



Person Centred Therapy

What is Person Centred Therapy?

Person Centred Therapy is a method of promoting client healing and wellbeing by treating the client as an individual of inherent worth and dignity. The person-centred therapist or counsellor emphasises the importance of clients' own innate ability to heal themselves.

Clients are treated with *empathy* and *congruence* – relating genuinely and authentically. While the relationship between client and counsellor is important in all therapeutic encounters, it takes centre stage in the Person Centred approach. Clients are viewed with 'unconditional positive regard,' as rational beings, rather than the view that it's the client's irrationality that is causing their distress.

When treated as 'individuals of dignity and worth,' clients experience less anxiety. They feel free and confident enough to pursue their own healing, desires and destiny.

The Tenets of Person Centred Therapy

The Person Centred approach has four basic tenets: 1) Each individual has dignity and worth; 2) Behaviour can be viewed perceptually (i.e. each person's perspective is unique); 3) Humans are drawn towards self-actualisation, and 4) People are basically good and trustworthy.

The tenet that each person has dignity and worth prompts therapists to treat their clients as 'equals' concerning their destiny and wellbeing. They have the right to choose how they deal with their difficulties and pursue their goals, providing that they don't impinge on others' rights to do the same.

The tenet that behaviour can be viewed perceptually holds that each self is unique with its own set of experiences, which shape the person's world view and view of themselves. Experiences constantly change us, so our self-concept changes also. It needs to be realistic and in sync with how things really are, not how we would like them to be.

The tenet that humans are drawn towards self-actualisation points to the intrinsic need for personal growth, autonomy and self-realisation. We want to achieve that of which we are most capable. We want to be the best that we can be. This desire is basic and encompasses our whole being. It is not peculiar to humans, but is present in all of nature.

Finally, *the tenet that people are basically good and trustworthy* allows therapists to realise that when their clients have acted against this standard, it is because they have become alienated from their true nature. Their 'inauthentic' actions stem from fear and defensiveness, rather than from weakness or an inherent defect.

Being your True Self

The more we are alienated, the more we experience anxiety, and the more our actions are incongruent with our true selves. The more we reconnect with our authentic self, the less anxiety we experience, and the more congruent and happy we are. Treating the client as a person of value and worth, with 'unconditional positive regard' sets the foundation for healing to occur.

For more information or to make a counselling appointment, contact us by any of the details below.

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