COUNSELLING THEORIES

OBJECTIVE:
UNDERSTAND CONSTRUCT OF THEORIES AND ITS APPLICATION ON PRACTISE
WHAT IS A THEORY

- Patterson (1986): Theory is a (a) set of stated assumption regarding a certain field, (b) set of definitions of the ideas and concepts in the theory © concepts that bear certain relationship to one another, and (d) hypothesis constructed from these assumptions, definitions and relationships
Continuum of theories

- Frank Parsons
- 1909-1940s: developing better means of assessing people aptitudes and interest
- Directive counselling – heavily on advising and also known as trait-factor
- 1942 - Carl Rogers: Non-directive as helper is not adviser
- Directive vs non-directive?
Key points in different theories

- Nature of human being
- Basic assumptions
- Goals
- Key concept/construct
- Personality development
- Adaptive/maladaptive behavior
- Learning process/change
- Techniques
The Five Schools of Thought

Psychodynamic

- Human beings are basically determined by psychic energy and by early experiences.
- Unconscious motives and conflicts are central in present behavior. Irrational forces are strong and the individual is driven by impulses.
- These impulses are solely sexual and aggressive.
- Early development is of critical importance as later personality problems are rooted in repressed childhood conflicts.
Behavioral

- Humans are shaped and determined by socio-cultural conditioning.
- The view is basically one that is determinist as all behaviors are a product of learning through conditioning and reinforcement.
- What was learnt can be unlearnt.
Humanistic

- Humans are viewed positively as we have a basic inclination to become fully functioning.
- The context of counselling is often focused on the affective world of the client, moving towards self-actualization, gaining trust, spontaneity and focusing on the human condition.
- Humanistic approaches take a phenomenological, here-and-now approach.
- The relationship is thought to be fundamental to successful therapy.
Cognitive-Behavioral

- What we think is the root of our emotional and behavioral life.
- Consequently a change in cognition will inevitably cause a change in our behaviors and emotions.
- Dysfunction and maladjustment are problems of faulty or irrational thoughts.
Emerging Approaches

- As information on counseling is collected, new theories emerge.
- Emerging approaches often include aspects of previously founded theories.
- Contemporary emerging approaches tend to focus heavily on phenomenology, human uniqueness, multicultural concerns, and client empowerment.
Psychodynamic

Psychoanalysis

**Philosophy:** Humans are sexually and aggressively driven. Childhood conflicts emerge as personality problems when defense mechanisms fail.

**Theorist:** Sigmund Freud

**Goals:** Insight, personality restructuring, making the unconscious conscious, strengthen ego

**Techniques:** Transference analysis, dream analysis, catharsis, interpretation, free association
Psychoanalysis – cont’d

- Humans are amoral, selfish and irrational
- Adult’s behavior is determined by the crucial first five years
- Sexual impulses are key determinants of behavior – to gratify all bodily parts
- Our behavior is controlled by unconscious determinants
Three levels of awareness

- CONSCIOUS – equates with awareness
- PRECONSCIOUS – can be brought to the conscious state (recollections)
- UNCONSCIOUS – we are unaware of the mental activity, cannot bring into consciousness
Sub-system of personality

- **ID** – the instinct, including sex, aggression, instant gratification, the pleasure principles (primary process thinking — our most primitive need gratification type thoughts)
- **EGO** – develop because of the need of the person to deal with the realities of the world. EGO mediate between the pleasure principles and the outer world (to balance our primitive needs and our moral/ethical beliefs) - policemen
- **SUPREGO** – internally control the ID which is unaccepted. SUPEREGO is unconscious – represents what is ideal and strives for perfection (our conscience and counteracted the Id with moral and ethical thoughts)
Freud came to see personality as having three aspects, which work together to produce all of our complex behaviours: the **Id**, the **Ego** and the **Superego**. All 3 components need to be well-balanced in order to have good amount of psychological energy available and to have reasonable mental health.

**THE ID**: functions in the *irrational* and *emotional* part of the mind. At birth a baby’s mind is all Id - *want want want*. The Id is the primitive mind. It contains all the basic needs and feelings. It is the source for libido (psychic energy). And it has only one rule --> the “pleasure principle”: “I want it and I want it all now”. In transactional analysis, Id equates to "Child".

