

## HUMANISTIC APPROACH

☞ *Existential or Phenomenological approach*

What is the meaning of our existence?

*Existential Anxiety* – the feeling that there is no meaning to one's life

☞ *Free will* was missing in other perspectives; others were deterministic

EX: behavior is the result of conditioning, some unconscious impulse, a need to satisfy, etc...

☞ Humanists view people as primarily responsible for their actions

### Key Elements of the Humanistic Approach

1. Personal Responsibility
2. The Here and Now
3. Phenomenology of the Individual

Person is...

- responsible for actions
- humanistic approach does not take away the wrong behavior from person
- the perpetrator, conductor, director of his/her life
- responsible for helping the self recover from misfortune

☞ We always have a choice

EX: even if we partied last night, we choose whether we would get up to attend class or not

- taking control on one's actions, one's life

EX: after a traumatic experience, bereavement or divorce, we choose to recover quickly, at all or not

☞ External factors only influence us, they do not control us.

EX: the hostile environment, neglectful parents, abusers, DO NOT pull the trigger, neglect our own children, abuse the people we do

## CARL ROGERS

*Fully Functioning Person* – has reached an optimal sense of satisfaction with life

☞ The GOAL of every human being

Characteristics of a Fully Functioning Person

1. Open to experience
2. Trust their own feelings
3. Act according to how they feel

☞ Congruence between what they THINK, FEEL, and how they ACT

- triangle

## ANXIETY AND DEFENSE

☞ Anxiety is the RESULT of INFORMATION INCONSISTENT with our SELF-CONCEPTS

EX: we may think that we are very intelligent, until we receive failing marks

☞ We also use DEFENSE MECHANISMS to counter these information

## Types of Defense Mechanisms

1. *Distortion*

EX: the professor just didn't understand my point

2. *Denial*

EX: there wasn't a fair basis for my grade

☞ Threatening information is processed by *subception*

*Disorganization* – the result of being unable to deal with anxiety

## Conditional and Unconditional Positive Regard

### Why is it so difficult to incorporate inconsistent information into our self-concepts?

☞ We are only aware of the “good me” (because of SUBCEPTION); negative information is not consistent with what we are aware of (OUR GOOD ME), resulting in anxiety

☞ sometimes parents send a message to their children that they only love them when they are good

☞ results in the child not being able to accept weaknesses; not in touch with true feelings = incongruence

☞ separating the individual from the act; do not take your children personally (be a “professional” parent)

EX: punish the bad behavior; not the person; direct punishment to act, not person

- at the heart of humanism is the importance of the person
  - statements: “walang hiya kang bata ka!!!” - can be very damaging to the person.

## **The Psychology of Optimal Experience**

What are the things you enjoy doing?

What makes people happy?

*Adaptation Level Phenomenon*

- people would be temporarily happy with success, they would become accustomed, which leads to dissatisfaction and higher levels of success to feel satisfied

☞ Psychologists are concerned with the individual's quest for meaning in life and personal satisfaction

Optimal Experience

☞ When we do something and ENJOY the actual PROCESS of doing it rather than the ACHIEVEMENT; also known as *Flow Experience*

☞ We have to play an active role in finding pleasure in experience

☞ Looking for pleasure in the things we do; satisfaction is mostly a matter of perception, therefore we could force ourselves to see beauty in things

### **Eight Components of Optimal Experience**

1. The activity is challenging and requires skill

☞ Challenging enough to demand full attention but does not deny sense of accomplishment

2. One's attention is completely absorbed by the activity

☞ Actions seem spontaneous and automatic

☞ Losing one's self-awareness

3. the activity has clear goals

☞ we have to know what we're working towards

4. there is clear feedback

☞ evaluation of performance

5. one can concentrate only on the task at hand

☞ do not pay attention to unpleasant aspects of life

6. one achieves a sense of personal control

☞ enjoy experience of exercising control over environment

7. one loses self-consciousness

☞ similar to #2

8. one loses sense of time

☞ when you can continuously do something for hours and hours without noticing time passing by

*Relate to Performance and Mastery Goals*

### **Application: Person-Centered Therapy and Job Satisfaction**

#### Person-Centered Therapy

☞ No therapist can better understand their clients more than they can themselves

☞ It is difficult to help a person that does not want to be helped

☞ Clients are the actors; they are the ones who change themselves

#### Therapist's Role:

☞ more of an art really than a science; assessment techniques are just tools

☞ is to provide an atmosphere wherein clients could help themselves;

