

Confession of Councillors: Phenomenological Approach to Ex-Narcotics Users as Councillors for Narcotics Users in Therapeutic Communication

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Abstract—Narcotics users in East Java have reached approximately 400 thousands from 4,9 narcotic users in Indonesia. Although they have clinically free from narcotics dependence, sometimes they experience difficulties in their social adjustment in family and social environment. This research try to explore and the role of ex-narcotis users as counsellors or therapists in rehabilitation house for narcotics users. Ceratinly interesting to see their current role as a form of repentance. This research use qualitative method in phenomenological approach that studies a person's life experience based on their reality in life. Data collection techniques using in depth-interviews and observations. The research subjects were several counsellors who were former addicts who now actively manage the home of drug addicts. From the analysis of the researcher, it appears that the research subjects initially realized that it was very difficult to be free from narcotics. Because of the therapy they have acquired ove the years and also the family's social support, they can be free from dependence on narcotics. In fact, they even initiated the establishment of a therapy house that aimed to rahabilitate drug addicts. They scsesfully build their self-confidence and their self awareness as former of drug addicts.

Keywords—*therapeutic communication; counselor; self-concept; self awareness; drug addicts*

I. INTRODUCTION

One of the big problem in Indonesia is called "Darurat Narkoba". This problem relate with the amount of drug users in Indonesia. Komjen Budi Waseso –former chief of BNN- said that this problem occur since 1971. The crucial problem arise along with the case of drug users is how to rehabilitate ex-

drgug users. Indonesian government has decided that rehabilitation process must be done for drug users to a certain limit of use. Different from previous process, drug users all go to prison through legal proceedings. In handling this rehabilitation process, addictive councelors have a central role. Their understanding of the deviant behavior of drug users becomes an important basis in the rehabilitation process. In handling recovery process and therapy for addicts requires this basic understand This research tries to reveal therapeutic communication process based on the ex-drug users counselor's perspective.

The researchers used phenomenoligal approach to uncover the psychological aspect of councelors because of their specific personal experience. Their past experiences somehow influence their position in the counselor-client relationship. Their position is so central to the client's rehabilitation process. They act as counselors, organizers and facilitators. This happens because some therapeutic institutions emerged because of their inspiration and effort.

II. METHODOLOGY

In phenomenology as methods, researcher to uncover the personal experience of the subject in certain matters. In this view, phenomena always has constructed meaning intersubjectively. This methods include conceptual analysis, deep observation on praxis and analysis of language and formal logic (Kuswarno, 2006) [1] . Phenomenology try to understand the world in subjective view. By observing and indepth interviewing, researchers found qualitative data to be interpreted. Of course,

the primary works of researcher is making the narrative notes from subjects.

Quoting from Moustakas, Kuswarno stated that there are 7 basic characteristics of qualitative research which describe the position of phenomenological approach (Kuswarno, 2006) [1] :

- a) Explore values in experience and human life.
- b) Focus of research on the whole, not the parts.
- c) The purpose of research is to find the meaning and nature of experience, not just to look for explanations or measures of reality.
- d) Get a picture of life from a first-person perspective through formal and informal interviews.
- e) The data obtained is the basis for scientific knowledge to understand human behavior.
- f) The questions made reflect the interests, involvement and personal commitment of the researcher.
- g) See human experience and behavior as inseparable entity, both between subjects and objects, and between parts and the whole.

In this research, narrative inquiry approach used to compile and structure the interview data (Bell, 2005: 22). This would allow the counselors to express their personal experiences of the problem. What is done in this research is "...health communication inquiry that is concerned with the important influences on people's health care in face-to-face communication such as health care interview, counseling session, health education efforts, care coordination, and provision of social support" [2] .

1. The Role of Counselor in Therapeutic Communication

Therapeutic communication to recover addicts occurs in two ways, namely group (community) therapy and personal therapy. In the first therapy, counselors act as facilitator. In second kind of therapy, counselors do the interpersonal therapy or personal counseling..

1.1 Personal therapy

Counselor know the condition of client through personal interviewing. In the first rehabilitation phase, counselor evaluated the client's addiction condition. By using multiple drug screen test, they can estimate the type of drugs consumed by the clients. They can also predict the socio pathological behavior based on the type of drug use. In general, there are three kind of effects arising from drug use: (a) causes of hallucinations (halusinogen), (b) stimulants and as (c) anti-depressants. The negative effects of drug must be eliminated by detoxification.

