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Psych 444

UNIT FOUR

CHAPTER SIX:

1. The book describes existential therapy as a grounding for morality in that we are free beings who are held responsible for our own choices. Christians would agree with this statement to a certain extent in that God gives us free will. In this free will we are able to do as we please, however, in that freedom to do as we please we do have to face consequences of our own actions. 1 Corinthians 10:13 says, "No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it" The first part of this sentence is exclusive to the idea of our freedom, however, the second sentence of this scripture is inclusive to those that believe in God. This belief includes the idea that in our free will as humans, we suffer from the common human experience, but as believers in Christ we are saved from from the full repercussion of that mistake. God is faithful and we will not be overtaken longer than we can bear.

The second part of the existential therapy calls for this idea that we design and create our own pathways. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future," in Jeremiah

29:11 contradicts this concept because God creates our path and not humans. As Christians, the moment we accepted Christ, we gave our life to Him and therefore he orders our steps which He sees best for us. The therapy suggests that we sustain the mistakes of our pathway and much like any Christian, when we choose out of the path God has for us we also sustain the mistakes of making our own path.

2. Existential therapy was birthed during a time where World War II devastated most of the European population. These people suffered from tremendous loss with the meaning of life and therefore it forced them into isolation or alienation. Writers during this

time often focused on their clients anxiety from their feeling of being alone during a time of devastation.

During the 19th century, philosophical majors needed clarity on the religious writings or cultural of the following: Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, Heidegger Sartre, and Buber. Their contribution to existential therapy paved way for Binswanger and Boss to also contribute ideas that were essential to this therapy. The themes that guided Yalom's thinking were as such: Kierkegaard's idea of creative anxiety, despair, fear, guilt, and nothingness; Nietzches perspective on death, will, and suicide; Heidegger's authentic being, caring, death, guilt, individual responsibility, and isolation; Sartre's idea on meaningless, responsibility, and choice; and Buber's interpersonal relationships, I/Thou perspective in therapy, and self-transcendence.

The development and belief of each of these contributors are as described:

Kierkegaard (1813-1855) He drove the idea of anxiety and the idea that it is associated with our decision making abilities in the way we pursue life and how we choose to live it. If we did not have anxiety, then we would not experience life, we would be walking zombies. It is necessary for our human existent,

Nietzsche (1844-1900) This German philosopher describes the idea of subjectivity and how we may want to discover this intense concern with the truth. The truth that we must not be herds and that we should strive to be individuals of free reign to pioneer our way through life. Our goal is not mediocracy, but originality produced by creativity and such

Heidegger (1889-1976) Our existence is within the world and not outside of it. These

authentic experiences propel us into a forward motion by which we should strive as human beings. Choosing to stay in the present world offers us situations to which we give our all in everything we do as not to waste a moment thinking about our later lives.

Buber (1878-1965) The individualistic approach that humans exemplify puts us in this in between life where it is not only I, but we or others. This theory is heavily weighted on the idea of our relationship with others.

Binswanger (11881-1966) Existential analysis: subject and spiritual dimension of human existence. His proposition was a holistic model between the person and their environment. We are individuals 'thrown into the world.'

Boss (1903-1991) A significant figure in early existential, produced the idea of reflecting on our life events which can attribute meaning. The therapist would have to enter the world of their client in order to understand their thinking.

5. The greater our awareness the greater our possibilities for freedom. We increase our chances to live a full life if we are aware that we exist but we do expire, we can choose to act or react, in choosing our actions we recognize that it chooses our future destination, we live creatively when we discover how we are when thrown into situations, we can experience being alone, feeling meaningless, empty, guilt or isolation, we are on our own but we are capable of being in relationship.

Our decision to expand our self-awareness means choosing to expand our human growth. During counseling one may experience this idea when they exchange their security to be independent with the anxiety of choosing for themselves. The identity in which we see ourselves is rooted in what others think of us because the approval of ourselves is sought by those that choose to accept us. The past compromises their present and therefore they can allow for new decisions in breaking that. A client will choose how they react to certain events by recognizing that they can no longer control the unknown. When entertaining death, their suffrage, or the idea of dying they may lose out on the experience of life. The client will also miss out on the present thinking about the past or planning for things in the future. These emerging experiences are vital for their growth.

Freedom and responsibility are related because although we have the power to choose things for ourselves, we are responsible for the life that we live. Implication of freedom and responsibility when done well gives us this existential guilt- awareness of evading a commitment of having not chosen. This guilt meant that one tried, but failed to rise to the challenge of overcoming.

10. The existential view of anxiety is caused by being confronted with the 'given of existence' which are death, freedom, choice, isolation, or meaninglessness. Our morality, when recognized, gives rise to our anxiety as well as the pain or suffering that we experience. As humans we are constantly or anxiously aware of the reality of our choices by what the consequences of our freedom entails. Anxiety is also the indicator of needing change in one's life therefore enabling one to grow. One should listen to their anxiety so that they are able to intentionally take steps that would help them change the direction

of their lives.

