UNIT 13: MAJOR CONCERNS IN GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

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13.1 Learning Objectives

After going through this unit, you will be able to—

- describe the characteristics of group counselling;
- elaborate the meaning of career counselling and gain knowledge about the methods used to support career-related issues;
- describe the role of peer facilitators in the school guidance programme;
- explore the concept of alternative therapy methods;
- explain the concept of crisis counselling;
- gain information about child abuse, substance abuse, HIV/AIDS, and suicide;

13.2 INTRODUCTION

You have already learned about the overall counselling process. In this unit, you will learn about different types of counselling such as group counselling, career counselling, peer counselling, and also about the relevance of alternative therapies as a part of counselling. In addition, this unit explains how these counselling services can be provided in schools and their usefulness in the present context. As children and adolescents grow up, they become aware of various types of risks. Although most families try to protect themselves and their children, sometimes serious incidents occur both within and outside the family. During childhood and adolescence, children may face different kinds of trauma. Some experiences, such as child abuse, witnessing domestic violence, and substance abuse, may occur repeatedly. This unit helps us understand these problems and also explains how such crisis situations can be prevented.

13.3 GROUP COUNSELLING

Group or team counselling is a useful method because it provides opportunities to present different perspectives and uses the resources of the entire group to solve problems or support the growth of its members. Group counselling offers special opportunities for personal healing, as it helps to build warm and supportive relationships among learners who come together for help. Group methods are especially helpful in crisis situations or problems such as alcoholism, drug abuse, learners from single-parent or divorced families, and learners facing illnesses like HIV/AIDS and cancer, as they support rehabilitation and recovery.

13.3.1 Characteristics of Group Counselling

The main features of group or team counselling are—

- group members accept one another;
- there is trust among the members;
- mutual respect exists among the members;
- tolerance for individual differences is present;
- there is insight into different solutions and perspectives for similar problems.

In brief, in group counselling, the person receiving counselling experiences greater opportunities to—

- express themselves in a safe and empathetic environment;
- receive more than one empathetic response to their problems;
- understand the causes of their problems by comparing their situations with others and by listening to others' problems;
- gain advice and ideas from others;
- identify goals to bring about change in themselves;
- share their successes and receive encouragement for positive behaviour.

13.3.2 Group Methods

Group methods can be used to organise group guidance, group counselling, or group psychotherapy. These are discussed below—

1. Group Guidance:

Group guidance is a method of bringing about change in attitudes through the exchange of information, ideas, thoughts, and concepts. It aims to prevent problems and to provide information that addresses educational, vocational, personal, and social needs.

2. Group Counselling:

Group counselling is therapeutic in nature because it aims to release emotions and ideas through sharing. It focuses on changing attitudes and behaviour by encouraging full participation of the group members.

3. Group Psychotherapy:

This method is largely remedial, supportive, and reconstructive. It gives

importance to the unconscious, subconscious, and even the conscious aspects of an individual's personality. It deals with serious emotional problems as well as challenges related to mental health. Many such problems can be resolved only through long-term therapy.

4. Group Leadership:

Whatever the type of group, the leader plays a very important role. As group leaders, counsellors need proper training in interpersonal skills, including warm and empathetic communication, in order to manage group procedures effectively.

13.3.3 Stages of the Group Process

There are four stages of group processes. These are the **Beginning stage**, **Working stage**, **Closing stage**, and **Follow-up stage**. Let us discuss these stages—

Beginning Stage

In the beginning stage, introductions are made, the outline of the group objectives is presented, goals are set, and rules and boundaries are clearly explained. There is no fixed rule regarding the amount of time to be spent at this stage. During this stage, members should feel comfortable enough to move towards discussing the real issues.

Working Stage

This stage is the core of the group or team process. Here, members focus on the main objectives of the group. They discuss various issues, complete tasks, or engage in personal sharing and therapeutic activities. This stage begins with a transitional phase in which members may not yet be ready to discuss very personal matters. The planning of the active middle phase depends on the purpose for which the group meets.

For example, in an educational group, the leader may distribute some written materials or show a picture before members begin discussing the topic. To encourage open expression, the leader may share similar problems faced by the group members and describe experiences they may have personally encountered. If, as a teacher, you form such a group in a school, you may ask the members to rate their level of happiness on a scale of 1 to 10. This helps to assess whether

they feel motivated to participate and actively express their thoughts and feelings.

