

**Unit 4 #1** “ I grasped the meaning of the greatest secret that human poetry and human thought and belief have to impart; the salvation of man is through love and in love.” Viktor Frankl  
Love is patient, love is kind. 1Corinthians 13:4. As a Christian therapist, I believe that love is the single most important element in the therapeutic process. First Peter 4: 8 says, “Above all, love each other deeply because **love** covers a multitude of sins.’ The client and the therapist must have a deep and abiding interpersonal relationship. When things get awkward within the client-therapist relationship, which they often do, love is willing to do the “heart’ work to forgive.

**Anxiety** symbolizes that something is not quite right within the counselor-client relationship and the difficult questions of **Immediacy** must be raised. First Corinthians 13:5 “keeps no records of wrongs.” Although a good therapist keeps good records and documents of all relevant material, a ‘loving” therapist will not put his client in the “loss column.” Authenticity and being aware of what is happening within the counselor-client relationship is one of the core “Givens of Existence, along with, death, freedom, existential isolation, meaninglessness, and responsibility. The Apostle Paul in his sermon on Mars Hill, admonished the learned but “ignorant” Athenians; “that they would seek God, if perhaps they might feel around for Him and find Him, though he is not far from each one of us, for in Him we live, move, and exist, we live and as even some of your poets have said, “For we also are His descendants.” Existential theorists postulate that the will to choose is somehow a terrible thing for humans to possess. For some existential proponents, human beings are “condemned to be free”, and we have “no exit”, or escape from this condemnation. It is my Christian contention, however, that human free will is the escape plan from life’s meaninglessness and the exit strategy from human hopelessness and the **existential vacuum**.

**#2)** The existential philosophy grew out of the devastation and despair caused by the horrors of World War II. Many people saw up close how cruel and heartless humans can be to each other. Anxiety, isolation, and tragedy were the order of the day. People everywhere began to feel as if life was meaningless and hopeless. It was out of this need for human caring, and individual self-awareness, that the existential perspective was born.

Some of the main contributors to the existential thought revolution were such notables as; Albert Camus, Martin Heidegger, Jean-Paul Sartre, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Soren Kierkegaard, all superstars within their right. The existentialist challenged the established ways of thinking about psychiatry, philosophy, history, science, and religion. They taught that human beings are “beings” only to the extent, that they realize that they are not the victims of some cosmic soup that they must surrender to, but that they are responsible for creating their own lives.

Existential therapy does not prohibit the contribution of other therapeutic modalities in their therapeutic process. They built on the premise that freedom was an individual responsibility, that was precipitated by being in authentic relationships with others. For the existentialist, the validity within the client-counselor relationship is what leads to genuine actualization and healing.

Existential therapists endeavor to be self-disclosing and authentic in their therapeutic approach.

**#9)** For Frankl finding meaning in suffering helped him survive the concentration camps of Auschwitz. Frankl says that there were two types of people in the camps, those that lost faith, hope, and meaning and those who did not. The following quote by Friedrich Nietzsche is said to have been one of Frankl’s favorites:” He who has a why to live for can bear almost anyhow.” Do individuals have a strong enough why in their lives to get them through any challenge? Frankl says that suffering ceases to be suffering at the moment it finds meaning. Suffering for

Frankl brings hidden opportunities that must be uncovered and appreciated. Anxiety, boredom, and depression are the result of being without a life's purpose. Frankl taught that individuals need to take the time to reflect and think about finding meaning, passion, and purpose in something bigger than themselves.

Logotherapy is Frankl's prescription for the maladies of depression, aggression, and addiction. A change of attitude and actions can cause someone to strive for meaning and actualization of their **values**. There is a void when people solely pursue personal satisfaction of **drives** and **instincts** over vocation realization and task fulfillment.

The existential therapist using logotherapy in counseling will focus on directing the client to follow their conscience and aim at discovering a cause that is greater than themselves. They will assist the client in actualizing concrete vocational demands, that will minimize the likelihood of the client experiencing anxiety and boredom. He/she will give them the skills to transform tragedy into lasting triumph.

“When we are no longer able to change a situation..we are challenged to change ourselves.”

Frankl

**#10)** Anxiety for the Existentialist, is a condition that results from having to face choices without clear guidelines and without knowing what the outcome will be. Soren Kierkegaard said that “Anxiety is the price we pay for our ability to choose.” It is a general sense of restlessness, the feeling that there is no real purpose in living, and an overall sense of empty wastefulness.

A client who presents with all of the classic elements of angst, including the feeling that they have been robbed of all the strength, energy, and will to live, will be given the utmost care and assistance. The client-counselor relationship is very important at this stage. The existential

therapist should help the client work through feelings of confusion and self-doubt about the future. Life is not a series of unfortunate events that must be tolerated, but it is an opportunity to discover the greater context and pursue a cause that is larger than oneself. Once the client has begun to experience a change in his or her attitude while also seeing positive results, the client will become freer and freer from fear and anxiety.

