Inspiring Growth: A Counselling Framework for Industrial Psychology Practitioners

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Abstract Industrial psychologists provide short-term counselling in the workplace and should, therefore, be equipped to manage or deal effectively with the challenges that confront employees. However, practitioners report that they are ill equipped to manage both the practical and emotional demands associated with work-place counselling. Most professional industrial psychology training programmes also fail to provide neither adequate training in counselling, nor practical skills, or "tools" to aid distressed employees. The reason may be that there are no clear training framework for the industrial psychologist as counsellor. Therefore, the purpose of this chapter is to develop a counselling framework for the industrial psychologist as workplace counsellor. Illuminated by a metaphor of a growing sycamore fig tree, this chapter delineates a four-phased framework (Rooting, Growing, Branching and Thriving). The aim is to help tertiary educational institutions train industrial psychologists as workplace counsellors.

Keywords Industrial psychologist · Counselling · Counselling framework

1 Introduction

The professional identity of industrial psychologists has been subjected to intensive debate during the past five decades (Van Vuuren, 2010; Van Zyl, Nel, Stander, & Rothmann, 2016). Various attempts have been made to clarify the relevance, nature or scope of professional practice, the skills, competencies, responsibilities as well as professional roles industrial psychologists occupy at work (Aguinis, Bradley, &

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Brodersen, 2014; Highhouse & Schmitt, 2012). Although there still are contested views about industrial psychologists' professional identity, seemingly a form of agreement is reached in defining the profession/discipline. According to Van Zyl et al. (2016, p. 9), industrial psychology can be defined as a profession with the following functions:

> … relates to optimising individual, group, organisational and societal potential through developing or applying scientific theories, processes, methods, paradigms and principles of psychology at work in order to facilitate sustainable improvements in performance, productivity, well-being and general health. It is a specialised field of professional practice aimed at diagnosing, understanding, predicting and managing human behaviour within work contexts. It has to do with working with people, their integration into the world of work through enhancing human resource processes and practices in an ethical manner.

From the definition above, it is clear that industrial psychologists' scope of professional practice is broad, and that these individuals are able to fulfil numerous roles within organisational contexts (Barkhuizen, Jorgensen, & Brink, 2014; Van Zyl, Deacon, & Rothmann, 2010). These roles range from developing, validating and utilising psychometric instruments, implementing training and development interventions, to human resource functions as well as therapy or counselling (Benjamin & Louw-Potgieter, 2008). The mentioned roles are indicators of the professional domains in which industrial psychologists are trained. In most cases these roles provide clear guidelines about the nature, scope, and content individuals require to be considered proficient in each domain (Barnard & Fourie, 2007).

Although this is true for most domains of professional practice, there are no structured guidelines, frameworks, models or meta-theories that provide the context in which to train industrial psychologists as workplace counsellors (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). Research shows that industrial psychologists do provide short-term counselling services at work (Benjamin & Louw-Potgieter, 2008; Van Zyl et al., 2016). However, they seem ill-equipped to manage both the practical and emotional demands associated with such efforts (Barkhuizen et al., 2014). This deficiency can be attributed mostly to inadequate professional training during tertiary education, which leaves industrial psychologists with limited skills, models, or tools to aid distressed employees. Furthermore, this lack of perceived competence causes industrial psychologists to shy away from counselling employees due to a lingering impression that counselling may fall outside of their scope of practice (Barkhuizen, Jorgensen, & Brink, 2015; Careless & Taylor, 2006).

In reality, industrial psychologists are at the proverbial front-line of psychological support and are suited best to help employees manage distress or trauma at work (Barkhuizen et al., 2015). If appropriately trained and skilfully equipped, industrial psychologists could help employees manage stress before it degenerates into burnout; debrief trauma before it turns into anxiety or mood disorders; or build personal resources to buffer continually increasing job-related demands. However, as noted above, industrial psychologists are not equipped to render the mentioned services since most formal academic programmes merely provide a brief introduction to counselling/facilitation (Weathington, Bergman & Bergman, 2014). These programmes borrow from models, approaches or paradigms that were developed orig-

inally specifically for clinical psychological training (Adler School of Professional Psychology, 2018; University of Pretoria, 2018; North-West University, 2018).

The wide array of psycho-therapeutic or counselling models employed in brief academic courses, are not tailored to address the unique demands that confront employees within organisations (Corey, Nicholas, & Bawa, 2017). Therefore, industrial psychologists revert to coaching skills or models that are usually more goal-oriented or solution-driven, in order to aid distressed employees (Jorgensen, Van Zyl, & Stander, 2016). These approaches are not appropriate to manage the acute onset of stressors or burnout, or debrief traumatised employees at work. Industrial psychologists must be trained within a specific work-related counselling framework to help them manage these types of experiences effectively within organisational contexts. However, it is evident from both the programmes presented by universities and the academic literature that no such training framework exists.

As a result, the purpose of this chapter is to develop a specialised counselling framework for the industrial psychologist as workplace counsellor. Presented in terms of a metaphor of a growing sycamore fig tree, this chapter outlines a four-phased framework (Rooting, Growing, Branching and Thriving). Such a framework includes the basic assumptions, legislation, and values for training industrial psychologists as counsellors. The aim is to delineate the foundational principles of the counselling framework, which is supported by the psychological capacities (skills, competencies), foundational counselling knowledge, and the counselling models required to train successful industrial psychological counsellors.