Closing Stage

The closing stage of the group process occurs when members express what they have learned or gained from the group and how they plan to use what they have learned. The duration of this stage depends on the length of time the group has worked together. At this point, members may become emotional because, during the group process, they often grow closer to one another. Since they face similar problems, they may form bonds by sharing personal experiences, feelings, and the support received from other members.

Follow-up Stage

The follow-up depends on the nature of the group activities and the objectives of the group. It helps members stay in contact and also identifies the need for further follow-up or remedial interventions. It assists the counsellor or group leader in evaluating the effectiveness of the group processes.

Stages in Group Counselling

Stage I – Beginning Stage

Here, participants are introduced, the purpose is presented, and goals and rules are set.

Stage II – Working Stage

At this stage, focus is placed on the main purpose. Each member speaks at a cognitive level, the group leader initiates emotional expression, and interaction increases.

Stage III – Closing Stage

Sharing of gains from interaction, clarification of conclusions drawn, and decisions regarding the use of these conclusions take place.

Stage IV – Follow-up Stage

Members provide feedback on conclusions drawn from self-reports, questionnaires, rating scales, checklists, and confirmed final conclusions.

(Source: Special Concerns in Counselling, NCERT, 2009)

13.4 CAREER COUNSELLING

Career counselling refers to a guided counselling process aimed at helping an individual become mature in matters related to career choice and career development, and to make the most appropriate, sequentially connected life–career decisions and adjustments. It includes providing assistance to an individual in choosing a vocation and preparing for it, as well as helping the person enter the chosen type of work effectively and perform efficiently.In brief, career counselling can be defined as a set of communication skills, techniques, and attitudes used to help people choose their careers effectively and make proper adjustments to them.

13.4.1 Need and Importance of Career Counselling

The need and importance of career counselling are discussed below:

- **Reducing unemployment and dissatisfaction:**

In any social system, large-scale unemployment arises due to the failure to inform career aspirants about the availability of career opportunities, shortages of certain professions, and surplus occupations. The absence of proper guidance can worsen the unemployment situation, leading to economic and psychological problems. Career counselling helps reduce unemployment and dissatisfaction among young learners.

- **Coping with a competitive future:**

In the work situation of the twenty-first century, within a globalized world, job opportunities are more likely to be available for individuals who possess specialized skills required to survive in the job market. Career counselling helps individuals identify their abilities and interests so that they can choose appropriate education and training.

- **Fulfilment of needs and life goals:**

Beyond meeting basic needs, career counselling helps individuals find jobs according to their potential and aspirations, thereby fulfilling other personal and social needs such as recognition, approval, self-esteem, and self-actualization.

- **Opening up new career avenues:**

In the present time, numerous career options are available. The information

revolution has opened up new career opportunities in many fields, especially in advertising, information technology, engineering, fashion technology, and others. Almost every career today requires highly specialized skills, which may demand investment of time, money, and effort. Career counselling enables individuals to make suitable choices from a wide range of options.

- **Utilisation of human resources:**

Career education and career counselling help in the proper utilisation of human potential. Research in career psychology has shown that professionally trained workers can nurture hidden and latent talents among children and youth through proper identification and guidance.

- **Bridging the gap between education and work:**

Since career counselling has not yet achieved adequate expansion in our country, there is still a lack of career-related education in school curricula. Learning in education should have applicability in the world of work. The process of career counselling thus helps in the effective implementation of career education and assists students in acquiring the necessary orientation, planning, and attitudes required for effective entry into careers.

13.4.2 Stages of Career Counselling

So far, we have discussed the concept of career counselling along with its need and importance. In this section, you will become familiar with the various steps and stages of the career counselling process. These steps are described in detail below:

- **Screening:**

At the beginning of this process, it is considered important to plan what will happen in counselling, as it can have a deep impact on counselling. Screening is the process that enables both the counsellor and the counselee to collect information about each other and about the services to be provided. Such information helps both parties decide whether to proceed further or not.

- **Clarifyingphase:**

This phase begins with the process of building a relationship, where general counselling skills are used to create a comfortable and friendly environment. Along

with rapport building, information is collected about relevant issues and the background, achievements, and frustrations of the counselee.

- **Contracting:**

Contracting is a process in which there is a clear mutual understanding between the counsellor and the counselee regarding the working methods and their respective roles in career counselling. The contract discusses several relevant issues such as who will bear the cost involved, confidentiality, and the expected roles of both the counsellor and the counselee.

- **Exploration:**

Exploration is a part of the early stage of career development. Exploring how the counselee has previously made career decisions helps the counsellor understand the extent to which the counselee has taken responsibility for decision-making and whether there was evidence of appropriate career attitudes.

