Fostering Well Being by Connecting Career and Mental Health in Service Delivery

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PRIVATE PRACTICE

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Overview

Factors to consider
Career theories connecting career and mental health
Research in this area
Assessments bridging career and mental health
Case examples
Questions/discussion
Factors to consider in combining career and mental health assistance

Institutional/agency/private practice culture, mission, policies, procedures
Administrative structure
Space
Records
Tools, resources, forms
Polices & procedures related to client needs, intervention complexity, staff competencies

A. Level of Client Needs

B. Level of Career Intervention Complexity

C. Level of Competencies and Skills of Counselors and Staff

Factors to consider in combining career and mental health assistance

Staffing, training, & supervision:
- Professional identity/ specializations
- Staff credentials/licensing
- Supervision & training
- Ethical/liability issues
Staff

- Credentials of persons on site for training & supervision
- Access to students enrolled in counseling, counseling psychology, career counseling programs
- Training materials
Private Practice Considerations

- Provider Scope of Practice
- Client Presenting Issues
- Support, Consultation, and Referral Sources
- Payment & Fee Structure
- Duration of Service
- Consent to Communicate With Other Providers
Ethical Considerations

Training and Credentials

Boundaries

DSM Diagnoses: Know criteria
- e.g., trait versus state anxiety

Medications and possible side effects

Know when to refer, know when to retain clients

Collaborate with other professionals

Supervision
Career theory connected to practice

Cognitive information processing (CIP) theory

Holland’s RIASEC theory and secondary constructs

- Differentiation, profile elevation, vocational identity

Connection to other counseling theories (e.g., Beck)
What’s Involved in a Career Choice

A pyramid can be used to show what’s involved in making a career choice

- Thinking About My Decision Making
- Knowing How I Make Decisions
- Knowing About Myself
- Knowing About My Options

What’s Involved in a Career Choice

A Guide to Good Decision Making

- Knowing I Need to Make a Choice
- Knowing I Made a Good Choice
- Implementing My First Choice
- Understanding Myself, Options, Decision Making, and Thoughts
- Prioritizing My Options
- Expanding and Narrowing My Options

The CASVE Cycle

Executive Processing Domain

Metacognitions—Thinking about decision making

◦ Self-talk
◦ Self-awareness
◦ Control and monitoring
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CTI domain based on CIP theory</th>
<th>Dysfunctional thoughts</th>
<th>Potential mental health factors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-knowledge</td>
<td>Unstable or weak self-knowledge schemata that comprise one’s identity</td>
<td>Low vocational identity, e.g., “I’m unsure of myself in many areas of my life”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Occupational knowledge</td>
<td>Difficulty in developing a conceptual framework or schema of the occupational world</td>
<td>Distorted thinking relative to the world of work; potential options</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>Presence of disabling emotions or cognitions that block progress through the CASVE cycle</td>
<td>Anxiety, depression, frustration; unwillingness to acknowledge nature of the problems which include a combination of career and mental health issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Lack of motivation to expend the effort related to solving a career problem; intimidated by the task</td>
<td>Feeling “stuck”, unable to examine information need to solve a career problem; fear of moving forward with next steps</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Synthesis</td>
<td>Inability to use information about self and options to identify plausible alternatives and create a manageable list of options</td>
<td>Cognitive distortions; inability to process information; overwhelmed by information; inability to focus on &amp; use resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Valuing</td>
<td>Inability or unwillingness to balance input from significant others and self interests; unable to rank options; not wanting to take responsibility for choices</td>
<td>Anxiety; fear of making a wrong choice; fear of disappointing important people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Execution</td>
<td>Unable to develop a plan of action to pursue choice; lack of persistence in reaching a goal</td>
<td>Procrastination; fear of failure; lacking in skills needed to execute next steps (e.g., social anxiety)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Executive Processing</td>
<td>Lack of confidence as a career problem solver or decision maker; lack of persistence or self control</td>
<td>Depression or anxiety over resolving career problem; finding a satisfactory solution; Perfectionism related to career outcomes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reproduced by special permission of the Publisher, Psychological Assessment Resources, Inc., 16204 North Florida Avenue, Lutz, FL 33549, from the Career Thoughts Inventory by Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon and Saunders, Copyright 1994, 1996 by PAR, Inc. Further reproduction is prohibited without permission from PAR, Inc.
Readiness

The capability of an individual to make appropriate career choices taking into account the complexity of family, social, economic, and organizational factors that influence career development.

