

COUNSELLING SUPERVISION

LECTURE 3

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LECTURE 3:THEORIES OF COUNSELLING PRACTICE

Topic contents:

- What is the meaning of the term theory?
- Overview of theories in counselling practice
- Theories of counselling practice
 - Psychoanalytic theory
 - Behavioral theory
 - Person Centered theory
 - Solution Focused theory

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Discuss the various theories of counselling practice.
- Relate the theories to counselling supervision.

MEANING OF THE TERM THEORY

- A theory is a set of accepted beliefs or organized principles that explain and guide analysis.
- Theories help counsellors understand the dynamics of human behavior and choose therapeutic approaches appropriate to specific clients and situations.
- Psychological theories come alive in the counsellor's mind if they are seen as extensions of life experiences of various theorists.

OVERVIEW OF COUNSELLING THEORIES

- Psychoanalytic theory; this is a method of psychotherapy that focuses on the unconscious factors that motivate behavior.
- The first six years of human development are viewed as the determinants of later development in personality.
- The inborn drives particularly sexual are also stressed in the personality development. The key figure in psychoanalysis is Sigmund Freud.

BEHAVIOR THEORY

- The basic assumption of this approach is that behavior is learnt therefore it can be unlearned.
- Principles of learning such as reinforcement, extinction, shaping of behavior and modelling are employed.
- A great emphasis is paid on precision and detail in assessing the clients' problems and then determining the appropriate interventions.
- The proponents of behavior therapy are; B. F. Skinner and Albert Bandura.

PERSON CENTERED THEORY

- Pioneered by Carl Rogers, its main emphasis is on understanding and caring for the client.
- The main aspects of the person centered approach which are also known as the co-conditions are; genuineness, unconditional positive regard and empathy.
- These aims at building an atmosphere of trust whose effect is to foster change on the part of the client.

SOLUTION FOCUSED BRIEF THEORY

- This approach in therapy is based on solution building as opposed to problem solving.
- Exploring current resources and future hopes, it is a brief therapy often lasting about five sessions.
- Solution focused brief therapy is known to be effective across a wide range of problems. It is also cost effective.

THEORIES OF COUNSELLING PRACTICE

PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY.

BEHAVIORAL APPROACH.

PERSON CENTERED THEORY.

SOLUTION FOCUSED BRIEF THEORY.

PSYCHOANALYTIC THEORY

- Psychoanalysis was Freud's base of the person and personality.
- He explored the meaning of his own dreams and through that he got an insight into the dynamics of personality and development.
- His theory was based on observations of primarily middle and upper class patients.
- Psychoanalysis has become the benchmark against which other theories are measured (Corey 2009).

BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

- Psychic energy is used in planning, thinking, feeling and remembering. This energy is believed to come from two main drives; the life and sexual instincts.
- Psychic determinism; this means that everything that people do has a specific cause and nothing is accidental. Psychoanalysis therefore sets out to unearth the unconscious.

ASSUMPTIONS

- People are driven mainly by the unconscious. It is believed to be the bedrock of desires, motivations and conflicts.
- The id, ego, and the super-ego are the structures of the mind. Personality is shaped by the way psychic conflicts are resolved.
- Defense mechanisms are used to protect the ego from anxiety.

THERAPEUTIC GOALS

- The main goals of the psychoanalytic approach are;
 - To make the unconscious conscious.
 - To strengthen the ego so that behavior is based more on reality and less on instinctual cravings or irrational guilt (Corey 2009, P. 69).
- Successful therapy restructures an individual's character and modifies their personality.

THERAPEUTIC TECHNIQUES

- Maintaining the analytic framework; this consists of setting up procedures, such as the frequency of the therapy sessions, consistency of the meetings, starting and ending the sessions on time.
- Free association; the relaxed client is left to talk about anything that comes to mind.
- The work of the therapist is to identify the repressed material that is locked in the subconscious.

TECHNIQUES

- Interpretation; this consists of the counsellor pointing out, explaining, and even teaching the clients the meaning of behavior that is manifested in dreams, free association, resistances and the therapeutic relationship itself (Corey 2009).
- Dream analysis; dreams are considered as symbolic wish fulfilments and royal roads to the unconscious. When one is asleep, there is less resistance and a few things from the subconscious come to awareness in symbolic form.

