

Approaches to clinical psychology



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Sigmund Freud wasn't the first to investigate the philosophical ramifications of the unconscious, but his early 20th century psychological examinations and development of psychoanalysis make him the progenitor of the psychodynamic counseling theory (Kovel 1987). While psychoanalysis has been extended into a broad range of analytic fields, most notably literature, its implications for counseling theory have largely been linked to his assertion that unconscious childhood or past-life experiences are oftentimes repressed by the individual, causing them to deleteriously affect later life functioning (Geldard 1998). Most individuals are familiar with Freud's characterization of the personality as differentiated into three categories of ego, super-ego, and id. When considering the relevancy for this personality theory for psychodynamic counseling it's important to note that Freud believed that the conscious elements represented by the ego in certain situations experienced cognitive overload resulting in repression as a protective mechanism. Psychodynamic counseling treatment functions by determining the patient's underlining malaise as rooted in the complex interaction of conscious and unconscious forces governing the individual's actions. Once the forces governing the patient's behavior have been identified, the therapy then functions to develop a functional response to the issue. As one might infer, while the process can be implemented through quick and direct methods, psychodynamic therapy usually occurs through the long-term and methodical investigation of the patient. A number of objections have surfaced in response to psychodynamic therapy that has largely marginalized it as a therapeutic approach. One of the most prominent is the general rejection of many of Freud's theories as largely unscientific, as their assumptions are predicated on untestable hypotheses (Corey 1991).

Even for those who embrace the psychoanalytic perspective the issue becomes one of feasibility, as the therapeutic technique necessitates a high degree of active participation on the part of the client that is often difficult to receive. References Corey, G. (1991), Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy 4th edn, Brooks/Cole USA. Geldard, D. (1998), Basic Personal Counseling: A Training Manual for Counselors 3rd edn, Prentice Hall Australia. Kovel, J. (1987), A Complete Guide to Therapy: From Psychoanalysis to Behavior Modification, Penguin Australia