

Person-centred approach counselling (psychodynamic therapy)



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Carl Rogers believed that every individual is inherently good and creative with the ability to fulfil his/hers potential, goals and desires in life. The potential of each individual is unique and develops in different ways according to their personality. Rogers believed that everyone needs to be treated positively by others; to feel valued, respected, treated with care and affection. If significant people in our lives e. g. family and teachers only offer us conditional 'love' while growing-up only valuing us when we conform to their expected behaviour, we are likely to do those things which please them to feel accepted. This may lead to us dismissing our own values and living by values set by others. Non-conforming can be self-destructive leading to a poor self-concept which can override the valuing process. Rogers believed as children, we build up our sense of identity and self-worth from the perceptions of ourselves and our behaviour given to us by adults

Core Conditions

Person-centred counselling is driven by the client who sets the agenda for each counselling session by talking about what is on his/her mind; it looks at the here-and-now including the client's personal history. The following are the three main core conditions Carl Rogers considered essential for effective counselling these are:

Acceptance: counsellor accepts the client unconditionally and non-judgementally. The client is free to express thoughts and feelings whether they be positive or negative, without the fear of rejection or criticism.

The client is free to express themselves without having to do anything in return to meet any particular 'values' from the counsellor.

Empathy: counsellor listens and tries to understand how things are from the client's

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point of view i. e. the client's thoughts, feelings, and perceptions. When the counsellor perceives the world from the client's point of view, this demonstrates the view having value, and the client is being accepted.

Genuineness: client does not have to wonder what the counsellor is 'really like'.

The counsellor should be self-aware, self-accepting, and know themselves.

Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) The contrast with CBT is that CBT tries to ease suffering quickly by training the mind to replace destructive/negative thought patterns, perceptions, and behaviour by 'thinking' how to alter behaviour etc. The counsellor sets the agenda for each session, focusing only on the here-and-now not on the client's past history. Psychodynamic therapy tries to get at 'why' the client feels or behaves the way they do, and so brings about a deeper lasting change.