Readiness also includes possessing adequate language skills and literacy skills for communication and learning.

Factors inhibiting capability include:

- disabling emotions
- goal instability
- negative career thoughts
- tension or urgency to make a decision
- self concept as a decision maker

Complexity

Contextual factors, originating in the family, society, economy, or employing organizations, that impact career choices, access to and availability of options, lack of “decent work”

Lisa Kristine: Photos that bear witness to modern slavery
Levels of Service Delivery

- Self-Help Services
- Brief Staff-Assisted Services
- Individual Case-Managed Services
CIP Readiness Model

**Complexity** (high)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Low readiness</th>
<th>Moderate readiness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Low readiness</td>
<td>Moderate readiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High degree of support needed</td>
<td>Moderate to low degree of support needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Individual Case-Managed Services)</td>
<td>(Brief Staff-Assisted Services)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Capability** (low)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moderate readiness</th>
<th>High readiness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moderate readiness</td>
<td>High readiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate to low degree of support needed</td>
<td>No support needed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Brief Staff-Assisted Services)</td>
<td>(Self-Help Mode)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessments that Bridge Career & Mental Health

Examples:

Directly:

- Career Thoughts Inventory (CTI; capability)
- Career Decision Space Survey
- Decision Space Worksheet (DSW; complexity)
- MMPI (capability)

Indirectly:

- Occupational Alternatives Question
- Self-Directed Search (SDS; capability)
  - Secondary constructs & mental health issues (e.g., low differentiation)
Occupational Alternatives Questionnaire (OAQ)

Measures career decision state:
- degree of certainty pertaining to a career choice
- satisfaction with current choice
- assesses clarity of occupational aspirations
- content indicates level of maturity and level of occupational knowledge

Scoring the OAQ:
1. List all the occupations you are considering right now.
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
   __________________________________________
2. Which occupation is your first choice? (If undecided, write “undecided.”)
   __________________________________________

Correlates:
- Decision-Making Confusion \( r = .33 \)
- Commitment Anxiety \( r = .25 \)
- Total Dysfunctional Thoughts \( r = .22 \)
- Beck Depression Inventory \( r = .19 \)
- No choice = moderate depression

Walker & Peterson (2012) *Journal of Career Assessment*
Two Tools To Explore Both Career and Mental Health Factors

Based on cognitive information processing theory
(CIP; Sampson, Reardon, Peterson, & Lenz, 2004)

- Career Thoughts Inventory (CTI)
  - Sampson, Peterson, Lenz, Reardon, & Saunders (1996)

- Decision Space Worksheet (DSW)
  - Peterson, Leasure, Carr, & Lenz (2010)
What is the CTI?

Self-administered

Objectively scored

48-Item measure of dysfunctional thoughts in career choice

Based on cognitive information processing theory and Beck’s theory
The CTI in Needs Assessment

Identifying the specific nature of negative thoughts

Three CTI Construct Scales

- Decision-making Confusion (DMC)
- Commitment Anxiety (CA)
- External Conflict (EC)

Specific career interventions can be related to specific construct scores
CTI Workbook

Section 1

Identifying Your Total Amount of Negative Career Thoughts: The CTI Total Score

The CTI Total Score tells you your total amount of negative career thinking. This score can suggest how much help you may need to make a good career decision.

Here is another way to think about negative career thoughts. Imagine these thoughts as stones piled-up to make a wall, with a good career decision on the other side. If the wall is low, then little help is needed to remove the stones so you can walk forward to make a choice. Some people just step over a low wall. The wall is meaningless and shows them down but they don’t want to make the effort to remove the stones that make up the wall. If the wall is high, a lot will be taken down. People just need more help to take the wall down so they can walk forward and choose The higher your CTI Total score, the higher this wall and the more effort or help you may need to take it down.

