Humanistic and Person Centered Therapy

Conditions of worth and congruence

Person centered therapy rests on Rogers's account of the actualizing tendency, conditions of worth, and the incongruence between self concept and experience. The path shares the premise that the person holds the answer, and it offers a structured way to follow that premise between sessions. The pairing is the closest in orientation, and the differences in structure deserve a plain statement.

Clinical frame

- Actualizing tendency as the basic motivational premise
- Conditions of worth introjected from others distort the self concept
- Incongruence between self concept and organismic experience as the source of distress
- Change follows the therapist's empathy, unconditional positive regard, and congruence, offered non directively

Path to Freedom frame

- The self as already present and recognized rather than constructed
- Masks and invisible contracts as adaptations to conditions of worth
- Alignment as a bridge between who a person is and what they do
- Structured reflection, self paced, with few tools

Points of conceptual fit

Conditions of worth and invisible contracts

DISCOVERY

Conditions of worth are the rules under which acceptance was offered. Invisible contracts name the same rules as commitments the person still keeps. The correspondence is close.

Incongruence and Alignment

ALIGNMENT

Rogers located distress in the gap between self concept and experience. Alignment addresses the gap between who a person is and how they live.

The actualizing tendency and the self already present

AMPLIFICATION

Both assume no outside agent supplies the direction. In later stages a person lives from what has been recognized, the practical extension of the same premise.

Division of labor

The clinician

- Relational conditions of empathy, regard, and congruence
- Non directive pacing of the client's own process
- Judgment on structure between sessions

The path

- Structured reflection between sessions
- Naming adopted roles and inherited rules
- Pointing the client back to the therapist

Coordination and cautions

Person centered practice is non directive, and a structured path may sit uneasily with that stance. The clinician decides whether structure between sessions supports or interrupts the client's own pacing.

Return to the clinician when a memory returns with more force than reflection can hold, when sleep, appetite, or functioning change sharply, when panic, numbness, or a sense of being unreal appears, when there is fear of someone in the person's life, or when there are thoughts of ending life or harming someone (988 in the United States).

A proposed conceptual integration offered by The Autonomy Commission. It is not a manualized protocol and has not been empirically evaluated. The Path to Freedom is not psychotherapy, offers no diagnosis or treatment, and defers to the treating clinician on every clinical decision. Nothing is shared without the client's written consent.

An institute for the self that was always there.

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