

Existential psychology- rollo may

Psychology



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Journal Summaries September 10, Existential psychology is a field of psychology that was first proposed by Rollo May. Various authors have applied it in different ways to date. This summary discusses three authors and their application of the existential psychology. Kiser (2007) touches upon the application of May's theory to psychotherapy stating that the goal of a therapeutic session is the appreciation of a client's existence. De Castro (2009) states that the human experiences should be clearly understood before being explained, and Merwin (2011) compares Rollo May's description of destiny to the life of Abraham Lincoln. Article 1 Kiser's article (2007) discusses the importance of Rollo May's approach to psychotherapy. The article focuses on the therapeutic approach of a client (as opposed to basic clinical observation). The whole human being is then described as an amalgamation of all the drives, instincts and mechanisms that make one work. Basically, the article by Kiser (2007) is an appreciation of May's proposition that the main goal of a therapeutic session is the appreciation of a client's existence. The article then describes in detail how the actualization mentioned above is being achieved, with emphasis placed on the dimensions of the psychotherapeutic process. Kiser describes the wish, will, as well as decision and responsibility that are utterly important in the healing process (being all central within the context of the May's philosophy). In the same way Kiser describes the steps taken to ensure that the client gradually gets through the whole healing process described by existential physiology. In the concluding part of the article the author explains self-affirmation and its importance to the whole healing process, as well as the way a patient should go through internal resistance before healing is achieved. The power of one's human being, his/her will and determination are once again reiterated as

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being utterly important within the healing process. Article 2 De Castro's article (2009) discusses the need of understanding human experiences before attempting to explain them. The author agrees that a complex environment influences a client's decision-making process and the daily actions that an individual engages in. The explanatory means sought for these experiences are mostly scientific, which does not serve to explain all of these processes. Basically, the article agrees with May's proposition that the patient should be first comprehended existentially before a treatment or therapy is applied, in which case the experiences of the client and the meanings of these experiences in describing norms of behavior and symptoms of disorders should be focused upon. The development of an individual's life is unique, mainly due to the different experiences that shape each individual. The individuality of every person helps in creating different levels of consciousnesses, which, in turn, creates the opportunity for treatment of each individual differently. The article explains in detail the reason why different clients should not be treated in a predetermined way and how the development of an individual is separate from the rest being based solely on his/her experiences and existence. The defense of May's contribution to psychology is based on the need to understand each human being differently and separately, based on his/her individual experiences (as opposed to a predetermined mindset applied to all individuals in general). De Castro (2009) agrees that May's existential theory is effective and should be applied to patients indiscriminately in order to achieve the success sought for in a therapy session. Article 3 The article by Merwin (2011) is a representation of the life of Abraham Lincoln within the context of Rollo May's conceptualization of the destiny of an individual. From the previous <https://assignbuster.com/existential-psychology-rollo-may/>

articles, it is known that by destiny May meant the experiences that shape and promote an individual all his/her lifelong. The hardships that Lincoln challenged in order to eventually achieve greatness were his destiny, his depression and spiritual disorientation at some point strengthened his persona and his lust for life. First and foremost, the author tries to explain the choice of the term " destiny" made by Rollo May, and according to the description given destiny refers to all the factors that affect us and shape our lives as it is. Destiny involves family experience, fate, environment and historical circumstances. Rollo May also focused on determinism in her works, which refers to the objects in the physical world that shape an individual's destiny. However, Rollo May still insisted that destiny set the boundaries with which an individual was bound in life. Merwin (2011) looks at Lincoln's life as an illustration of the destiny of a strong individual on his way from deep depression to great success. Lincoln arose from a period of personal stagnation and managed to achieve all his greatness, a measure of the destiny that his life held. In this regard, Lincoln will always be seen as a resurrection of the human dignity and a manifestation of Rollo May's philosophy of the destiny of humankind. His depression is described as having shaped his destiny and helped him become the great person he was.

M. M. (2011). Lincoln and May: Destiny visible in the life of the Great Emancipator. *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 52: 138-156.