2 A Counselling Framework for Industrial Psychologists

2.1 Defining Work-Place Counselling

The function of counselling differs according to various application domains, for example, trauma counselling has different requirements than relationship or performance counselling. Nevertheless, the fundamental principle underpinning each counselling paradigm/model/approach is that individuals have the internal capacity to grow and develop (Jorgensen et al., 2016). Counselling is considered a dynamic relational process that guides individuals to generate their own solutions to complex personal, social, or psychological problems (Palmer & Whybrow, 2018).

In particular, counselling is a process through which a practitioner helps relatively normal functioning clients clarify life challenges and help them develop clear lines of action to contain negative predispositions such as anxiety (James, 2017). Within the work environment and in the context of industrial psychology, counselling should be focused not only on managing the proverbial negative experiences at work and associated with job requirements, but also embraces principles of personal growth and development to facilitate sustainable wellbeing. This description of counselling is the core principle on which the proposed framework rests.

2.2 Introducing the Core Tenets of the Counselling Framework

Based on the definition of workplace counselling, the framework to train and develop industrial psychologists professionally as counsellors proposed in this chapter, is depicted by the growth cycle of a tree. It is not unusual for a scientific discipline to employ a tree as metaphor. The tree of life (ToL) is often used as metaphor or model for multiple scientific communities to describe life's diversity, growth or development (Johnson, 2014; Ludden, Kelders & Snippert, 2014; Mindell, 2013; Withington, 2016). In this regard, the ToL emphasises the life-giving capacity of a single seed, and under favourable conditions, its growth into a resilient organism that can withstand even the harshest environmental challenges.

In Africa, the sycamore fig tree, of which the existence has been reported as far back as biblical times, is believed to have been a type of ToL (Earth Touch News, 2014). In addition, the fig tree provides food for a larger variety of animals than any other tree in Africa and has a symbiotic relationship with a wasp, which triggers a pollination process. Therefore, the descriptive metaphor of the sycamore tree seems appropriate for presenting a counselling framework.

Based on the metaphor above, the tree is a living organism (in this case the counsellor), producing seeds (impacting the community and providing hope and direction), constantly changing and growing towards the end goal (showing growth initiative, aiming to become the best version of themselves as well as best counsellors for their clients). Furthermore, the tree reproduces a form of fruit, figs in this case (i.e. the counsellors' life work visible through their own flourishing but also when those they serve thrives). Thus, the counselling framework presented in this chapter aims to help industrial psychologists *instil and inspire* a process of growth in their clients. This framework outlines the foundational principles, skills, competencies, and expected outputs relevant to training industrial psychologists as counsellors. Thus, it seems appropriate to incorporate the name of the fruit into an acronym as an easy reference for the framework proposed in this chapter, namely the *Framework Inspiring Growth* (FIG), as depicted in Fig. 1.

According to Fig. 1, the metaphor utilised in the framework above, reflects the process of being rooted firmly in values, legislation, identity, and ethics. This is followed by the continually growing process of an optimally functioning person, which is reflected in the stem of the tree from which the branches sprout. This stem resembles the skillset, competencies, knowledge and counselling approach that industrial psychologists have to offer. Ultimately, as with the sycamore fig tree, the main aim is enhancing the capability of industrial psychologists to help clients grow and develop. Thus, the practitioners observe the fruit of their life's work flourish in the wellbeing of employees and organisations. The outcomes, therefore, according to the tree metaphor, are bearing fruit and providing shade through its leaves, with a lasting effect.
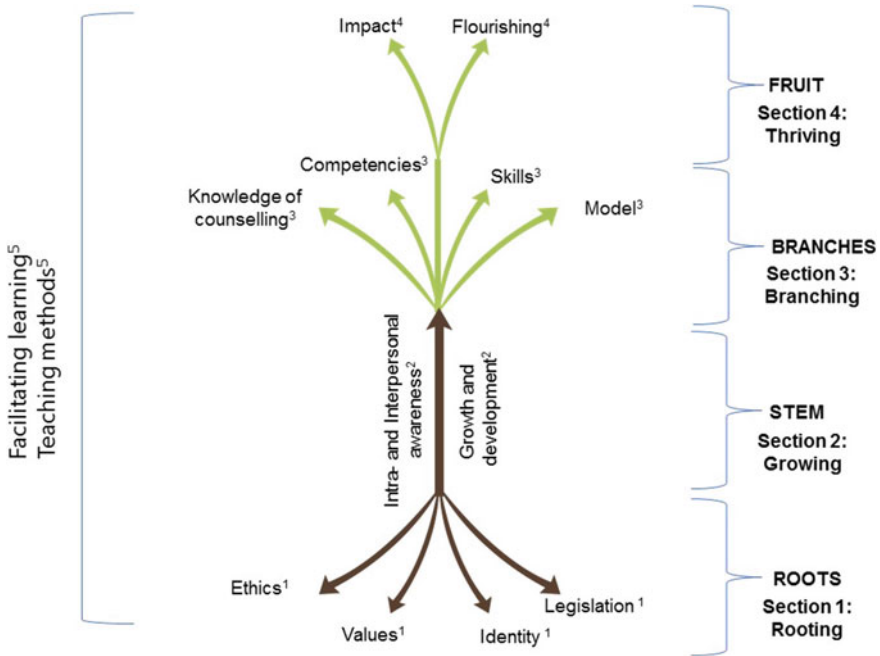
Fig. 1 Inspiring growth: A framework for industrial psychology counselling

Subsequently, the framework for inspiring growth (FIG) is unpacked systematically, based on the four mentioned sections: (a) Rooting, (b) Growing, (c) Branching, and (d) Thriving.

