

Essay Questions – Unit 03 - Chapters Four and Five

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1# - My first opinion about Freud could have been better. When I decided to work in the field of therapy in Brazil, I took a course at the Minas Gerais University in Psychoanalyze because it was an area in which I had some resistance. My professor, in his 80s, was a faithful disciple of Freud, and even though I had his idea that the only psychological Theory that worked was psychoanalysis (which I disagree with), I finished the course with a better understanding of the subject. Moreover, in that course, I could read a book about the relationship between Freud and a pastor named "Psychoanalysis and Faith: The Letters of Sigmund Freud and Oskar Pfister." In that book, I could see Freud from a different angle, and I started to nurture sympathize with him. Instead of living in totally different worlds, being Freud an atheist and Pfister a pastor, the relationship between both showed a respectful and sincere fellowship, including visits and contact with Freud's family, as commented by Ana Freud: "In the Freudian environment, alien to all religious life, Pfister, with his clothes, appearance, and attitude of a shepherd, was an apparition from a strange world."

The psychodynamic perspective, originating from the work of Freud, views human behavior and experience as primarily shaped by unconscious motives and conflicts. While some aspects of the psychodynamic perspective, such as the emphasis on early childhood experiences and the idea of the unconscious mind, can align with a Christian understanding of the complexities of the human experience, there are some critical elements of the psychodynamic perspective that conflict with the Christian faith, from my point of view.

One of the critical areas of conflict is the psychodynamic view of human nature. The psychodynamic perspective views humans as selfish and driven by unconscious impulses and desires. In contrast, the Christian perspective views humans as created in the image of God and naturally possessing both the capacity for good and the potential for evil.

Another area of conflict is the psychodynamic perspective's understanding of sin and the role of the supernatural. The psychodynamic perspective views sin and spiritual issues as implanted in

psychological conflicts and unconscious motives. In contrast, a Christian perspective views sin as a conscious choice to turn away from God and recognizes the role of spiritual forces in shaping human behavior.

While some elements of the psychodynamic perspective can align with Christian beliefs, others, like the perspective's fundamental understanding of human nature, sin, and the role of the supernatural, conflict with a Christian understanding of these issues.

5 # The concept of the unconscious, proposed by Sigmund Freud, is considered a seminal discovery in psychology. According to Freud, unconscious thoughts, feelings, and desires play a significant role in shaping behavior and emotional experiences (Freud, 1915). He also states that the unconscious is part of the mind that contains information that is not present in conscious awareness but influences behavior.

The implications of the concept of the unconscious for clinical practice are substantial. For example, psychoanalytic therapy utilizes free association and dream interpretation techniques to bring unconscious material to conscious awareness. According to Freud, by exploring the unconscious, patients can gain insight into patterns of behavior and emotional experiences driven by unconscious thoughts and desires. This understanding can help resolve conflicts or anxieties contributing to symptoms.

The concept of the unconscious has also influenced other therapeutic approaches, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT). CBT aims to change unconscious patterns of thought and behavior that may contribute to distress (Field et al., 2015).

In conclusion, the concept of the unconscious, as proposed by Sigmund Freud, has had a lasting impact on the field of psychology and clinical practice. By helping patients understand and address unconscious thoughts and desires, therapists can provide a more comprehensive and practical approach to therapy.

References:

1 - Field, T. A., Beeson, E. T., & Jones, L. K. (2015). The new ABCs: A practitioner's guide to neuroscience-informed cognitive-behavior therapy. *Journal of Mental Health Counseling, 37*(3), 206-220.

2 -Freud, S. (1915). Thoughts for the times of war and death. S.E. 14: pp. 275–288. Access by Google Books.

9 # Sigmund Freud's psychosexual stages and Erik Erikson's psychosocial stages are both frameworks that describe human development from infancy to adulthood. However, there are some critical differences between these two perspectives.

