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MFT PSY 444

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Essay I

Based on the reading of the Contemporary Counseling Models the Psychodynamic Approaches in the book(pg6) I feel that one can see the trajectory of growth and change in the models. Psychoanalytic therapy which focuses on the early stages of development as a determinant of one's outcome in life and was the first approach, deals with infancy as the determinant of a person's identity and character.

The Adlerian Therapy sees a person in the context of "placement" , the influences of birth order, and one's purpose in life, taking into account the individual free will and striving to fulfill one's role and purpose with an egalitarian approach. This approach takes consideration of the person and his or her surrounding Existential Therapy focuses on how the person perceives his role in the world. How life events shape a person's view of the world and deal with such events. It is more introspective and holistic. Its main concern is in the relationship with the client. This approach is more elastic and shaped by one's experiences and how such experiences mold the individual.

Person centered therapy finds reason in accepting a person unconditionally in positive regard. Connecting with people and allowing the "good" to be seen and explored. In this approach a person always has something good to be harvested and cherished.

Gestalt Therapy It is all about the "here and now", the body language, the words, the silence. What is the main question and how, not so much the wh. Interpreting dreams, taking everything to the now, allowing traumas or situations to be felt and understood.

Behavior therapy is very goal oriented, evidence based and followed by a treatment plan. A great structure of care that can be combined with other techniques. Focused in the body and mind, working with mindfulness and structure at the same time.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy is the most cost effective; it deals with the issue without digging into the trauma. It is effective and short term. I believe it would be more difficult to use with clients of abuse, since so much of the work is behind the scenes.

Choice theory/ Reality theory, the client takes responsibility for his choices and learns how to meet his needs. Straightforward approach, focusing on tools for problem solving.

Feminist Therapy, how oppression played a vital role in women's identity. Self concept and life.

Postmodern approach The client is the decision maker in his life. No single truth.

Family System Therapy believes that to understand an individual we need to look into the family and the relationship within the individuals.

The Psychoanalytic therapy approach is the one I agree with the least. I believe that a person continues to shape his/her life throughout life. And that therapy and other events can change and transform a person. That is exactly why the Existential Therapy Approach is the one that I identify most with. The client continues to evolve and to create meaning and purpose in life.

Stan is very insecure, unsure of himself and with very low self esteem. My first take about Stan was that he was abused by his mother, or a mother figure due to his extreme anxiety around women. The level of anxiety and nervousness if you will, his body language, constant moving, made me think that he was suffering withdrawal symptoms. Stan seems very committed to change. He really wants to change everything about his life. I believe understanding trauma and how it affects a person would be a good start for Stan. Knowing that a lot of the behavior he engages in is very keen with abused and trauma patients. That it is reversible and that a lot of the anxiety will go away as he works in rebuilding his self esteem. Stan doesn't talk about faith or spirituality. Which makes me think that he doesn't have one. Mindfulness may be a good start.

Gwen is a woman that from an early age took on the role of a caretaker. She spent the years of her life taking care of others and not really taking care of herself. She is somatizing in her fibromyalgia, all the pain and stress that she has accumulated over time. Now that her children are grown and independent she is once again in the role of a caretaker, caring for her mother. She is stressed, feeling unheard, dealing with her mortality and the feeling of not having really accomplished anything for herself. While the church has provided her with some kind of comfort, it seems that a deeper relationship with God or a deeper level of spirituality was not achieved. While Gwen has managed to achieve professional and academic success, her anxiety and depression are significant markers that she never received proper care for the abuse of her cousin. I would start our intake session talking about how she feels, Transition into how her experiences shaped her life choice, decision making, and self image. What was it like to become the caretaker for her siblings? I would try to establish a connection, build a relationship of trust and compassion. I feel that Gwen is really struggling with her place in the world. How she sees herself and how she keeps on taking on roles that overextend her limits. She would benefit from learning how to set boundaries in all areas of her life. She needs to cut the umbilical cord and have some room for entertainment and joy in her life.

I don't feel that I have many fears but I do fear not having enough knowledge. What brings me to question myself as a therapist is if I know enough, if I understand enough. Will the client bring to the session something that will make me feel unprepared to help him? I am very comfortable with my capacity to listen, connect with the client and have a grasp on what is happening. I may be wrong and be feeling confident on things that I am not supposed to be feeling comfortable about. I really feel that it is too early for me to say what kind of therapist I will be, how clients will push my buttons and how I will deal with triggers. Time and experience will shape the type of person and professional I will become. The more I learn the more I feel that experience is really what gives a therapist confidence in his work.

I would approach Charleses' case by listening to him, asking what makes him think the way he does? What experiences shaped his view of others? What were the neighbors' behaviors that he attributes to the end of the marriage? I would try to hear him out and ask questions about his wife. How was the marriage? I really think that this hatred for the outside world is just his coping mechanism. His excuse to remain the same way. The problem is not the neighbor. I don't think I would really react to his discriminatory views, they are his views. I would feel compassionate towards Charles, it must be very hard to leave like that. Lonely and limiting. I believe that working with Charles would be a challenge but a good one. Because he can really change his life around by opening himself up to the world.

Brenda is a young adult facing many difficulties to establish her own identity and independence from her parents. She has goals in mind and wants to accomplish them. I would like to work with her in her understanding of her role in the family and why she feels so guilty. I would start by listening to her and getting a sense of her religious beliefs. What her religion says about it and what her parents say about it? Sometimes they are two different realities that need to be addressed. I would encourage her to understand her religion and to deepen her faith. To find strength and not shame. Didn't her parents leave their parent's home too? I would not try to influence or let my religious belief influence Brenda. She already is dealing with that! She needs to feel safe to make her own choices in life. I can see that her parents use religion as a way of controlling Brenda.