2.2.1 Section 1: Rooting

The professional identity of the industrial psychologist as counsellor should be rooted in sound ethical, and value-based behaviour patterns, which are guided by sound governance and local legislation. The professional identity of industrial psychologists as counsellor is crafted through the guiding ethical principles they follow, thereby informing their actions and intent during the counselling process. Rooting the psychologists' behaviour therefore implies interaction between ethics, personal values, professional identity and governance or legislation.

Ethics

In the first instance, portraying *ethical* principles for this profession serves as a starting point. Various codes of ethics show similar principles for psychologists (APA,

2018; South African Department of Health, 2011). As is the case with legislation (see Sect. 2.2.1.3), practitioners often perceive ethical guidelines as punitive measures to correct deviant behaviour. Instead, ethical guidelines are developed to help practitioners provide in practice the best possible service to their clients (Hoffman & Koocher, 2018) and uphold the minimum standards of the profession (Handelsman, Knapp, & Gottlieb, 2009). Ethics should not be viewed as remedial actions or behaviour patterns but rather be experienced as guidelines helping practitioners reach their full potential, and facilitate a positive impact on clients (Handelsman et al., 2009).

The functional benefits of ethics should therefore be clarified during the rooting phase. This will help practitioners of industrial psychology realise that ethics does not merely imply minimizing harm; rather facilitating virtuous behaviour (Knapp & VandeCreek, 2012). Smith (2006) argues that a strength-based or 'positive-ethics' approach should be followed. Thereby, counsellors can improve the quality of their work and benefit the client within the counselling relationship. In particular, these guidelines encourage counsellors to respect the clients' rights and dignity, and take care that no harm befalls the clients (Knapp & VandeCreek, 2012; Smith, 2006). These ethical guidelines functionally direct the behaviour of the counsellors and influence their engagement with their clients (APA, 2018; Smith, 2006).

The proposed framework (FIG) seeks to ingrain positive ethics as a way of being, rather than a set of strict or stringent rules, codes, or policies to be followed. From this perspective, the framework should depict a strong foundation of the core ethical principles that underpin psychology, for example Kitchener's (1984) five: autonomy (allowing clients freedom of choice and action); justice (treating clients equal but differently); beneficence (focusing on clients' welfare and doing well); non-maleficence (avoid causing harm to others); and fidelity (being trustworthy throughout).

In addition, the framework should also facilitate the understanding that positive ethics is a functional value that (a) identifies aspirational principles, virtues or values; (b) focuses on conduct and the underlying positive attributing forms of behaviour; (c) helps prevent harm but also promote positive reasoning, (d) facilitates self-awareness and understanding how personal valances influences behaviour, (e) guides practitioners to invest in self-care and own psychological health; (f) ensures an investment in practitioners' continued personal and professional development; (g) emphasises moral traditions that underlie ethical principles; and (h) helps practitioners recognise and integrate self-interest into positive motivations for optional professional practice (Knapp & VandeCreek, 2012). Based on the above-mentioned functions, positive ethical behaviour should become a core value of the industrial psychological counsellor's make-up.

Values

Furthermore, the behaviour of industrial psychologists as counsellor is a function of their personal and professional *value system*. For Lefkowitz (2010), the value system of industrial psychologists includes their fundamental beliefs, which are guided by

professional goals and ideals. These professional values are an extension of personal values and function as a metaphorical compass that guides industrial psychologists in the pursuit of their goals (Strauss, 2017). Although values are considered noble traits (Strauss, 2017), a conflict between personal and professional values could have negative consequences for both practitioner and client (Lefkowitz, 2017). Therefore, it is important to ensure alignment between the professional and personal values. This will not only enhance the quality of the service provided by the industrial psychologist counsellor, but also ensure the alignment of the self to the professional role. Van Zyl et al. (2010) argues that the closer the alignment between the strengths (personality, values) of industrial psychologists and their work role, the more likely they will show increased levels of positive mental health. Thus, alignment between personal and professional values and the associative work roles is imperative for the industrial psychological counsellor.

Strümpher (2007) identifies three primary values that should guide the behaviour of the industrial psychologist (i.e. counsellor). Firstly, he refers to the *pensive watcher*, the person who cares for others' feelings (empathy), which is important when working with people. Secondly, for the *aroused thinker* an active problem-solving way of thinking is applied when confronted with deep-rooted problems that influence people's lives. Finally, the *bold worker* is the counsellor who shows courage and is relentless and without fail to serve humankind. These values should guide not only the decisions and beliefs but also the actions of the industrial psychologists as counsellors. Such values should become essential to practitioners' organism and form a core of their professional identity.

Professional Identity

According to Moss, Gibson, and Dollarhide (2014), the professional *identity* of a counsellor entails the integration of the professional and personal self. Professional identity is a set of distinctive characteristics belonging to a given profession that is generally shared by all members within a particular occupational category (Van Zyl et al., 2016). Such an identity is a function of a socially-constructed interplay or integration of personal characteristics (interests, beliefs, personality traits), and professional attributes (ethical principles, professional values, professional skills, etc.). Moss et al. (2014) add that this integration includes values, is formed by personal attributes, but is shaped by professional, formative training. Higher-education institutions can therefore play an important part in developing the professional identity of the industrial psychological counsellor.

