

Theories People

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Abstract

If this counselor does wind up meeting with Conrad, this paper will employ 12 different hypotheses based on a film about ordinary people. These 12 theories include Psychoanalytic Therapy, Jungian Therapy, Adlerian Therapy, Behavior Therapy, CBT&REBT Therapies, Reality Therapy, Family Systems Therapy, Christian Approaches, Existential Therapy, Person-Centered Therapy, and Gestalt Therapy. Psychoanalytic Therapy, Jungian Therapy, Adlerian Therapy, Behavior Therapy, CBT&REBT Therapies, Reality Therapy, Family Systems Therapy, and Gestalt Therapy are also included. The twelve distinct therapeutic approaches reveal how the author applies each theory to the scenario that is depicted in the movie concerning Conrad. As the therapist gets closer to beginning therapy with Conrad, the counselor takes a deeper look at Conrad's mental health from his perspective and analyzes it from that angle. This therapist gives careful consideration to the theories used with Conrad, as well as the method and intervention that results from those theories. This counselor first assesses how Conrad will react to the inquiries that are directed against him, and then analyzes what Conrad has to say in answer to the questions that have been given to him. Conrad's mental state may be effectively addressed by the 12 theories, and the theories' ensuing application to queries about his mental state and behavior issues may be useful.

Summary of Ordinary People

Guest (2015) said the following about the summary of ordinary people in the movie:

Conrad, a 17-year-old, tried to kill himself and was then put in an institution. Conrad feels awkward in social situations, so he starts seeing Dr. Berger for counseling. At the first session, he talks about how his brother died in a boating accident, admits that he tried to kill himself before with razor blades, and says that he wants to be more in control of his emotions and actions. Conrad goes to see his old friend Karen in the mental hospital. He finds out that she is having a great time at her new school, which is a world away from his own strangeness and unease. Conrad tells Dr. Berger how much he hates being on the swim team, and Berger tells him to listen to his gut and act on it. Conrad quits swimming without telling anyone, which causes a big fight with his mother, who found out from a friend and yelled at him. Conrad gets angry at his mother and says she doesn't care about him. He also blames his father for not noticing the tension between his mother and himself.

Discussion

Psychoanalysis Therapy

If this author were a psychoanalyst counselor, I would have focused on early development, psychosocial stage, and unconscious as follows:

- This counselor might ask a question such as “Do you trust your mom?” Perhaps Conrad would have discussed his unease or distrust of Mom as a child. This counselor probably suspects that he was rejected by his mom in early childhood or that his mother’s discipline was too harsh for him, so he was negative toward women.
- To understand Conrad’s stage of development in the view of Erickson, the counselor may ask, “Tell me about your school life.” Conrad may have explained that his school life included the unlikeliness of going to school, feeling like a person who is out of school, not completing school assignments, and developing relationships with his peer groups. Conrad struggled in school and had conflicts with his peers, so this author may surmise that his identity is not clear because he has low self-esteem and has failed to transition from childhood to adulthood.
- This counselor would get to know about his unconscious by asking the following questions, “How was your dream yesterday?” and following up with, “How’s you’re feeling today?” Conrad is most likely unaware of his unconscious, but by becoming aware of it, he will be able to confront his memories and repressed feelings and learn how to control his emotions without becoming frustrated or discouraged. Through the resolution of transference distortions, the client's need to cling to previous patterns must be addressed (Corey, 2021, p.61).

Jungian Therapy

If this author were a counselor using Jung's theory and therapy approach, she would have focused on Conrad's personality, personal development, suicidal attempt and past events, as follows:

- This counselor would have asked Conrad, "Tell me about the most important thing that happened to you in the past that has had the most impact on your life." After the boating accident, Conrad might have talked to his mother about his relationship. It would have been easy to see that from his point of view, his mother wanted to love him, but he said in the movie that his mother loved his brother more than she loved him. This counselor might conclude that he felt like his mom turned her back on him and that his brother's death hurt his personality and development.
- Because of Conrad's intense anxiety, the counselor would have questioned him about his suicide attempt and pointed out that he wasn't really experiencing much affection from his mother after the death of his brother. And then I would like to ask, "How has your brother's death affected your life? How have your relationships with your mother changed as a result of your brother's death?" The therapist might have concluded that Conrad suffered from depression and unchecked anxiety caused his suicidal attempt as a result of his brother's death and his misperception that his mother might no longer love him.

