

Psych 444

Assignment 2 /Chapter 2

1. When I focus on the phrase authentic therapist, I think of a few words; Genuine, kind, essential, personal, integrity, relational. These words draw me specifically to the idea of an authentic therapist because of the quality these words and their meanings bring to a therapist who is considered authentic. In this line of work, you learn that there is more to the abilities of being a therapist. Often, a therapist can also be misunderstood because people already have this “textbook” image of what a therapist is supposed to be. Nobody ever teaches how therapists need to have a level of humanness as well as personality in this line of work. A therapist who is genuine is open to completely being themselves in this line of work which is key to developing a good relationship with clients. People will often relate and feel comfortable talking about themselves when they feel like they belong. When I say belong, I mean feel the connection someone else (in this case a therapist) can have with them to help them fit in through relationship. People also have a very keen level of perception where they can pick up when someone is or is not genuine and honest. It is important for authenticity to be at the center of a therapist’s engagement with clients in order to create that safe space many clients have a difficult time having. A therapist who is kind will often show a level of optimism and encouragement to another person. In relation to the authentic therapist, someone who brings this level of kindness to a session can also demonstrate that they believe in living out that same kindness through their work. Kindness is difficult to come by and is needed in order for people both generally and in therapy to have hope and confidence in another person. It can become very challenging for

people to want to open up to anyone who is unkind and sometimes, a person's professionalism can be mistaken for rudeness so it is important to balance kindness with professionalism as well. The act of being essential comes to mind because it means something that is necessary. We need to put our best face forward when we are committing to time with clients, making these things essential parts of the therapeutic experience. Clients often either don't know what to expect when coming into therapy or expect something negative or cliché because others may have shared their experiences. Often times many people do not have positive things to speak about regarding therapy because they may not have had the best relationship with their therapists. Being authentic is essential to the therapeutic experience. Acting with integrity as a therapist is something I think is very important in bringing authenticity to sessions. Integrity is something that many people lack in general. As a therapist, practicing integrity will say a lot about the therapist's moral values as well as the respect they have for their clients. This too comes to mind when I think about the authentic therapist.