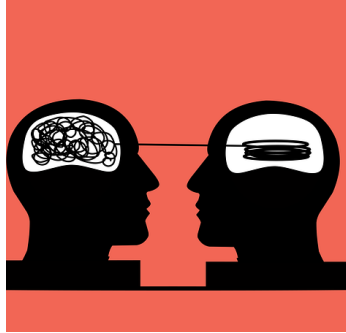


Counselling Skills and Approaches ECPS5019

Week 5 Humanistic Perspectives



1

Aims Overview

History of Humanism and Relationship to Psychology

Humanistic Counselling

Humanistic Approaches

2

History of Humanism and the relationship to Psychology

Carl Rogers & Abraham Maslow

In 1954, Humanistic Psychology gave rise after the First and Second Forces of Psychoanalysis and Behaviorism

Humanistic Psychology, the Third Force, was popularized during the 1950's and 1960's following WWII and the Cold War.

During this time period psychologists were seeking a more optimistic and nurturing approach in response to the stresses that came with war.

3

Defining characteristics

- View of the Human Person
- Values –right, desire and ability of determining what is best.
- Actualizing Tendency – maintain self and develop potential
- Relational Emphasis
- Phenomenology
- Empathy
- The Self – the 'I' or me of one's existence
- Emotion
- Meaning
- Holism – the human organism is conceived as a constantly interconnected, indivisible whole. Person viewed as a gestalt, a dynamic whole. Mind body are inseparable.

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Introduction to the school of Humanistic Counselling

Some of the various approaches and theories within the modern and post-modern tapestry

- Person-Centred
- Existential Psychotherapies
- Gestalt Psychotherapy
- Experiential Psychotherapy –
- Emotion Focused Therapy EFT
- Transactional Analysis (T.A.)
- Humanistic Creative therapies
- *Pluralistic Approach – Mick Cooper & John McLeod*



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Existential Psychotherapy and Counselling

Philosophy as well as a way of practicing

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"Don't wait
for the
storm to
pass, dance
in the rain"



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Activity

Take 5 minutes to reflect on
– what do you think of as the
essence of your being? What
makes you, you?

Think about it, write words,
draw it...

-Mick Cooper exercise

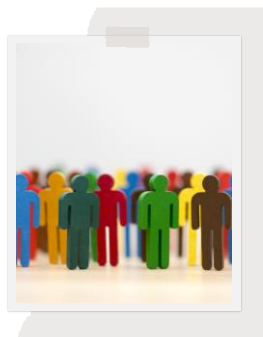
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The diversity of existential therapy

"Existential therapy means something to
everyone, yet what it means precisely varies
with the exponent" - John Norcross

Yalom – finding meaning in what seems
meaningless
Frankl – recognising our own meaning

*Some believe it's a focus on relationships,
others see it as a focus on loneliness*



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Existential Philosophy...

Acknowledges that life is complex, there are no easy answers

Focuses on connection and connected to life in all its complexities

Reminds us to live in the present moment

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Existential Counselling and Psychotherapy...

- Goes into a person's most painful areas, it wants to recognise and celebrate what existence really is..
- Relational depth..
- Connection doesn't always make us happy, but it reminds us of humanity and gives us a place in the world..
- It is not about making someone happy or taking away their symptoms. It is helping clients acknowledge, live, 'in tune with' and make the most of the actuality of their existence..



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Cont.

- Accepting their concrete reality..
- Be true to their existence..
- Helping them reconnect to what it means to be human..
- Being alongside other person, a relationship with a person where we recognise them as a forward moving being as opposed to a static being we can label, pathologize or diagnose..
- Getting back to the human lived experience
- A return to the "flesh and bone" of a person.



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Core Practices within Existential Therapy...

- Active listening
- Empathising
- Bracketing
- Descriptive rather than interpretive
- Asking open ended questions
- Non – judgemental
- Exploring the here and now encounter
- Using symbols and metaphors
- Engaging in dialogue
- Helping the clients to unpack their experience



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Martin Heidegger 1889- 1976
most influential in the UK

- Reminds us about the question – what is being
- Existence – it's like to air around us, we take it for granted without ever questioning it.
- Asks – what is goodness?
- If we want to find a way into this question, we need to understand the being of humans..
- We are always immersed in the world with other, everything is connected, everyone is connected
- There are lots of different ways of seeing something, more than one truth

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Martin Heidegger continued..

