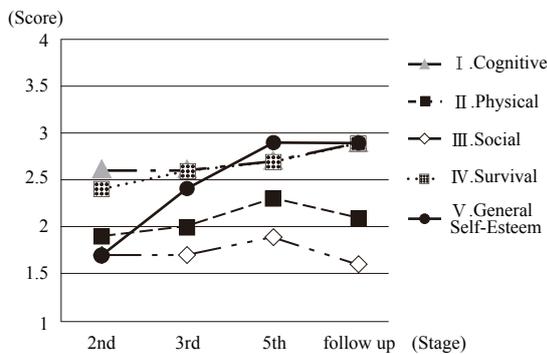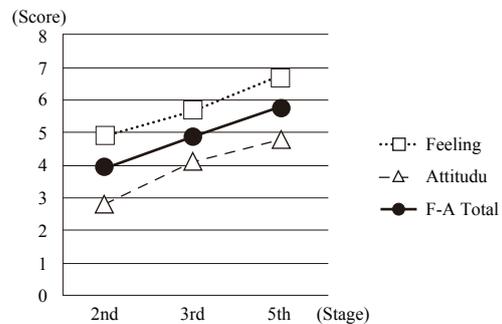

Fig.1　Five factors of competence at each stage

Fig.2　Mean scores on the Feeling and Attitude Scale at each stage

Present and Future Perspectives, and showed the Present state dominancy. Moreover, the score for the past had stagechanged to positive. Remarkable changes appeared in two items for the Future and Past Perspectives: "I hardly plan for the future because of anxiety," and "Even dislikable experiences have much to teach." The client seems to have developed a more constructive perspective about the past, present and the future.

Ⅳ. Discussion

The purpose of the present report was to apply Ivey's five-stage interview for a jobless client with social anxiety and to ensure its effectiveness.

One characteristic of the five-stage interview is advancing towards the client's goal. The client had been considering a lifelong occupation, but because of his negative thoughts about his problems, he had been unable to make a decision regarding this matter. In this interview, he began to focus on his goals, along with the therapist, according to the stage of the interview. At the last stage, he made up his mind to write novels. The five-stage interview was very effective in clarifying his goals.

Moreover, it was considered that his activated competences contributed to his decision about his future employment. As indicated at the last stage of the therapy his general self-esteem competence,

Fig.3　Scores on the Time Perspective Scale at each stage

his responses to the KUCS, Feeling-Attitude Scale and the Time Perspective Scale, his psychological dysfunctions had improved. One year later, he had maintained the improvements in his competence. The five-stage interview was also useful for improving the client's functioned competences.

Spurred on by Ivey's keynote lecture, I have deliberated the effective counseling structure. Ivey systemized counseling skills and developed the microcounseling method. Microcounseling is designed in a pyramidal style. The base of this style is the five-stage interviewing process, which was used with the client described in this case study. It is hoped that the five-stage interview would be used to treat different complaints by different therapists. Moreover, it is hoped that therapists would strive to demonstrate the effectiveness of this treatment by using objective criteria.

Ⅴ. Conclusions

The five-stage interview technique described in Ivey's microcounseling was applied to a 43 year-old man, who had quit his part-time job because of anxiety when he was around other people. In the first and second stages of counseling, information was gathered by developing a rapport with positive regards. In the third stage, his goal of continuing to draw illustrations and write novels as a lifetime occupation was identified. In the fourth and the fifth stages, he had developed a firm belief that he would become a novelist and he was preparing to publish his work on the Internet. At the beginning of the therapy, he showed some dysfunctions, especially in social competence and general self-esteem competence. He also had low attitude scores in the F-A Scale and a low time perspective in the TP Scale. But at the end stage of therapy, the scores of general self-esteem competence and attitude scores were improved and
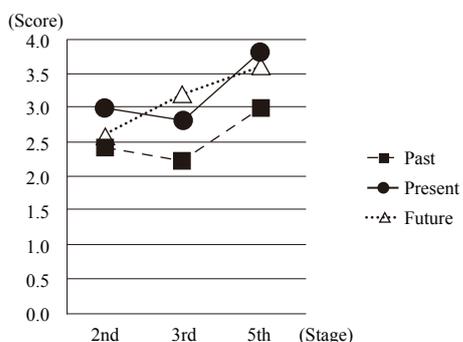
had reached a positive level. Moreover, he had developed more constructive perspectives about the past, the present and the future. The five-stage interview was highly effective in clarifying the client's goals and to activate his competences.

Acknowledgements

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