**THE EGO**: functions with the *rational* part of the mind. The Ego develops out of growing awareness that you can’t always get what you want. The Ego relates to the real world and operates via the “reality principle”. The Ego realizes the need for compromise and negotiates between the Id and the Superego. The Ego's job is to get the Id's pleasures but to be reasonable and bear the long-term consequences in mind.
THE SUPEREGO ("Over-I"): The Superego is the last part of the mind to develop. It might be called the moral part of the mind. The Superego becomes an embodiment of parental and societal values. It stores and enforces rules. It constantly strives for perfection, even though this perfection ideal may be quite far from reality or possibility. Its power to enforce rules comes from its ability to create anxiety.

The Superego has two subsystems: Ego Ideal and Conscience. The Ego Ideal provides rules for good behaviour, and standards of excellence towards which the Ego must strive. The Ego ideal is basically what the child’s parents approve of or value. The Conscience is the rules about what constitutes bad behaviour.

However, the Ego has a difficult time dealing with the competing demands of the Superego and the Id. According to the psychoanalytic view, this psychological conflict is an intrinsic and pervasive part of human experience. The conflict between the Id and Superego, negotiated by the Ego, is one of the fundamental psychological battles all people face. The way in which a person characteristically resolves the instant gratification vs. longer-term reward dilemma in many ways comes to reflect on their "character".
Freud’s model of personality structure

- **Conscious**: Contact with outside world
- **Preconscious**: Material just beneath the surface of awareness
- **Unconscious**: Difficult to retrieve material; well below the surface of awareness

**EGO**
- Psychological component
- Reality principle
- Secondary process thinking (reality testing)

**SUPerego**
- Social component
- Moral imperatives
- Contains the conscience & the ego-ideal

**ID**
- Pleasure principle
- Primary process thinking (wish fulfillment)

**BIOLOGICAL COMPONENT**
- The instincts EROS & THANATOS are associated with the unconscious mind and the Id

All psychic energy originates in the unconscious.
Strength and weaknesses

- The most comprehensive and detailed theory
- Need a lengthy process of training
- In clinical setting not in school
- Outdated view of female sexuality
- Deterministic and pessimistic view of human kind
- Success defined in term of client’s degree of acceptance of the helper’s view of life
More reading


- [http://www.kheper.net/topics/psychology/Freud.html](http://www.kheper.net/topics/psychology/Freud.html)
Analytic Therapy

- Philosophy: Humans strive for individuation. Humans are dynamic and spiritual
- Theorist: Carl Jung
- Goals: Integration of conscious and unconscious systems. Self-knowledge, personality restructuring
- Techniques: Personality assessment, art therapy, dream work, archetype analysis, card sort
Carl Gustav Jung. His approach to human psychology emphasized understanding the psyche through exploring the world of dreams, art, mythology, world religion and philosophy. He was a strong believer in the importance of integration of opposites (e.g. masculine and feminine, thinking and feeling, science and spirituality). Though not the first to analyze dreams, his contributions to dream analysis were influential and extensive.

The terms extrovert and introvert derive from this work. The extrovert orientation finds meaning outside the self, in the surrounding world, whereas the introvert is introspective and finds it within.
There are four psychological functions in Jung’s model: two rational functions (thinking and feeling), and two perceptive functions (sensation and intuition).
Carl Jung (1875-1961)

Jung asserted that individual's are born knowing certain things. For example, people are born afraid of the dark and fire. This has been passed down from our ancestors. For Jung these archetypes form the basis of personality, accounting for why people are not merely driven by their past experiences but also strive to grow and become something better. In essence, Jung saw the self as striving for wholeness.
Adlerian

- Alfred Adler (1819-1937)
- Freud's emphasis on biological urges (psychosexual) as determinants of behaviour was disputed by Alder. According to Alder the self enables us to fulfill our lifestyle, to become more than our genes have endowed on us. Alder foreshadowed the modern emphasis on self or human potential.
- Stressed the impact of social relationships on psychological development as opposed to that of psychosexual as theorised by Freud.
Individual Psychology

Philosophy: People are motivated by social interest. All behavior is goal directed as we strive to move from a position of felt minus to felt plus. There are five life tasks: 1) work, 2) love, 3) friendship, 4) spirituality, and 5) self-understanding.

Theorist: Alfred Adler

Goals: Identifying and exploring mistaken goals.

Techniques: Life style assessment, parent education, marriage and family therapy, play therapy, dream work, interpretation, paradoxical intention
Adler

- We feel inferior and strive for inferiority
- We need to master the environment or mastering others
- People are not powerless of external forces
- Psychological growth – moving from self centered attitude to mastery of the environment
- Developing life tasks
A major determinant of life style is the family environment in which the child grows.

The earliest experiences are significant because everything is so new and unexpected.

Adler gave special weight to the position of the child in relation to siblings (birth order).

