

My beliefs, values,
and clinical gestalt
with individuals and
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Each individual person is brought up to believe in something, whether it be religion or personal values, so to become a clinician means that each of these beliefs and values need to be put aside while treating a patient. In order to build a trusting relationship with the client, the therapist will need to be able to put themselves into the client's position, without judging or analyzing the client. The therapist will have to put aside their biases and prejudices in order to suspend their expectations and assumptions. As a human being, we are all subject to pre-conceive and anticipate what a person will be like before even meeting them. This causes the clinician to jump to conclusions which in the long run are going to be very different than what they assumed.

As a clinician I believe I should encourage the client to grow and develop in ways that foster the well being of the client and their friends and family. In order to be aware of my clients needs, I need to set aside my values, beliefs and behaviors that may impose beliefs and values that are inconsistent with my clients. I would like to create an ongoing sense of trust, partnership and appropriate boundaries with my clients to ensure that they are comfortable and trust my opinions. I plan to remain warm and caring, and show my client acceptance and responsibility. I will maintain confidentiality to my best abilities and establish a way that my client can communicate openly and freely with me as their therapist. My clinician gestalt will help me to motivate my client to move toward their goal on their own, not by me telling or showing them how to do it.

Gestalt Therapy is an existential and experimental psychotherapy that focuses on the individual's experiences in the present moment, the

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therapist-client relationship, the environmental and social contexts in which these things take place, and the self-regulating adjustments people make as a result of the overall situation (Wikipedia, 2008). Gestalt therapy focuses more on what is happening than what is actually being discussed (Yontef, 1993). This is a method of awareness that is separate from interpreting and explaining using old methods. By teaching the client awareness, they are better able to become aware of their actions and how they can change them. One objective of Gestalt therapy is to enable the client to become more creative and alive, which helps them to be rid of the problems they have encountered in the past or in the present. There are three basic concepts to Gestalt therapy, Phenomenological perspective, Field Theory perspective and Existential perspective.

Phenomenology is a discipline that helps people stand aside from their usual way of thinking so that they can tell the difference between what is actually being perceived and felt in the current situation and what is residue from the past. The goal of phenomenology is a clear understanding of the situation that is being studied. Field theory is a method of exploring that describes the whole field of which the event is currently a part rather than analyzing the event in terms of a class to which it belongs by its “nature” or a unilinear, historical, cause-effect sequence (Yontef, 1993).

Field approaches are descriptive rather than speculative, interpretive, or classificatory. The emphasis is on observing, describing, and explicating the exact structure of whatever is being studied. In Gestalt therapy, data unavailable to direct observation by the therapist is studied by

phenomenological focusing, experimenting, reporting of participants, and dialogue (Yontef, 1993).

Existentialism is based on the phenomenological method. Existential phenomenologist's focus on people's existence, relations with each other, joys and suffering, etc., as directly experienced (Yontef, 1993). Gestalt therapy provides a way of being authentic and meaningfully responsible for one. By becoming aware, one becomes able to choose and/or organize one's own existence in a meaningful manner (Yontef, 1993).

Each of the three basic concepts describes how important the relationship is between a client and a clinician. The patient will quickly learn to decipher between ideas and ideation and between a statement of experience and a statement of a statement. This helps the patient and the therapist draw from important matters (Yontef, 1993). The responsibility for the patient's recovery is in the patient's hands other than the clinician. The client learns how to solve problems on their own while enabling them to be responsible for their own actions and thoughts. Clinician gestalt is an important part of the learning process for a client and their therapist.

I will continue to grow and learn new variables of personal and professional assumptions throughout my career as a clinician. I feel these experiences will encourage me to become a better clinician and keep an open mind to the endless new theories that are awaiting me. I have already learned so many things about myself in such a short period of time. I have realized that I let the natural assumptions that many people encompass hinder my expectations of meetings with clients with very little information given to

me. I perceive the client to be something very different than what they are. This realization of myself will go along with me throughout my education and experiences. I plan on taking myself back to when I first became a student and remind myself that I need not judge or expect before knowing fully what awaits me on the other side of the door. This will remind me that I always need to be open to change and where I will need to adapt to new circumstances.

To be a clinician is to be caring, understanding, unbiased and open minded if they expect to be trustworthy and looked upon as a respectable person. I want to be the clinician that leads my clients to greater awareness and the ability to fulfill their own desires and abilities to solve problems on their own.

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