Freud's psychosexual stages focus on developing the individual's sexual and aggressive impulses and how these impulses are satisfied or frustrated. The oral, anal, phallic, latent, and genital stages are marked by different psychological conflicts that must be resolved for healthy development (Lantz, 2022).

Erikson's psychosocial stages, on the other hand, focus on the development of the individual's sense of self and social relationships. The stages include trust vs. mistrust, autonomy vs. shame and doubt, initiative vs. guilt, industry vs. inferiority, identity vs. role confusion, intimacy vs. isolation, generativity vs. stagnation, and integrity vs. despair. Each stage is marked by a different psychological challenge that must be overcome for healthy growth (Orenstein, 2022). Both perspectives can inform a therapist's understanding of developmental themes in a client's life. For example, by studying a client's background in different psychosexual and psychosocial stages, a therapist can understand their current developmental challenges and how they may impact their behavior and emotional experiences.

Additionally, combining these two perspectives can provide a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of how psychological and social factors interact and shape individual development. For example, analyzing a client's experiences with trust, autonomy, and identity formation can provide insight into how their sexual and aggressive impulses are expressed and satisfied.

In conclusion, while there are some critical differences between Freud's psychosexual stages and Erikson's psychosocial stages, both perspectives can be combined to inform a therapist's understanding of developmental themes in a client's life.

Reference:

1 - Lantz SE, Ray S. Freud Developmental Theory. [Updated 2022 Dec 5]. In: StatPearls [Internet]. Treasure Island (F.L.): StatPearls Publishing; 2022 Jan-. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK557526/>

2 - Orenstein GA, Lewis L. Eriksons Stages of Psychosocial Development. [Updated 2022 Nov 7]. In: StatPearls [Internet]. Treasure Island (F.L.): StatPearls Publishing; 2022 Jan-. Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK556096/>

15 # Contemporary tendencies in psychoanalytic thinking have moved towards a greater emphasis on the interpersonal and relational aspects of the therapeutic process. For instance, interpersonal and relational psychoanalysis deeply emphasizes the relationship between the client and the analyst. It recognizes social and interpersonal experiences' position in constructing a person's personality. This approach was developed by Harry Stack Sullivan and expanded by Stephen Mitchell and Edgar Levenson. (Mitchell, S. A. (1995).

Another movement in psychology, known as the self-development movement, places a strong emphasis on the impact of interactions with significant others on a person's sense of self. This perspective is most notably represented by Heinz Kohut's Self Psychology theories, which have been widely discussed and debated within psychology.

Kohut's work, which includes "The Analysis of the Self" (1971) and "Forms and Transformations of Narcissism" (1980), emphasizes the interplay between self-esteem and narcissistic vulnerabilities, which work together to shape an individual's perception of themselves. This perspective sheds light on the importance of early relationships and their long-lasting impact on a person's development. As such, it offers valuable insights into how people can work towards improving their sense of self and well-being throughout their lives (Lichtenberg, 2014).

Attachment Theory and its application to psychoanalysis have also been a growing interest. It views personality development in the context of early relationships and attachment patterns formed with primary caregivers. John Bowlby developed this approach (Goldberg, 1995). In the same way, Intersubjectivity has become a contemporary trend in psychoanalytic thinking. This approach views the therapeutic process as a mutually impactful encounter between the client and analyst and emphasizes both parties' subjective experiences and perspectives. [

Overall, these contemporary trends in psychoanalytic thinking have expanded the discipline's focus beyond the traditional individual-centered approach to include the interpersonal and relational aspects of the therapeutic process.

References:

Goldberg, S., Muir, R., & Kerry, J. (1995). Attachment theory. *Social, developmental, and clinical perspectives*. Hillsdale. Access by Google Books.

- Lichtenberg, J. D. (2014). *Reflections on Self-Psychology (psychology revivals)*. Routledge. Access by Google Books.
- Mitchell, S. A. (1995). *Relational concepts in psychoanalysis: An integration*. Harvard University Press. Access by Google Book.