We are thrown into the world,
running alongside other people,
without questioning our position.
Meanings are socially constructed..

But..

We can sometimes get some
distance from it, some
separateness from the race

Having the courage to stand aside
from the race..



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The end of our journey...

• If we can recognize our mortality, if we can think about our death, we can recognise our uniqueness of our own journey. No one can live our death for us.

• We can then ask ourselves, what do I want my own journey to be? Within my lostness, what life do I want to have...

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Pause for reflection...Being as free..

"Man does not exist first to be free subsequently; there is no difference between the being of a man and his being free" - Sartre

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The denial of freedom, of choices...

Being a victim – delegating choices to others

Cynicism

Fatalism

Conformity

Procrastinating

Rebellion

Trying to do it all

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Pause for reflection...

What is your relationship with freedom and choice?

- How easy do you find it to own your own responsibility and choices?
- What strategies might you use to deny them?
- How could you grasp your freedom more fully?

- Mick Cooper exercise

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Gestalt Psychotherapy

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Characteristics

- Gestalt therapy is a holistic,
- process-oriented,
- Dialogical – a specific form of contact
- phenomenological,
- existential,
- field theoretical approach to human change

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Brief History

First developed by Fritz Perls, his wife Laura and other colleagues.

It was initially seen as a challenge to the traditional approaches that were available at the time.

It continues to refine its ideas and concepts and develop.

One of the central ideas to Gestalt is the idea of '*wholeness*'.

Gestalt is a German word which roughly translates from German as 'an organised whole' or shape

It looks at the whole sense, rather than breaking things down into individual parts.

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Central concepts



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Zeigarnick Effect

- Zeigarnick effect – Fill in the gap
- Events, conversations, relationships that feel unfinished continue to cause us restlessness and we have a sense that something is unfinished.
- Clients often come to therapy for this reason.

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Holism

- The holistic notion became the epitome of GT with the basic idea that everything is inevitably interrelated and mutually dependent on each other. The whole is more than, and different from, the sum of the individual parts. Thus, any attempt to dissect its aspects is doomed to destroy its nature.



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Principle of human value

• People are neither good nor bad. We are what we are in any given moment.

• Diagnosing, labelling the client will be dismissed and instead we see the individual as a person.

• As a counsellor we have a genuine interest and curiosity about the person before us.

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Principle of Self Awareness

Moving away from the automatic pilot mode that we so often find ourselves in.

Moving towards a way of being that allows us to choose different and new ways of thinking, feeling and behaving.

To do this we have to be aware of how we are thinking, feeling and behaving currently.

Being present in the moment.

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Awareness

Dialogue

Field

Experiment



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Awareness

- Present moment awareness
- Bringing things from the past and the future into the present
- Our feelings exist in the present
- We experience aliveness in the present
- It's in the present that we make and can make choices
- What are you aware of now?



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Dialogue

- An exchange between two people
- Not client and expert
- Both are learning in the process together
- I-Thou relationship (Martin Buber)
- Meaningful contact between 2 people which builds the therapeutic relationship, the key agent to change



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Field Theory

Holism

Looking at and understanding a person's context, environment, family, systems

Interconnectedness

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Principles of Completion

As individuals, we need to complete our experiences.

Unfinished business/experiences will occupy our thoughts and distract us from being fully present.

Any examples?

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The Therapeutic Relationship

Like many other approaches Gestalt Therapy also contends that a healthy relationship is key to growth and health.

Acceptance by the counsellor for who the client is

This is inviting the client to do the same for themselves

The importance of the therapeutic relationship

It's about what happens between the client and therapist, in the relationship between.

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You Tube Video Link -

The Gestalt Cycle of Awareness



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Pause for reflection...

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Any questions and
feedback?

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