Adlerian Therapy

If this author were an Adlerian Therapist, I would have focused on the following topics: social interest, lifestyle, birth order, sibling relationship, and life tasks:

- To know about Conrad's social interests, the counselor may have asked, "Tell me about your interests in school?". Conrad may tell the counselor that he is interested in singing and swimming, as he has been a member of the choir and trained to be a swimmer in the pool. This counselor understands that his inferiority feeling can motivate him to succeed in the swim, as competition is unavoidable with another students in swimming race.
- This counselor would have asked Conrad the following questions to learn about his lifestyle: "tell me about your lifestyle? Tell me about your routine life." Conrad could explain how his life has recently changed since he stopped swimming in the movie. Because Conrad was the second child, it is highly likely that his older brother gained an advantage over his parents while forming a relationship with his family when he was young. This indicates that competition will be unavoidable as he grows older. This counselor may conclude that Conrad's relationship with his older brother was competitive during his early childhood, and that the Conrad's sibling and family relationships were possibly tense.
- This counselor may ask, "How's your relationship with your friends?" Conrad may respond that he tried to build a relationship with Karen but felt that he got a different vibe from her. Conrad was shocked at the end of the movie when Karen, who seemed to be in good health, chose to kill herself. This counselor may conclude that Karen was one of his best friends, and her decision, as well as his brother's death, made him appear to be a failure in terms of friendship and intimacy.

Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

If this author were a counselor who used cognitive behavioral therapy, I would have focused on Conrad's low self-esteem, guilt feelings, provoking negative thoughts, trauma, and beliefs as follows:

- To understand his trauma, and any guilt felt for past his life, the counselor would have asked, "Tell me about any trauma or accident in your life." Conrad may have answered that his brother died in a boating accident. The counselor might conclude that Conrad felt guilty because he was rescued from the boating accident, but his brother lost his life.
- This counselor would have asked Conrad about his low self-esteem and why he thought he was dumb and less critical than other people. The counselor might conclude that Conrad exaggerates himself as inferior to others with faulty information procession. Faulty information processing is a prime cause of exaggerations in adaptive emotional and behavioral reactions (Corey, 2013, p. 283)
- This counselor would have asked Conrad what made him hostile around himself and followed up with a question, "Tell me about your honest feeling yourself," and the next question stating, "You are negative to yourself and how're your negative thoughts arose from?" The counselor may conclude that his provoking negative thoughts influenced his perception which led to his depression and decision to quit swimming.
- To know his beliefs, the counselor may have asked, "Tell me about your beliefs for your life experiences" and followed up with, "how have your life experiences affected your beliefs". The counselor may have concluded that his beliefs have highly personal meaning, as he may have answered negatively by comparing himself often with others.

Behavior Therapy

If this author were a behavior therapy counselor, I would have focused on Conrad's behavior problems, including environmental conditions, stress management, anxiety, and phobias.

- To understand Conrad's environmental conditions that contribute to his problems, the counselor would have discussed school life and family. Perhaps Conrad would have told his unfair experiences and dissatisfaction with his school and the family around him. His family, school, and surroundings may have contributed to his behavioral issues, the counselor may have determined.
- This counselor would have asked Conrad about stress management and how he handles his stress and acknowledged that he did not have any specific plan to cope with stress. The counselor may have concluded that Conrad is vulnerable to managing or controlling his stress.
- This counselor would have probed Conrad about his anxiety about his mom as he may have expressed his anger of disconnection with his mom. The counselor may have concluded that he experienced rejection anxiety from his mother, as well as disconnected emotions from his mother's relationship.
- To know of anxiety-arousing situations, the counselor may have asked, "tell me about your phobia or anxiety-arousing situations. Perhaps Conrad would have answered specific phobia to remember a boating accident, that caused his brother's death. This

counselor may have concluded that his anxiety got worse when he thought about the boating accident and his brother's death.

Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy

If this author were a counselor using Rational Emotive Behavior Therapy, she would have focused on Conrad's shameful experiences, anxiety, self-defeating thoughts, and depression.

- This counselor would have inquired about the client's feelings of shame in relation to a particular circumstance or event. Conrad would have talked about the shame that was bothering him in the movie. This counselor may have concluded the humiliation that was arising from the fact that he was falling short of his mother's expectations for him in the movie.
- This counselor would have questioned Conrad about his anxiety, and Conrad would have discussed how he wanted to manage his distress and anxiety following the boating accident. The fact that, from his point of view, remembering the boating tragedy always fills him with dread would have been easy to deduce.
- The counselor may question Conrad about any negative thoughts that may be circulating around him in order to bring his attention to self-defeating thoughts. Conrad's response would have that he believed he was less capable than other individuals and had no relationship with other people. It's possible that the counselor will conclude that Conrad has negative views about other people and himself.
- This counselor would have questioned Conrad in order to determine the extent of his depression. It's possible that Conrad would have brought up the fact that ever since his

brother went away, and this counselor may have concluded that Conrad has been suffering from depression ever since his brother passed away.

