

Chapter 15 Treatment and Therapy Psychotherapy

- **Definition:** a specialized process in which a trained professional uses psychological methods to help a person with psychological problems
- People enter therapy in order to rid themselves of an abnormal behavior or to improve their daily living (personal growth)

Psychodynamic Therapy

- **Psychoanalysis:** (Freud) the root of all psychological problems are unconscious conflicts
 - Free Association: talk about whatever comes to mind (uncensored)
 - Dream Analysis: “royal road to the unconscious”
- **Psychodynamic Therapy:** Modern day Freudian therapy: explores the “deeper” reasons for a client’s problems (childhood issues, unconscious processes)
 - Transference: client transfers emotions from inner life (usually feelings towards parents) onto the therapist
 - Resistance: any unconscious attempt to subvert the therapy process

Humanistic Therapy

- **Client-Centered Therapy:** Carl Rogers: emphasizes the relationship between therapist and client (warmth, empathy)
 - Unconditional Positive Regard: therapist must always respect and like the client (build client’s self-esteem)

Behavior Therapy

- **Behavior Therapy:** helping clients unlearn self-defeating behaviors (classical and operant conditioning)
“if you have a behavior that’s not working for you, then we are going to change that behavior”
- Behavioral Treatment of Phobias:
 - **Systematic Desensitization:** a complex procedure involving progressive relaxation and graded exposure to phobic stimuli

- *Progressive Relaxation*: learning to deeply relax the muscles of the body
- *Graduated Exposure*: exposing mildly fearful stimuli and then gradually exposing more and more fearful stimuli
- ***Flooding***: confronting the client with high levels of fearful stimuli until the fear response is extinguished.
- ***Skills Training***: teach skills (such as social skills) that someone may be lacking
- *Role Playing*: a therapeutic technique in which the therapist and client act out different scenarios that might be problematic to the client

Cognitive Therapy

- ***Cognitive Therapy***: teaches individuals new cognitions (thoughts), adaptive beliefs, expectations, and ways of thinking in order to eliminate abnormal emotions and behavior
- ***Rational Emotive Therapy (RET)***: Albert Ellis: challenge a person's unrealistic thoughts or irrational beliefs
- *Catastrophize*: when a person blows things out of proportion
- *Overgeneralize*: when a person thinks in all or nothing terms
- Cognitive therapy has been shown to work well with a variety of anxiety disorders, eating disorders, and major depression
- A combination of medication and cognitive therapy is the most effective treatment for depression

Family Therapy

- ***Family Systems Therapy***: emphasizes an understanding of the roles of each family member and how the family functions as a system (this method is usually conducted with all members of the family, but it can be practiced individually)

Drug Therapy

- ***Drug Therapy***: the most widely used medical treatment for psychological disorders

- Antidepressants: mood elevators, but also used for a variety of other disorders, elevates levels of serotonin and norepinephrine
- Tranquilizers (anti-anxiety): to treat mild anxiety, not to be used for long time periods
- Antipsychotic drugs: used to treat schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders, inhibits dopamine, reduces delusions, hallucinations, thought disorganization.

Other Medical Therapy

- Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT):
- People are “shocked” which produces a convulsive brain seizure
- In the 1930s the seizures were violent (sometimes resulting in broken bones), but today anesthesia and muscle relaxants make the procedure more humane
- Is used with severely depressed or psychotic individuals
- No one is sure exactly why it works, but it is suspected that it alters brain neurotransmitters
- Psychosurgery (NOT done anymore!):
- *Prefrontal Lobotomy*: surgically cutting the neural fibers that connect the frontal lobes with the limbic system (1940s-50s)
- This was thought to prevent disturbing thoughts and perceptions from reaching the brain and prevent emotional outbursts
- These don't work and caused serious side effects (loss of intellectual functioning and seizures)