- **Insight building:**

At this stage, the counselees are helped to develop a more objective and accurate self-understanding and to deepen their insight into their situation. The aim is to enable the counselee to move towards new and more constructive perspectives that can form the basis for decisions and actions.

- **Decision making:**

The counsellor helps identify gaps and inconsistencies in planning, which are gradually brought out from the counselee. This helps in increasing information, and a better understanding of the self and the world of work leads to greater awareness and inspires a more creative approach to thinking and planning for the future.

- **Action stage:**

After decisions are made, the counselee is encouraged to prepare an appropriate and systematic action plan. The action plan includes tasks to be accomplished to achieve progress and gain self-confidence, keeping in mind the individual's abilities, motivation, and other factors.

- **Reviewing process:**

Towards the end of career counselling, a review enables both the counsellor and the counselee to evaluate what has been achieved.

- **Termination:**

Ending the relationship between the counsellor and the counselee is itself a process in career counselling. However, the ending should have a positive impact on both the counsellor and the counselee. The final outcome should be a summary of the key issues discussed and the actions proposed by the individual.

- **Follow up:**

After receiving career counselling, individuals often feel that they are in a position to move forward. Several strategies can be used to encourage and support counselees in implementing their action plans, such as providing support, arranging follow-up meetings, and offering rewards when progress indicators are achieved.

w CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q1: What do you understand by group counselling?

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Q 2: What do you understand by career counselling?

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13.5 PEER COUNSELLING

Peer counselling is a concept in which students of the same age help one another to adjust to personal and academic situations. Unlike a professional counsellor, a peer counsellor is not a problem-solver. Instead, the peer counsellor encourages the peer to engage in self-exploration and decision-making. In a school, peer counsellors can be identified from any age group or class level, but relationships tend to be more effective when peers are of the same age group. The purpose of peer counselling is to promote personal growth and development through supportive relationships.

13.5.1 Need for Peer Counselling

In recent years, the need for guidance as an organised service in schools has

become increasingly important. When viewed as an integral part of education, guidance is necessary for all children. It is a service meant not only for those who face problems, but also for those who need to further develop their potential. Students require help for the many problems they encounter. Some of the commonly faced problems are:

- Choice of subjects
- How to study effectively
- Lack of self-confidence
- Time management
- Relationships with classmates
- Planning and setting goals for the future, etc.

Even if a school has a qualified counsellor, it may not be possible for the counsellor to help everyone. Therefore, the idea of training students who have the potential to help their peers in schools is very effective. Moreover, peer groups can influence decision-making more strongly, are more easily accessible, and can more easily establish relationships to build long-lasting personal connections with school-going children.

13.5.2 Establishing a Peer Counselling Programme

A peer counselling programme can work as a supportive component of the counsellor's organised programme. The initial steps that can be adopted for setting up a peer counselling programme include the following:

- **Conducting systematic needs assessment:** Determining whether peer counselling is an appropriate or effective intervention.
- **Emphasising specific rather than global goals:** Clearly defining the roles of peer facilitators, along with their specific functions and levels of responsibility.
- **Selecting peer counsellors:**The selection process of peer counsellors aims to identify individuals who demonstrate empathy, high self-confidence, and the ability to accept values that may be different from their own.

13.6 RELEVANCE OF TRADITIONAL HEALING METHODS

Traditional and indigenous methods of treatment for physical as well as mental illnesses have existed in every society since ancient times. These indigenous systems of medicine are practiced in many parts of the world, especially in traditional societies. An important point to note is that there has been a revival of traditional medical practices. This suggests that people have become aware of the limitations of modern medical science. Modern medicine largely views human beings as biological and chemical systems and often ignores the emotional, social, and spiritual aspects of a person. Alternative systems of medicine treat illness in a holistic manner, and therefore modern medical science has begun to integrate these methods with its own treatment practices.

13.7 ALTERNATIVE THERAPY METHODS

With the growing increase in restlessness and dissatisfaction among today's youth and children, great importance is being given to nurturing spirituality that helps us find solutions to our inner and outer conditions or problems. As a result, attention is being focused not only on modern systems but also on traditional healing practices followed in different cultures, as well as on treatment systems and counselling techniques. Some alternative therapies are discussed below:

- **Yoga:**

Yoga is well known all over the world for its effectiveness in promoting health and well-being. Its main source is *Patanjali's Yoga Sutras*, which are about 2,500 years old. Yoga is a complete system that explores the depths of the inner world and provides guidance on how to deal with the mind, emotions, thoughts, and habits, so that one can live efficiently, productively, and peacefully in this constantly changing world.