After dealing with the physical-health problems of the clients, counselor usually explore the client's problems in the family. Based on their experience, addicts usually have social problems with the family. In arycertain cases, even addiction problems begin with family problems. And then, counselor asked clients to describe their social interaction by presentig their life maping. Life maping means the depiction of the positive or negative aspects of their existing social relations. And then clients are asked to describe their "river of life" which means the depiction of fluctuations in their social relationships, both to family, friends and other relationships.

Karen Kearsley describe the typology of therapeutic communication:

- (a) **Active listening** (mendengarkan secara aktif)
- (b) **Sharing observation** (memaparkan/berbagi pengamatan)
- (c) **Sharing empathy**
- (d) **Sharing hope**
- (e) **Sharing humor**
- (f) **Sharing feelings**
- (g) **Using touch**
- (h) **Silence**
- (i) **Providing information**
- (j) **Clarifying**
- (k) **Focusing**
- (l) **Paraphrasing**
- (m) **Asking relevant question**
- (n) **Summarizing**
- (o) **Self disclosure**
- (p) **Confrontation**

What they do is actually the same as other addictive counselors. The difference is that they are former addicts who sometimes carry their past experience. Therefore, they state that they must change drastically and completely to be able to change others. They must be able to foster good will and good intention to motivate themselves to change others. Sometimes they face past stigma. They not only have to be proffesional therapist workers. They must also overcome the remaining problem of the past. Some counselors still have to overcome family problems such as divorce, family relationships or other social relations. Some still experience social rejectios [4]

What they sometimes feel quite heavy is when they are experiencing their own problems, they must heal others. And actually there is no "cured" word for addicts. What is there is the word "recover". Former addicts counselor experience this, they must still undergo urine tests by their own colleagues to remain "clean". Meanwhile, they must foster client awareness to recover and understand the client's personal problems. They do have to encourage clients

to assert and express themselves honestly. While the main problem of addicts is actually “no addicts want to be rehabilitated”. And what they had for the first time was denial from addict clients [3].

Counselors together with clients plan together the recovery process to be carried out together. This is necessary to maintain a continuous commitment to client recovery. They also have to meet with the client’s family to find out the social and emotional relationships in the family. In after care process, counselors must create and support group forum to foster awareness of being ‘clean’ and well functioning in all social relationships and context.

When they get personal reputation as counselor sometimes they get private counseling. Sometimes high rank government officer or public figure, the member of their family or the person itself involve in drug addiction. Because they must keep their good image or reputation, they do not want to be rehabilitated in a formal institution but choose a personal or private counseling to make them ‘clean’ from drug addiction. In this case, counselor with high reputation with high reputation can be hired as a personal counselor. Some cases shows that ex-addict counselor have opportunity to do ‘side job’ as personal counselor beside their ‘regular’ job as a part of addict rehabilitation institution.

1.2 Group Therapy

Group therapy is kind of therapy based on therapeutic community process. In this process, peer group or the member of community play roles as counterpart to other members of community. Of course the membership of community in a addicts rehabilitation institution do not emerge voluntarily. Clients are the member and counselors are the organizer and facilitator. Some counselors state that part of the ex-narcotic user became addictive counselor because their involvement in BNN (Badan Narkotika Nasional: National narcotics Agency). The regular phase they usually pass as an anti –drug counselor – (a) narcotics user (b) became client of BNN rehabilitation center, (c) to be senior client (reputable role model), (d) was recruited as counselor with the provision of skills as a certified professional counselor. As ex-drug users they have advantage to now the network of drug users. They also know ‘the frame of reference’ and ‘field of experience’ of users because of their involvement in their past experience as narcotics user. In this sense, they really know the language and the context of conversation in drugs or narcotics problem. This advantage make them to be good liaison officer in social outreach for recruiting new clients from areas with many drug addicts.

