

Introduction to Psychological Counselling

Counselling Theory

Session Week 2

Abba Hailegebriel Girma

*The Ethiopian Orthodox Theological
College Houston, Texas, USA*

Aim and Learning Outcomes – Week 2

Session

Aim

- To introduce students to the theory and practice of counselling

Learning Outcomes

- At the end of this session, students will be able to:
 - Demonstrate a practical and theoretical understanding of the core conditions of empathy, congruence and unconditional positive regard

Introduction

- Previous lesson focused on the ‘General Concepts of Counselling’.
- It gave:
 - Some theoretical definitions of counselling,
 - The aims of counselling and
 - Factors in counselling practices
- This week lesson will deal with theory of counselling in diverse ways.

Overview of Counselling

- The counselling process and relationship with client has a developmental or cyclical component to it – a beginning, middle and end
- Each stage has different relationship tasks and challenges
- Different theorists place different emphasis on importance of various stages or number of stages
- The counselling process has also **four phases**:
 1. **Preliminary** - Create the necessary physical and psychological conditions for relationship to begin
 2. **Beginning** - Begin to build trust and Limit confrontation in this phase
 3. **Action** - Relationship with trust continues to grow
 4. **Ending** - Emphasis on reviewing, consolidating, saying goodbye, shifting success to client

Counselling Theory

- Counselling methods are based on some theoretical structure
- These methods are the foundation of good counselling
- A theory provides the counsellor with a lens from which to view the counselling process, the client-indicated concern, and ways of working to achieve client improvement
- Without a well thought out theory, counselling can risk being ineffective

Continued

There are many counselling theories or ideas on how to work with client for their healing and growth. The major counselling theories include:

1. Psychoanalytic theory
2. Behaviour theory
3. Adlerian theory
4. Analytic theory
5. Existential theory
6. Person-centred theory
7. Family systems theory
8. Rational-emotive behaviour theory
9. Cognitive theory
10. Multicultural theory
11. Gestalt theory
12. Transactional analysis theory

Counselling Theorists

- Understanding the influence of biographical backgrounds of major counselling theorists. They played crucial roles in Psychological Counselling profession.
- In order to understand the theory of counselling it is essential to observe some theorists' backgrounds and their theories:
 - Sigmund Freud
 - Carl Rogers
 - Carl Jung
 - Frederick “Fritz” Perls
 - B.F. Skinner
 - Albert Ellis

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

Psychoanalytic Theory



- Freud has developed psychoanalytic theory – human behaviour
- Psychoanalysis is both an approach to therapy and a theory of personality
- This therapeutic technique that attempts to provide insight into one's thoughts and actions
- Psychoanalytic treatment explores how unconscious factors affect current relationships and patterns of thought, emotion and behaviour. Treatment traces these patterns back to their historical origins, considers how they have changed and developed over time, and helps the individual to cope better with the realities of their current life situation.
- The focus is on those aspects of inner life that are painful, embarrassing, or guilt-provoking.
- The analyst focuses on two basic goals:
 1. Helping clients gain insight into their own functioning
 2. Finding ways to get Id impulses satisfied in socially acceptable ways
- Psychoanalytic Theory emphasizes unconscious motivation – the main causes of behaviour lie buried in the unconscious mind

Continued (Freud)