- **Meditation:**

As shown in yoga, meditation or one-pointed concentration is an essential part of self-development. Simply defined, it means mental calmness. Every spiritual and religious tradition has emphasized the value of meditation, leading to the development of many forms of meditative practices. Meditation has been valued and practiced for thousands of years for healing and relieving suffering, and various techniques have emerged over time. However, all meditation techniques can be broadly divided into two main types: focused meditation and mindfulness meditation.

- **Reiki:**

Reiki was discovered by the Japanese spiritual teacher Dr. Mikao Usui. In this therapy, the hands are used as tools for healing. It can be practiced only by trained Reiki practitioners. The word Reiki comes from two Japanese words: *Rei*, meaning universal, and *Ki*, meaning life force, similar to the Chinese *Chi* or the Sanskrit *Prana*. Thus, Reiki means universal life energy.

- **Pranic Healing:**

According to pranic healing, the human body consists of a visible physical body and an invisible energy or etheric body, also known as the bioplasmic body. Pranic healing is based on two natural laws: the law of self-recovery and the law of life energy. It uses prana or life energy, which is easily available from the sun, air, and earth, to heal physical and emotional imbalances.

- **Acupressure and Acupuncture:**

In acupressure, fingers, thumbs, or the palm are used to massage pressure points to relieve common discomforts. For example, massaging the muscles between the thumb and index finger can relieve headaches caused by a cold.

Acupuncture literally means “needle insertion.” It involves inserting very fine needles into specific points on the body, known as acupuncture points, to stimulate them for therapeutic purposes.

- **Other healing or therapeutic systems:**

There are several other popular systems of treatment that give great importance to the connection between the mind and the body. For example, in India, Ayurveda, Unani, Homeopathy, and Naturopathy are widely practiced for both physical and mental illnesses. Their diagnosis and treatment are not based only on symptoms but also include factors such as dietary habits, sleep patterns, temperament, and behavior.

- **Expressive therapies:**

Expressive therapies are another form of emotional healing methods and are different from psychotherapy, as they do not depend heavily on verbal abilities. As the name suggests, they use other forms of creative expression such as art, music, and dance movement. Drama, poetry, and creative writing help in self-expression and emotional healing. Therefore, these therapies are especially useful for children, individuals with

intellectual challenges, and people suffering from dementia and Alzheimer's disease. They provide a medium for self-expression, imagination, active participation, and opportunities for mind–body intervention.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q No. 3: What is meant by peer counselling?

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Q No. 4: Who introduced Reiki as an alternative therapy?

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Q No. 5: Mention the two laws of Pranic Healing.

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13.8 MEANING OF CRISIS COUNSELLING

Before moving on to the concept of crisis counselling, we must first understand the meaning of crisis. A crisis is an event or a series of events that is unexpected, appears to be unmanageable, and is potentially dangerous. A crisis is defined by the person who experiences the event. A crisis may include an element of threat that makes the individual fear for their own safety or the safety of others. However, a crisis may also be an apparently safe event for which the individual or group involved does not have the skills or resources to cope.

For any situation to be considered a crisis, it must have the following features:

- The event or series of events must be perceived as stressful by the individual or group involved.
- The individual or group involved must lack the tools, skills, and resources to manage the situation effectively.

Crisis counselling is not long-term and usually does not last more than one to three months. Crisis counselling provides education, guidance, and support. It is not a substitute for intensive or long-term psychological treatment for children and adolescents who need such care but have not received it. Crisis counselling is not limited to hospitals;

it can also work within different communities. In this process, there are certain universal "elements" through which a crisis counsellor can help children and adolescents cope with painful and traumatic life events and move forward from the past.

13.9 COUNSELLING FOR PREVENTION OF CHILD ABUSE

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), child abuse includes all forms of physical or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, and commercial or other exploitation. These acts result in actual or potential harm to a child's health, survival, development, or dignity, and occur within a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power.

According to the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act, child abuse can be defined as any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caregiver that results in serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse, or exploitation, which may lead to serious injury or even death of the child.

Many factors can contribute to child abuse. Some of these are:

- Abusive parents themselves are often victims of physical and sexual abuse and may have experienced long-term violent or painful domestic lives.
- Stressful living conditions such as poverty, social isolation, unemployment, and substance abuse by parents can lead to abuse of children.
- Mental disorders of parents or other close adults, along with disturbances in their thinking or judgment, can also result in child abuse.