The primary step to train industrial psychologists as counsellors is to establish a firm identity and acquire knowledge about where and how to make a difference in the organisation. According to Wiles (2017), being clear and confident about identity improves the practitioner's contribution by working with other professionals. Providing effective qualifying education that is developed and maintained throughout people's career, aids a strong professional identity. According to Fink-Samnick (2019), a framework for achieving professional competence should include strong

leadership competencies, focus on continuous learning, register with the appropriate governing bodies, and be visionary.

Furthermore, identity also means understanding who the client is exactly. Within the context of industrial psychology there often is uncertainty whether the organisation that employs the practitioner is the client, or the employees (internal stakeholders) in the organisation themselves. A clear understanding of the boundaries for such a practice provides a clear identity. Legislation (discussed below) is one obvious means of supplying such boundaries.

Legislation

Legislation governs industrial psychologists' scope of practice, the functions they perform, the behaviour exhibited, and the services rendered. Although legislation is usually considered a corrective or punitive instrument, it is positioned as a guiding principle within the framework. Industrial psychological counsellors must ensure their behaviour is aligned with the overarching pieces of legislation that govern practice within their given country. For example, within the United States, the Mental Health Act of 1946 regulates the diagnosis and treatment of mental health problems. The main purpose of the Act is to aid understanding and treatment of mental illnesses, thus paving the way for prevention, recovery, and cure (National Institutes of Health, 2019).

Similarly to the above, the Health Professions Act 56 of 1974, provides for the functions of psychologists within the South African context by outlining the scopes of practice and of profession. The main focus for industrial psychology's scope of practice within the South African context is to optimise individual wellbeing to help organisations work more effectively. Functioning within the mentioned framework offers a safe environment for both practitioner and client (South African Department of Health, 2011, p. 9). Training industrial psychologists through a counselling framework would suggest that it is critical for these practitioners to know, understand, and function within the parameters of acts, laws, policy documents, and guidelines relevant to their profession within their respective countries.

Having a firm foundation and being rooted strongly means that growth is possible. The following phase depicted in the framework describes the growth process recommended for industrial psychology practitioners' to fulfill their role as counsellors.

2.2.2　Section 2: Growing

Growing as an industrial psychological counsellor implies a function in terms of three areas. The mentioned growth function can be described by referring to the tree metaphor: a strong trunk provides the central support system for the tree, by holding the branches and leaves and transporting water and minerals from the ground as well as nutrients from the leaves to support the root system (Kerr, 2019). Considering this tree metaphor, the development of strong inter-personal awareness can be viewed as

influenced mostly by the *root system* (in this case, the ethics, values, identity and scope of the counsellor). Firstly, such awareness entails the extent to which personal characteristics influence the outside world. Secondly, this development enhances self-knowledge (intra-personal awareness). Thus, drawn from the principle of identity, the counsellor should demonstrate self-insight and a strong focus on self-awareness. Finally, investing in self-development and growth, provides the proverbial water and nutrients to support the developing counsellor.

Inter-personal Awareness

Inter-personal awareness refers to individuals' self-insight into the ways their emotions, behaviour, attitudes, perceptions, personal strengths, developmental areas, experiences and valances *impact the outside world* (Arnold, 2015; de Jager-van Straaten, Jorgensen, Hill, & Nel, 2016; Jorgensen et al., 2016). In this case, such awareness describes how industrial psychological counsellors can either employ/utilise, or withhold/manage these capacities during counselling to help build and maintain a positive relationship with the client. Kaslow (2004) views inter-personal awareness as a core competency of an effective counsellor. This means that the (conscious or unconscious) behaviour patterns demonstrated by a counsellor may impact the effectiveness of the counselling process.

There are numerous specific sub-competencies and components of inter-personal awareness (a thorough discussion of which is beyond the scope of this chapter). In this regard, the framework encourages practitioners in particular to become systematically more aware of how their inner workings affects others. This framework adopts 'Johari's Window' from Luft and Ingham (1961) as a heuristic model to diagnose and facilitate the development of inter-personal awareness, as depicted in Fig. 2.

As is clear from Fig. 2, the model proposes a 2 × 2 grid (of four quadrants) of areas impacting inter-personal awareness, based on two continuums: (a) aspects known to the psychologist and (b) aspects known to others. The four quadrants can be expounded as follows:

- *Quadrant 1*: Entails an area of free activity, where the behaviour, and motivations demonstrated by the industrial psychological counsellor is known to the self and clients.
- *Quadrant 2*: Represents the practitioner's blind spot, where clients can recognise behaviour patterns or motivations of which the practitioner may be unaware.
- *Quadrant 3*: Refers to the façade practitioner presents, which represents the areas they avoid or hide from the client.
- *Quadrant 4*: Points out the area of unknown activity where neither the practitioner, nor the client is aware of certain behaviour patterns, or motives.

