Focus on the Self:
Humanistic (Third-Force) Psychology

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I. INTRODUCTION
A. Paradigms in Psychology

- The purpose of the next two weeks of lectures is to explore four major paradigms of psychology
  - **Humanism**: A focus on the self
  - **Biopsychology**: A focus on the body
  - **Cognitive Psychology**: A focus on the mind
  - **Socio-cultural Psychology**: A focus on the social environment
- Paradigms are not theories but include them
  - Paradigms are defined as a set of assumptions, concepts, values, and practices that constitutes a way of viewing reality for the community that shares them, especially in an intellectual discipline.

I. INTRODUCTION
B. Goals of Each Presentation

- My goal is to open a discussion to help students understand whether an article they are reading is associated with one or the other paradigm.
  - Helps in understanding…
    - The implicit philosophical or psychological ideas implicit in the article
    - the history of the ideas and methods in the article
    - the limits or critiques of the ideas or methods
    - The relation between ideas or methods and other intellectual and social movements emerging with those ideas.

I. INTRODUCTION
B. Goals of Each Presentation

- Presentation of each paradigm will involve
  - Background social and intellectual movements
  - Critical ideas of key theorists
  - Important findings and the methods used to arrive at them
  - The philosophical assumptions of the paradigm
  - Critical evaluations and limitations of the paradigm.
- This will be more performed in an interactive manner with students being asked to work through the ideas.

II   BACKGROUND
A. Social Context

- By the mid-20th century there was a boom in American economy and society.
  - Partly the result of becoming the only super power.
    - American dream being realized with the growth of home ownership, nation-wide highway system, prosperity and peace.
  - Baby boom generation, those born after the war were the most privileged and enpowered.
    - These kids were adolescents and young adults in the 1960s and were looking for

II   BACKGROUND
B. Intellectual Context

- By the mid-20th century, only behaviorism and psychoanalysis remained influential in psychology.
  - Previous movements in psychology (structuralism, functionalism, and Gestalt psychology) had lost their distinctiveness as schools of thought.
    - The image of humans provided by behaviorism and psychoanalysis were viewed by many as incomplete, distorted, or both.
  - Many were looking for a new view, one that emphasized the *human spirit* rather than strictly the mind or body.

II   BACKGROUND
B. Intellectual Context

- Third-force Psychology
  - In the early 1960's, a group of psychologists led by Abraham Maslow started a movement referred to as third-force psychology.
    - This was a reaction to the shortcomings (as they saw them) of behaviorism and psychoanalysis to deal fully with the human condition.
  - According to these psychologists, what was needed was a model of humans that emphasized their uniqueness and their positive aspects.
    - This third force combines the philosophies of romanticism and existentialism and is called humanistic psychology.

II   BACKGROUND
C. Philosophical Antecedents

- Phenomenology
  - Focuses on cognitive experience as it occurs; in intact form not reduced to component parts
- Franz Brentano
  - German Rational-Idealist philosopher, 1838 - 1917
    - Focused on psychological acts such as judging, recollecting, expecting, doubting, fearing, hoping, or loving, and including the concept of *intentionality* within the acts.

II   BACKGROUND
C. Philosophical Antecedents

- Husserl
    - German Rational-Idealist, student of Brentano, 1859-1938
    - Believed that phenomenology could create an objective bridge between the outer, physical world and the inner, subjective world.
    - He developed what he called pure phenomenology with the purpose of discovering the essence of conscious experience – the person inward.

II   BACKGROUND
C. Philosophical Antecedents

- Existentialism
    - Husserl's phenomenology was a basis for modern existentialism.
    - Existentialists were interested in the nature of human existence.
        - In philosophy, the study of existence or what it means to be is called ontology.
- Concerned with two ontological questions:
    - What is the nature of human nature?
        - What makes us human?
    - What does it mean to be a particular individual?
        - How are we unique

II   BACKGROUND
### C. Philosophical Antecedents

- Martin Heidegger
    - German Philosopher 1889 – 1976
    - He was involved in Nazi-era politics in Germany (National-Socialism)
    - *Time and Being* is his important work.
        - Postulated that humans are always becoming something other than what they were; to exist it to change.
        - The **Dasein** refers to that place in space and time where existence takes place; existence is a complex, dynamic, and uniquely human phenomenon.

