

**Reality Therapy: of “Ordinary People”**

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Choice therapy is a school of thought that believes a client has control over present behavior and ultimately, we have innate factors for the purpose of true satisfactory connection. The bare needs that “drive us all our lives (are) : survival or self-preservation, love and belonging, power, or inner control, freedom, or independence, and fun, or enjoyment” (Corey, 2015. P. 314). Other than brain damage, choice therapy does not acknowledge psychological disorders unless it is for insurance purposes as focuses on the diagnosis more than solutions. Therapeutic techniques are comparatively directive with the therapist as a mentor and the client as a student. Nevertheless, the work of doing is a commitment made by the client.

Human behavior is reliant on the choices of the client for the purpose of seeking satisfactory connection. Maladaptive behaviors occur when one believes they are just victims of their circumstances and do not take control of their choices in life. There needs to be a willingness and responsibility to take action for their choices when it comes to changing one’s circumstances. As a result, human behavior can be focused on change if one does away with the patterns of their choice of thinking and acting.

Through the lens of Choice therapy, Conrad went to the drastic extreme of taking his life by avoiding the suffering of losing Bucky. He continues to put up a façade that everything is alright when in fact he is not planning to do anything effective to change. Conrad craves true connection and tries to get that with his female counterparts, for instance, Karen. This therapy would argue that Conrad is trying to “get connected or reconnected with the people they have chosen to put in their quality world” (Corey, 2015. P. 318). However, since that connection is not being fulfilled he is presently unhappy and tries to fulfill that by pursuing a relationship with Jeannine who can fulfill the “five genetically encoded needs” (Corey, 2015. P. 314).

As Dr. Burger, the first choice Conrad should be praised for is the initiative to contact him in the first place for therapy. That in it of itself is Conrad taking “effective control of (his life)” (Corey, 2015. P. 314) because there is something he wants to decisively change. The first technique would be in the “WDEP System” (Corey, 2015. P. 322) is to determine what exactly Conrad wants and explore the deepest desire of “how their behavior is aimed at moving their perception of the external world closer to their inner world of wants” (Corey, 2015. P. 322). In this upper-middle class society where everything is only superficial, Conrad wants to discuss truth and do away with the superficiality that everything is effortless and how fine he is doing. In reality therapy, the relationship between Conrad and Dr. Burger is crucial to establish the therapist as someone Conrad wants as a part of his quality world. Once that alliance is built, there needs to be simple and clear goals in achieving the plans that are set with “process-centered activities” (Corey, 2015. P. 325). Since the focus is on what Conrad pursuing authentic relationship, this will inevitably bring him out of his depressed mode that life is futile and fake. Although quitting the swim team is a big deal in his family, it is part of Conrad’s present truth in trying to spend his time and devote the efforts to building firm friendships.

Choice therapy is limited in tackling Conrad’s true suffering of the loss of Bucky, however, at this stage of coming out of the hospital, action-oriented tasks will have a positive effect in short-term recovery. In terms of long-term healing, the theory is limited in “taking into account factors such as repressed conflicts and the power of the unconscious in influencing how (he) thinks, feels behaves, and chooses” (Corey, 2015. P. 333), for instance, his relationship with his mother.

## References

Corey, Gerald. (2015). *Theory and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy.*, Tenth Edition, Thompson Learning.