Children are mainly victims of four types of abuse, which are described below:

- **Neglect:**

  Neglect means failure to meet a child's basic needs. This may include physical needs, medical care, educational needs, or emotional needs.

- **Physical abuse:**

  Physical abuse can range from minor injuries to serious harm. It may involve beating with a stick or other objects, burning, or causing injury to the child in other ways.

- **Sexual abuse:**

  Sexual abuse refers to sexual acts carried out without consent or against the

will of the victim, causing physical and psychological harm. Sexual abuse does not occur only within families; it also takes place outside the family, in schools, daycare centers, hostels, crèches, and similar settings.

- **Emotional abuse:**

  Emotionally abused or neglected children are those who are verbally and non-verbally exploited, insulted, scolded, or rejected. Such children feel unloved, especially because their thoughts and wishes are not heard or respected.

Teachers and counsellors meet children regularly and are in a suitable position to reach out and help abused or neglected children. They can monitor children's daily safety and progress and design programmes that help improve a child's self-esteem and cognitive skills.

If parents are involved in abuse, a counsellor can try to provide a safe space and relationship in which the child can explore new ways of adjusting to a safer world. The counsellor should assess the risk of further physical or sexual abuse when the child expresses experiences. The counsellor must also understand the social and legal aspects of child abuse.

If parents are not involved in the abuse, a counsellor can take the following steps:

- Help move the child to a safe environment. This may not be easy and may have some negative effects on the child's personality, which the counsellor must address carefully.
- Ensure that parents are willing to participate in the counselling process.
- Work to ensure that parents and other caregivers accept and cooperate with support services.
- Prepare awareness programmes for parents, focusing especially on the consequences of child abuse. Lectures, films, and printed materials can be used for this purpose.
- Organise programmes at school or community level to help children develop skills to protect themselves from abuse.

School counsellors often have to deal with the effects of child abuse. Disruption in classroom learning, bullying and aggressive behaviour on the playground, and antisocial behaviour in class are common problems. In more serious cases, these children need close monitoring and support from the school counsellor.

W CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q No. 6: What is meant by crisis counselling?

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Q No. 7: What is meant by child abuse?

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Q No. 8: Mention the different types of child abuse.

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13.10 COUNSELLING FOR PREVENTION OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE

People misuse drugs, alcohol, and tobacco for many different and complex reasons. Substance abuse has harmful effects on the brain and nervous system, which affects the user's health and daily functioning. Over time, substance abuse can lead to addiction or dependence. While discussing abuse, it should not be confused with addiction, especially when dealing with children in schools. Abuse is different from addiction, where a person is forced to continue using a substance despite negative consequences. Substance abuse reflects a complex interaction between the individual, the substance being used, and society.

Teachers and counsellors should discuss in schools how drug use can lead to abuse and addiction and help in prevention. If dealing with addiction goes beyond the scope of school counsellors or teachers, students should be referred to professional counsellors or medical personnel. To ensure prevention and effective counselling, counsellors need to be aware of the different types of substances used by students. These are broadly classified as alcohol and tobacco, misuse of prescription drugs, illegal drug use, and abuse of common household substances. Drug use is associated with many negative consequences, such as increased risk of serious drug use later in life, school failure, and poor judgment, which can expose adolescents to accidents, violence, unplanned and unsafe sexual behaviour, and suicide.

Substance abuse is a complex phenomenon with multiple causes. These causes may be psychological, such as anxiety and stress; social, such as low socioeconomic status; biological, such as chronic illnesses; and even cultural and geographical factors, including traditional or tribal use of substances. Usually, substance abuse results from the interaction of several factors. Some children may believe that drugs reduce pain, anxiety, and depression, at least temporarily, and therefore use them easily during stressful situations. For example, school examinations can be a major source of stress for some students. Tension, inability to prepare for exams, and repeated failure can create extreme stress, and one seemingly easy way to escape is by calmly using drugs or substances.

Strategies for preventing drug use in schools should address children at different levels and include the following:

- Universal strategies for the general population, such as all students in a school.
- Targeted strategies for specific groups, such as disadvantaged students or children of drug users.
- Helping improve self-control, emotional awareness, communication, and study habits.
- Strengthening personal commitment against drug use.