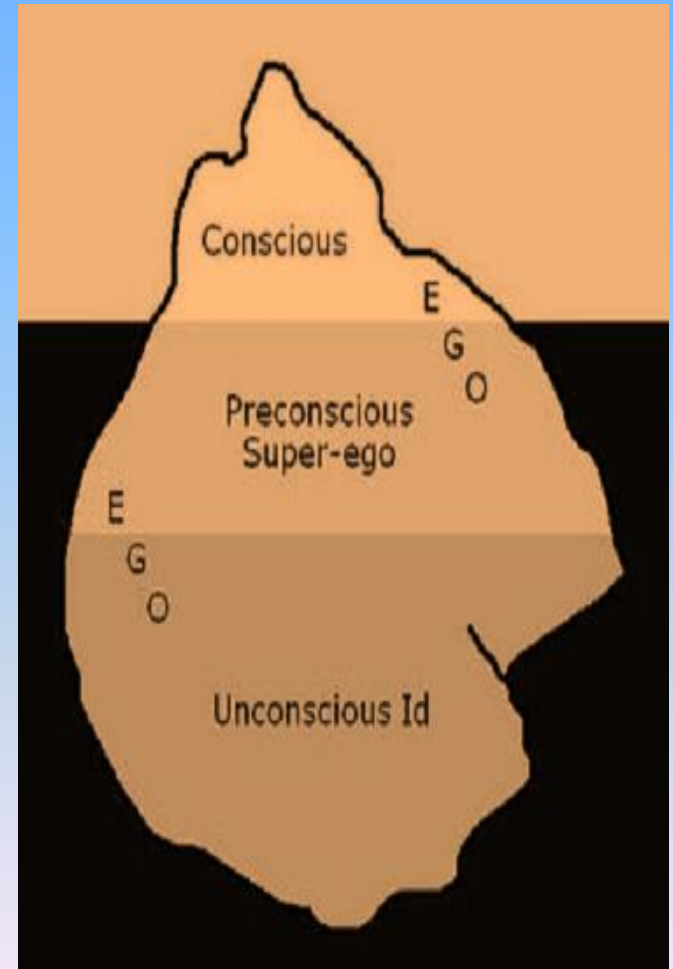
- According to Freud the unconscious is the safe haven for our recollection of painful events and also it is where we store our instinctual drives. It is in this part of the personality that infantile desires and demands are hidden from the conscious of one's personality because they would conflict with a person's day to day living.
- The personality was divided into three elements: the Id, the ego and the superego.
- These elements are not physical structures found in the brain.
- They represent a general model of personality that describes the interaction of various behaviours and drives that motivate us.
- The Psychodynamic Perspective:
- **Id** - instinctual drives present at birth
 - It does not distinguish between reality and fantasy
 - It operates according to the pleasure principle
- **Ego** - develops out of the id in infancy
 - It understands reality and logic
 - It is mediator between id and superego
- **Superego**
 - internalization of society's and parental moral standards
 - One's conscience; focuses on what the person "should" do
 - Can be harshly punitive using feelings of guilt
 - Partially unconscious

Continued (Freud)

Three levels of Mind:

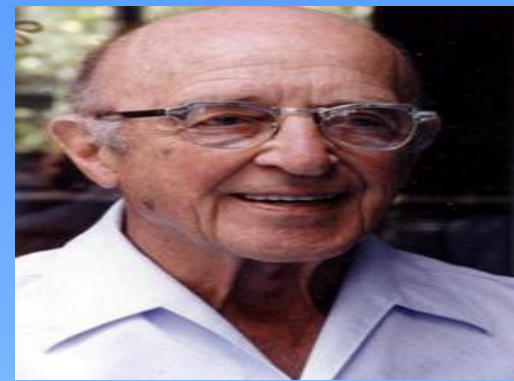
- (1) Conscious - all the thoughts, feelings, and sensations that we are aware of at this particular moment represent the conscious level.
- (2) Preconscious - a region of the mind holding information that is not conscious but is easily retrievable into conscious awareness.
- (3) Unconscious - a region of the mind that includes unacceptable thoughts, wishes, feelings, and memories. Inaccessible warehouse of anxiety-producing thoughts and drives

3 Levels of Mind



Carl Rogers (1902-1987)

Person-centred theory



- Modern counselling probably started with Carl Rogers, back 1940's started out by doing something that he called 'educational therapy'.
- Rogers stressed the importance of the client's personal understanding of his/her experiences instead of the counsellor's interpretation of them.
- Rogerian Therapy (Counselling)
- Client centred or Person centred therapy keeps a very significant place in psychology.
- In client-centred therapy, clients gain insights into their problems through the examination of their experiences.
- The counsellors do not explain the meaning of experiences or tell the clients what to do.
- Client-centred therapy is based on the belief that individuals are controlled by their own values and choices rather than by other factors such as the environment or unconscious drives.
- Its goal is to help people fulfil their unique potential, which is called self-actualization.
- In developing client-centred therapy, Rogers emphasized the need for a close relationship between the patient (client) and the therapist (counsellor).

Continued (Rogers)

- Rogers thought better alternative would be to give child unconditional positive regard - loving the child regardless of behaviour
- This allows child to explore all potentials
- Therapy could help a person reconnect with his/her organismic valuing process
- Direction comes from the client rather than from the therapist's insights, so referred to as nondirective therapy, later client-centred therapy
- Since Rogers viewed people as essentially good, the outcome is the development of a fully functioning person

□ Rogers' Theory – Therapy

- Unconditional Positive Regard
- Congruence
- Empathic understanding

Carl Jung (1875 -1961)