TECHNIQUES

- Analysis and interpretation of transference; transference occurs when a client projects feelings towards the therapist while such feelings belong to significant others in the client's life.
- Transference in therapy brings to surface the repressed emotions that have been troubling the client.

TASK

- Assume that you are a supervisor in a drug rehabilitation center. Identify a case that you may recommend your supervisee to use psychoanalytic theory.
- What techniques would you expect the supervisee to use?

BEHAVIORAL THEORY

- The behavior approach to therapy is a sharp departure from psychoanalysis with its focus being on observable behavior, learning experiences that promote change.
- In this approach, treatment is tailored to suit an individual client after assessment has been carried out.

THERAPEUTIC GOALS

- The general goal is to increase personal choice and to create new conditions for learning (Corey, 2009).
- Goal setting is an outstanding aspect of behavior therapy. The therapist in collaboration with the client determines the goals.
- The main focus of therapy is on specific identified behaviors which become the target for therapy, followed by an exploration of the reasons as to why the client persists with that kind of behavior.

THERAPEUTIC TECHNIQUES

- Imagery-based technique; the therapist in collaboration with the client identifies specific triggers that cause anxiety.
- These situations are then graded as per the degree of anxiety they elicit from the client.
- While the client is deeply relaxed, he/she is instructed to imagine each event. Relaxation and anxiety are incompatible and through progressive relaxation, the client eventually ceases to experience the anxiety.

TECHNIQUES

- Cognitive restructuring; the therapist helps the client analyze and then revise their dysfunctional assumptions. Using reason and evidence, the distorted thought patterns are replaced with more accurate and functional ones.
- Assertiveness and social skills training; the therapist may model for the client appropriate assertive behavior, such as body posture, voice training, and eye contact.
- The newly learned assertive behavior is carried out in the real world.

TECHNIQUES

- Self-control procedures; the therapist works with the client towards setting goals and standards to guide behavior. The goal set should be specific, realistic, measurable and short-term.
- Token economy; this is a system of individual reinforcement of target behaviors in which tokens are administered.
- Reinforcement is only given when a person increases or decreases behavior as per the goals of therapy.

TASK

- How would you apply behavioral theory during supervision?

PERSON CENTRED THEORY

- Carl Rogers' basic assumptions are;
 - People are essentially trustworthy, have potential for understanding themselves and resolving problems without direct intervention.
 - People are capable of self-directed growth if they are involved in a specific kind of therapeutic relationship.
 - The quality of the therapist-client relationship is seen as the determinant of the counselling outcomes.

KEY CONCEPTS

- View of human nature; people are essentially forward moving, constructive, and realistic.
- Therapists need only to communicate three attributes to their clients in order to facilitate their growth. These are; congruency, unconditional positive regard and accurate empathic understanding.
- Therefore the client becomes less defensive and more open to him or herself and their world.

ACTUALIZING TENDENCY

- There is an innate tendency for humans to heal, grow and fulfil their potential.
- Growth is always in the direction of autonomy and this leads to internal regulation of the individual's existence.
- Growth is also towards greater levels of complexity.

SELF VS SELF CONCEPT

- As people grow and experience the world, a portion of this experience becomes labelled as the self.
- It develops through interaction with others and involves awareness of being and functioning.
- The self concept on the other hand constitutes all the experiences that the person recognizes as “me”. For example when one discovers that he or she is good in music, this experience becomes part of their self concept.

CONDITIONS OF WORTH

- Conditions of worth arise when an individual perceives that some aspects of themselves are evaluated negatively by persons important to them.
- What follows is that the individual begins to deny those parts of them that are negatively evaluated.
- Initially conditions of worth are external, they are reactions of significant others. After a while, the conditions are internalized as parts of the self.

INTERNAL LOCUS OF EVOLUTION

- Refers to the way an individual assesses him or herself while external locus of evaluation is how much the individual needs to be evaluated by others.
- External locus of evaluation; one will need to be complimented by others in order to feel that they have done a good job.
- Internal locus of evaluation, one is able to affirm himself or herself and is genuinely feel happy with self.