Existential Therapy

If this author were an existential therapist, I would have focused on Conrad's mortality, which means freedom, responsibility, anxiety, and aloneness, as these relate to a person's current struggle in the following ways:

- This counselor would have asked Conrad, "Tell me about the meaning of mortality in your life," to understand how he accepts and understands mortality. Conrad may have reflected on his brother's morality, and his death may have induced a negative understanding of morality because his death was a terrible accident.
- This counselor would have asked Conrad what freedom meant to him, followed by the question, "Tell me about when you feel free," and the next question, "Do you think your freedom is related to your responsibility?" The counselor may have concluded that his understanding of freedom in his life was unrelated to his responsibility, but something that he wants to let go of as he is bold enough to quit swimming quickly in the film.
- This counselor may have asked Conrad about any anxiety-provoking factors and distress moments recently in order to understand his anxiety and what caused him to struggle and conflict with current situations. Given that Conrad frequently expresses his feelings of rejection toward his mother when he seeks counseling from her in the film, the counselor may have come to the conclusion that Conrad struggles with understanding his existence by rejecting feelings from her.

- This counselor would have questioned Conrad about the meaning of aloneness, as well as how he understands and accepts his own aloneness. As he continues to want to lean on and talk to Counselor Burger about his emotional suffering, which includes feeling alone, the counselor may have concluded that his understanding of aloneness is due to his fear and uncontrollable feeling of solitude.

Person-Centered Therapy

If this author were a counselor practicing person-centered therapy, I would have focused on Conrad's emotions and a sense of fundamental helplessness, powerlessness, and inability to make decisions or effectively direct their own lives, as follows:

- To help Conrad, this counselor would have inquired about his emotions. Conrad might have brought up his emotional issues about wanting to admit himself to his family and friends. Conrad will be able to move forward and become what he is capable of becoming with unconditional positive regard, acceptance, and caring if the counselor provides empathic support to his emotional issues (Corey, 2013, p. 170).
- This counselor would have asked Conrad what had caused him to feel helpless, followed by the question, "Tell me about when you feel helpless." Conrad may respond that he sometimes feels helpless and has attempted suicide, which he discussed with a counselor. The counselor may come to the conclusion that providing unconditional emotional support helps him adjust from maladjustment to psychological health and growth (Corey, 2013, p. 171).
- This counselor would have inquired about any event that affected his inability to control his life and emotions in order to comprehend his powerlessness. This counselor may

come to the conclusion that he needs to be supported by his emotional conflicts, which have rendered him powerless in the face of past traumatic experiences.

- To emphasize Conrad's decision-making ability, this counselor inquired whether he made effective decisions in his own life. Perhaps Conrad would have complained about his decision-making process, and his decision would have been blamed on his mother, who pushed him in the direction she desired in the film.

Gestalt Therapy

If this author were a Gestalt therapist, I would have concentrated on Conrad's present moments, including any thoughts, pain, sadness, or confusion.

- This counselor would have asked Conrad about his current thoughts and feelings in relation to a specific circumstance or event. Conrad would have discussed how his past experiences, such as the boating accident and Karen's death, have influenced his current feelings and thoughts. This counselor may have concluded that Conrad has resistances to contact that were developed as coping mechanisms, but they are preventing him from experiencing the present fully and authentically.
- The counselor may question his pain in relation to his behavior issues, such as suicidal ideation and disobedient attitudes toward his parents. Conrad's response would be how much his pain is related to his previous experiences with his problems. This Counselor may conclude that his past appears to have a significant bearing on his current attitude or behavior, and it is dealt with by bringing it as much as possible into the present (Corey, 2013, p. 204).

- This counselor would have questioned Conrad about his current sadness as he had lost his friend Karen, with whom he had a relationship. Perhaps Conrad would have responded to his current sad feeling after Karen died. The counselor may conclude that Conrad left unfinished business, which can manifest as unexpressed sadness and grief for Karen. This counselor could help Conrad by setting up situations in which he can feel his sadness and helplessness to the fullest extent.
- Conrad would have been questioned by the counselor about his current confusion, and Conrad would have discussed the current situation in which he is confused about who he is, and he would have probably expressed discomfort with the current feeling he is going through and bore up for the confusion. After his brother's death, he considers himself to be at a crossroads in his life. This counselor encourages Conrad to grow by showing him that if he accepts all aspects of himself without judging them, he can begin to think, feel, and act differently.

Reality Therapy

I would have focused on Conrad's love and belonging, happiness, relationship, and freedom if this author were a reality therapy counselor.

- This counselor would have inquired about Conrad's love and belonging needs, particularly those of his family and school. Conrad may respond that he is watching over his family and friends because he expressed dissatisfaction with school and family in the film. This counselor may come to the conclusion that his feelings of love and belonging to his family and school were not as fulfilled as he had hoped. As a result, this counselor assists him in developing a sense of belonging to the family and society in which he lives.