Existential is different from normal anxiety because existential anxiety is seen as a potential for growth, whereas, normal anxiety is the response that one would face from an event. In that moment of anx, one should not repress it but use it as a motivation to move forward and change it. One would look at this type of anxiety as an invitation to their own freedom.

Another anxiety which differs from existential is neurotic anxiety which is anxiety about something that is not proportionate to one's behavior. This is caused by one's unawareness. This type of anxiety can propel someone to be immobel. In order to work someone out of that they must be counseled to create an illusion that brings them out of that psychological state.

As a therapist, it would be appropriate and positive to help their client recognize how they should be able to tolerate ambiguity or the uncertainty in the unknown. In order for the client to experience freedom they must break habits or patterns and build new ones that will help them to get rid of their anxiety. Self confidence allows for freedom the more the client practices it.

CHAPTER SEVEN:

19. Person-Centered theory suggests that one can heal themselves from their experiences when guided properly. The idea that someone can heal themselves would be inadequate as a Christian. The Christian doctrine of salvation is the moment that someone accepts Christ and the relationship we have with Him will direct us towards a God that can heal. Jesus himself performed many healing miracles with which people could not heal themselves. While those were physical wounds, God also healed those that were emotionally impaired. One bible scripture in Psalm 147:3 says, "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." God heals those that are broken hearted,

those that have internal wounds. As a Christian we recognize that healing is our responsibility by, "I call onto him, my help comes from the Lord." (Psalm 121:2)

Aside from the fact that we Christians cannot heal ourselves, Person-Centered therapy speaks about the trustworthiness of humans to find their own healing. I think Christians would begin to describe the idea of flesh and desires. That we are faulty and sinful people as described in Ephesians 6:12. As faulty humans we cannot carry our own burdens and heal from them. We must be able to look to a higher power to cry out to. Trusting ourselves is like saying that we are God himself.

What may align with the Christian belief of self-healing is the responsibility with which we are held accountable to. Christians would say that one cannot go deeper into healing if they are not willing to go there themselves. There are many healing books such as Soul Care by Rob Reimer, which suggests the idea that we cannot change our behaviors without changing our hearts. We cannot cure the symptoms or the sickness without going after our hearts. The experiences that have held us back from our freedom, is the work on must go through to bring to God.

21. While existentialism and humanism hold significant differences, they relate in so many ways such that they share the respect of a client's experience, recognize the uniqueness of their client, and hold a huge amount of trust in their client for progressing in a healthy way. Additively, they believe in the concepts of freedom, choice, value, responsibility, autonomy, purpose, or meaning. They do not weigh their approach on techniques in the therapeutic process as they believe in the reality of intentionality.

Existentialists take pride in the idea that we create this identity of ourselves in a world that is meaningless and this brings anxiety. They choose to write about the reality of death, anxiety, meaningless, or isolation. Humanists will believe that the low stress of anxiety is because we choose to actualize with finding meaning or purpose of life.

Maslow contributed to the Humanistic Psychology by furthering self-actualization. This concept was believed to be underdeveloped as Maslow believed too much research

was dedicated to anxiety, hostility, or neuroses. Self-actualizing people were different from normal people in that they posed a greater standard of self-awareness, freedom, honesty, care, or trust. Humanism suggested that when we are provided the appropriate opportunities then we will grow automatically in ways that push us towards actualization. However, existentialism suggested that our normal nature of being will not get us to that place of growth.

23. Roger's view of human nature suggests that trust in the client and their ability to continue to propel forward if and only if they were fostered to do so. The individual can only recognize a trustworthy self if they identify who they are at their core. Therapist play an important role in their client's lives when it comes to this type of therapy, Rogers suggests that if people maintained their trustworthiness then they are capable of directing themselves, making decisions for themselves, or live an efficient life. Therapist must obtain three important attributes of congruence, unconditional positive regard and accurate empathic understanding. This helps to create a healthy environment for one's client. These clients will become less defensive.

I do agree with this concept but to a certain extent. While I do believe that one can promote their self healing by allowing for guidance by a therapist, I do not agree that one can heal themselves entirely. I don't think anyone has done it by themselves, they rely on others to pull them out or a specific coping mechanism to pull themselves out. However, I do believe in the approach and way that the therapist should interact with the individual. The therapist does play an important role when it comes to a person discovering themselves and moving towards this goal of healing.

25. The goal as described by Roger's, was not to solve a client's problem but to

assist them in achieving this larger picture of greater independence to help better cope or understand their problems. The mask that one has on must come off in order for them to create this purposeful meaning towards a better healing process. Who they really are was lost due to the facades and socialization of others telling them who they are. The therapist enables clients to choose a goal or to create a specific vision for themselves. The therapist does not create the goal for their client as the idea of person-centered is for the client to guide themselves through their healing process. The therapist's goal is not to defend the client's goal but to work alongside that their goal

The function of the therapist is rooted in their attitude and not the techniques used in other approaches. Their attitude rather than their knowledge is used in this idea of therapy. They get on their client's level and meet them where they are at. The therapist remains as present as possible which means the therapist must be in direct relationship with their client and holding this intentional mindset. When the therapist cares, is loving, listens well, and respects the client, the client has access to be in a space that is safe and free for them to be open and thrive.