○ establish proper rapport to clients; *pakikiramdam*

☞ EMPATHY; being natural

○ establishing connections

☞ Being honest

○ not looking at clients as stupid or passive receivers

*Reflection* – restating the statements of clients

☞ Makes them aware of their own thoughts

☞ Sees the situation from another perspective

### **Q-Sort Technique**

☞ Let the client describe own self-concept; process makes the person aware of it

☞ Compares perceived self and ideal self

☞ Quite literally, laying down the cards of who they are

○ looking at a situation from another perspective is difficult for some

○ being able to identify incongruence with ideal and actual self

☞ Correlational measures for real and ideal self; higher means healthier individual

☞ Lower correlation means less accepting of self and less fully functioning

### **Q-sort effectiveness on clients**

- ☞ Clients enter with low correlations between real and ideal; gradually increased as therapy progresses
- ☞ Real self before therapy shows low correlations with real self after therapy suggesting a change in clients perception of self

### **Criticisms**

- ☞ Free will leaves no space for cause and effect; foundation of SCIENCE
- ☞ Operational definitions of flow experience, fully functioning person, self-actualization, etc...
- ☞ Limited applicability for extreme psychological disturbances
- ☞ Naïve assumptions about human personality
- ☞ Self-contradicting; self-actualizing potential in people contradicts concept of free will

*Activity: Draw lots to determine interviewer and interviewee. Interviewer: spend 5 minutes thinking about something you would feel comfortable sharing with a partner in class. Interviewee: spend 5 minutes preparing yourself to be open to what the person wants to share.*

*Activity: Create a time line of your life from this day unto the future. Set goals that you want to achieve in the future; indicate its place in the time line. Be specific. You may zoom in and out of the time line for smaller/larger intervals*

### **ABRAHAM MASLOW**

- 4.also provided a more POSITIVE approach
- 5.acknowledged the Unconscious, but focused more on the CONSCIOUS aspect

### **Motivation and the Hierarchy of Needs**

- behavior has to be motivated by something
  - ☞ *Deficiency Motive* – results from the lack of basic needs (food, shelter, clothing)
  - ☞ physical needs
  - ☞ *Growth Needs* – unselfish giving of love to others; development of one's self
  - ☞ psycho-social needs

- 1.only natural to satisfy basic needs before higher needs

Five categories of needs/**Hierarchy of Needs**:

☞ Physiological Needs

☞ first to be satisfied; ESSENTIAL

7. food, shelter, clothing, sex

☞ depressed areas in the Philippines

☞ Safety Needs

☞ security, stability, protection, structure, order, freedom (from fear and chaos)

☞ Migration of middle-class Filipinos

☞ Belongingness & Love Needs

☞ meaningful relationships, circle of trusted friends, family (children), social acceptance

*D-love* - conditional

*B-love* – unconditional, continues to grow, a fascination for the EXPERIENCE

☞ an OPTIMAL EXPERIENCE within a relationship

☞ Esteem Needs

☞ focuses on internal needs for success

EX: one can hold a high ranking position but still feels INCOMPLETE

☞ Need for Self-Actualization

- highly cognitive in nature
- the feeling the one's life HAS MEANING, a personal QUEST in life
- realizing, maximizing and REACHING your TRUE POTENTIAL
  - altruism, philanthropists
  - Mother Theresa, Hermits (?), Nick Joaquin,

*Activity: Make your own Hierarchy of Needs based on the goals you want to achieve in your life plan.*

*Place your goals according to what need they wish to satisfy.*

### **Misconceptions about Hierarchy of Needs**

- IMPORTANCE of needs may VARY from person to person
- needs are only partially met
  - lower needs are satisfied more than higher needs
    - only 10% of our self-actualization needs are met
  - how well LOWER needs are met, DETERMINES BEHAVIOR
    - focus more on BASIC needs BEFORE seeking SELF-ACTUALIZATION

- ways in which the needs are met may vary
  - esteems needs come in career growth for urbanized societies; hunting for the less civilized
- basic needs remain the same; different forms
- a specific behavior may be the result of MULTIPLE MOTIVATIONS
  - sexual activity
    - release sexual urge: basic need
    - express affection in a relationship: belongingness/love
    - to dominate, be dominated (masochists): esteem