Preventive measures are most effective when interactive strategies are used, such as peer discussion groups and parental role-playing, which allow active involvement in learning about drug use and strengthening skills. Family-based prevention programmes should strengthen family bonds. Family bonding is the foundation of the parent–child relationship. Therefore, school- and family-based substance abuse prevention programmes should aim to improve communication between parents and children, teach resistance skills, and correct children's misconceptions about cigarettes, alcohol, and drugs and the consequences of their use.

School counsellors are often the key to successful alcohol and drug prevention programmes. Due to their training and professional roles, they are best positioned to act as coordinators, counsellors, and evaluators. School counsellors are in a unique position to provide prevention, identification, and intervention services because of their regular access to students. The steps that counsellors should follow for effective substance abuse prevention are given below:

- **Identification:**

  For more effective prevention, students facing alcohol or drug problems should be identified as early as possible, before they become emotionally dependent on substances.

- **Establishing a healthy relationship with children:**

  A major difficulty in working with adolescents who have substance use problems is that they are often unwilling to talk openly about their drug use and tend to underreport it. Building trust and understanding can help reduce resistance.

- **Assessment:**

  While assessing a student's substance use history, counsellors must verify the accuracy of the information shared, as users often underreport. Proper assessment helps determine the seriousness of substance use or abuse and the need for treatment.

- **Referral:**

  A student who is experimenting with substances requires less intensive treatment than one with long-term drug dependence. The former can often be handled by a school counsellor, while the latter should be referred to professional counsellors or doctors at de-addiction centres.

- **Follow-up services:**

  It is not safe to assume that adolescents with substance abuse problems will fully recover and remain abstinent after treatment ends. School counsellors should provide follow-up services, help students reintegrate into school life, and focus on preventing relapse.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q No. 9: What is meant by substance abuse?

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Q No. 10: Mention the causes of substance abuse.

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13.11 COUNSELLING FOR HIV / AIDS AWARENESS

HIV/AIDS has become one of the most widespread and serious diseases affecting people all over the world. So far, the only hope to reduce the spread of this infection and its risk is to create awareness among people. Today, many adolescents engage in unsafe sexual behaviour out of curiosity. In the present time, it is very important that schools take responsibility for educating children about such issues.

HIV is a virus that weakens the human immune system. It belongs to a family of viruses called retroviruses. HIV is found in blood, semen, cervical and vaginal secretions, and in smaller amounts in the saliva, tears, breast milk, and cerebrospinal fluid of infected persons. HIV infection mostly spreads through sexual contact or through the transfer of infected blood from one person to another.

Most people who test HIV positive develop AIDS within about 10 years. However, some people develop AIDS-related complex illnesses at an early stage, which are less severe than AIDS but usually progress to AIDS within about one year.

The diagnosis of HIV infection leads to serious emotional, social, and medical consequences. Coping with HIV infection involves continuous stress related to family life, sexual and social relationships, work, education, spiritual needs, dignity, and civil rights. For people who have developed full-blown AIDS, counsellors need to be very sensitive to their feelings of trauma or guilt and should work in the following ways:

- Show a positive and caring attitude towards people living with AIDS.
- Remove misconceptions about HIV and AIDS.
- Conduct detailed discussions on prevention of infection.

Professional counsellors help expand educational efforts related to HIV/AIDS in schools. School counsellors work together with students, parents, staff, and the community to prevent the spread of this disease. Counsellors have the responsibility and opportunity to provide correct health information and help students develop healthy attitudes and habits. Information and education about HIV/AIDS are essential for everyone. As part of the school guidance programme, counsellors can provide information on HIV/AIDS, including:

- Information about behaviours that put people at risk of HIV/AIDS.
- Information about the modes of transmission of HIV/AIDS.
- Awareness about related civil rights.

- Prevention efforts.
- Correct information to remove myths and misconceptions.

In general, creating awareness among the public, especially students, is very important. Therefore, help should be taken from mass media such as television, radio, newspapers, magazines, and other reading materials to spread information about HIV and AIDS. Such information should:

- Help people understand the seriousness of the situation and present a realistic and human perspective.
- Educate students about how HIV/AIDS spreads and make them aware that sexual activity is the easiest and fastest mode of transmission.
- Make students aware that substance abuse involving needles and syringes can lead to HIV infection.
- Allow counsellors to provide HIV/AIDS-related information to students through printed materials, lectures, and films. Special HIV/AIDS awareness days can be organised using exhibitions, debates, quizzes, and similar activities.
- Enable counsellors at college, university, and community levels to identify individuals who are at high risk for HIV/AIDS.