Decision Making Checklist

1. Place check mark (✓) next to each item with which you strongly agreed or disagreed on the CTI booklet. Focus your attention.
2. Add up the number of check marks for each group of CTI items. Higher number of check marks, the higher your CTI Total score. This professional can help you an smoother, easier and faster career change.

✓ Knowing About Myself

1. No field of study or occupation interests me.
2. Whenever I have become interested in something, important people in my life oppose it.
3. My interests are always changing.
4. Even though I have taken career tests, I still don’t know what field of study or occupation I like.
5. I go out to see what is up when people ask me what I want to do with my life.
6. My achievements mean more to my mother’s or father’s or my brother’s or sister’s.

✓ Knowing About My Options

1. Almost all occupational information available showing the occupation looks good.
2. There are few jobs that have real meaning.
3. Jobs change so fast it makes little sense to learn much about them.
4. My opinions about occupations change frequently.
5. I have no idea how to find information about jobs in my field.
6. I know so little about the world of work.

✓ Restoring

Total checks

An Exercise for Improving Your Career Thoughts

Old Career Thought | New Career Thought
--- | ---

Old Career Thought | New Career Thought
--- | ---

Understanding My Options

My Options

1. I’ll never understand enough to make a good choice.
2. I don’t know why I like a field of study or occupation.
3. Choosing an occupation placed me, I just can’t get it.
4. The more I try to understand myself and find out about the new occupations, the more confused I get.
5. I’ll never understand enough to make a good choice.
Decision Space Worksheet (DSW)

- Cognitive mapping task
- Helps clients reveal thoughts, feelings, persons, circumstances associated with career decision
- Helps clients prioritize importance of contextual influences
- Can be used with middle school through college level students and adults

Decision Space Worksheet (DSW)

Name ___________________________________ Date ____________

The career decision you are considering _____________________________________________

List all thoughts, feelings, circumstances, people, or events that bear on the career decision you are making. Then, for each factor indicate whether it has a specific negative, positive, or neutral impact on your decision by circling the corresponding symbol at the end of each line.

1. ___________________________________________ - 0 +
2. ___________________________________________ - 0 +
3. ___________________________________________ - 0 +
4. ___________________________________________ - 0 +
5. ___________________________________________ - 0 +
6. ___________________________________________ - 0 +
7. ___________________________________________ - 0 +
8. ___________________________________________ - 0 +
9. ___________________________________________ - 0 +
10. ___________________________________________ - 0 +

The Decision Space

Directions:

- The large circle below represents the total decision space of your career decision.
- Draw circles within the large circle to represent each item on your list. Use the size of the circles you draw to represent the relative importance of each item to your career decision.
- Be sure to label each circle according to the corresponding item number from the list you made on the previous page.
Typical Issues Revealed

Cognitive distortion
Disabling emotions
Financial
Family
Education
Interests
Self doubt
Employment
Quality of life

Correlates:
Beck Depression Inventory  .21
CTI Commitment Anxiety  .19
CTI External Conflict  -.18

Solomon, J. L. (2011). The Decision Space Worksheet, the Career Thoughts Inventory, and the Beck Depression Inventory-II as measures of mental health in the career decision-making process. Florida State University, ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.
Sample DSWs
Assessments for Psychological/Mental Health Appraisal

Examples:

- Beck Depression Inventory (BDI)
  - Useful as a mental health screener
  - Item 9 concerns suicide ideation

- Beck Hopelessness Scale (BHS)
  - Useful as a mental health screener, especially for depressed individuals or those at risk for suicide
  - Example item: “My future seems dark to me.”
Assessments for Psychological/Mental Health Appraisal (continued)

MMPI-2 in Career Counseling

- Assesses personal and social adjustment
- Measures clinical syndromes that may interfere with or block effective decision making
- Used following screening measures such as CTI, DSW, and interview
Research hot off the presses