Their first involvement in handling clients is in the process of screening addicts. By using multistage

drug test, counselors know the history of the addicts. The counselors must know the real condition – physically and psychologically- in order to continue the rehabilitation process. If the client physically is not appropriate for social rehabilitation process, they must get a nursery process for their health. The clients may have may have an infectious disease like HIV-AIDS, TBC, herpes etc. The health problem can also emerge from the impact of continual and intense using of drug. In this case, detoxification process is the solution. The health problems must be solved first before the rehabilitation process. The problem can also emerge from psychotic problems of clients. If there are problems of aggression their addiction or acute neurosis pathology, the psychological problem must be solved first by psychiatric process. There should be no dual diagnosis treatment in the treatment of narcotics addicts. The rehabilitation institution (IPWL : Receptient Instituion for Narcotics Users). If there is health problem, the client must go to hospital first. If there is psychological problem, the clients must deal with psychologist or psychiatrist. The main duty of the institution is social rehabilitation. There must be no dual treatment/diagnosis. In group therapy it means “behavior shaping management”.

If the client’s condition is appropriate for the rehabilitation process, the counselor will determine its eligibility for outpatient or hospitalization (inpatient) in social rehabilitation institution. If the process is inpatient, the client should receive counseling as personal treatment. If the counselor decide that the client should receive group therapy, the client must participate in therapeutic community process.

The first process in primary process of therapeutic community is adjustment process. Clients should know the treatment process. The counselor communicate the rehabilitation process with the client in a treatment plan. After the social adjustment, the client process is complete, the client will participate fully in the rehabilitation institution. First, the client will be placed in the division of institutional work. The existence of this department depends on the interests and needs of the institution. Departmental membership can be in:

- (a) Kitchen department
- (b) Landscape department
- (c) Housekeeping and maintenance department
- (d) Expeditor department
- (e) Mental spiritual department
- (f) Expeditor department
- (g) Gastronom department

With the position as a new member, the client will learn to function in the community. The role and social participation carried out by the client will show the quality of their behavior. The ability to function socially which is demonstrated by appropriate social behavior is a positive achievement of the client. Clients are provided with 2 journals namely (a) a journal which notes about everyday activity (b) journal of positive and negative activity inventory that is carried out in one day. Meanwhile, the counselor carries a journal about clients under his supervision. In implementing this social function, there is an umbrella rule that must be obeyed, namely cardinal rule and house rule. Cardinal rule is substantial or fundamental rule in an organisation. From the observations made, there are at least three main things that must be avoided by the client, "no drugs, no violent and no sex". While house rules regulate things that are routine and related to social manners. In implementing these rules, counselors use simple guiding principle "reward and punishment". Reward received by client only in verbal acknowledgement. But they don't use word "punishment" but "Life Experience". They prefer to use soft word to implement therapeutic community. In reality, they mix therapeutic community with twelve steps of NA (Narcotics Anonymous). "At their core, the 12 steps of NA are step-by-step online of the journey that leads from the suffering of active addiction to the serenity of sober living to the satisfaction of service to fellow addicts. This path is to anyone who find themselves living in an unmanageable life because they are powerless over their addiction". There are 5 principles of how really engage with Narcotics Anonymous: (a) Commitment (b) Attendance (c) Accepting Help (d) Work and (e) Charity.

Thus it can be said that what is practiced by the rehabilitation agency is a combination of Therapeutic Community and 12 steps of NA. In therapeutic community, group therapeutic support the existence of social rehabilitation institution. Counselors as facilitator push social activity that grow up in the community. With their self confidence and self concept they could improve the social relations within the community. They construct and build the sessions that planned by the counselors in the existing structure based on clients who are successfully recruited. Of course they can carry out this community activity, partly because of the experience of those who have been treated in similar situation. There are some counselors recovering from addiction after being treated more than 3 times in a different rehabilitation institution. Their self concept and counseling skills grow along with their personal experience. They have also become senior clients

who are role models of other clients. Therefore, in applying 12 steps in community level, they are more able to encourage clients to be more assertive, open and forthright.

There are several joint activities inside the community created by rehabilitation institution. Counselors participate in this activity as organizer, facilitator and counselor. They called the activity as sessions. This session is different for each institution. This is what seen in observation [5]

2.1.1. Wellness

Wellness is sport activity in the morning to improve the fitness and enthusiasm of the client as a member of the community. Expression of joy in the form of body movements and verbal messages are expected to appear in this activity. The role of counselor is to grow and stimulate the existing situation. Of course, appropriateness is something important to consider because it is part of good social behavior.

