Name

Professor

Course

Date

Personal Style of Counseling

Although the humanistic attitude involves theories such as Gestalt and Person-Centred, together with components of distinct approaches, the fundamental values within the two can function harmoniously to provide a positive perspective on human beings and their essential ability to be self-sufficient. The aim of this paper is to assess humanistic psychotherapy and its relevance to contemporary counseling practice.

There are two core methodologies to treatment under humanistic theory. The first theory is Gestalt Therapy which is accredited to Fritz Perl. The second approach is Person-Centred (PC) theory which is attributed to Carl Rogers (Counselling Staff). Although both methods have their benefits, I prefer applying the features of both models in my practice.

Overall, the humanistic theory is mostly centered on the dignity, worth, and significance of human beings. Indeed, people are inclined to reach a higher state of existence which is hindered by the society, the psyche, and the environment (Martin). Personal-centred (PC) states that humans are intrinsically well meaning and their conduct is the outcome of the human need to achieve the highest potential (Counselling Directory). Consequently, it is the role of the counselor to find ways that can assist the individual to develop fully. PC concentrates on aiding the person to understand his/her process of change, and adjusting his/her discernments of reality via the application of three basic conditions: congruence, unconditional positive regard, and empathy. This theory has proved successful in assisting individuals to nurture their self-worth.

Indeed, the best word that can describe Gestalt Therapy is completeness. That is, all of the person's needs are satisfied, and he/she can experience healthy living. However, if the individual's needs are disrupted during the development of Gestalt, the consequence is personal malfunction. A need develops and becomes the central picture; if the need is met, it becomes suppressed as Gestalt is finalized and pathology is the result of the interruption of the process (GoodTherapy.org). The disturbance of need fulfillment is termed as unfinished business. In assisting the person to settle his/her unfinished issues, the client will be involved in a variety of tests that are devised to aid him/her fulfill their needs. These strategies will assist the client in realizing the self-support required for him/her to enjoy a life of choice and freedom.

After evaluating these two theories, and the general model of humanistic psychology, the benefit of this system concerns the perception that people are significant, should be handled with self-respect, should be free to choose, and should be accountable for their choices. Moreover, the therapeutic connections of demonstrating unconditional positive regard to the client, plus exhibiting empathy and candidness are real fortes of the humanistic method.

However, the main limitation of the humanistic approach to counseling is that it lacks actual delineations and because of this, great caution should be applied when utilizing the humanistic approach. For example, PC has received great disapproval as it lacks direction and depends on the client's inherent capacity to be self-fulfilling. This could lead to the client failing to sustain when the counseling is completed. My personal belief as a counselor is that the most important question to consider is whether or not the benefits offset the limitations in handling a particular client.

Incidentally, the humanistic theory best aligns with my value system and personal convictions of Christianity. My religion acknowledges that human beings have great worth and

have been blessed with the freedom of choice; this is the principal focus of the humanistic approach. The freedom of choice is vital to the growth of the individual. Bad decisions result in distress and agony. The individual has the power to choose, experience resistance, to establish the kind of personality that will characterize him/her. This is similar to humanistic theories whose values are that human beings are beings of worth and should be handled with full positive consideration and care. It is my belief that the similarities between humanistic dogmas and Christian principles will motivate my preference for applying humanistic theories in counseling practices. It aligns very well with the personal value that I hold dear.

I prefer working with a population that is comprised of juvenile youth and their families. My objective would be to offer addiction evaluation and therapy, have the qualifications needed to handle dual diagnosis scenarios, and provide family counseling. I see this theory as a brilliant choice for this population because of its central principles of personal accountability, freedom of choice, a higher life purpose, and unconditional positive regard. Even though I am uncertain of exclusively applying a humanistic approach to my counseling, I have the conviction that the underlying values offer the best chances to develop empathy with youth and their families. Furthermore, these principles avert feelings of compulsion and assist in establishing a counseling relationship where the client is more responsive to extra therapeutic practice and strategies.

The most noteworthy limitations to the humanistic methodology of therapy are that it is not an excellent choice for brief counseling. Although person-centred therapy is unobtrusive and does not employ the utilization of therapeutic methods, it is conventionally not a brief treatment. Still, Gestalt therapy is an exception since it could be short or long-term contingent on the needs of the client and the strategies applied by the therapist (GoodTherapy.org). The long-term disposition of humanistic therapy can be challenging for the client and the counselor. In current

systems, most patients are offered limited insurance cover for therapeutic services. As a result, this excludes the therapy costs for the patients, and they are more likely to suspend counseling before their issues are resolved.