Multiple cases—qualitative dissertation study
Career Thoughts Inventory (CTI) & MMPI-2
5 cases with CTI’s > 65 from diverse backgrounds
4 MMPI experts independently reviewed cases

Preliminary Findings: depression, anxiety, negative treatment factors, somatic complaints, hallucinations, poor coping, work problems found by all 4 experts across most cases.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diagnosis</th>
<th>100</th>
<th>200</th>
<th>300</th>
<th>400</th>
<th>500</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Generalized Anxiety Disorder</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Major Depressive Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Persistent Depressive Disorder</td>
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<td>Somatic Symptom Disorder</td>
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<td>Adjustment Disorder</td>
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<td>Avoidant Personality Disorder</td>
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<td>Dependent Personality Disorder</td>
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<td>Narcissistic Personality Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder</td>
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<td>Unspecified Anxiety Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unspecified Anxiety Disorder with obsessive traits</td>
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<tr>
<td>Acute Stress Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Autism Spectrum Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bipolar Disorder (unspecified severity)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bipolar II Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Borderline Personality Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conversion Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cyclothymic Disorder</td>
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<td>Insomnia Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Passive-Aggressive Personality Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Schizoaffective Disorder</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Anxiety Disorder</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

* indicates that at least one expert noted the presence of the diagnoses in the case
22-years-old, Multi-racial female

Family
- Mother and father’s occupational roles, 1 older sister and 1 younger brother

Support System
- Family, friends, and partner

Educational History
- Double major: Political Science and Social Work
  1st year in MSW program

Presenting concern--Decide whether to pursue Ph.D. in social work or law school after completing M.S.W

Feeling lost, confused, anxious, and uncertain
Career Decision State Survey (CDSS)

- OAQ score: 3 (alternatives, but no first choice)

- Satisfaction score: 6 (undecided about my future career)

- Vocational Clarity score: 3 (all true)
Pre CTI Assessment

- Total Score – average, T=59
- DMC – average, T=53
- CA – moderate elevation, T=69
- EC – high elevation, T=80
Counseling Process

- Presenting Concern: Decide whether to pursue Ph.D. in social work or law school after completing M.S.W.
- Administer CTI, use CTI Workbook, cognitive restructuring, ongoing monitoring, reduce negative thinking
- Use Decision Space Worksheet (DSW) to get in touch with important influences on decision
- Psychoeducation on CIP pyramid/CASVE cycle
- Develop an Individual Career Learning Plan
- Learn about self knowledge and how related to Ph.D. in social work and law school
- Learn how to make informed decisions—Guide to Good Decision-Making Exercise

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**Individual Career Learning Plan**

| Goal(s): | Make a decision of what to do after M.S.W. complete
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Needed</th>
<th>Goal #</th>
<th>Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CTI Workbook</td>
<td>30 min</td>
<td>1 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guide to Good Decision Making Tool</td>
<td>30 min</td>
<td>1 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decision Space Worksheet</td>
<td>15 min</td>
<td>1 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional Note, DNET, D01</td>
<td>1 hour</td>
<td>1 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Post CTI Assessment

- Total Score – average, T=56
- DMC – average, T=51
- CA – moderate elevation, T=69
- EC – moderate elevation, 67
Learning Outcomes

Increased knowledge of values, interests, and skills and how they relate to options

Reduced negative career thinking (DMC & EC)

Ongoing work on reducing anxiety—exercises to address this; gaining information about options

Learned steps in making a career choice
Case Study – Private Practice

43 yr old Asian-American male, married w/ 2 yr old child

Anticipating job loss; interested in career change – seeking “passion”

Work experience in consulting; skills in synthesizing research literature and creating presentations

Education, BS Biochemistry, MS Chemistry

Mental health history: past depression and medication, substance abuse & food addiction hx, 12 years sober, 60 lb weight loss in past year

Current: irritability, apathy, low self confidence, and worry

Feeling lost, unmotivated, and uncertain how to begin
Case Study – Private Practice

Counseling process:

Offer structure for process – CIP
Engage in assessment – Clinical Interview, CTI, SII
Re-clarify self knowledge to allow for exploration
Reframe perceptions of skills, strengths, and clarify values
Explore mental health history and challenges he overcame
Integrate past with present