Practitioners must consciously be made aware of their blind spots and be presented with opportunities to explore the unknown areas of their personalities. This will help ensure these aspects do not hamper the counselling process (Khatoon, 2018; Saxena, 2015).
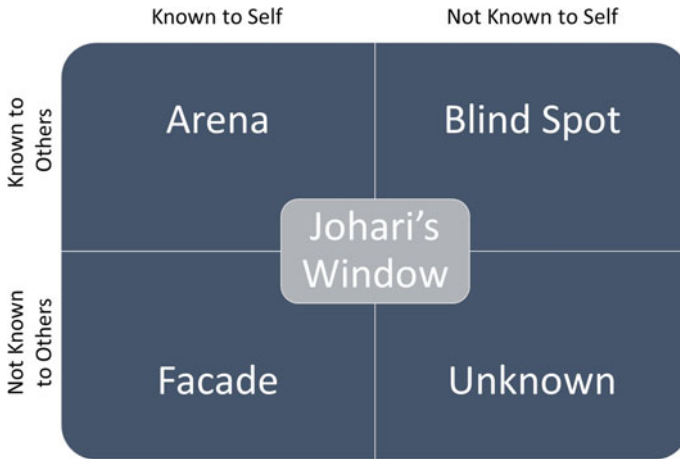
Fig. 2 Johari's Window

In contrast, practitioners must also be made aware of their underlying psychological strengths and positive capacities, as these could help enhance the counselling session (Van Zyl & Stander, 2013).

When facilitating a process to develop the inter-personal awareness of potential industrial psychology counsellors, Luft and Ingham (1961) identify the following seven important principles:

(a) Changes taking place in one quadrant will impact changes in other quadrants.
(b) Extensive energy is consumed when practitioners attempt to hide/deny or ignore their underlying motives or behaviour during the counselling session.
(c) Threats to the identity of the practitioner as part of the developmental process will decrease awareness, however if a psychologically safe environment is established (thus, facilitating mutual trust), stronger inter-personal awareness will develop.
(d) Forcing a practitioner to become aware of blind spots, or explore the unknown areas, leads to undesirable outcomes and is usually ineffective.
(e) When inter-personal awareness is developed, the quadrant of the Arena increases and the other areas decreases.
(f) Working with clients means that the Arena area must be large, and the practitioner should act authentic during the counselling session.

Enlarging the Arena area (i.e. developing increased levels of inter-personal awareness) can be facilitated by requesting feedback, self-disclosure, shared discovery with a client or self-discovery by investing in self-development (Van Zyl & Stander, 2013). From this perspective, it is important not only to focus on becoming aware of the negative (or developmental) areas. Specific focus must be placed on identifying strengths of which the practitioner may not be aware. Developing in-depth inter-personal insight will inevitably lead to heightened levels of intra-personal awareness.

Intra-personal Awareness

A primary function of the industrial psychological counsellor is to understand, predict, explain and influence human behaviour (Levitt & Piazza-Bonin, 2017; Rothmann, 2006). Although this function is influenced strongly by knowledge acquisition and skills training, its effectiveness is underpinned by counsellors' intra-personal awareness (Habeeb & Fatema, 2016; Myers & Tucker, 2005). In contrast to inter-personal awareness (i.e. how the practitioners relate to others), intra-personal awareness reflects individuals' inner-world, and how people manage the issues within the "four walls of our brains" (Sharma, Mangal, Mishra, 2017 p. 79). From this perspective, it is clear that intra-personal awareness is the function of (a) developing self-understanding and (b) how effectively individuals deal with their own issues.

Developing self-understanding

Similar to the development of intra-personal awareness, practitioners must employ tools that help them develop a deeper understanding of their core psychological building blocks. This entails developing self-insight, self-understanding, and the intention to grow (Cilliers, 2000; Klynveld, 2014). The framework indicates that practitioners must be made aware of how they think (e.g. personal biases; preferences in information processing); how they feel, (e.g. emotional intelligence); how they function (e.g. wellbeing, strengths and underlying pathologies); and how they relate to others (i.e. relational styles). The aim is increased self-awareness by developing the above-mentioned aspects through applicable training techniques, as reported in Table 1.

Dealing with own issues

Research has shown that psychologists tend to develop psychological distress and mental illness due to the unique personal and professional demands they face (Figley, 2002; Firth-Cozens, 2007; Veage et al., 2014). In particular, it has been found that psychologists are prone to higher levels of psychological distress (McCann et al.,

Table 1 Training techniques that develop self-awareness

Component	Technique	Reference
Cognitive processing	Self-directed learning	Grant and Hartley (2013)
Emotional insight	A growth process such as an encounter group Experiential learning Mentoring	Parilla and Hesser (1998); Jorgensen (2016) Van Zyl et al. (2016)
Psychological functioning	Encounter groups Psychometric Assessment	Jorgensen (2016)
Relational awareness	Experiential learning Encounter groups Mentoring/Coaching	Van Zyl et al. (2016) Jorgensen (2016)

2013), emotional exhaustion (Steel, Macdonald, Schröder, & Mellor-Clark, 2015), burnout (Di Benedetto & Swadling, 2014; Lim, Kim, Kim, Yang, & Lee, 2010) and other general health-related problems (Cushway & Tyler, 1996). If practitioners fail to identify these issues or manage it actively, their mental health could impede the quality of care they provide, or may damage the counsellor-client relationship (Bourne et al., 2017; Tartakovsky, 2018). Therefore, industrial psychological counsellors must invest actively in developing and maintaining their own mental health.

