

## Ch 17 Therapy and Change

### Sec 1: What is Psychotherapy?

Therapy – treatment of behavioral, bodily, or psychological disorders

1. Psychotherapy – “healing of the soul”, any treatment used by therapists to help individuals overcome their problems

a. Three Components:

- i. Verbal interaction between therapist and client
- ii. Supportive and trusting relationship
- iii. Analysis of client’s problems including suggestions for overcoming those problems

2. Functions of Psychotherapy

- a. Help people realize that they are responsible for their own problems & they are only ones that can resolve them

3. Types of Psychotherapy – psychoanalysis,

humanistic, cognitive, behavioral, and biological

- a. Eclectic Approach – combines various kinds of therapy

4. Goal of Psychotherapy

- a. Strengthen patient’s control over his or her life

- i. Patient's attitude plays an important role  
(placebo effect)

### What Makes a Good Therapist?

1. Psychologically healthy
2. Empathy – capacity for warmth and understanding
3. Experience in dealing with people and understanding their problems

### Group Therapies – patients work together with the aid of a leader to resolve interpersonal problems

1. Allows patients to see others struggling with similar problems
2. See similar people recovering
3. Allows one therapist to help a large number of people which reduces cost
4. Family Therapy – focus on interactions among family members which often times is at the root of the problem
5. Self-help Groups – voluntary groups of people who share similar problems conduct therapy sessions without active involvement of a professional therapist
  - a. Deal with problems ranging from overeating, drug addiction, child abuse, single parenting, dealing with cancer, and gambling

- b. AA – best known self-help group, has helped far more people overcome alcoholism than psychotherapy
  - i. Mutual encouragement, friendship, and emphasis on personal responsibility are used to keep individuals sober

## Sec 2: Psychoanalysis and Humanistic Therapy

Psychoanalysis – therapy aimed at making patients aware of their unconscious motives so they can gain control over their behavior

1. Based on Freud's teachings
2. Psychoanalysts believe 1<sup>st</sup> step toward gaining control over behavior is understanding our unconscious motives
3. Slow procedure – requires years of meeting with a therapist (avg. of 600 sessions)
4. Free Association
5. Most talking is done by the patient
6. Resistance – reluctance of patient to reveal painful feelings or to examine long-standing behavior patterns
7. Dream Analysis – psychoanalysts interpret content of patients' dreams

- a. Manifest Content – what you remember about your dream
  - b. Latent Content – hidden meanings represented symbolically in the dream that the therapist interprets
8. Transference – process experienced by the patient, of feeling toward a therapist the way they feel or felt toward some other important in their life
- a. By understanding transference the patient becomes aware of hidden feelings and motivations

Humanistic Therapy – focuses on value, dignity, and worth of each person; healthy living results from one realizing their full potential

- 1. Client-centered Therapy – belief that client and therapist are partners in therapy
  - a. Based on theories of Carl Rogers
  - b. “Client” is used instead of “patient” because it implies an equal relationship
    - i. Relationship reflects 3 therapeutic components:
      - 1. Positive Regard – therapists demonstrates care and respect for client

2. Empathy – understand what client is feeling

3. Genuineness – therapist’s ability to act toward client in a real and nondefensive manner

c. Assume people are good and capable of handling their own lives

d. Try to help people recognize their own strengths in order to help them live more effectively

## 2. Client-Centered Therapy Techniques

a. Nondirective Therapy – free flow of ideas, with no particular direction

b. Active Listening – listener acknowledges, restates, and clarifies speaker’s thoughts and concerns

c. Unconditional Positive Regard – therapist’s consistent expression of acceptance of patient, no matter what patient says and does

d. Once client has moved toward independence, therapy is no longer needed

## Sec 3: Cognitive and Behavior Therapies

Behavior Modification – systematic method of changing the way a person acts and feels

## Cognitive Therapy – using thoughts to control emotions and behaviors

1. Cognitive therapies follow one or more of the following principles:
  - a. Disconfirmation – clients may be confronted with evidence that directly contradicts their existing beliefs
  - b. Reconceptualization – clients work toward an alternative belief system to explain current observations
  - c. Insight – clients work toward understanding and deriving new or revised beliefs
2. Rational-Emotive Therapy (RET) – aimed at changing unrealistic assumptions about oneself and other people (Albert Ellis)
  - a. Techniques used by RET therapists:
    - i. Role Playing – allows person to see how their beliefs affect their relationships
    - ii. Modeling – demonstrate other ways of thinking and acting
    - iii. Humor – underline absurdity of beliefs
    - iv. Persuasion
    - v. Homework
  - b. ABCs of Behavior