II   BACKGROUND
C. Philosophical Antecedents

- Martin Heidegger
    - The authentic life
        - We are free to create a meaningful existence that allows for becoming (personal growth).
    - If we do not exercise our personal freedom, we experience guilt.
        - Acceptance takes courage to overcome anxiety of nothingness
    - The concept of throwness
        - Thrown into circumstances without control which determines how we exercise our freedom.
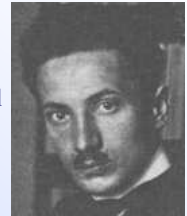
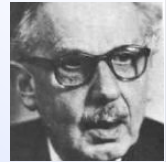## III EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOLOGY
A. Introduction

- Assumptions of Existential Psychology
  - Every person is centered in self and lives life through the meaning placed on that center.
  - Every person is responsible for the courage to protect, affirm, and enhance the self.
  - People need other people with whom they can empathize and from whom they can learn.
  - People are vigilant about dangers to their identities
  - People can be aware of themselves thinking and feeling at one moment and in the next moment.
  - Anxiety originates, in part, out of a person's awareness that one's being can end.

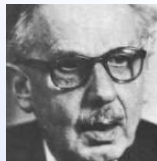## III EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOLOGY
B. Ludwig Binswanger

- Ludwig Binswanger (1881 - 1966)
  - Combined combine psychotherapy (psychoanalysis) with existentialism
    - Sought to discover their client's **world view** (or **world design** or **lived world**)
      - **Umwelt** or physical world -- things, buildings, trees, furniture, gravity....
      - **Mitwelt**, or social world, your relations to individuals, to community, to culture, and so on.
      - **Eigenwelt** or personal world; mind and body, whatever you feel is most central to your sense of who you are.

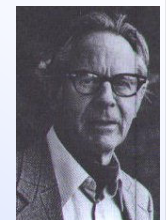## III EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOLOGY
B. Ludwig Binswanger

- Binswanger's therapeutic goal is autonomy, the freedom and responsibility for one's own life,
  - The existential therapist is more likely to be "natural" with you.
    - Existential therapy is seen as a dialog, and not a monologue by the therapist, nor a monologue by the client.
  - The language of existential analysis is **metaphor**.
    - Existential therapists allow their clients to disclose themselves, in their own words, in their own time.

III EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOLOGY
C. Rollo May

- Rollo May (1909 - 1994)
  - Human dilemma: Humans are objects and subjects of their experience in the world.
    - Objects in that we exist physically,
    - Subjects in that we interpret, value, choose, and make meaning.
  - A healthy person exercises freedom to go beyond what was previous.
    - Causes normal anxiety which is healthy because it is conducive to personal growth.

III EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOLOGY
C. Rollo May

- May's human dilemma
  - Humans need freedom and meaning.
    - Neurotic anxiety results from reducing or eliminating freedom.
    - Self-alienation occurs whenever people conform to social values.
  - Finding meaning through myth.
    - Myths are stories that help us to "make sense" out of out lives, "guiding narratives" even "identities."
  - Physical science ineffective to understand human meaning

III EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOLOGY
D. George Kelly

- George Kelly
  - Kelly's position based on how people view things, *constructive alternativism*, which aligned him with existentialists.
    - We reduce uncertainty by creating construct systems to predict the future.
      - People are free to choose the constructs they use in interacting with the world
      - They can view and interpret events in an almost infinite number of ways because construing them is an individual matter.

III EXISTENTIAL PSYCHOLOGY
D. George Kelly

- Personal construct as therapy
  - Psychological disorders reflects a personal construction which is used repeatedly in spite of consistent invalidation
    - Kelly began therapy by having clients write a self-characterization
    - This gave information about how he/she viewed him/herself, the world, and others.
  - Kelly also had clients engage in fixed-role therapy.

IV HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY
A. Introduction

- Humanism refers to the recognition of the value of the human being.
  - Humanistic Psychology celebrates human potential.
  - It is a theory of healthy personalities and conditions under which less than healthy personalities can become healthy.
  - Assumptions of Humanistic Psychology
    - Emphasis on conscious experience
    - Belief on the wholeness if human nature.
    - Focus on free will, spontaneity, and creativity.
    - Studies factors relevant to the human condition.

IV HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY
B. Abraham Maslow

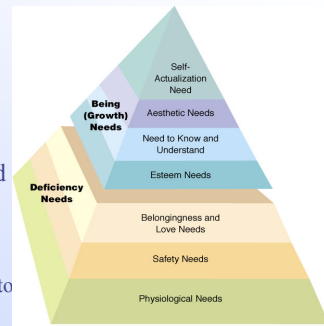- **Abraham Maslow** (1908-1970)
  - People are designed to develop a healthy personality.
    - He read case studies of Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, Eleanor Roosevelt
  - Common characteristics:
    - Self-aware, Self-accepting, Open and Spontaneous, Loving and Caring, Uninfluenced by Others' Opinions, Focuses Energies on a Life Mission, Enjoy a few Deep Friendships, Has Spiritual or Peak Experience, Unashamed to be openly virtuous

IV HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY
B. Abraham Maslow

- Self actualization (the definition of a healthy person) can only occur when other needs are fulfilled.
- Maslow also identified a Needs Hierarchy
  - Individuals grow from having Basic (or Deficiency) needs met to having Being (or Growth) needs met.

