

Carl Rogers

Humanistic Approach

The humanistic theories are mainly developed in response to Freud's theory. Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow have particularly contributed to the development of humanistic perspective on personality.

The most important idea proposed by Rogers is that of a fully functioning person. He believes that fulfilment is the motivating force for personality development. People try to express their capabilities, potentials and talents to the fullest extent possible. There is an inborn tendency among persons that directs them to actualise their inherited nature.

Rogers makes two basic assumptions

about human behaviour. One is that behaviour is goal-directed and worthwhile. The second is that people (who are innately good) will almost always choose adaptive self-actualising behaviour.

Rogers' theory grew out of his ~~experer~~ experiences of listening to patients in his clinic. He noted that self was an important element in the experience of his clients. Thus, his theory assumes that people are constantly engaged in the process of actualising their true self.

Rogers suggests that each person also has a concept of ideal self. An ideal self is the self that a person would like to be. When there is a correspondence between the real self and ideal self, a person is generally happy. Discrepancy between the real self and ideal self often results in unhappiness and dissatisfaction. Rogers' basic principle is that people have a self-

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tendency to maximise self-concept through self-actualization. In this process, the self grows, expands and becomes more social.

Rogers views personality development as a continuous process. It involves learning to enhance oneself and mastering the process of self-actualisation. He recognises the role of social influences in the development of self-concept. When social conditions are positive, the self-concept and self-esteem are high. In contrast, when the conditions are negative, the self-concept and self-esteem are low. People with high self-concept and self-esteem are generally flexible and open to new experiences, so that they can continue to grow and self-actualise.

This situation warrants that an atmosphere of conditional positive regard must be created in order to ensure enhancement of people's

self-concept. The Client-centred therapy that A Rogers developed basically attempts to create this condition.