

Crystal Hank Interview:

How would you describe your area of study to a novice?

Counseling psychology is the study of how to most effectively work with various individuals who struggle with difficult life situations/stressors as well as with individuals who have various mental diagnoses. It also focuses on understanding culture and how an individual's culture contributes to all aspects of their life (including the therapy session). Finally, there is an emphasis on contributing to society and promoting the welfare of all individuals (especially those who have disadvantages in society or who are from minority groups subject to discrimination), which is called social justice.

What is your primary motivation for persevering through graduate school?

I really enjoy the subject of psychology, and I love working in a therapeutic setting with a range of individuals. I persevere through school so that I can do the job I love, while providing the best care possible for clients. It is all about making a living, while being happy and contributing to society while doing it!

Do you think there is any value in social networking with other graduate students in non-related fields?

I always believe that social networking can be important, because seemingly unrelated fields may always end up having expertise in an area that will help with various clients/situations. I also think that the general skills learned by individuals from various disciplines can be shared with others in ways that apply and are helpful to them. It also allows for different perspectives on a particular situation.

What is your favorite stress-reduction technique?

Singing or listening to music always helps me calm down and put things into perspective. It is a creative outlet for emotion and frustration.

What is the last book you read strictly for pleasure and how long ago was it?

The third book in the series Game of Thrones, and I finished that right before starting school Fall 2013.

Please describe your most meaningful academic relationship.

My most meaningful academic relationship at this point would have to be my cohort (3 other girls) because while we work well together to achieve academic successes (such as creating a scale to measure bullying and presenting at the American Counseling Association conference in Atlanta, Georgia, as well as getting ready to present at the American Psychological Association conference in Washington D.C. this fall), we also have become great friends who are there to support each other with school and personal issues. Having a group of ladies who will always be there to support and help me, and one day provide professional consultation is amazing, as well as the fact that we are tackling this doctoral thing together!

What surprised you the most about graduate school?

The sheer amount of work. I knew that it would be a lot of work, but learning to manage seeing clients while maintaining coursework in 4 classes and while working as a GA was more than I imagined. However, I was also surprised at just how fast you become accustomed to the work load/pace and how things begin to even out the second half of the first year.

If travel to Mars happens in your lifetime, would you want to be one of the scientists on board? If yes, what would you contribute to the mission?

I would likely not want to be one of the scientists on board, however if for some reason I ended up on the ship my role would likely be to mediate the interactions between scientists and provide crisis intervention (i.e., in the case of panic attacks). Also, I suppose if life forms were discovered I would attempt to communicate with them and understand their culture ☺

What is your favorite comfort food and why? How often do you consume it?

Pizza or cheese of any kind, and I would say I consume one of them (most likely cheese by itself) at least once or twice a week. Pizza is more like every couple of weeks.

If you hadn't been admitted to graduate school, what do you think you would be doing right now?

I would probably either be employed at an entry level clinician position, or would still be job searching for the placement that would most fit what I love to do-work with and provide therapy to clients.

When do you expect to complete your degree?

I expect to complete my degree May of 2017.