As indicated by the framework, the mentioned practitioners should be encouraged to identify the distressful issues (abnormal behaviour) in their lives, deal with these in the here and now, and focus on a growth process aimed at optimal living. The framework proposes certain techniques (among others) to help manage the mental health of the industrial psychologist as counsellor:

(a) Actively seek a mentor with whom to attend regular supervision sessions (Carroll, 2006).
(b) Focus on self-care (Wise, Hersh, & Gibson, 2012).
(c) Include counselling or therapy such as mindfulness-based therapy (Wise et al. (2012).

Professional Growth and Development

Similar to the outer bark of a tree, which is renewed continually from within (Trees-SA, 2017), industrial psychological counsellors should focus on continual personal and professional development (Jorgensen et al., 2016). This keeps the practitioners aware of ways to stimulate growth and enable them to instil such a process in their clients as well. As with a tree's sapwood functioning as pipeline transferring water to the leaves (Trees-SA, 2017), industrial psychologists' focus on their own process of growth and development is reflected in the ultimate goal of stimulating and facilitating such a process in the client as well. The counselling framework therefore points out that practitioners should internalise the principles of continuous personal and professional development, to become life-long learners.

2.2.3   Section 3: Branching

Branching involves the specialist capacity and process of skills development required from the industrial psychologist as counsellor. During this phase of the development process, practitioners must fulfil the following functions: (a) acquire and master knowledge about counselling methods and techniques; (b) develop certain fundamental counselling competencies; (c) glean certain skills; and (d) determine the counselling model that best suits their natural strengths, preferences, or capabilities. Whereas the fundamental principles of the Rooting and Growth sections are universally applicable, the Branching section allows for industrial psychological counsellors to find their own proverbial voice and thus provide an effective service

to the client. According to the framework, these domains are depicted as branches, which are expounded in die following sub-sections.

Counselling Knowledge Acquisition

The **first** branch would be to obtain the required and necessary *knowledge* that underpins counselling. Positive psychology provides a solid paradigm to anchor the counselling model for industrial psychology in the suggested framework. Positive psychology is oriented more towards a strength- and solution-driven approach, and diverts from the traditional deficiencies typical of the psychology profession (Linley, Harrington, Joseph, Maltby, & Wood, 2009). Defining and understanding the theory of a strength-based approach, provide a strong foundation for a counselling framework such as the FIG (Smith, 2006).

Strümpher (2007) points out that extensive theoretical psychological material must be covered as a prerequisite to becoming a psychologist, according to whichever application. The Task Group for Counsellor Regulation (2006) emphasises that training for counsellors should include the application of theory regarding psychology. Strümpher (2007) explains further that the following grounding theories should be included in the curriculum of an industrial psychologist: management, psychopathology, psychofortology, personality courses. This includes a course on adult development, background in counselling as well as knowledge of interpersonal theories, group-dynamics and conflict. Based on the proposed framework, it is thus essential that industrial psychology practitioners have a foundational knowledge about the counselling process, for example as described in the three-staged counselling model of Ivey (1998), Hill (see McLeod & McLeod, 2011), or the helping model of Carkhuff (2009). A counselling model helps the counsellor apply a framework to guide the counselling process.

Furthermore, perhaps more important (thus, the slight imbalance in the scale image in the figure below) is that for their skillset, industrial psychologists must incorporate knowledge of the *theory* on the following aspects: career counselling, coaching, (employee assistance programme) counselling, informal counselling as well as marital and relationship counselling. Practitioners should also be skilled in feedback of psychometric assessment, dealing with personal problems, and workplace counselling situations. Figure 3 depicts the counselling framework's building blocks of knowledge that applies to industrial psychologists.

Counselling Competencies

As part of practitioners' skillset, the **second** branch of the framework symbolises specific *competencies* of industrial psychologists as counsellors within the work place. Smith (2006) indicates that competencies of strength-based counselling range according to a continuum of counsellor skills from the most negative pole to the strength-based end of the continuum. In this regard, practitioners should portray

Fig. 3 Knowledge building blocks
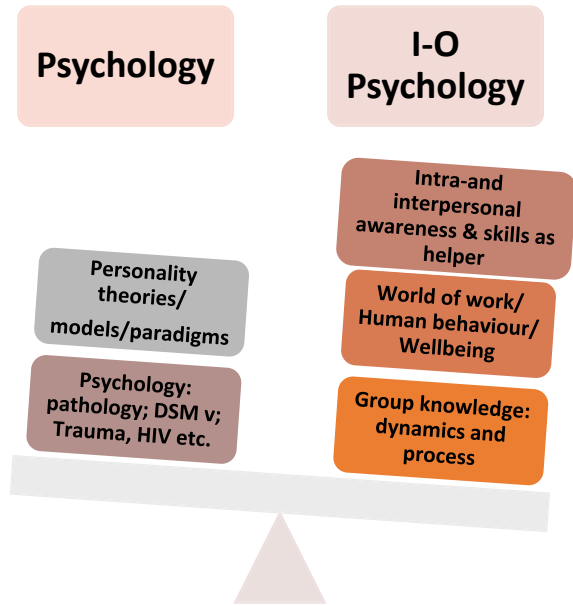
hope-instilling counselling skills and focus on developing and growing as a counsellor despite acknowledging and treating deficiencies.

