

MODELS OF PSYCHOTHERAPY

Understanding the Basics

Models in Psychology

- Psychology does not have an agreed on, overarching theory of human beings
- Psychotherapy uses different **models** to understand different aspects of human experience
- A **Model** is a representation of reality that defines its relevant aspects and how they relate to each other

What Do Therapeutic Models Do?

- Influences the type and quality of the therapeutic relationship
- Focus our attention on specific aspects of a client's presentation
- Define what is relevant and what constitutes a positive therapeutic outcome
- Structures information gathering and techniques
- Defines how experiences are causally related

What is Psychotherapy?

- An intentional interactional relationship between two or more people designed to promote positive change and development

What Does Therapy Do?

- Helps a person resolve distressing 'symptoms'
- Creates a supportive relationship within which the client feels heard and validated
- Supports positive change in how a person thinks, feels and acts
- Increases freedom from internal and external constraints
- Develops self-awareness and self-control

Key Questions in Psychotherapy

- What is the nature of human beings?
- What are harmful versus helpful experiences?
- What kinds of relationship are healing?
- What kinds of communication are therapeutic?
- How do human beings change?

Models of Psychotherapy

- **Psychodynamic:**
 - Psychoanalytic, Jungian, Existential
- **Cognitive Behavioral**
 - Dialectical Behavior, Acceptance and Commitment
- **Humanistic/Transpersonal**
 - Gestalt, Person-centered, Mindfulness
- **Solution Focused/Strategic**
 - Ericksonian, NLP, Systemic Family

Integrative Process Psychotherapy

- Emphasizes an open, collaborative and engaged therapeutic relationship
- Is concerned with how the session *feels* and *unfolds* (the process) as well as what is talked about
- Adapts each session to the nature and needs of the client
- Uses different models and methods of therapy depending on the client and the situation
- Includes the experience of the therapist

Four Phases of Therapy

1. **Forming the Relationship:** Creating connection, clarifying agreements, fostering hope
2. **Symptom Relief:** Resolving problems, developing skills, moving stuckness
3. **Insight:** Developing self-awareness/self-acceptance, resolving trauma, exploring hidden processes
4. **Transformation:** Fostering an intentional life filled with meaning, purpose and rich inner experiences

Questions to Ponder

- What are my basic assumptions about human nature?
- What are my preferred methods of psychotherapy? Why do I prefer them?
- How and why do people change? What do I think helps them change?
- What do I need to learn to become a better psychotherapist?