

Psychology essays - relationship therapist client



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Relationship Therapist Client

In the book "The Process of Counseling and Therapy" the authors outline a framework and series of guidelines for becoming a more effective psychotherapist. The purpose of a therapist is to help the client help themselves, gain a better understanding of his thinking, feelings and behavior, which will help him perform better in those areas of living, which have been limiting.

The author also focuses on authenticity in the relationship between therapist and client, provides information on clients from different ethnic and cultural backgrounds (African-Americans, Hispanics and Asians), gay and lesbian clients, the elderly and clients from different religious backgrounds, and clinical information in regards to groups, individual and family. In this paper I will compare the differences in these therapy settings.

People go to therapy because they have problems and need help in solving their problems. Some individuals, when faced with difficulties may be able to work them out and that is well. But if they cannot, seeing a therapist can help them choose a path to take for the solution to their problems. A person may choose to see a therapist on an individual basis. The reason being that they can speak more freely one-on-one rather than in front of many people, even if it is their own family.

The only draw back in individual therapy is that if the clients' problems stem from something going on within a family unit, it could be more difficult for both the client and therapist to resolve some of the problems the client has. In the movie "Ordinary People" I feel that had the family, as a whole, go to
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therapy, and the family unit would have stayed in tack. There is no guarantee that this would have been the outcome but I feel that Conrad's mother needed to find a way to express her feelings.

I feel that deep down inside she felt compassion but on the surface there was a wall which she and her "ideal" way of living produces, and she just couldn't get through it alone. In individual therapy you get feedback from the therapist, which could be all that a client needs. Making a decision to begin could be monumental in itself and going for individual therapy could make you feel that you're in a safe emotional environment. The client could feel that with the caring therapist there is no need to hold back for fear of criticism or judgment from other.

A client who is puzzled by the things that keep happening to them can be shown with individual therapy, why these things happen and what they can do to gain control of their life. Individual therapy also enables the client to examine at their own pace the origins of their problems and also have a feeling of privacy and confidentiality.

There are certain objectives in individual therapy. Clients will establish a relationship of trust to facilitate to come to terms with their issues. Another objective is to help the client discover and implement ways to change and improve THEIR life and also to promote the understanding of emotion and enhance the client's ability in THEIR relationships. In "Ordinary People" by Conrad going for individual therapy he attained these goals but the family as a unit still fell apart. This is where I feel family therapy would have helped. Just by Conrad's father meeting with Dr. Berger one time helped him see the

family for what it was and made him realize that Conrad's emotions weren't the only cause of the family's problems.

In family counseling, the therapist works with the entire family system. Family counseling can help a family adjust whenever there is a change in family dynamics or you can simply realize that the family has gotten into a "rut" and you may want to achieve a healthier style of interaction. There may be times during family counseling that sessions may involve only a few family members or even a single individual.

Family therapy usually is initiated by one member going or is brought to a therapist with particular problems. The therapist must then decide which therapist option will best meet the needs of the person or persons seeking help. Since change in any one family member inevitably has its impact on the whole family group, it is important to determine which option to choose. Family therapy is considered when a family appears to be having difficulty making the changes needed to pass from one stage to the next. It is an effective way of dealing with problems that are embedded in a troubled family system.

It can also be usefully combined with treatment of individual family members. The difference between individual counseling and family counseling is that even though it seems that a client in individual therapy has reached his personal goal if there is still conflict when the family unit it will be harder for the client to deal with his role within the family. One major success of family therapy is to learn about how to be part of a group and at

the same time be separate. Many families have difficulty achieving this balance.

Either they emphasize family solidarity to such an extent that individual members have to relinquish their independence, or they emphasize individual independence to such an extent that there remains no family commitment whatsoever. Very often the difficulty in balancing these two, underlies the problems that families in therapy experience.

It is very unusual for a family to enter family therapy with the understanding that family change or some change in the structure of the family is desirable. The usual complaint is that someone is acting up and the family is having trouble controlling him/her. The job of the family therapist as opposed to the individual therapist is to help the family develop additional goals in order to expand their perception of the problem related to the group-interaction level. In individual therapy the therapist would be counseling the so-called "troublesome one" one how to deal with his feelings and how to cope with the family around him and also in individual therapy the therapist is only hearing what his client has to say and can't really get the "big picture".

There are times when a parent will call a therapist to make an appointment for her child whom she says is acting irresponsible and could not be depended on. She also may explain that there are two younger children in the family and that the older child's behavior would have a bad effect on the younger ones. When speaking to the therapist he may suggest that the whole family come to the first session because it would be important to get all the family members ideas about what was going on.