Analytic Theory



- Carl Jung –
 - Psychiatrist
 - Founder of a neo-psychoanalytic school of psychology
 - Analytical Psychology
 - His unique and broadly influential approach to psychology has emphasized understanding the psyche through exploring the worlds of dreams, art, mythology, world religion and philosophy.
 - Although he was a theoretical psychologist and practicing clinician for most of his life, much of his life's work was spent exploring other realms, including
 - Eastern and Western philosophy
 - Alchemy
 - Astrology,
 - Sociology, as well as literature and
 - The arts.
- Jung - Stressed concept of the psychological archetype, theory of synchronicity and the collective unconscious - also known as “a reservoir of the experiences of our species.”
- He also emphasized the importance of balance and harmony. He cautioned that modern humans rely too heavily on science and logic and would benefit from integrating spirituality and appreciation of the unconscious realm.
 - ❑ Like Freud’s Conscious - Ego: conscious level; carries out daily activities
 - ❑ Like Freud’s – Personal Unconscious: individual’s thoughts, memories, wishes, impulses
 - ❑ Collective Unconscious: Storehouse of memories inherited from the common ancestors of the whole human race; no counterpart in Freud’s theory

Frederick Perls (1893 – 1970)

Gestalt theory



- Known as “Fritz” Perls
- psychiatrist and psychotherapist
- Developed Gestalt theory (Gestalt – German Origin – described as a «form» or «pattern»)
- The primary objectives of Gestalt therapy is the ability to restore the self-awareness which is lost when a psychological disorder becomes evident.
- The main idea of Gestalt therapy is the extension of awareness, when all current senses and behaviours merge influencing the interconnection of the individual and his surroundings.
- Gestalt therapy became a good remedy for many people which could assist them to solve their problems, it has boundaries.
- Fritz Perls concentrated on things essential for the individual for the development of his personality.
- Nevertheless, all people are social and they are not able to reach fully their potential without building a relationship with others and collaborating to reach the common aim.
- People try hard to find the harmony, peace of mind and happiness, which is unattainable on one's own, otherwise the happiness is not real.
- Separation from others cannot bring to genuine happiness. Happiness can be obtained in the fulfillment of real love, which is not concentrated on self but is revealed through other people to share this love with.

B.F. Skinner(1904-1990)

Behaviourists Theory



- Skinner focused on observable behaviour
- The task of scientific inquiry:
- To establish functional relationships between experimenter-controlled stimulus and organism's response
- No presumptions about internal entities - The "empty organism" approach
- Behaviour modification
- Used in a variety of applied settings
- Reinforce desired behaviour and extinguish undesired behaviour
- A basic assumption of his was that all language, including private, internal discourse, was a behaviour that developed in the same manner as other skills.
- Skinner stressed that a sentence is merely part of "a behaviour chain, each element of which provides a conditional stimulus for the production of the succeeding element."
- He claimed that there were four general types of speech:
- Echoic behaviour is the primary form of verbal behaviour of language learners
- Interverbals include such things as "Please" and "Thank you."
- Autoclitics are subject to the same effects of reinforcement as verbalized speech and that previously reinforced internal

Albert Ellis (1913 – 2007)

Rational Emotive Behaviour Therapy (REBT)



- Albert Ellis –
 - Psychoanalyst
 - Developed REBT
 - thinks people are born with the potential to think rationally and irrationally.
- Emotional disturbance comes largely from irrational thinking (elevating our desires to demands).
- REBT is a philosophically-based, humanistic approach that emphasizes individuals' capacity for creating their own self-enhancing and self-defeating emotions.
- Human thinking and emotion are not two different processes—our thinking, emoting, and acting all interact together
- REBT is based on the concept that emotions and behaviours result from cognitive processes
- Behavioural Techniques: use relaxation protocols, operant conditioning and reward, and self-monitoring etc.
- The REBT therapist helps clients to develop a more “rational,” non-demanding philosophy and thinking style.
- REBT theory holds that if a person can think more rationally (especially in the face of negative events), s/he will suffer less emotional disturbance and act in less self-defeating ways. Rationality is the key to achieving goals.
- Ellis believes that human beings start developing ideas, expectations and hypotheses about themselves and the world in the first two years of life. These are vague and do not lead to many consistent predictions.

Conclusion

- This session showed some theory of counselling with Counselling Theorists. It is also a short introduction to the pros and cons of this approach, which has predominated in the counselling world for the past twenty years.
- We continue to address an introduction to Person-Centred Counselling.

Learning Journal

- Keep your Learning Journal.
- Explore your own understanding about the theory of counselling
- Record your impressions, self-observations and reflections responses to course exercises and material.
- Reflect for a few minutes on today lesson.
- Write your learning journal each week after lesson.

Next – Week 3 Session

- Introduction to Person-Centred Counselling

References

- Cory, Gerald (2009) Theory and Practice of Counselling and Psychotherapy 8th ed. (Belmont: Thomson Brooks/ Cole)
- Neukrug, Edward S. (2011) Counselling Theory and Practice (Belmont: Brooks/ Cole)
- Jones-Smith, Elsie (2012) Theories of Counselling and Psychotherapy: An Integrative Approach (Thousand Oaks, CA and London: SAGE)