The Object Relations Theories

The Key concepts of Object Relations Theories assert that an individual's relationships with others play a crucial position in their emotional and psychological development. The Theory is founded on individuals forming mental representations, referred to as "internal objects," of their early relationships with caregivers. These internal objects continue to influence their later relationships and emotional functioning.

The following are fundamental concepts in object relations theories:

1. Internal objects: According to Klein (1946), internal objects are mental representations of significant others, such as parents, siblings, and peers, formed in early childhood.

2. Projection: Winnicott (1958) described projection as the process of attributing one's own unconscious thoughts, feelings, and impulses to others.
3. Splitting: Klein (1946) introduced the concept of splitting as an unconscious defense mechanism in which individuals perceive people and events as good or bad instead of recognizing the complexities and contradictions that exist.
4. Object constancy: Object constancy, as defined by Winnicott (1953), is the ability to maintain a consistent and stable image of a loved one, despite changes in their behavior or circumstances.
5. Attachment: Attachment, as described by Bowlby (1969), refers to the emotional bond that forms between a child and their primary caretaker and serves as a model for future relationships.
6. Transference: Transference, as defined by Freud (1912), refers to the unconscious transfer of feelings and experiences from childhood relationships into present relationships.
7. Countertransference: Countertransference, as defined by Freud (1915), refers to the therapist's unconscious reaction to a patient based on their own experiences and unresolved emotional conflicts.

In conclusion, object relations theories emphasize the significance of early relationships in shaping personality and emotional development and the importance of exploring these relationships in therapy (Flanagan et al., 2008), (Kernberg, 2019).

References:

- Flanagan, L. M., Berzoff J., Hertz, P. (2008). Chapter 5 - Object Relations Theory. In *Inside out and Outside in: Psychodynamic clinical Theory and psychopathology* (pp. 92–125). ROWMAN & LITTLEFIELD.
- Kernberg, O. F. (2019). Part 1 - Theory - Structural Derivatives of Object Relations. In *Object-relations theory and clinical psychoanalysis* (pp. 19–54). essay, A Jason Aronson Book.

Chapter 5

24# - The Adlerian idea, developed by psychologist Alfred Adler, is a psychological theory that views individuals as goal-oriented and guided by their desire for superiority and belonging within society. Adler believed that early childhood experiences and birth order shape individuals' perceptions of their strengths and weaknesses, influencing their goals and lifestyle.

From a Biblical and Christian point of view, the Adlerian perspective has both aligned and conflicting elements with Christian values. The emphasis on individuals being active and goal-oriented aligns with the biblical teaching that people are created in God's image and therefore have the capacity for creativity and intentional action (Genesis 1:27). The importance placed on early childhood experiences also aligns with the biblical teaching that children are a blessing from the Lord and should be nurtured and protected (Psalm 127:3).

However, there are also elements of the Adlerian perspective that conflict with Christian thinking. For example, the emphasis on persevering for superiority and feeling a sense of belonging in society can be seen as conflicting with the biblical teaching that humility, self-sacrifice, and love for others should be the central motives in a person's life (Philippians 2:3-4). Adler's rejection of the concept of original sin and belief that individuals are not inherently bad but shaped by their experiences conflicts with the biblical teaching that all people are born in a state of sin and need redemption through Jesus Christ (Romans 3:23).

In conclusion, while some aspects of the Adlerian perspective align with Christian beliefs, some elements conflict. Christian therapists should approach the Adlerian perspective with discernment, evaluating its teachings in light of biblical truth and seeking to integrate the elements consistent with a Christian worldview.

25# Alfred Adler and Sigmund Freud were two influential psychologists of the 20th century, but they had different views on human nature and the role of childhood experiences in adult life.