- "Do you feel happy in your life?" this counselor may inquire. Conrad may respond that he is unhappy because he attempted suicide in the past and has been struggling with his anxiety. Because he is hostile toward his parents and disobeys them, this counselor may conclude that he is unhappy, resulting in his parents' authority. This counselor approaches him with the intention of teaching him to choose what he wants and satisfy his decision-making.
- "Tell me about your relationship with your family," this counselor would have asked to better understand his relationship with his family. Conrad might have responded by saying that the relationship has deteriorated since the passing of his brother. If the therapist determines that the broken family relationship has not been resolved, she may be able to assist him in mending those fences.
- This counselor would have asked Conrad what made him feel unfree, followed by the question, "Tell me about how you feel free in your life," and the next question, "Tell me about why you don't feel free." Conrad may respond that he cannot control his life because he has failed to control his emotions, which he should control. The counselor may conclude that he lacked internal control and assist him in regaining control of himself.

Family Systems Therapy

This therapist would have concentrated on Conrad's family system, family members, family goals, and family life cycle if she had been using family systems therapy.

- This counselor would have inquired about Conrad's family system issues, which are presented in his family story and will provide meaning for his family. Conrad would have

mentioned that his mother and father had a falling out with some people after his brother died. This therapist may come to the conclusion that the loss of his brother severely damaged his family unit.

- It's possible that this counselor inquired about each member of Conrad's family. Conrad may have said when projected to his father at the conclusion of the film, that he understands him better than his mother. This therapist may come to the conclusion that his mother did not fulfill all of the roles Conrad and his father had hoped she would.
- This counselor would query about his family's aim by asking, "What do you think your family's goal is?" and then following up with, "Have you ever discussed your family goal with your family?" It's possible that Conrad stated that he'd never heard of or given any thought to family goals. This counselor may come to the conclusion that failing to set goals for his family makes it harder for each member to get where they are going over time.
- This therapist would ask about Conrad's family cycle and how it influences the family cycle. Conrad's family's transition into parenthood is examined by the counselor. Conrad is at the adolescent stage, therefore this counselor can assist the family in parenting and set them up to support Conrad as an independent adult in the future.

Christian Therapy

I would have concentrated on Conrad's identity, spiritual needs, security, sin, and hope if this counselor were a Christian therapist.

- The counselor would inquire, "Tell me about who you are," in order to comprehend his identity. Conrad might have said that he finds it difficult to provide an explanation because he hid his identity in the film. This counselor can give Conrad biblical guidance on how to comprehend and accept his identity in Christ.
- If Conrad had been queried by this counselor about his spiritual requirements, he might have said he didn't have any. Conrad should have all of his spiritual needs met, especially those for love, significance, and forgiveness (Tan, 2022). This counselor supports him in achieving a fundamental level of spiritual well-being by recognizing the gospel through agape love.
- This therapist would have probed Conrad about his sense of shame and remorse about his wrongdoings. Sin is the basic issue, yet not all emotional anguish is brought on by individual sin (Tan, 2022). This therapist assists Tan in identifying his emotional anguish caused by his guilt and enables the unconscious guilt to be healed by the power of the holy spirit.
- This counselor would have inquired about Conrad's hope, but Conrad might not have answered whether he had hope or not. The counsellor may come to the conclusion that for hope to exist, one must believe in God. This counselor can help him develop a close relationship with Jesus, giving him a genuine hope.

Conclusion

Composing 12 theories is a voyage to counseling Conrad, followed by each theory. This counselor makes use of 12 different theories to comprehend Conrad's mental state and provide

him with improved guidance as a result. This counselor is aware, as well, that the greatest psychological power and healing can be derived from love, which is recognized as the most essential and fundamental requirement of humans. I am also a big fan of the movie Ordinary People, and the reason why the movie holds a special place in my heart is because it allows me to investigate all 12 hypotheses via the lens of Conrad's situation. After Conrad was involved in a terrible boating accident, the responsibility of the counselor, in my opinion, should be to assist Conrad in successfully expressing his feelings and guiding him so that he can live his life feeling free from guilt. I particularly appreciate existential therapy and reality therapy because the therapist can help Conrad regain his current emotional and mental stability so that he may genuinely live in the present moment to the fullest. I also prefer the Christian counseling method because I am aware that only Christian therapy can provide a unique hope for the future in God, and I find that to be quite encouraging. In conclusion, this counselor sincerely hopes that Conrad will be able to conquer his anxiety and sadness, grow up and mature enough to move on from the tragedy that has befallen him in the past, and find strength in God.

References

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