

Person centred therapy: overview and analysis



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Person-centered Therapy

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Abstract

This article discussed about Person-centered Therapy which is developed by Carl Rogers. Carl Rogers who is the Humanistic psychologist believed that there are needs that needed to be fulfilled by individual in order for the wellness of the individual. Person-centered Therapy is developed based on the Humanistic approach in the psychology field. In this article, whole of the Person-centered Therapy will be discussed, the core elements that need to be practiced by Person-centered therapists will be discussed and the critical condition in order for the therapy to be success will also be discussed in this article. This article is to help understand Person-centered Therapy and what requirement that needs to be followed when practicing Person-centered Therapy.

Introduction

In Person-centered Therapy, Carl Rogers believed that the client should focus on the present and the future as opposed to Gestalt Therapy that focused only on the present. Carl Rogers also believed that by focusing on the present and the future, the client would be able to understand more about himself or herself (McLeod, 2008). In Person-centered therapy, the client will be the main focus rather than the focus on how good is the therapist. This is due to Rogers believed that the self-healing ability and the personal growth that helps lead the client towards self-actualization (McLeod, 2008; Love & Pinkowitz, 2013).

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The main purpose of Person-centered Therapy is to allow the client to have the opportunity to develop the sense of self where the client will be able to realize how their attitudes, their feelings and their behaviors that are being affected negatively (Love & Pinkowitz, 2013; Swartout & Swartout, 2012).

Based on Person-centered Therapy, the self-concept is main element of our experiences and self-concept is influencer that will mold our perception towards the world and the perception towards the individual himself or herself. For example, an individual who is very confident towards himself or herself will behave confidently.

The self-concept might not always fit the real world but as every individual is different in nature, the way we see ourselves and others see us might be different. For example, individual A might be a fun person to the eyes of others but individual might see himself as boring person, so individual A behave as a fun person to increase his or her self-esteem. The way individual A sees himself or herself might reflect how individual A values his or her self-esteem.

In Person-centered Therapy, those who came for the therapy will not refer as 'patients' instead they will be referred as 'clients'. This is due to the therapist and the clients are viewed as equal partners. The client is responsible to improve his life or her life and not the therapist (Corey, 2009). This is the part where Person-centered Therapy differs from psychoanalysis, where the patients is diagnosed by the psychologist and treated by the psychologist. The clients will be consciously and rationally make decisions for themselves about what is the right things to do and what should be done.

The therapist in Person-centered Therapy is viewed as a friend that will listen

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to the problem and encourages the clients on an equal level rather than the therapist that view himself or herself as superiority in the session (Corey, 2009; Hagner, Kurtz, May & Cloutier, 2014).

Hagner, Kurtz, May & Cloutier (2014) state that there is no absolute counseling technique to be applied in Person-centered Therapy as every counseling relationship that built with the clients are unique by itself. The quality of the therapeutic relationship between the client and the therapist is more important compared to the therapy techniques. There are three important elements that should be practiced by Person-centered Therapists is congruent, unconditional positive regard and emphatic.

The first element that needs to be practice by Person-centered therapists is congruence. Congruence means that therapists need to be genuine in the therapeutic relationship. The therapists need to fully involve himself or herself in the therapeutic relationship in order for the wellness of the clients. The client is allowed to experience the therapist's experience as Person-centered therapists can use their own experiences to enhance the therapeutic relationship (Cornelius-White, 2008). The second element that needs to be practice by Person-centered therapists is unconditional positive regard. Carl Rogers believed that in order for an individual to grow and fulfill his or her potential, it is very important that the individual is valued as himself or herself. This means that Person-centered therapists need to care about their clients deeply and genuinely in order for the growth and potential development of the clients. This also means that the therapists need the attitude of accept their clients as how the clients are (Corey, 2009). Thus Person-centered therapists need to always carefully maintain positive

attitude toward their clients. The third core element that needed to be practiced by Person-centered therapists is empathy. By practicing empathy means that the therapists have the ability to understand what the clients' experience and the clients' feelings at the current moment.

There are six critical conditions that need to meet in order for therapeutic change for the clients; therapist-client psychological contact, client incongruence, therapist congruence, therapist unconditional positive regard, therapist empathic understanding and client perception (Corey, 2009; Cornelius-White, 2008). Therapist-client psychological contact is a relationship that needs to be established between the client and the therapist. Client incongruence means that there is an existence of incongruence between the clients' experiences and the clients' awareness. Therapist congruence means that the therapists need to be congruence in the therapeutic relationship. The therapists need to fully involved in the relationship and also they can use their own relationship to facilitate the therapeutic relationship. Therapist unconditional positive regard means that the therapists need to accept their clients as they are. This will help to increase the self-concept of the client. Therapist empathic understanding requires the therapist to have empathic understanding towards the clients' inner-self. Adequate empathy will allow the clients to believe their therapists have unconditional love towards them. Client perception is where the clients perceive the therapists' unconditional positive regards and the therapists' empathic understanding. These six critical conditions are then summarized into three important elements; congruent, unconditional positive regard and empathic (Maslow, Fazio, Ortigara, Kuhn & Zeisel, 2013).

As a conclusion, Person-centered Therapy requires the clients to concentrate in his or her present and future, which the clients will be able to know himself or herself more. Besides that, Person-centered Therapy will concentrate on the clients self-healing ability and the self-concept of the clients. In order to promote the self-concept of the clients, the therapists would need to practice three main elements; congruent, unconditional positive regard and emphatic. Aside from that, for the therapeutic relationship to be successful, the therapists need to ensure six core conditions to be presence; therapist-client psychological contact, client incongruence, therapist congruence, therapist unconditional positive regard, therapist emphatic understanding and client perception.

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