

Developing My Personal Counseling Theory

Clinton L. Severe

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Abstract

This paper is an expression of my own integrated counseling theory. It is composed from 11 different theories we have studied this semester. I have not chosen from all of the theories, but from the ones I think will fit the intentions of my counseling theory. I have found it to be a soul searching experience while studying this discipline – painful but rewarding. The reader should be able to distinguish between my values and the autonomy of clients, as required by law, and between the law and religious values. The course text is used along with a Positive Psychology text as sources.

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Basic Philosophy

My background and values are rooted in Christianity. These values include free-agency, or autonomy as informed consent refers to it. Consequently, I view human nature as being carnal, sensual and devilish, except for children younger than the age of accountability (8 years old). I consider children under this age as not being accountable or capable of self-regulation. I consider parents accountable for their children's sins, unless the parents have taught their children right from wrong. I maintain that bad traditions develop when parents fail in this responsibility. I postulate that mankind is the spirit offspring of heavenly parents, which offspring has the same potential as these parents. I claim that these heavenly parents maintain autonomy for their children to the extent of their children's choosing – whether good or evil.

In this light, freedom of religion is fostered by governments inspired of God. Psychology and Psychiatry (APA) is used by government as a platform to classify, treat and sometimes segregate behavior “outside the box” of religion. Positive Psychology is embracing religion in context of religion's positive effects on subjective-well-being (Baumgardner, 2009). Unfortunately, the straight-and-narrow gate within Christianity is not entered into by the norm of mankind during mortality. This translates into few successes in Psychology as well.

Key Characteristics

My personal theory integrates concepts from Adlerian theory in order to probe a person's background for bad traditions. I also incorporate person-centered concepts to foster autonomy. I prefer using cognitive and narrative therapies in order to undo childhood programming, and to rewrite the client's life story, through the client's autonomy and capacity for self-direction.

Goals of Therapy

Goals for clients include the setting of good life goals, developing self-directed self-regulation, and learning to trust in their capacity to choose how to do this. Goals include showing clients how to change faulty beliefs and negative automatic thoughts. This includes establishing an audience for their changed lives.

The Therapeutic Relationship

My idea of the correct client-therapist relationship has many variables. Some clients are mandated clients, and some are voluntary with self-directed autonomy. Some clients are male, female, young, old and some are families. With mandated clients I develop a relationship similar to the relationships developed in behavior, cognitive-behavior and reality therapies. This is because these therapies are more directive and instructive than some of the other therapies. Notwithstanding this, I understand that no individual can be forced to accept any direction. With voluntary clients I develop a relationship similar to that found in person-centered therapy – to maintain the client's autonomy.

I use feminist theory on women to the extent of establishing gender equality and role equality. I would foster equal accountability for the sexes, in their relationship with me and others. I try to expose queer theory for what it is, and give information concerning the consequential risks and impacts of the theory. Children I can develop a teaching relationship with, if they are too young to exercise their own autonomy.

Techniques of Therapy

I pay attention to the subjective side of clients, after I ascertained their traditional orientations, lifestyles and life histories. I integrate this with active listening, reflective feelings, clarification and being there for the client. Depending on which client I may become directive, instructive or more person-centered. I may apply a variety of cognitive, emotive and behavioral techniques. I promote self-management and coping skills.

Application of Approach

My theory is an integrated growth model, which is applicable to all age groups, genders, cultures and lifestyles. I change my application of techniques according to the client. For example, I apply person-centered therapy to culturally diverse clients.

Final Summary

My theory is growth oriented, aimed at increasing subjective-well-being and ultimately aimed at promoting client perfection (goal). I employ various techniques according to the autonomy and direction of clients, or as mandated by public directives. Autonomy is foremost. A Person-centered relationship I consider to be basic to autonomous counseling. Psychoeducational relationships are engaged for mandatory counseling of clients. Cognitive, emotive and behavioral techniques may be employed as appropriate. Bad traditions are exposed so clients can autonomously adopt alternatives. Concrete and eventually abstract goals are set and achieved, in order to increase subjective-well-being and happiness. Client's reaching their full potential is the ultimate goal of my counseling theory – becoming like their heavenly parents.

References

Corey, Gerald (2012). Theory & Practice of Counseling & Psychotherapy - 9th Edition.

Baumgardner, Steve R.; Crothers, Marie K. (2009). Positive Psychology – 1st Edition. Published
by Pearson Education, Inc.