Assessment information:

CTI
- Total Score – moderate elevation, T=69
- DMC – high elevation, T=80
- CA – moderate elevation, T=61
- EC – moderate elevation, T=68

Strong Interest Inventory
- C=43; E=34; S=34; R=32; I=32; A=32
Case Study – Private Practice

Outcomes:

- Client optimism, hope and desire to explore
- Increased confidence in skills and value to employers
- Recognition of importance of life values/priorities
- Increased comfort staying where he was – for now
- Confidence that he would find an alternative if needed
- Embraced new understanding self and options
Value of Integrating Service Delivery

- Supports a holistic perspective of career/life decisions
- Encourages self reflection and self knowledge clarification
- Opportunity to educate clients about impact of mental health issues
  - (ex. recent loss of spouse and flat interest profiles, recent dx of autism spectrum and changes in understanding about skills/strengths)
- Provides context for decision process and perceived challenges
- Allows for changes in thinking
Sources of Additional Information


For additional information, visit: www.career.fsu.edu/Tech-Center
Chapter 9

USING THEORY-BASED CAREER ASSESSMENTS to CONNECT CAREER and MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES
by V. Casey Dozier, Janet G. Lenz, and Vanessa Freeman

Introduction
As Wood and Hays (2013) noted, “assessment is an integral component of practice for counselors working with clients or students on career related issues” (p. 3). Journal articles, test directories, and conference vendors, provide evidence of the increasing number of assessments available that can be used in the career guidance and counseling process. In addition, the growth of web-based resources has brought a significant increase in the number of career assessments available to consumers and practitioners, with little oversight or quality control associated with these instruments, regardless of whether they are offered for a fee or at no cost (Osborn, Dikel, Sampson, & Harris-Bowlsbey, 2011). Ethical codes in the counseling and career development field stress the importance of considering the reliability, validity, and psychometric properties of any assessments used with clients. The National Career Development Association’s code of ethics (2015) states that career professionals must understand the “validation criteria, assessment research, and guidelines for assessment development and use” (p. 13). Another consideration with regard to career assessments is the relationship between theory, research, and practice (Sampson, Hou, Kronholz, Dozier, et al. 2014). The development of career theories often leads to the creation of constructs within those theories, e.g., career thoughts, congruence, differentiation, vocational identity, etc. The hallmark of a good theory is that it produces measures to assess constructs derived from the theory, followed by research on those measures and constructs to validate the theory’s propositions or assumptions, e.g., negative career thinking is associated with low vocational identity. In reality, many career assessments are created without a clear connection to an associated theory, and/or there is a lack of research on their psychometric properties, and their ability to produce valid results for clients who complete them. Whether via online sites, print materials, or conference presentations, it is not uncommon to see career assessments promoted as being fun, free, quick, and easy to use. However, in many instances, these assessments lack any theoretical foundation, research, or supporting materials (e.g., professional manual, intervention tools). Osborn and Zunker (2012) stressed the importance of reviewing an assessment’s professional manual prior to use with clients. Promoting the use of career assessments that lack theoretical foundations, supporting research, and guidelines for professional use, seems, at best, at odds with sound practice and, at worst, a violation of ethical codes.

The purpose of this article is to highlight two career assessments, based on theory and research, which can be used in practice to explore the connection between career and mental health issues, which is an increasing area of emphasis in the counseling field (Lenz, Peterson, Reardon,
NCDA Resources, ncda.org

Counselor’s Guide to Career Assessments
Career Convergence
Career Counseling Casebook
Clinical Supervision of Career Development Practitioners
Webinar: Unemployment and Mental Health (Blustein)
Support in the literature for integrating these areas

Consider nature of practice setting—organizational, policy, ethical, staff, programmatic issues, etc.

Implementation requires attention to resources, internal & external factors

Theoretical approaches used in settings inform decisions about addressing career and mental health issues

Assessment tools used impact extent to which these factors are considered and addressed in counseling process
For More Information

www.career.fsu.edu/Tech-Center