Hope-instilling counselling means guiding clients towards a focus of being hopeful and encouraged. In this regard, Frankl (1969) explains that even individuals who has suffered the most horrific traumatic experiences can discover hope and find meaning from such incidents. Buckingham and Clifton (2001) assert that by identifying employees' strengths, they can be helped to function optimally within their work environment. Buckingham and Clifton (2001) identify components of strength such as talents, knowledge, and skills, which allow employees to lead an optimal life.

According to Smith (2006), the strength-based approach can be applied to most disciplines of psychology, such as industrial psychology where the aim is building strengths within employees to steer them through difficult periods of change. Literature shows that specific competencies relevant for industrial psychologists and their training, include core dimensions such as remaining neutral, showing respect, having empathy, and demonstrating genuineness in behaviour (Cilliers, 2000; Shattel, Starr & Thomas, 2007). The Task Group for Counsellor Regulation (2006) identifies certain core competencies for counsellors, such as effective communication and relationship; sensitivity for diversity; maintaining basic conditions consistent with theory and practice; and structuring and facilitating the therapeutic process.

Smith (2006) points out further that counsellors who follow the strength-based approach should be culturally sensitive by understanding both their own and clients' culture. Similarly, Jorgensen et al. (2016) highlight multiculturalism as an important competency for industrial psychologists. Sue, Arrendondo and McDavis (1992)

Table 2 A counsellor-competency profile for industrial psychology practitioners

Competency	Description	Reference
Group 1: Professional conduct		
Culturally sensitive Ethical Structure and facilitate the counselling process Analytical Problem-solving	Exhibit cultural sensitivity Being aware of own and others' cultures Identify key issues in counselling relationship from a base of information Identify cause-effect relationships Apply professional practice skills and skills to manage the counselling process	Smith (2006) Strümpher (2007) Cilliers and Wissing (1993)
Group 2: Interpersonal sensitivity		
Remaining neutral Showing respect Authentic behaviour Serving	Show the ability to remain unbiased during the counselling process Use a sensitive interpersonal style Apply core dimensions of helping (namely, respect, empathy, genuineness) Aware of the needs and potential contributions of client	Cilliers (2000), Cilliers and Wissing (1993) Strümpher (2007) The British Columbia Task Group for Counsellor Regulation (2006) Sburlati, Schniering, Lyneham, and Rapee (2011), Shattel et al. (2007) Smith (2006)
Group 3: Rooted in a paradigm (e.g. positive psychology)		
Solution-focused Courageous Hope-focused	Portray competencies rooted in positive psychology such as results-and hope- focussed	Gable and Haidt (2005) Smith (2006) Strümpher (2007)

explain being culturally sensitive during counselling as recognising cultural origins of own biases, values and attitudes, acknowledging own prejudices and challenging own values (the values individuals hold is not automatically true for others).

Table 2 lists additional competencies derived from literature and deemed important for counsellors. This summary is according to three groups of competencies, placed in the framework (FIG) that could be used to train counsellors.

Counselling Skills

The **third** branch focuses on specific *skills* relevant to counselling. At a minimum, such competencies should include the micro-skills as recommended by Ivey (1998), namely: listening, questioning, minimum encouragement, and paraphrasing (i.e. responding to content and personalising meaning) (Du Preez & Jorgensen, 2012). Such skills may include: clarifying, reflecting, summarising, and giving information. In a study by Shattel et al. (2007), patients of healthcare workers indicated that com-

munication techniques such as restating, clarifying, summarising, and reassurance, helped them relate better to their patients. In addition, eye contact and expressing emotion were highlighted as ways to influence on the counselling process positively (Shattel et al., 2007).

Counselling Models

Relevant competencies to function effectively as an industrial psychologist and exercising sound counselling skills should be placed against the backdrop of a suitable counselling model. Literature recommends various types of counselling models. For purposes of the proposed FIG framework, solution-focused therapy (SFT) suits the counselling model for the context of industrial psychology. Several studies recommend solution-focused therapy to be used within an organisational setting (Aulthouse, Kolbert, Bundick & Crothers, 2017; McKergow & Hogan, 2017). According to Shattel et al. (2007), reaching a solution to solve a problem was deemed central to counselling relationships. The participants to their study indicated that, for them, reaching a goal or action was essential to the therapeutic relationship.

In addition, a basic three-staged model such that of Hill (reported in McLeod & McLeod, 2011) can be employed in the counselling process. As noted previously, the counselling skills of Ivey (1998) is as effective in the context of industrial psychology. Figure 4 indicates the competencies, skills, and counselling model applied in the FIG framework by using the three-staged model of Hill.

Figure 4 shows how the strength-based approach forms the paradigm in which the counselling model and relevant micro-skills are embedded. The competencies of the
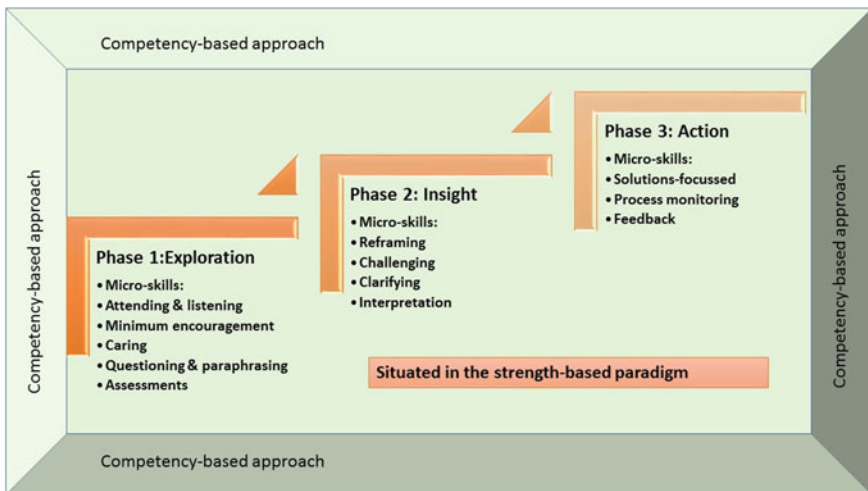

Fig. 4 Three-staged model depicting micro-skills and counselling model

industrial psychologist as counsellor outline the model and simultaneously provide the parameters for the skills and model.