- i. A – Activating Event
  - ii. B – person’s Belief system about the event
  - iii. C – Consequences that follow
  - iv. A does not cause C, instead C is caused by B; therapy focuses on changing B
- c. Individual must take 3 steps:
- i. Realize some assumptions are false
  - ii. Must see that he is making himself disturbed by acting on false beliefs
  - iii. Has to work to break old habits of thought and behavior

### 3. Aaron T. Beck’s Cognitive Therapy

- a. Similar to Ellis; Beck focuses more on illogical thought processes
- b. Works very well with depression
- c. Therapists help client detect negative thought patterns and help them to use more reasonable standards for self-evaluation

Behavior Therapy – designed to change undesirable behavior through conditioning techniques

#### 1. Basic behavioral therapy assumptions:

- a. A disturbed person is one who has learned to behave in an undesirable way

- b. Any learned behavior can be unlearned
  - c. Reason's for patient's behavior are not important
2. Counterconditioning – technique that pairs stimulus that triggers an unwanted behavior with a new more desirable behavior
- a. 3 Step Process
    - i. Person builds an anxiety hierarchy with least feared situation on bottom, most feared on top
    - ii. Person learns deep muscle relaxation
    - iii. Person imagines or experiences each step in the hierarchy while learning to relax
  - b. Systematic Desensitization – technique to help a patient overcome irrational fears and anxieties
    - i. Goal is to encourage people to imagine the feared situation while relaxing thus extinguishing the fear response
    - ii. After imagining feared situation, client is then exposed to actual fear producing stimulus
  - c. Flooding – therapist exposes client to fear producing stimulus in an extreme way
  - d. Modeling

- e. Aversive Conditioning – links an unpleasant state with an unwanted behavior in an attempt to eliminate the behavior
3. Operant Conditioning – based on assumption that behavior that is reinforced tends to be repeated while behavior that is not reinforced will be extinguished
- a. Contingency Management – undesirable behavior is not reinforced, while desirable behavior is
    - i. Used in prisons, mental hospitals, schools, military bases, etc.
    - ii. Token Economies – desirable behavior is reinforced with valueless objects or points which can be accumulated and exchanged for various rewards

Cognitive Behavior Therapy – based on a combination of substituting healthy thoughts for negative thoughts and changing disruptive behaviors in favor of healthy behaviors

- 1. Used by many self-help programs

#### Sec 4: Biological Approaches to Treatment

Biological Therapy – assume there is an underlying physiological reason for mental illness

1. Administered mostly by physicians or psychiatrists

2. Drug Therapy – biological therapy that relies on medications

a. Most widely used biological therapy

b. Four main types of medications:

i. Antipsychotic Drugs – medication used to reduce agitation, delusions, and hallucinations by blocking activity of dopamine in brain (tranquilizers)

1. Used to treat schizophrenia

2. Reduce schizophrenic symptoms but have unpleasant side effects (impaired coordination & tremors)

ii. Antidepressant Drugs – used to treat major depression by increasing amount of one or both of the neurotransmitters noradrenaline and serotonin

1. Negative side effects include dizziness, fatigue, forgetfulness, and weight gain

iii. Lithium Carbonate – chemical used to counteract mood swings of bipolar disorder

1. Natural chemical element that controls levels of norepinephrine

- iv. Antianxiety Drugs – medication that relieves anxiety and panic disorders by depressing activity of central nervous system
  - 1. Help reduce excitability and cause drowsiness
  - 2. Sedatives or Mild Tranquilizers
  - 3. Antianxiety drugs make up many of the 75 most prescribe drugs
    - a. Benzodiazepines (Xanax & Valium)
  - 4. If taken properly side effects mainly consist of drowsiness
    - a. Prolonged use may lead to dependence & death if abused and taken with alcohol
    - c. Temporary cure, treat only the symptoms but do not remove the causes of the disorder
- 3. Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) – electrical shock is sent through brain to reduce symptoms of mental disturbance
  - a. Has proven effective in treating severe depression, acute mania, and some types of schizophrenia

- b. Over several weeks a series of brief shocks (70-150 volts) are administered for 0.1-1.0 seconds
    - i. Shock induces a convulsion (similar to a seizure) that may last for a minute
    - ii. Usually applied unilaterally
  - c. Controversial because of past abuses, actually is accompanied with little discomfort
4. Psychosurgery – operation that destroys part of brain to make patient calmer and freer of symptoms
- a. Prefrontal Lobotomy – most common form of psychosurgery, section of frontal lobe is destroyed
    - i. Many were performed from 1930s-1950s
    - ii. Less than 200 lobotomies are performed in U.S. annually