

Unit 5 Chapter 8

#1) In my estimation, the use of the “I” expression in Gestalt therapeutic language, lends itself the opportunity to be aligned with my Christian worldview, It is what I will call “ **I contact.**” I contact is when a client is in touch with his or her total surroundings. A person’s awareness of their environment through their senses is a core tenet of Fritz Perl’s original philosophy.

For Fritz Perl, a person was suffering from **neurosis** if they exhibited a poor understanding of environmental **contact boundaries**. People who had problems had them as a result of being **disconnected** from the recognition of their senses, and bodily sensations, and how senses and sensations related to the environment.

I Thessalonians 5:23: “**May your whole spirit, soul and body be preserved blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus.**” I contact is when the spirit, soul, and body are working together in harmony as a synergistic whole. “Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ.”

I contact pertains to the **whole** self spirit, soul, and body and is the **Explosive**, authentic, and fully alive self, that is fully aware of his or her environment and who is ready to take responsibility, and who is ready to take action.

In my Christian worldview, I am somewhat leery of the Phenomenological inquiry enactment approach. Specifically the attempt at entering into and reliving the fantasy, as if it were happening now in the present. My concern is that the vulnerable client could be compelled to call upon and invite an unseen force to manifest through them that could be more insidious and sinister than the dreams or fantasies they are trying to explore. Jesus said in St. Matthew 17:21 “However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting.”

#3) Reality is defined as being what the client perceives as being real. Gestalt therapy deals with human nature as the integration between the external and internal. Some parts of the external self have their disjointed, which are different from those struggles of the internal self.

Therapists explore the clients' awareness of their environments, and how well they navigate through the difficulties of life.

The unification process puts the client in a trusting relationship with the counselor, as they work together, the counselor will help him or her rid themselves of those things which have been hindering them from authentic living. The client is not a passive detached observer, but actively engages in personal growth.

Gestalt therapists move the client step by step toward an understanding of self, as a self-regulating, self-supporting existence. Fritz Perls believed that human beings were capable of extraordinary awareness of their environment however they needed a push to facilitate that awareness. In classical Gestalt therapy, the direct confrontational approach was used to intentionally motivate the client toward awareness.

Human beings reach a point of self-awareness and environmental connectedness, when they concentrate on who they are currently, and not on who they should become in the future. The contemporary Gestalt therapist uses probing questions that are not as intentionally confrontational as the classic mode, to move the client toward place self-regulation and environmental integration.

#4) Gestalt therapy developed because of the vision of its founder Fritz Perls. Perls took elements of other theories merged them and added his creativity. “An organized whole that is perceived as more than the sum of its parts.” Oxford Languages

Gestalt therapy is not considered mainstream as it compares to other theoretical modalities. The prevailing and overarching belief is that Gestalt therapy is not supported by established empirical evidence. It is common for individuals to integrate Gestalt techniques and principles with other theories.

The modern approach to Gestalt therapy has gotten away from the strong influence of Fritz Perls' charismatic personality. The most notable move away from the classic Gestalt mode is the move away from the confrontational approach to less aggressive awareness enhancing techniques.

The self-dialogue technique is also one of the more popular advances of the current Gestalt approaches. Another significant difference within the Gestalt approach is its move toward becoming a more coherent and less fragmented therapeutic modality.

#7) The here and now in Gestalt therapy is a basic concept that is used by the therapist to force the client into bringing the past into the future so that it can be dealt with. The therapist will use blunt language to move the client to a place of insight. The client comes to a place of awareness where they make choices that affect their perception of the past and positively impact their future.

I see elements of the Gestalt concept of the here and now within Jesus' encounter with the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well. In the book of St. John chapter 4, Jesus is intent on going through the town of Samaria. He sent his disciples into the city to buy food while he rests near the iconic Jacobs well outside the city.

When the woman approaches to draw water from the well Jesus engages her with a question.

After the ice is broken and Jesus pushes past her religion and ethnic smokescreen, he confronts her with a probing question that forces her to confront her recidivist behavior and compels him to

acknowledge her “psychopathology.” Because of her enhanced awareness, due to the “intervention” by Jesus, she **leaves her water jar** and runs into town to tell everyone about her newfound hope for a meaningful future, and she invites her community to “**Come, see a Man who told me all things that I ever did. Could this be the Christ?**” She testifies to her community about her change in perception and offers them the opportunity to do the same.

#21) I think that the Behavioral Therapy approaches of Mindfulness and Acceptance closely align with my Christian worldview. In Mindfulness practice, the clients train themselves to intentionally focus on their present experience with acceptance. Acceptance is a process involving receiving our present experience without judgment or preference, but with curiosity and gentleness and striving for full awareness of the present moment.

In the Berean Study Bible St. Matthew 7:2, Jesus says: “ For with the same judgment you pronounce, you will be judged; and with the same measure you use, it will be measured to you.” We must judge **ourselves** with the same measure of curiosity and gentleness, that we would lovingly extend to someone else. I am essentially talking about forgiving our past mistakes, and the guilt that it has caused.

Guilt and shame are the common denominators in most psychopathological problems.

Forgiveness offers freedom from guilt and self-condemnation and provides a full awareness of the present moment.

The Behavioral therapy approach which least aligns with my Christian worldview is in vivo flooding. The most basic core of Christianity which is love is antithetical to pursuing fear as a beneficial activity. St. John 4:18 (ESV) “ There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not been perfect in love.”

My explanation may be somewhat simplistic and banal, from a therapeutic and empirical perspective, however, as a Christian counselor “in training” I would not presently recommend this therapeutic approach.

#28) Positive reinforcement is probably the most popular of the operant conditioning techniques. Positive reinforcement involves the addition of something pleasurable to enhance the behavior, for example, athletes earning a gold medal for all of their hard work and disciplined training. Negative reinforcement involves the removal, or (escape) of an unpleasant stimulus. A basketball player may “hustle” during practice, to avoid running “suicides” after practice. Another technique used in operant conditioning is punishment. Punishment is based on the idea of consequences because of a particular behavior. A professional football player may be fined for not showing up at a team meeting for instance. Punishment can be either positive or negative. Negative punishment might involve removing chauffeured car service from a fortune 500 business executive.

#31) Relaxation training works by teaching the client the basics of relaxation procedures. The client will then have the tools to practice mental composure and muscle relaxation. Total muscle relaxation techniques along with diaphragmatic breathing and visualization are absolutely relaxation procedures, that I would try on myself.

The value of relaxation is just beginning to become understood. Allopathic doctors are now beginning to recognize the success of their Ayurvedic counterparts. Relaxation techniques have recently gained widespread acceptance as a beneficial remedy in relieving stress and anxiety anywhere from the fear of flying to having a surgical procedure.

#34) Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing(EMDR) is a treatment that involves the use of rapid, rhythmic eye movements and other bilateral stimulation to treat clients who have experienced trauma. EMDR was originally designed to treat patients who were suffering from post-traumatic stress disorders. Like in vivo flooding, EMDR is an exposure technique, as such strict safety and supervision must be adhered to.

With EMDR there needs to be informed consent, the client should be fully aware of any possible negative occurrences. The client needs to understand that they have the power to agree or disagree about having the procedure done. If and when consent is given by the client he or she will need to be in a safe and sterile environment, with the least likely hood of any adverse circumstances.