13.12 COUNSELLING FOR PREVENTION OF SUICIDE

Suicide is a complex phenomenon linked with psychological, biological, and social factors. Generally, suicide reflects a desire to escape from real or difficult situations, or it may be an expression of anger toward someone or a sense of injustice experienced by the person who attempts suicide.

Suicide often occurs when a depressed person feels that life has become so unbearable that death seems to be the only way to escape from suffering, emotional disturbance, terminal illness, or similar situations. A suicidal person feels hopeless and helpless, with no clear possibility of change or improvement.

Some common causes of suicide among school students are given below:

- Death of an important person in life or loss due to divorce or separation.
- Sexual abuse or child abuse.
- Failure in school.
- Failure in relationships, such as a breakup with a boyfriend or girlfriend.

- Recent suicide of a friend or relative.
- Issues related to personal identity and sexual identity.

Suicide may also be caused by mental disorders such as depression, anxiety, and psychotic disorders. Other contributing factors include drug and alcohol use, lack of strong social support systems, and a history of impulsive behaviour. Thus, it can be said that the causes of suicidal behaviour among adolescents are largely emotional, and their suicidal intentions are similar to those of adults.

Students who are at risk can often be identified by teachers or counsellors through classroom interactions and guidance activities. To be effective in suicide prevention in schools or among children, a counsellor mainly needs three strategies:

- **General discussion and awareness programmes for students:**
  These programmes help students learn how to seek help for themselves or for friends, and develop skills to identify children at risk and sources of help.
- **Identification and early intervention for students at risk:**
  Before any suicide attempt occurs, at-risk students should be identified, approached, and supported. Planned programmes should be organised in advance to address and treat known risk factors for suicide.
- **Post-trauma counselling after a suicide attempt:**
  Counselling should be planned for students who attempt suicide, as well as for parents, friends, siblings, and others who may blame themselves for the incident. Counsellors should provide understanding about death, suicide, grief experiences, and coping skills so that they do not feel unnecessary guilt, shame, or isolation, and special care should be taken to ensure that children do not become emotionally detached from their parents.

In addition, counsellors should share necessary information about such students with medical professionals so that, along with the student's physical history, a complete picture of the student's condition can be understood and appropriate care can be provided.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q No. 11: Mention two causes of students' suicide related to school.

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2 13.13 LET US SUM UP

- **Group or team counselling** is beneficial because it provides opportunities to present different viewpoints and uses the resources of the whole group to help solve problems or promote members' growth. Group counselling especially offers opportunities for personal healing, as it builds warm relationships among students who come together for support.
- **Career counselling** refers to a guided counselling process that helps an individual become mature regarding career choice and stages of career development, and to make the most suitable and sequentially connected life-career decisions and adjustments. It includes assistance in choosing and preparing for an occupation, as well as entering and functioning effectively in the chosen type of work.
- **Peer counselling** is a concept in which students of the same age help others by sharing personal and academic situations.
- **Indigenous and traditional healing practices** for physical as well as mental illnesses have existed in every society since long ago. Such traditional treatment methods are practiced in large parts of the world, especially in traditional societies. A noteworthy point is that there has been a revival of traditional treatment practices, indicating that people have realized the limitations of modern medical science.
- With the increasing unrest and dissatisfaction among today's youth and children, great importance has been given to nurturing spirituality that offers solutions to both internal and external conditions or problems. As a result, emphasis has been placed on traditional healing practices prevalent in various cultures along with modern systems, as well as on treatment systems and counselling techniques.
- Before moving to the concept of **crisis counselling**, it is necessary to first understand the meaning of crisis. A crisis is an event or a series of events that is unexpected, seemingly unmanageable, and potentially dangerous. The definition of a crisis can be given by the person who is facing that event.
- According to the **World Health Organization (WHO)**, child abuse includes all forms of physical or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligent treatment, or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development, or dignity, within the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power.

- People abuse substances such as drugs, alcohol, and tobacco for various and complex reasons. Substance abuse has harmful effects on the brain and nervous system, which in turn affects the abuser's health and daily functioning.
- **HIV/AIDS** has become one of the most widespread and serious diseases affecting people worldwide. So far, the only hope for reducing this infection and its risk is creating awareness among people. Today's adolescents often engage in unsafe sexual behaviour out of curiosity. In the present age, it is extremely important that schools take responsibility for educating children on these aspects.
- **Suicide** is a complex phenomenon linked with psychological, biological, and social factors. Generally, suicide reflects a desire to escape from real or difficult situations or to hurt someone, or it represents perceived injustice towards the person who commits suicide.