#### **Unit 4 Chapter 7**

**#19)** The element of the person-centered approach that particularly resonates with my Judeo-Christian worldview is the element of **Presence**.

Presence is the ability to “be with” someone fully in the present moment; being engaged and absorbed in the relationship with the client. In my Christian world view presence is a very important concept. Psalm 51:11” Do not cast me away from your presence...”

The ability to “be with” someone requires commitment and the willingness to change. In the Old Testament book of Exodus 25:30, the Bible introduces the concept of the bread of the Presence. The bread of the Presence 9 (also called the showbread or shewbread in some translations) was special bread that was always present on the table, first in the tabernacle and later in the temple. It was holy and sanctified bread that was set apart to be used only by the designated priests. One of the responsibilities of the priest was to change the older bread for newer bread every sabbath. Like the priest who changes the bread on the table to it keep it fresh, the client-counselor relationship must be willing to change what is “on the table” to keep their relationship fresh and innovative. Presence speaks of nearness and closeness. Psalm 73:28(NIV) “But as for me, it is good to be near God.” Presence is a place of intimacy, but an intimacy that can be accommodating.

Matthew 12:4 “how he entered the house of God and ate the bread of Presence, which it was not lawful for him to eat nor for those who were with him, but only for the priest.” Jesus was telling the story of a hungry David who ate the sacred bread off the table, even though it was unlawful for him to do so. Not only did David eat, but he also feeds those who were with him. Finally, the presence is not a legalist, it allows radical paradigm shifts, that will benefit not only the client-counselor relationship but will “feed” other relationships as well.

My conflicting perspective of person-centered therapy as it pertains to my Christian worldview would be the person-centered therapist’s nondirect and unstructured approach with the client.

The therapist merely echos what the client is saying, without offering any real advice.

“Do not withhold good from those who deserve it when it’s in your power to help them.”

Proverbs 3:27(NLT) I believe that as a Christian therapist I should at least offer to help because, without clear direction, people lose hope.

**#20)** The person-centered approach changed the psychotherapeutic landscape. Many professionals believed that the Rogerian concept was doomed to failure and that it was a presumptuous endeavor. Like most innovators, Carl Rodgers had to swim against the current and fight upstream. I am sure that 50 years ago no one believed that Walt Disney and his mouse would still be relevant 50 years later, like Disney, Rodgers was ahead of his time.

Rodger was called the “father of psychotherapy research.” He was fearless in his pursuit of using empirical research to develop his theory of psychotherapy. Carl Rodgers was an academic whose books, articles, and lectures on interracial relations earned him a Nobel Peace Prize nomination, not too shabby.

Person-centered therapy has given rise to many new forms of therapy, in my humble estimation, the one that I think has the most potential for a lasting global impact is the theory of Motivational Interviewing. This theory takes the direct approach and answers the client's relevant questions, which helps speed up the recovery process.

**#22)** The basic characteristics of the person-centered approach involve many different variables. Carl Rogers emphasized the relationship between the counselor and the client, and the ability of the client to self-actualize. Personality and personal growth approaches were different from the other therapies that were prominent during that time.

The individual's need for positive self-regard, not only for themselves but from others as well, is an important concept in this modality. Rogers believed that all human beings have the capacity for self-awareness, and that clients have the potential for change. Becoming a fully functioning person involves searching for meaning.

Anxiety is the result of a person's failure to resolve the tension between freedom and responsibility. In the person-centered approach the counselor and the client build a therapeutic alliance, that leads to a positive view of development. The counselor takes a non-direct non-judgmental approach with the client, that leads to accurate empathy.

**#36)** Natalie Rogers is the **daughter** of person-centered therapy, and the **mother** of Person-centered expressive arts therapy. Natalie in her approach uses a variety of models in her work. She uses the elements of dance, painting, poetry, sculpting, music, and writing to create a climate of discovery and self-awareness. Expressive arts therapy is not only effective in an individual setting, but it is also effective in a group setting.

Creative connection is a trademarked strategy that is used to uncover a person's underlying feelings of frustration and disappointment. Journaling is one of the more well known motifs used by N.Rodgers to unlock clients hidden emotions and unresolved tensions. Once the hidden emotions have been unlocked, the client will then discuss them with the counselor.

Expressive arts therapy expands on the person-centered view of human nature through creative expression. Creative expression has the potential to bypass any limitations of intellectual articulation. I believe that in the same way that Carl Rodgers used empirical research to help foster psychotherapy, N. Rodgers used research in cognitive neuroscience to help foster the understanding of spontaneous creativity.

The expressive arts carries us into areas of the subconscious that are normally not activated and stimulates them to produce healing.