1st born child is given much attention which is withdrawn with the birth of 2nd child.
Cont’d

- The firstborn child is likely to have intensified feelings of power and superiority, high anxiety, and overprotective tendencies.

- If the child is three or older when the second child is born, the child will already have developed a cooperating style.

- If the firstborn is less than three, hostility and resentment will be largely unconscious, which makes them more resistant to change in later life.

- 2nd child likely to be ambitious but better adjusted.

- The youngest child is spoiled and more likely to become a problem child and a neurotic maladjusted adult.
Behaviorism

- **Worldview:** Environment shaped us and we have little choice.

- **Philosophy:** All behavior results from learning. Only that which is measurable is relevant. If you "get rid of the symptom, you get rid of the problem."

- **Theorist:** B.F. Skinner

- **Goals:** Change the environment to change behavior. Problem alleviation.

- **Techniques:** Diagnosis, testing, implosive therapy, aversion therapy, conditioning, education, skills training, charting, reinforcement schedules, behavioral modification
* **Skinner's Concepts**

Psychologist B. F. Skinner three possible consequences of any behavior: **reinforcements** which are consequences which increase the likelihood of behavior (such as praise or food), **punishments** which tend to decrease behavior (such as a traffic ticket), and the **lack of reinforcement or punishment** which also tends to decrease behavior.

Skinner assumes that all human behavior is ultimately due to the above influences. Learning in the above ways is called **"conditioning"** and his entire system is often referred to as **"behaviorism."**
Aversive Therapy

- Aversive therapy aims to rid the client of the undesirable behaviour by pairing the behaviour with aversive consequences. e.g. If alcohol is paired with a nausea-inducing drug, or a sexually deviant impulse is paired with electric shock, the expected results is that the client will avoid the undesired behaviour. Merely thinking about alcohol makes the person feel nauseated.

Systematic Desensitisation

- Systematic desensitisation introduced mainly to treat phobias and specific anxieties. The client is gradually exposed to the feared object or situation. Over time the panic induced by the feared object will disappear.
Flooding

Flooding treats anxiety in quite the opposite manner. The phobic patient is immersed in the phobic situation and are encouraged to experience the full force of the anxiety storm. For example, someone who is agoraphobic and afraid to leave home would be encouraged to spend an hour in the park and thus be flooded with anxiety. Gradually the anxiety would disappear.
Cognitive

- **Philosophy**: A change in thinking creates a change in behavior or emotions. People tend to develop faulty thinking.

- **Theorists**: Beck, Burns, Meichenbaum

- **Goals**: Develop more effective cognitions

- **Techniques**: Education, cognitive-restructuring, behavioral modification
Cognitive philosophy – a commonsensical approach i.e. what people think and say about themselves – their attitudes, ideas and ideals is relevant and important.

Reject – unconscious (psychoanalytic), overt behavior (behaviorism) and neuropsychiatry (physiological disorder) as cause of emotional disturbances.
cognitive

- Problematic emotion and behavior are influenced by belief, attitudes and perception – cognition
- Faulty thinking
- Perception not events create one’s mood – fortune telling, ‘should’, mindreading, overgeneralized, labeling.
- Importance of internal dialogue
Rational Emotive Behavioral Therapy

- **Philosophy:** Human nature has inherent tendencies toward growth and rationality as well as toward dysfunction and irrationality. There is often tension between these. Beliefs are more important than objective reality.

- **Theorist:** Albert Ellis

- **Goals:** Assess irrational beliefs and change these to be more rational.

- **Techniques:** Many
assumptions

- People seek pleasure and avoid pain – Freud, Gestalt
- Early family and cultural influences are significant – Adler
- We are prone to suggestion
- Habit and cognitive conditioning make it difficult for people to think or act differently
- We refuse to acknowledge mistakes and use defenses
- Active teaching is more effective than passive learning (Piaget)
- People have the capacity to grow and become less disturbed (Maslow, Rogers)
Widespread Irrational Beliefs

1. An adult human must be loved or approved by almost everyone.
2. In order to feel worthwhile, a person must be competent in all possible respects.
3. When things are not the way you want them to be, it is a catastrophe.
4. People have little or no control over the external causes of the bad things that happen to them.
5. The best way to handle a dangerous or fear-producing event is to worry about it and dwell on it.
6. It is easier to avoid certain life difficulties and responsibilities than it is to face them.
7. One needs to depend on others and to rely on someone stronger than oneself.
8. One's present behavior is determined primarily by one's past history.
9. One should be upset by the problems of others.
10. There is always a perfect solution to a human problem, and it is essential to find it.