O 13.14 FURTHER READING

- Perusse, R, Goodnough, G. E. & Lee. V. V. (2009). *Group Counselling in the Schools.* Psychology in the Schools 46 (3), 225-23.
- Mcleod,J, (2013). *An Introduction to Counselling.* McGrawhill education (UK).
- NCERT (2009). *Special Concerns in Counselling*.

- Perusse, R, Goodnough, G. E. & Lee. V. V. (2009). *Group Counselling in the Schools.* Psychology in the Schools 46 (3), 225-23.
- Mcleod,J, (2013). *An Introduction to Counselling.* McGrawhill education(UK)
- NCERT (2009). *Special Concerns in Counselling*.

K 13.15 ANSWERS TO CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Answer to Question No. 1: Group or team counselling especially provides opportunities for personal healing, because it builds warm relationships among students who come together for support. Group methods are particularly helpful for the rehabilitation and recovery of students facing crisis situations or problems such as alcoholism, drug abuse, having unmarried or divorced parents, and illnesses like HIV/AIDS, cancer, etc.

Answer to Question No. 2: Career counselling refers to a guided counselling process

that helps an individual become mature with respect to career choice and stages of career development, and to make the most appropriate and sequentially connected life-career decisions and adjustments. It includes assistance in choosing and preparing for an occupation, as well as entering and functioning effectively in the selected type of work. In short, career counselling can be defined as a set of communication skills, techniques, and attitudes used to help people effectively choose and adjust to a career.

Answer to Question No. 3: Peer counselling is a concept in which students of the same age help others to effectively share personal and academic situations. A peer counsellor, unlike a professional counsellor, is not a problem solver or adviser. Peer counsellors encourage self-exploration and decision-making.

Answer to Question No. 4: Reiki was discovered by the Japanese theologian Dr. Mikao Usui. In this therapy, the hands are used as tools for healing.

Answer to Question No. 5: Pranic healing is based on two natural laws. These are the Law of Self-Recovery and the Law of Life Energy.

Answer to Question No. 6: Crisis counselling is not long-term and usually does not last more than 11 weeks to 3 months. Crisis counselling provides education, guidance, and support. However, it is not an alternative for children and adolescents who need intensive or long-term mental health treatment but have not received it. Crisis counselling is not limited only to hospitals; it can also work in connection with various communities.

Answer to Question No. 7: Child abuse includes all forms of physical or emotional ill-treatment, sexual abuse, neglect or negligence, or commercial or other exploitation, resulting in actual harm to the child's health, survival, development, or dignity, within a relationship of responsibility, trust, or power.

Answer to Question No. 8: The different types of child abuse are neglect, physical abuse, sexual abuse, and emotional abuse.

Answer to Question No. 9: People abuse substances such as drugs, alcohol, and tobacco for various and complex reasons. Substance abuse has harmful effects on the brain and nervous system, which affects the abuser's health and daily activities.

Answer to Question No. 10: Substance abuse is a complex phenomenon with multiple

causes. These causes may be psychological, such as anxiety and mental stress; social, such as low socio-economic status; biological, such as various chronic diseases; and even cultural, geographical, and traditional tribal use of certain substances.

Answer to Question No. 11: Some common causes of suicide among school students are mentioned below—

- Loss of an important person in life due to divorce or death.
- Immoral acts or child abuse.

M 13.16 MODEL QUESTIONS

A] Short Questions*(Write answers within 150 words)*

Q 1: Mention the characteristics of group counselling.

Q 2: Briefly explain the different methods of group counselling.

Q 3: Highlight the need for peer facilitators.

Q 4: Write a short note on yoga.

Q 5: Mention two important crisis situations.

Q 6: Mention some common causes of child abuse.

Q 7: Write a short note on substance abuse.

[B] Essay-Type Questions*(Write answers within 300–500 words)*

Q 1: Discuss the stages of the group process.

Q 2: Discuss the need and importance of career counselling.

Q 3: Explain the steps of career counselling.

Q 4: Write in detail about the different alternative therapeutic approaches used in guidance and counselling.

Q 5: Explain in detail the different types of child abuse.

Q 6: Mention the areas on which a counselor should focus while dealing with substance users.

Q 7: Explain how we can protect the present generation from HIV/AIDS.

Q 8: Explain the concept of suicide. Discuss in detail the major causes of suicide among school students.

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