2.2.4   Section 4: Thriving

The final section of the proposed framework focuses on the outcomes portrayed in the visible fruits of the mentioned proverbial tree, according to which the counselling framework is applied. Two types of outcomes are highlighted: firstly, how the counsellor's application of the counselling framework is expected to impact the client; and secondly, the visible outcomes when the counsellor leads an optimal life, these two outcomes are discussed subsequently.

Impact

Firstly, the *impact* of the sycamore fig tree was indicated in the metaphor of supplying fruit to a large variety of animals, living in symbiosis and providing shade. These functions provide an apt description of the potential impact that industrial psychologists have on their clients. Such an impact should be visible in the outcomes, or the amount of 'fruit' the 'tree' carries. Fruit, as outcomes in this case, could be the practitioner impacting widely in the internal as well as external community, for example focusing on corporate social responsibility.

SIOP (2016) reports about the UN-Global Impact team that includes industrial psychologists, which demonstrates the contribution that industrial psychology can make in the community. Furthermore, psychology practitioners should be involved in the organisation's sustainability and its focus on ethical business practices. The industrial psychologist can play an important role in ensuring good governance and ethics in organisations by designing and implementing governance models (Barnard & Fourie, 2007). Governance and ethics can also be related to the root of the metaphorical tree as discussed in this chapter. These fruits as outcomes thus, indicates harvest from the 'good seeds' that was planted and from which the counselling process grew.

Flourishing

The above-mentioned positive outcomes do not only apply to the client, but also to the counsellors themselves. The fruit and leaves of the metaphorical tree would thus portray the wellbeing and optimal living of the clients as facilitated in a process by the counsellor. Not only should the impact be visible; there should also be growth signs of a flourishing individual. Ludden et al. (2014) define flourishing as the improved capacity to lead a pleasant, successful, social, and meaningful life. This implies that industrial psychologists would know when and how to take care of themselves by managing boundaries and relationships and remaining psychologically and physically healthy.

Successful industrial psychologists would be flourishing individuals who show traits (i.e. 'fruit') of leading an optimal life. This would include characteristics such as living well, healthy, and thriving; articulating a vision of the 'good life'; and showing which action leads to wellbeing. The fruit as outcomes would be thriving individuals and communities (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014). Gable and Haidt (2005) view the ultimate aim of a positive-psychology approach as building what is known about human resilience, strength, and growth. Thriving individuals would also be in a better position to guide and facilitate a growth process in the client (Strümpher, 2007).

3   Conclusion

This chapter set out to provide a framework that could help train industrial psychologists as counsellors. The training process is symbolised by the anatomy of the sycamore fig tree. The metaphor establishes that growing and developing industrial psychologists as counsellors can be depicted by the growth cycle of such a tree. Rooted in the strength-based paradigm, terminology such as 'thriving' and 'flourishing' seemingly stimulate thoughts of impressive, cultivated and steadfast trees that provide shade and food for those seeking nourishment during times of difficulty. The preferable outcome is that these recipients are inspired to flourish and grow themselves. They must be empowered to believe that even in worst-case scenarios, new life is possible, analogous to the resilience of the so-called Survivor tree of 911 (911memorial.org).

It should be noted that a specific area is left undiscussed in this chapter (i.e. Section 5 of the framework). This is the methodology of training counsellors. Such a conceptual section will focus on typical training techniques, methods and how to facilitate a learning process to train industrial psychologists as counsellors. The coaching and training framework suggested by Jorgensen et al. (2016) form a sound basis to work from and is deemed a suitable grounding for the framework by which to train counsellors, however more research is needed in the focus area of counselling. In terms of the sycamore-tree metaphor, the training techniques would most likely entail the rain, nourishment and food necessary to thrive, in the form of continuous development, simulations, growth groups and role-plays to facilitate growth and ultimately, maturity in the industrial psychologist as counsellor.

Finally, scholars of psychology such as Frankl (1969) and Rogers (1970) often describe a condition where individuals find meaning through suffering. Naturally, suffering per se is not a prerequisite to reach this 'place', what can be learnt thus from these scholars is that an individual grow and develop as a person despite challenges and difficulties. Such individuals themselves grow into impressive examples such as the sycamore and Survivor trees.

In conclusion, and untraditionally for a scientific paper, the author presents a photograph taken in the African bushveld of a sycamore fig tree, which was allowed to grow in its own space and capacity. Thus, the chapter closes with the metaphor

Fig. 5 The sycamore fig tree (photo by the author, Kruger National Park, South Africa, 2012)

of the tree (FIG), a thriving, flourishing and inspiring specimen indeed, making an obvious impact on its surroundings (Fig. 5).

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