Ellis (1967) introduced 11 irrational beliefs.
- Man is disturbed not by things, but by the views which he takes of them – Epictetus, Roman Philosopher
- There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking make it so – Hamlet (Shakespeare)
Model ABCDE

- A – activating experiences
- B – beliefs about the experiences. What did you tell yourself? Should, must, ought
- C – consequences of your belief
- D – disputing irrational belief. Where is the evidence
- E – effect of disputing irrational belief. Bring about new effect or philosophy
Example of E

- Yes, I failed, and that’s not good, but ......
- I failed, but I refused to feel bad, awful or worthless (appropriate feeling)
- I learnt and will use my experience to do it better the next time (desired behavioural effect)
Reality Theory / Choice Therapy

- **Philosophy**: All of our behaviors are an attempt to control perceptions. We have basic human needs—survival, belonging, power, fun, freedom. How we attempt to meet these needs, and how successful we are, determines our identity. We have the ability to make new choices.

- **Theorist**: William Glasser

- **Goals**: Gain better control of our perceptions. Help the client be more responsible. Help the client find socially appropriate ways to meet needs.

- **Techniques**: Contracting, pinning down, education, confrontation, positiveness, resolving conflicts
Personality – people are ultimately self determining

Internal and external psychosocial pressures hinder emotional functioning

Identity – most important growth. Acceptance of others

Important of love and worth

Failure identity – lonely, self critical and irrational. Rigid and ineffective behaviour

Maladjustment – not fulfilling love and self worth
Humanistic

**Gestalt**

- **Worldview**: People are whole not part, seeking to find completeness
- **Philosophy**: People organize the world by their own subjective reality. We are holistic and strive for homeostasis.
- **Goals**: Integration of our own experiences and components. Develop appropriate boundaries. Complete unfinished business. Insight.
- **Techniques**: Enactment – completing unfinished business, directed behavior, fantasy, "empty chair, dream work, homework, "what’s your _____ telling you?“. Emphasize personal responsibilities.
Client-Centered

- **Worldview**: People have own potential, worth and dignity
- **Philosophy**: People are basically good and strive to actualize. The affective world of others is very important. Relationships bring change. People are unique and the subjective world of others is of the most importance.
- **Theorist**: Carl Rogers
- **Techniques**: Develop a positive relationship. Empathy, genuineness and positive regard
Client centered – con’d

- Incongruity issues – resolution of real self versus ideal self incongruence. Exploring in-depth of mixed and ambivalent emotions

- Issues: To release human potential to find it’s own natural directions and to resolve real self/ideal self.
"the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming"
Client centered

3 core conditions necessary and sufficient

1. Genuineness
   Transparent
   Congruent

2. Unconditional Positive Regard - A real caring and respect for the other person, knowing the person has the capacity for self-direction

3. Empathy - understanding
Existential

- **Philosophy:** Dealing with questions and conditions of existence is necessary. Meaning must be created. The immediate moment is of most importance.

- **Theorists:** Victor Frankl, Irvin Yalom, Rollo May


- **Techniques:** Develop a positive relationship. Work in the here-and-now. Understand the client’s phenomenological world.
The goals of existential therapy are:

- to enable people to become more truthful with themselves
- to widen their perspective on themselves and the world around them
- to find clarity on how to proceed in the future while taking lessons from the past and creating something valuable to live for in the present
● Seeking clarity and meaning in all these four dimension of life
Multicultural

- **Philosophy**: All learning is culturally defined. Cultural identity and development are a key component of who each person is. Norms differ greatly across cultures.
- **Goals**: Change oppressive situations, understand cultural identity
- **Techniques**: Vary by culture, gain awareness of client’s worldview
Integrative

- **Philosophy**: No one theory is comprehensive enough for all clients and problems.
- **Goals**: Assess what the client needs and offer this approach or appropriate techniques.
- **Techniques**: Varied
Convergence of theories

- Almost all theories attempt to combat demoralization – emotional charged, confiding relationship, healing setting, help client make sense of experience, and attempt to restore health.
- All involve therapeutic process – consciousness raising, emotional catharsis or corrective emotional exp, explore choices and responsibilities, alter responses to stimuli, reinforcement and contingency plan.
- A developmental cognitive model – reality is relative, individually constructed. All theories are based on an attempt to solve a common problems.
Application?

- YOU decide client’s role in the world? YOUR views of their nature
- CLIENT’S personality development? The importance of first 5 years
- CLIENT’S maladaptive behavior? Why maladjustment?
- YOUR goal of helping for the CLIENT
- YOUR relationship with the CLIENT
- YOUR roles