THERAPEUTIC CONDITION

- Congruence; also translates to genuineness, transparency, or realness.
- It refers to the counsellor's awareness of his experience during therapy. Through authenticity, the therapist serves as a model of a human being struggling toward greater realness (Corey, 2009).
- The more the therapist is himself or herself, with no professional facade, the greater it is the likelihood that the client will change and grow in a constructive manner.

UNCONDITIONAL POSITIVE REGARD

- The counsellor approaches the client with complete acceptance and caring.
- Carl Rogers spoke of “prizing” to describe this attitude. The therapists caring should not be possessive or so that the client can like the therapist.
- Through unconditional positive regard, the therapist communicates to the client that the client is valued the way he or she is and that it is ok to have the feelings that the client has without the risk of losing the therapists’ acceptance.

ACCURATE EMPATHIC UNDERSTANDING

- The counsellor tries to appreciate the client's situation from the client's point of view, showing an emotional understanding of and sensitivity to the client's feelings throughout the therapy session.
- In person-centered therapy, empathy constitutes a major portion of the therapeutic work.
- A primary way of conveying this empathy is by active listening that shows careful and perceptive attention to what the client is saying.

THERAPEUTIC TECHNIQUES

- The therapeutic relationship is the main cause of growth and not the use of techniques in counselling.
- The assumption that clients have resourcefulness for positive movement without the counsellor assuming an active and direct role (Corey, 2009).
- The therapist's presence is viewed as being most powerful in bringing therapeutic change and particularly when qualities and skills such as accepting, respecting and understanding are honestly expressed by the therapist.

TASK

- How will the supervisee present client case differently when using the person centered approach?

SOLUTION FOCUSED THEORY

- It is based on solution-building rather than solving problems.
- Current resources and future hopes are explored as opposed to present problems and past causes.
- This mode of therapy usually takes place in three to five sessions.
- It is based on the premise that the clearer a client is about his or her goals, the more the likelihood that they will be achieved.

CONTINUATION

- Individuals who come to therapy do have the capability of behaving effectively, even though this effectiveness may be temporarily blocked by negative cognitions.
- Clients often present only one side of themselves. Solution focused therapists invite clients to examine another side of the story they are presenting.
- Small changes pave the way for larger changes.

THERAPEUTIC PROCESS

- Takes on a collaborative approach between the therapist and the client.
- This is based on the understanding that clients are the experts when it comes to their own lives.
- They are aware of what has or has not worked for them in the past.

STEPS

- The following steps characterize the process of therapy:
 - Finding out what clients want rather than what they do not want.
 - Instead of looking at pathology and giving labels to the clients, look for what is working or their assets, and encourage them to use them more.
 - If what the client is doing is not working, then the client is encouraged to try something different.
 - Therapy is kept brief by having each session as a complete one.

TECHNIQUE

- Establishing a collaborative relationship; this constitutes the development of a working alliance between the client and the therapist.
- It also means that the client is the true expert.
- This way the counsellor brings to light what the client has done by himself or herself to bring out positive change. This encourages the client to rely more on their resources and less on the counsellor.

EXCEPTION QUESTIONS

- There were times in the client's life when the problems they face today were not there.
- These times are referred to as exceptions. By directing the client through questioning to these exception times, the therapist increases the chances that the client will work towards solutions.
- It is a reminder to the client that the problems have not existed throughout their lives.
- The therapist asks the client what has to happen for these exceptions to occur more often.

THE MIRACLE QUESTION

- This is the main technique used to set up therapeutic goals.
- “If a miracle happened overnight such that when you wake up you find your problem has been solved, what would be different?”
- Often times the clients will give a positive answer which is actually the solution to their problem and the therapist then encourages him or her to imagine the changed situation and state what they would do differently.

SCALING QUESTION

- This is used when change in the clients experience is not easily observable.
- For example the therapist may ask, “on a scale of one to ten describe how bad you think the situation is” this allows the client to appreciate the progress they have made in as far as their problem is concerned and as such they can pay closer attention to what needs to be done.

TASK

- Give an example of a case that you can recommend for the solution focused brief therapy.

SUMMARY

- We have discussed the meaning of theory, explored the various theories of counselling practice, the key concepts and techniques used.
- We have attempted to relate the counselling theories to counselling supervision.

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NEXT LECTURE

Models of Counselling Supervision