### **The Self-Actualized Individual**

3. the WISE MAN
4. similar to a FULLY FUNCTIONING INDIVIDUAL
5. ACCEPTS self for WHO THEY ARE
  1. recognizes weaknesses, CONTINUOUSLY makes an EFFORT to IMPROVE self
  2. does not obsess self with their mistakes
    1. acceptance
  3. comfortable with self
    1. not bothered by cultural expectations; OPENMINDEDNESS
    2. they act freely, without disregard for others
6. NOT necessarily PERFECT
7. OPENESS to experience
8. ENJOY every bit of LIFE; being able to FIND BEAUTY and OPTIMISM
9. relatively FEW friends; retain MEANINGFUL RELATIONSHIPS

*Self-actualizing Creativity* – different from TALENT-BASED creativity

1. INNOVATIVE in dealing with PROBLEMS
  - A S-A person is not too tied up with cultural norms and standards
  - *enculturation*
  - *acculturation*

### **Job Satisfaction and the Hierarchy of Needs**

- job satisfaction correlates with overall satisfaction in life
- jobs = BIGGEST part of our TIME; next to sleep; bigger than the amount of time we spend with our LOVED ONES

- people not happy with their jobs:
  - suffer more from STRESS
    - decline in overall health: increased smoking; restlessness; etc...
  - could lead to UNSATISFACTORY PERFORMANCE
    - eager to get the job done and go home
  - unable to FOCUS on job

#### RELEVANT RESEARCH

- people CANNOT be reduced to a set of numbers
  - empiricism; SCIENCE
  - statistical analysis
- tests do not capture inner strengths, feelings, character
  - interviews!!!
- importance of HUMAN ELEMENT
- effectiveness of HUMANISTIC approach to therapy is VALIDATED through research
  - giving it an EMPIRICAL standing

Do you think it sounds contradicting that the humanistic approach draws its strength from empiricism?

*Assignment: (1) Try to initiate a personal conversation with a person (preferable someone not very close to you). As much as possible, try to bring the conversation into personal topics such as personal issues, family problems, relationships, personal satisfaction, dreams and aspirations, frustrations, etc. Remember that people would tend not to open up that easily, especially when unprepared to spill out personal information. So try to establish a reasonable amount of rapport before you enter into the person's personal life. Practice empathy, and be willing to share some of your common fate with the person. This would aid in allowing the person to open up. Do not be withheld by fear of being negatively evaluated, as you might actually end up helping someone with bottled up emotions. (2) Be prepared to share your experience next meeting. Tell us what your thoughts and feelings were before the conversation, as the conversation was starting, during the conversation, and after the conversation was over. Write a reflection paper about it stating the these, how the experience was like, a summary of aspects you were able to talk about, and any other aspect you feel comfortable sharing.*

#### Self-Disclosure

- typical when people SHARE personal INFORMATION

- revealing INTIMATE information
  - people become CHOOSY whom to disclose these to
- important in UNDERSTANDING one's SELF, we come to KNOW OURSELVES
  - putting FEELINGS into WORDS allows for BETTER PROCESSING
- making ourselves TRANSPARENT, EXPRESING thoughts and feelings allow for HEALTHY psychological WELL-BEING
  - evident in therapy
  - they get in touch with TRUE SELF

Why do people often fear self-disclosure?

☞ Fear of REJECTION and a NEGATIVE EVALUATION from others

1. apprehension to reveal BAD HABITS

☞ not self-disclosing results in the continued effort to HIDE our TRUE SELVES

☞ THERAPISTS must also be WILLING to self-disclose

1. create an atmosphere of TRUST

2. sometimes proves DIFFICULT

3. experiments show improvement in clients

4. need to balance the OBJECTIVE of the therapy; DAUNTING task for therapists

### **Disclosure Reciprocity**

*Dyadic Effect /Disclosure Reciprocity-* people often match the level of intimacy being volunteered in a conversation

Why do we match the level of intimacy?