In the humanistic approach to therapy, my responsibility as the counselor is to be the instructor or guide for the client. The counseling relationship is cooperative, and I would need to ensure a setting that will facilitate the improvement of the patient's status. This is possible through congruence, unconditional positive self-regard, and empathy. The client's function is to be dynamically involved in the therapy process. The client will be the learner in the therapy relationship. The client should not be afraid to express himself/herself, should be in touch with his/her experiences, and should assist in directing the counseling in some cases. The responsibilities of the client and the counselor are mutually considerate and active.

Considering a humanistic attitude, I would apply the person-centred methods of congruence, unconditional positive regard, and empathy. These are more of counseling responsibilities rather than practices since person-centred therapy does not enforce specific strategies (Counselling Directory). Instead of specific methods, the therapy meetings are designed to give the clients an opportunity to find their path with guidance from the therapist. Gestalt provides the soundest methods with the application of voice dialogues, dream's disguise, exaggeration, taking responsibility, polarities, making the rounds, and guided questioning. I would prefer using exaggeration, voice dialogues, acting, polarities, taking responsibility, and guided questioning. Deciding which strategy to apply would rely on the exhibition of the client's issues, his/her needs, and personal background. I believe that these methods are very suitable and align with my personal and therapy values.

Nonetheless, humanistic theory is restricted in its application because of the cost of counselling sessions and the permanent nature of therapy (Martin). These reasons restrict services to those that are affluent, and can comfortably pay the costs of the long-term self-pay therapy. The percentage of black individuals living below the poverty level is at 25% while that of the Hispanic population is at 23% excluding most minority groups from humanistic therapy services (Macartney). Moreover, humanistic approach's stress on the person is limiting as it could disagree with the ethnic principles of populations that have a more communal disposition. Moreover, relying on the client's cultural background, the focus on therapist immediacy could result in client distress and obstruct the counselling relationship.

I believe that the application of humanistic counselling cannot restrict the types of clients I can handle. However, I might have to change which theoretical usage from the humanistic methodology to apply, for instance, I would not employ Gestalt therapy with clients that exhibit psychotic diagnosis and symptoms, but the rudimentary settings of person-centred therapy can be used with any client.

A solely humanistic method may likely be most appropriate for private practice that is not reliant on financing from insurance firms, Medicare or Medicaid. These managed care companies usually put restrictions on the number of client visits, and need DSM IV (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, 4th Edition) diagnosis. This could be challenging from a pragmatic perspective as most individuals cannot afford the long-term therapy demands of humanistic counselling as a private-pay client.

The first time I started to understand humanistic approaches, I thought that I would have the capacity to easily utilize the humanistic theory in my therapy practice. Still, with deeper analysis, the confines arising from managed care restrictions, lack of classification and struggle

of instituting assessable objectives, and possible cultural disparities while applying this approach has led me to reconsider my attitude to implementing this theory in my therapy practice. I believe that I can effectively employ the humanistic methodology in my practice by acquiring the components of its benefits, and integrating those features into my therapy practice together with a cognitive attitude to treatment. I could apply the main values that first lured me to humanistic approach to assist me in developing a genuine, empathetic, and warm therapy relationship with my clients. This kind of relationship will encourage responsibility and choice, while using a counselling approach that is most suitable to the constraints enforced by managed care. Generally, this was a greatly efficient practice that allowed me to have a bigger understanding of humanistic theory which assisted me to comprehend how I can best apply it in my future therapy practice.

Works Cited

Counselling Directory. "Person-Centred Therapy - Counselling Directory." *Counselling Directory*, www.counselling-directory.org.uk/person-centred-therapy.html. Accessed 17 July 2017.

Counselling Staff. "Five Counseling Theories and Approaches - Blog." *Online Masters in Counseling Degree*, counseling.northwestern.edu/five-counseling-theories-and-approaches/. Accessed 17 July 2017.

GoodTherapy.org. "Gestalt Therapy." *GoodTherapy.org*, www.goodtherapy.org/learn-about-therapy/types/gestalt-therapy. Accessed 17 July 2017.

Macartney, Suzanne. *Poverty Rates for Selected Detailed Race and Hispanic Groups by State and Place: 2007–2011*. U.S. Dept. of Commerce, Economics and Statistics Administration, U.S. Census Bureau, 2013. www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/acsbr11-17.pdf. Accessed 17 July 2017.

Martin, Anna. "Humanistic Approach to Counselling." *A Comprehensive Guide for Counsellors*, www.thecounsellorsguide.co.uk/humanistic-approach-counselling.html. Accessed 17 July 2017.

U.S. Department of Health & Human Services. "Products - Data Briefs." *Centers for Disease Control and Prevention*, www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db96.htm. Accessed 17 July 2017.