After asking each member of the family to explain why they thought they were there it was discovered that each member had a different goal based on individual understanding of what was happening in the family. Had the therapist just seen the “ problem child” he would have helped him/her but not the family as a unit. In family therapy each member has a goal that is different from the other member’s goal and also the family as a unit has a goal. The therapist develops goals that encompass some significant behavioral pattern changes within the family.

The therapist wants the family to experience a safe environment where no one feels that it is solely their fault for what is going on in the family. Some of these goals may be better communication, improve empathy and understanding, improve the ability to deal with and accept differences, improve independence and individualization and to develop a balance between individual independence and family solidarity.

Goal setting in family therapy is connected with the work of the therapist itself and the developmental stage of the family. Whereas in individual therapy just the client and therapist set goals for the client to gain control of what he/she desires. The development of the family relationship dynamic is crucial to individual person development. Effective communication throughout the family is very important. Each member of the family must have a choice and be listened to.

Group therapy is different from individual therapy in a number of ways. One difference is the number of people in the room with the therapist. Originally group therapy was used as a cost-saving measure, in institutional settings

where many people needed psychologists to discover that the group experience benefited people in many ways that were not always addressed in individual therapy.

Since we live and interact with people everyday, we know how beneficial it is when we take the time to share our experiences and challenges with others.

In group therapy it provides a place to come together with other. Here the client can share problems and concerns and learn from and with each other.

The client can get support and knowledge from other group members and also given the opportunity to experiment new behaviors in front of the group.

There is another difference between individual and group therapy, at least not in the same way. In group therapy you would get feedback from a group as opposed to just the therapist. Also in group therapy there is an aire about how group members use each other in their process of growth and change.

There is also much information that can be attained in a group. For example, another member may know of a book in which your problems are identified and solved, which could be helpful in your own process or there could have been a documentary which could also be helpful to you. Also, you use of body language and how to become more aware of it, is a skill which you can practice. Many people, when confronted with a problem, will respond with “ I didn’t say a thing” and not understand why they are being pinpointed with a problem attitude. Body language is a very strong way in which we communicate our feelings and thoughts but just don’t realize it.

Social skills is another skill in which the client can learn how to listen to others and share his/her thoughts and feelings in an appropriate way. In an

individual therapy session, the client has only the therapist to get feedback from. In a group there is a need to learn how to communicate with each other openly. Most individuals' problems stem from interpersonal relationships; individuals in a group can openly discuss it in the presence of others and help the client help him/herself work them out.

Communication skills acquired and learned and developed in a group is an important aspect in any therapy, especially group therapy. If the client has the confidence in he/her ability to make good contact with others it will help him/her to be more confident with themselves and help build their own self-esteem. In group therapy each member has an opportunity to try out new ways of behaving and they also have the opportunity for learning more about how they interact with others.

The main benefit group therapy may have over individual therapy is that some patients behave and react more like themselves in a group setting than they would in a one-on-one with a therapist. The group therapy patient gains a certain identity and social acceptance from their membership in the group. They are not alone. They are surrounded by others who have the same anxieties and emotional issues that they have. Seeing how others deal with these issues may give them new solution to their problems. Group therapy may also simulate family experiences of patients and will allow family dynamic issues to emerge.

The success of group therapy is that people feel free to care about each other because of the climate of trust in a group. Most therapy groups do have some basic ground rules that are usually discussed during the first

session. Patients are asked not to share what goes on in the therapy sessions with anyone outside of the group. This protects the confidentiality of the other members. They may also be asked not to see other group member socially outside of therapy because of the harmful effect it might have on the dynamics of the group.

There may be risks in group therapy as apposed to individual therapy. Some very fragile patients may not be able to tolerate aggressive or hostile comments from group members. Patients who have trouble communicating in group situations may be at risk in dropping out of the group. If no one comments on their silence or makes an attempt to interact with them, they may begin to feel more isolated instead of identifying with the group.

Therefore, the therapist usually attempts to encourage silent member to participate early on in treatment. Sometimes, a client is recommended to seek individual therapy until their therapist feels that the client is ready to benefit from group therapy. If they therapist does not run groups he/she may refer the patient to a group therapist while continuing to see the patient individually.

After reading the book, the " Process of Counseling and Therapy" by Janet Moursund and Maureen C. Kenny, I feel that patients gains a better understanding of themselves and a stronger set of interpersonal and coping skills through the group therapy process. In family therapy the development of the family relationship dynamic is crucial to individual personal development. One common goal in all three therapies is the acquisition of communication skills. Effective communication throughout the family is very

important as well as communicating in the social circles. Each individual should have a voice and be listened to and also ready to hear what others have to say.