Adrianna O’Dell

Clinton High School OWL Program

AR Counselor: Robin Tate

The career I pick is a mental health counselor. I looked up mental health counseling degree on All Psychology Degrees website. A mental health counselor offer’s guidance to individuals, couples, families, and groups who are having issues that affect their mental health and well-being. They encourage clients to discuss emotions and experiences. They would need to start earning an undergraduate degree in counseling, psychology, sociology or social work, that is the first step. Would have an undergraduate degree in another field and pursued your master’s in mental health counseling, that usually takes one to two year to obtain. Most states require mental health counselors to have two years of post-graduate supervised work. It totaled between 2,000 and 4,000 hours of clinical experience. Counselors must pass a State recognized exam and complete annual continuing education courses. There are different paths to take, you could work in the family services, outpatient mental health, and substance abuse centers. They can be in hospitals, schools, and in private practice. Can pick a specific population, such as teenagers, incarcerated (in prison), families, and the elderly. They help clients with issues such as depression, OCD, and PTSD. To overcome their challenges and develop into a healthy person.

      Counseling can take time and patience, I will achieve this goal by finishing high school. When I get into college I will study more about counseling. Practice communication with others, like teachers or other high school students. Be politer with everyone and treat them with respect.

     A mental health counselor can get $70,000 average. Their hourly salary is $21, average is $28. This type of counseling can be found almost anywhere. The ones closest to me are Counseling Associates in Marshall, AR, Clinton, AR, and Ozark Counseling Services in Yellville, AR.

     The reason why I want this career is because I have been through some things that most adults don’t believe kids see, hear, or feel emotionally. I want to be that counselor that people can count on. The one who will listen and help no matter what. There are counselors who won’t help and just ignore them. I know what it’s like not having them help or anybody else. I am going to be that person who is going to help and listen to them. I have had really bad counselors before. They never listened to what kids had to say and never really tried to help out any kid in the program with me. I knew they were only there for the money and nothing else. My first experience with a bad counselor made me nervous. I was scared of her. I didn’t say anything to anyone because I thought I could solve my own problems. As I got older I realized that I could help others instead, so I started to help people around me. Helping others has always made me happy, if they are happy then so am I.

      Some of my friends had been there with me, even during the bad times.  A couple of them had come to me for help, and they helped me too. I’m sure that I have what it takes to be a counselor. Patience is the most important one in my opinion. You need to be patient with the people you are working with, it takes time for them to open up. Don't force them to open up because they will just leave. Respect them, they would like to have that. If you are respecting them it may help them understand nothing isn’t going to happen, and they won’t go into panic mode. Another one of my opinions, make your room feel like a safe place for them. Have some snacks or drinks for them. The person will first think that it is just another counselor, show them that you are there to help. I will treat them with care, they will need it. Taking care of them is another important thing to remember.  I will treat them just as they are my family. I don’t want to scare them off, I want them to come to me for help. I will show them that I am there no matter what.  I will treat them as they are a person not anything else, that is just wrong. Everyone needs a little help on those types of days, and I want to be that person who steps up and helps them.