

Examrace

Psychology Study Material: Carl Rogers, Rogers' Approach and Main Concepts

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Carl Rogers: (1902 – 1987)

- Born in 1902 in Oak Park, Illinois, a suburb of Chicago, he underwent a strict upbringing as a child who later turned out to be rather isolated, independent, and self-disciplined.
- Initially went to the University of Wisconsin for Agriculture major but later became interested in the study of religion. From there he switched on to the clinical psychology program of Columbia University, and received his Ph. D. in 1931.
- One of the founders of the humanistic approach, Rogers was one of the most influential therapists in the 20th century.
- Research, even that conducted after his death, revealed that Rogers was cited by more therapists as a major influence on their thinking and clinical practice than any other person in psychology ... including Freud.

Rogers' Approach

- Primarily a clinical theory, based on years of Rogers' experience dealing with his clients
- In its richness and maturity his theory matches that of Freud; a theory well thought-out and logical having broad application.
- The theory emphasizes on a single factor "force of life" which he calls the actualizing tendency i.e.. built-in motivation present in every life form to develop its potentials to the fullest extent possible.
- Rogers had the person-centered approach since the 'person' was the main figure of importance,
- He believed that the most powerful human drive is the one to become "fully functioning" ,
- Fully functioning = a person becomes all that he or she is capable of

To be fully functioning means experiencing:

- Optimal psychological adjustment
- Optimal psychological maturity

- Complete congruence (a feeling of integration when the self and the ideal self-match; incongruence is a feeling of conflict or unease experienced in case of a mismatch between the two)
- Complete openness to experience

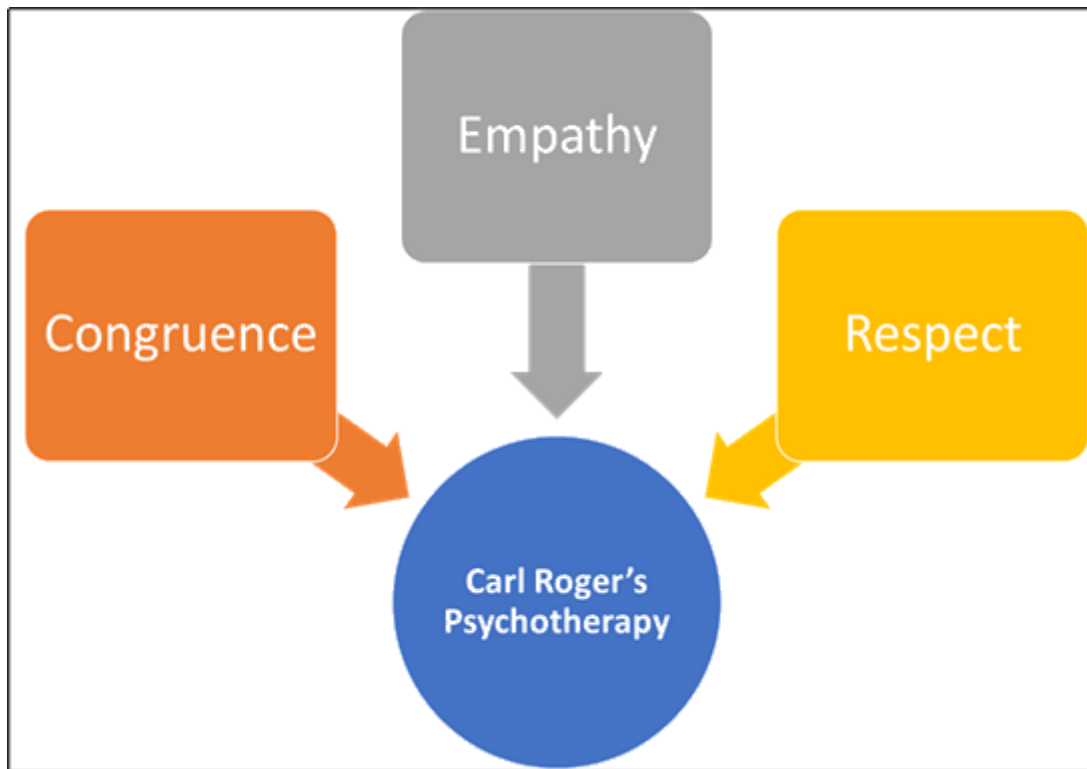
Main Concepts

- Self: a fluid perceptual structure based on one's experience of one's own being,
- Ideal self: an Individual's goals and aspirations,
- Phenomenal field: an Individual's unique perception of the world,
- Actualizing tendency: an innate drive reflecting the desire to grow, to develop, and to enhance one's capacities,
- Need for positive regard: a need for positive social contacts like love,
- Conditions of worth: restrictions imposed on self – expression in order to earn positive regard,
- Defences: In case of an incongruity between one's the ideal and the real self-defences develop. Rogers's talks about only two defences: Denial and Perceptual Distortion
- Denial: Blocking out the threatening situation altogether. Denial also includes what Freud called repression.
- Perceptual distortion: Reinterpreting the situation so that it appears less threatening, just like Freud's rationalization.
- Neurotics: are apart from the real and the ideal. Becoming more incongruous, they find themselves in more and more threatening situations, levels of anxiety become greater, and they use more and more defences ... It becomes a vicious cycle that the person eventually is unable to get out of, at least on his own
- Psychosis: Psychosis occurs when a person's defences are overwhelmed, and their sense of self becomes "shattered" into little disconnected pieces. His behaviour lacks consistency.

Carl Roger's Psychotherapy

- Carl Rogers is best known for his contributions to therapy known as "person centered/Client- centered therapy/Non- directive therapy. Also known as the Rogerian Therapy" .
- His main technique is "Reflection" mirroring of emotional experiences.
- Aim of the therapy: to help a person grow and self-actualize.

Rogers maintained that the therapist must possess the following qualities:



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- Congruence -- genuineness, honesty, with the client
- Empathy -- the ability to feel what the client feels.
- Respect -- acceptance, unconditional positive regard towards the client.

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