2.2.2. Functions

Functions is activity of clients to clean the environment and homes in institution. In general, what is cleaned up is the environment around the dwelling which is a shared responsibility. Landscape department responsible in this activity. Room cleanliness, bed and kitchen are the responsibility of the kitchen and house keeping department. Counselors with chief and crew of department evaluate the overall environment in morning general inspection (GI).

2.2.3. Morning Meeting

Morning meeting is activity led by counselor to evaluate what happened before: What's the problem? And how to solve the problem. All members of community is allowed to participate. Members who were chosen on the previous night chose today's theme by providing specific description. In social rehabilitation institution based on religion, morning meeting start with praying and verse choice.

2.2.4. Seminar/Class

In seminar session, counselor gives education to clients in their competence. Topic of seminar can be various from character and category of drugs, psychological or personal improvement or religious matters. In this session, besides counselors who play a role in this session, sometimes they also invite outside speakers such as psychologists or religious leaders.

2.2.5. Confrontation

Confrontation is a session or forum created to remind each other or admonish each other for mistakes made by other community member. The process start with a client sees another client doing

and act that make him feel uncomfortable and considers it wrong based on general ethic and understanding. The first thing he do is to confirm the action. For example, a client said to other client that the previous day he did not clean the cutlery. Or for example in verbal expression, his fellow client once cursed with dirty words etc. If the accusation or reprimand is accepted the the confronted client will confirm the error and promise to correct his actions. There are institutions that require each client to make 5 confrontations for his friends who make mistakes. But there are also those who only confront only if there any errors made by his colleagues.

2.2.6. Clients Presentations

This session is a follow up session or continuation after another session. After vocational, psychoeducation, or religious class/session, clients have task that must be presented at the forum in front of class in the presence of friends. The counselors felt the difficulty of this session. Their duty is to stimulate the client to be assertive and want to practice and develop themselves.

2.2.7. Care and Concern

This session is improve by the counselor based on certain necessity. For example, in 12 steps there are statement about step one "We admitted we were powerless over narcotics – that our lives had become unmanageable". The counselor can state a problem relate with clients past experience. All clients can give opinion or statement about the topic, the solution, improvement etc. The problem raised can be anything. What matters is the problem is related to clients needs.

2.2.8. Drop Guild

Sometimes clients need a forum to to disclose his mistakes for several reasons. Maybe he needs comprehensive understanding and forgiveness from all member of community. He can use this session for this purpose. On the other hand, counselors can use this session to raise client mistake issues that need to be explain in general. The purpose of this session is for mutual understanding, the search of collective solutions and a sense of community togetherness.

2.2.9. House Meeting

This session is used to solve problems to be addressed together. There maybe an interest in changing or refreshing the composition of the departemen. 'Case conference' is other terms used by other social rehabilitation institution.

2.2.10. Vocational Session

This session is used to improve the ability or clients skill to get opportunity to find job, to work and earn income. The resource person is an expert

who masters the field of work. The field of work can vary, such as agriculture, livestock, trade, creative work and so on. Counselors usually consider the interests, talents and requests of clients.

The names of these sessions do not apply equally to all social rehabilitation institutions. Some use general terms such as morning, afternoon or evening sessions. The main goal is fungsional therapy. There are aspect relates with socially cognitive, whose expectations are changes in social behavior.

III. CONCLUSIONS

From the exposure that has been shown, it appears in general that former drug users as counselor have roles like other addictive counselors. Although there are rehabilitation institutions who place them only as social volunteers, in reality they have a central important position. Some of them are even initiators or founders of social rehabilitation institutions. Their advantage is that they have direct and deep understanding of narcotics. In some functional positions like in social outreach their role even irreplaceable.

Of course this does not apply to all former addicts. Those who succeed in overcoming their personal problems and developing themselves so they have personal capacity. At first in a general story, in a state of addiction they were found and force by their families to recover through rehabilitation institutions. In fewer stories, they come to rehabilitation institutions because they don't know where they are going. They then managed to build their own confidence.

Then their self concept grow along with the healing and abstinence process. They are clean and have a strong will to heal and become healers. But actually there is no term "cured", they can only be called recover. Therefore, they always try to keep on recurring and always do relapse prevention. They do it not only for themselves but also for others in institutions.

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