

Beatriz Pinguelo

Professor Stephen Maret

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## Unit 4 Essays

### Chapter 6

Required Question: When first reading the chapter and the introduction of existential therapy it sounded good in the beginning but as I read on more, I noticed that a lot of what existential therapy and perspective does not align to the Bible and through a Christian point of view. I liked in the beginning how it explains that existential therapy focuses on asking deep questions such as the nature of anxiety, despair, grief, loneliness and isolation. This I agree with because I believe that it is important to openly talk about these hard topics and use the Bible which also talks about these hard topics and help clients overcome these difficulties. I also agreed with the existential perspective when it talks about how we are free because as we all know as Christian we are free and most importantly free in Him. However, after this part of freedom it mentioned how “we are the authors of our lives” which really shocked me and is something that I do not agree with. As a Christian, we believe that God is the ultimate author of our lives and He has everything planned out already in our lives and we are not in control of any of that. However, even though God is the author of our lives we still are free because He gave us free will and to make our own decisions.

2. There are many aspects that take part in the historical and philosophical background of the existential approach but it all started in the 1940s and 1950s. This is when it became known in certain areas of Europe and between different schools of psychology and psychiatry. Because of

World War 2, many Europeans found their lives were crushed and resulted in existential issues such as isolation, alienation, and meaninglessness. This is why the European existential perspective focused so much on the tragic parts of life and human limitations. The thinking of existential psychologists and psychiatrists was influenced by many philosophers and helped form what is now known as existential therapy. The first philosopher listed is from Kierkegaard which included themes of creative anxiety, despair, fear, and dread, guilt, and nothingness. The second philosopher listed was from Nietzsche which included themes such as death, suicide, and will. The third philosopher listed was from Heidegger which included themes such as authentic being, caring, death, guilt, individual responsibility, and isolation. The fourth philosopher listed was Sartre which included themes of meaninglessness, responsibility, and choice. Lastly the fifth philosopher listed was Buber which included themes of interpersonal relationships, I/thou perspective in therapy, and self-transcendence. It's important to note also that Ludwig Binswanger and Medard Boss also helped shape ideas to existential psychotherapy. Again these philosophers helped Yalom shape and guide his thinking of the existential perspective.

3. We know that in therapeutic practices not every single patient will be able to accept that they have an emotional problem or even an abnormal behavior. This is definitely not like Stan's case in which he is very self-aware and he realizes that he has some abnormal behaviors but that is not always the case. This can cause a huge burden and issue for the therapists or psychologist. Since the patients aren't able to accept that they have these problems, the therapist isn't able to treat the client especially without their collaboration. This is where existential therapy comes in to help with this issue and in hopes to get the client to collaborate. Using existential therapy, we can give the patients the confidence they need and even self determination in order for them to collaborate with their therapists in a therapeutic practice. By talking about these difficulties, tragic, and life

experiences it can help a person lose their fear and this can make it a lot easier in therapeutic practices.

5. This was a very interesting question to answer and I feel like I can write a whole paper on just this topic. Self-awareness is related to freedom because having this self-awareness allows us to completely take advantage and use our freedom to its fullest. When we have self-awareness and we allow ourselves to see the areas in our life that are difficult, we automatically have the freedom to just feel that. We have the ability to free ourselves from the fear of being self-aware. Expanding awareness is a goal of this therapy because it makes you talk about the hard things no one wants to talk about. In order for us to take responsibility for things in our life, we need to have self-awareness and this is how we achieve freedom. The implications for counseling of this notion is that maybe some people can feel more guilt and have a lower self-esteem if they become too self-aware and this can cause them not to experience the freedom that awaits them. Freedom and responsibility are related because existentialist believe that they have the power to design the pathways they want to follow but this comes with the responsibility of accepting the mistakes they have made in their lives. They also relate because existentialists think that we are free and responsible for who we are and what we do. This can cause implications in counseling because I believe that it can bring shame and guilt in patients when things do not go the way they want because they are the ones who made that decision in their life.

## Chapter 7

Required Question: As we begin to read chapter 7 we see that it says the person-centered approach shares many of the same values as the existential perspective. Because of this I already do not agree 100% with the person-centered approach since I did not agree with all of the existential perspective. In the book we see that Roger's makes assumptions that people are

trustworthy and have the potential to understand themselves and to resolve their own problems with any intervention from a therapist. I do not necessarily agree with this statement because I do believe that we have the ability to understand ourselves and sometimes solve problems on our own but we are definitely not 100% trustworthy. In the Bible itself it says that we cannot trust our flesh and we need God to heal us completely from these things. Therapists, especially Christian therapists can guide and lead us into the right path when it comes to helping us solve our problems but ultimately God is the one who solves our problems.

20. A person centered therapy was founded by Carl Rogers and was developed in the 1940s. This type of perspective is much related to the existential perspective and shares a lot of the same values. However, a person centered therapy is a non-directive approach to have people basically solve their own problems. Rogers believed that people are trustworthy and have the potential to understand themselves and solve their own problems with the intervention of a therapist. To put it in much simpler terms, a person centered therapy basically makes the client an equal partner in therapy. In this type of therapy the therapist is non-directive and they do not offer solutions and most importantly do not judge the client's feelings. This type of therapy surprisingly enough to me had a big impact in psychotherapy. In the text it explains that Rogers has 6 points that can help with growth within a client and these points include therapist client psychological contact, client incongruence and vulnerability, therapist congruence and genuineness, therapist unconditional positive regard, therapist empathy, and lastly client perception. The changes that have been made to the approach over the time is that a person centered therapy moved from the therapist being the traditional type of therapist into a non-directive and empathetic therapist later on.

21. The two viewpoints of existentialism and humanism have a lot in common but there are also some key differences between them as well. The similarities between the two is that they both share a respect for the clients experience, the uniqueness and individuality of each client, and a trust in the ability of the client to make positive and constructive conscious choices.

Existentialism and humanism also have in common that they find importance in freedom, choice, values, personal responsibility, autonomy, purpose, and meaning. They also both don't find as much value in the role of techniques in the therapeutic process and find it important to have a genuine encounter. Along with these similarities of existentialism and humanism, there are also some differences. These differences include that existentialism believes that we are faced with the anxiety of choosing to create an identity in a world that lacks a lot of meaning. Also existentialists focus on the realities of human experience, and existentialists writings often focus on death, anxiety, meaninglessness, and isolation. On the other hand Humanists, focus less on anxiety and focus more on the optimistic view that each of us has a natural potential and we can use this in order to find true meaning.

23. Rogers view of human nature is that humans are trustworthy and have the ability to solve problems on their own. He also believes that us humans have the ability to make changes and to just live a more meaningful productive life. Another view that Rogers sees of human nature is that we usually want to succeed in life and not fall into a meaningless life. Lastly, Rogers also believes that of course with the right steps taken each person is able to move forward with their life and fulfill their creative nature. I think that the implications that could come with this in the practice of counseling is having people get sort of a false sense of hope. Clients will start to believe that they can literally do anything and just succeed in life but it's not as simple as it seems. I don't know why but when I read more about Roger's view I keep thinking of the word

“manifesting” which I personally do not like and I do not believe that it is Biblical at all to manifest. When it comes to agreeing with Roger’s I feel like I am in the middle and not sure where exactly my thoughts are going. I do believe that us humans strive to be creative and that we strive to pursue our full potential but at the same time I feel like the majority of what he says for us to do is something only God can do. As Christian, I know that I do not have the strength to change and do things on my own and I need God to give me the ability to use my full potential.