Freud's view of human nature was based on the idea of the unconscious sense and the influence of unconscious desires and conflicts on human behavior. He believed that human behavior is

driven by unconscious motivations such as sex and aggression and that these motivations result from childhood experiences and repressed memories (Corey, G., 2019).

Adler's view of human nature was centered around the concept of "striving for superiority," which he believed was a natural drive for every individual. Adler considered that each person entered the world with a definitive inferiority complex and spent a lifetime trying to overcome it. Adler's school focused on exploring this motivating force in the development of human behavior. Adler emphasized an individual's conscious goals and aspirations. He believed that individuals are goal-oriented and actively strive to improve their life circumstances and achieve a sense of belonging in society. (Adler, A. 1956).

In terms of the function of childhood experiences, Adler believed that they play a significant role in building an individual's perceptions of their strengths and weaknesses and their place in the world. He argued that childhood experiences, particularly those related to birth order and family dynamics, have an ongoing impact on an individual's goals, lifestyle, and sense of self. Adler emphasized the importance of these early experiences in shaping an individual's personality and worldview. (Corey, G., 2019)

References:

1. Adler, A. (1956). *The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. pp. 01–15. Access by Google Book.
2. Corey, G. (2019). In *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy*. Cengage Learning U.S. pp. 62-132.

30 # Adler's theory of Individual Psychology asserts that a person's psychology is a unified whole, indicating that all characteristics of an individual's life are interconnected and cannot be separated. According to Adler, a person's thoughts, feelings, behaviors, and relationships are all interrelated and must be considered to understand a person as a whole.

Adler believed that birth order, early childhood experiences, and perceptions of strengths and weaknesses all shape an individual's personality, goals, and lifestyle. He emphasized the

importance of understanding individuals holistically rather than focusing solely on specific aspects of their behavior or personality (Corey, G. 2019).

Adler's approach to psychology aimed to empower individuals by helping them understand and shape their own lives. He believed that individuals have the power to change their circumstances and shape their destinies. This proactive approach focused on helping individuals understand and overcome their limitations rather than simply accepting them.

In conclusion, Adler's view of Individual Psychology meant indivisible psychology because he believed that all aspects of a person's life are interconnected and must be considered together to understand a person entirely. Adler emphasized the importance of holistically understanding individuals and their role in shaping their own lives and destinies. (Adler, A. 1956).

Reference:

1. Adler, A. (1956). *The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston. p. 01–15. Access by Google Book.
3. Corey, G. (2019). In *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy*. Cengage Learning U.S. pp. 62-132.

37 # Holism is a philosophical and theoretical stance that emphasizes the interconnectedness and interdependence of various aspects of human experience and considers the individual as part of a larger whole, such as family, community, and society. Holism asserts that an individual's thoughts, emotions, behaviors, and physical health are interrelated and cannot be comprehended in isolation.

Adlerian therapy, also called individual psychology, is a holistic approach to psychotherapy. Adlerian therapists believe that individuals are inherently social beings, and their experiences are shaped by their perceptions of their place in the world. Adlerian therapists view clients as whole individuals and aspire to understand their unique subjective experience in the context of their relationships, community, and more significant cultural and historical influences (Adler, A. 1956).

They perceive client functioning through a holistic lens, recognizing the interconnectedness of the various aspects of a person's life. They view their clients as proactive, creative individuals who possess a sense of purpose and strive for a sense of belonging and significance. Adlerian therapists empower clients to identify and overcome obstacles to personal growth and develop a sense of purpose, meaning, and direction.

In Adlerian therapy, the therapist works collaboratively with the client to identify and understand the client's unique strengths and challenges and to develop an individualized plan for growth and change. Emphasizing the importance of the therapeutic relationship and focusing on creating a supportive and empowering therapeutic environment (Corey, G. 2019).

References:

1. Adler, A. (1956). *The Practice and Theory of Individual Psychology*. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.
4. Corey, G. (2019). In *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy*. Cengage Learning U.S. pp. 62-132.