☞ A RESPONSE to the developed ATTRACTION and TRUST

☞ provides us with a CUE as to how we should RESPOND

2. Friends and Romantic Partners

☞ already established TRUST does not require reciprocity

1. person already knows that friend will LISTEN

☞ Men and Women

☞ social dictates

1. it's not that men do not want to be self-disclosing; they are SUPPRESSED by SOCIAL NORMS

2. gender ROLES and EXPECTATIONS play a significant role

☞ Traumatic Experiences

☞ studies show that disclosing traumatic experiences reduces overall tension, stress and physical deterioration; COMMON KNOWLEDGE!!!

1. probably REASON why PSYCHOTHERAPY works

☞ keeping unwanted THOUGHTS inside requires COGNITIVE and physiological RESOURCES

1. hence the DETERIORATION of overall HEALTH

## **Loneliness**

☞ a reflection of EXISTENTIAL ANXIETY

1. INSECURITIES arise from NOT being SECURE with one's existence or one's SELF

☞ NOT the SAME as ISOLATION

1. PHYSICAL closeness/presence can be BOUNTIFUL, yet people may FEEL lonely
2. QUALITY of INTERPERSONAL relationships is what's IMPORTANT

☞ occurs when social RELATIONSHIPS are SMALLER or LESS SATISFYING than the person DESIRES

1. PERSONAL SATISFACTION
2. they can't SATISFY the NEEDS of the PERSON
3. SATISFACTION with CONTACTS

EX: some people find satisfaction in solitude; HERMITS

☞ kind of relationship we look CHANGE throughout the LIFE CYCLE

1. young people want QUANTITY; older people prefer QUALITY

☞ CULTURAL INFLUENCE

1. INDIVIDUALISTIC cultures = romantic partner/spouse
2. COLLECTIVISTS = family ties

☞ isolation in COLLECTIVIST cultures are WORSE; larger SOCIAL NETWORK

## **Personality Variables and Loneliness**

### What could be the characteristics of lonely people?

☞ lonely people are often DRAW from their own PERSONALITY, their being LONELY

Characteristics:

- introverted, shy, difficulty trusting others, spend less time with friends;

## SOCIALLY WITHDRAWN

### ☞ SELF-FULFILLING PROPHECY

- their BEHAVIOR ELICITS aloofness from OTHERS
- DON'T EXPECT people to approach you if you DO NOT want to be APPROACHED!!!

### ☞ Fear of Negative Evaluation

### ☞ PESSIMISTS

- approach social situations NEGATIVELY; thinks it will not GO WELL
- Experiment: lonely people thought they were doing poor in social interactions; recall NEGATIVE COMMENTS more, etc... (1990)
  - THEY were the only to PERCEIVE this
  - they were EVALUATED POSITIVELY by others; in fact MORE FRIENDLY

### ☞ Lack of Social Skills

### ☞ do NOT know how to properly RESPOND/react in a CONVERSATION

- fails to provide FEEDBACK
- talk too much about SELF
- fails to CAPTURE INTERESTS of partner

### ☞ DIFFICULTY self-disclosing

### ☞ Lack of Initiative

### ☞ INITIATING a conversation can be CUMBERSOME for lonely people

## Self-Esteem

Differentiate between *Self-esteem, self-concept and self-worth*

*Global Self-Esteem, NOT simply a SUM of Domain specific Self-Esteem*

## Low Self-esteem and Failure

### ☞ low SE people

- LOW in MOTIVATION to succeed after FAILURE
  - they ACCEPT their FAILURE; CONSISTENT with their SELF-CONCEPTS
- experience NEGATIVE emotions more INTENSLY
  - failure TRIGGERS negative thoughts, WORSENING their feeling
- easily DISCOURAGED
- fear of NEGATIVE evaluation, and PUBLIC HUMILITY – self-

protection

- AVOID SITUATIONS that might invite this

**Self-enhancements and self-protection motives**

☞ people HIGH in SE, motivated by CONCERN for *self-enhancement*

**SE and Culture**

☞ individualistic definitions of self-esteem may not apply to collectivist cultures

- SE is measure through assertiveness, emphasizing uniqueness in INDIVIDUALISTS
- COLLECTIVE societies emphasize harmony within groups

☞ what SEEMS to be low SE in INDIVIDUALIST societies, may actually be wrong in COLLECTIVE societies

**Solitude**

time alone can be healthy for a person

for negatively predisposed people, it could be detrimental

length is determined by demand

processing personal issues requires more time than simply wanting to have a break from work/studying

!!! Results from psychological tests only serve as data. Interpretation and personal judgment plays a big role