Pyramid labels: Self-Actualization Need; Aesthetic Needs; Need to Know and Understand; Esteem Needs; Belongingness and Love Needs; Safety Needs; Physiological Needs. Being (Growth) Needs; Deficiency Needs.

IV HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY
B. Abraham Maslow

- **Carl Rogers** (1902 - 1987)
  - From Maslow, Rogers believed the people are good and endowed with self-actualizing tendencies.
    - People could use this actualizing tendency in living their lives,
  - A problem arises if unconditioned positive regard is received.
    - This sets up conditions of worth.
    - Stunts self-actualizing tendencies
      - The only way to avoid imposing conditions of worth on people is to give them unconditional positive regard.
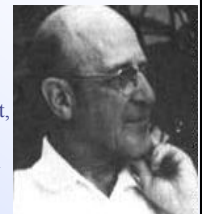
IV HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY
B. Abraham Maslow

- **Carl Rogers** (1902 - 1987)
  - He identified the conditions necessary for the growth of a healthy personality.
    - **Genuineness**: Open with feelings, dropping facades, being transparent, and self-disclosing.
    - **Acceptance**: Having unconditional positive regard for ourselves and others by acceptance
    - **Empathy:** Nonjudgmental understanding by feeling others' experiences.

V   METHODS OF HUMANISM
   A. Introduction

- Methods of Humanistic Psychology must measure the full range of human experience.
  - Humanistic psychologists, while embracing the need for rigorous science, have therefore argued for a science which
    - captures the primacy of experience over abstract truths,
    - uniqueness along with universality,
    - descriptive or qualitative research methodology which captures the unique lived experience.
    - the centrality of the experiencing human being and the actualization of the human potential

V   METHODS OF HUMANISM
   B. Self Esteem Research

- Central to Humanism is the influence of conscious self-awareness on behavior.
  - Narrative measures, interviews, Assessment of meaning, emotions.
  - Measuring the conscious self
    - **Q sort**: Adjectives that are order as "most" and "least" like me.
    - Q sort for "as you are now" and "as you would like to be".
    - The discrepancies index your self esteem
      - Low Self Esteem → big discrepancy between Q sorts
      - High Self Esteem → small discrepancy between Q sorts

V   METHODS OF HUMANISM
   B. Self Esteem Research

- Research on Self Esteem and Behavior
  - High self esteem: Fewer ulcers, sleepless nights, do not conform, not use drugs,
  - Low Self esteem: Despair, unhappiness, Fall short of their hopes, depression and anxiety
- But what causes what?
  - In studies which experimentally lowered self esteem (by proving false feedback from IQ tests):
    - Low self esteem → increasingly racially prejudiced, thinned skinned, and judgmental.

VI   HUMANISTIC & EXISTENTIAL PSYCH
   A. Similarities

- Shared beliefs
  - Humans have free will and are responsible for their actions.
  - The most appropriate method to study humans is phenomenology.
  - Humans must be studies as a whole in order to be understood.
  - Living an authentic life is better than living an inauthentic one.

VI HUMANISTIC & EXISTENTIAL PSYCH
   B. Differences

- Differences
  - Humanists assume that humans are basically good, while the existentialists view human nature as essentially neutral.
  - Humanists believe the major motivation in life is the actualizing tendency, while existentialists believe that the only motivational force is the "will to meaning.
  - Humanistic therapy is not directive whereas existential therapy may be directive

VI HUMANISTIC & EXISTENTIAL PSYCH
   C. Criticisms

- Criticisms of Humanism
  - Criticizes behaviorism, psychoanalysis, and scientific psychology in general
    - However, all three have made significant contributions to the betterment of the human condition
  - Rejects traditional scientific methodology, but offers nothing to replace it of any substance.
  - Rejects animal research
    - May be a valuable source of knowledge about humans
  - Ill defined terms and concepts
    - They defy clear definitions and verification.

VI HUMANISTIC & EXISTENTIAL PSYCH
   C. Criticisms

- Criticisms of Humanism
  - Ideas are vague and subjective.
    - Is self-actualizing the ideal for this time in this culture?
    - Applicable cross culturally?
  - Excessive focus on the self
    - Sometimes seems to promote immorality and self-indulgence,
  - Naively Optimistic
    - The capacity to do evil and be influenced by others may be more powerful than believed.

VI HUMANISTIC & EXISTENTIAL PSYCH
   D. Contributions

- Contributions
  - Expansion of psychology's domain
  - Development of positive psychology
    - Explores positive human attributes
  - Positive psychologists and early humanistic psychologists agree that mental health is more than the absence of mental illness.
    - Flourishing is used to describe people who are not only free from mental illness, but who are filled with vitality and are functioning optimally.