

Psychology of Personality and Individual Differences: Theory and Applications

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Week 7

Lecture 15: Rogers theory of Personality

I welcome you all to module 7 of this course and lecture number 15. This is the second lecture of module 7, and overall, it is lecture number 15. In this session, we are discussing the humanistic perspective with a focus on understanding personality. In the first lecture of this module, we explored Maslow's theory, and today's lecture will delve into Carl Rogers' theory of personality. Before we jump into today's topic, let's take a moment to recap the key points from the last lecture.

In the last lecture, we focused on Maslow's theory, beginning with an overview of the fundamental ideas of humanistic psychology. We explored some of the core principles that underpin this psychological approach. After that, we delved into Maslow's hierarchy of needs, examining the various levels of needs he introduced and discussing how these needs can illuminate our understanding of human motivation, behavior, and personality. This framework helps us appreciate the complexity of human experience from a humanistic perspective.

We also discussed the concept of meta-needs, or B-values, which are associated with individuals who are self-actualized or are on the journey toward self-actualization. We emphasized the significance of these needs and how they contribute to personal growth. Additionally, we examined various characteristics of self-actualizing individuals as described by Maslow. Lastly, we addressed some common criticisms of Maslow's theory and how they reflect the ongoing dialogue in the field of psychology. Now, let's transition into today's lecture.

In today's lecture, we will focus on Rogers' theory and explore how it relates to human personality and the dynamics involved. We will discuss the concept of the actualizing tendency, emphasizing its importance in human development. We'll examine how this

tendency interacts with societal influences and the impact it has on individuals. Additionally, we will explore the distinction between the real self and the ideal self, as well as the concept of the fully functioning person as proposed by Carl Rogers. This framework offers valuable insights into understanding personal growth and self-concept within the humanistic perspective.

In brief, we will also discuss some of the major ideas behind client-centered therapy, as proposed by Carl Rogers. By the end of the lecture, we will address some of the criticisms directed at Rogers' theory. It's important to note that Carl Rogers' theory emerged from his extensive clinical practice. As a well-known therapist, many of his ideas evolved from his direct experiences with clients and patients. Rogers introduced a significant and influential approach to psychotherapy that continues to impact the field today.

Essentially, Rogers' theory is intricately connected to therapy. He initially referred to his approach as non-directive or client-centered therapy, which later became known as person-centered therapy. The core idea behind this approach is that the focus is on the individual undergoing therapy, rather than on the therapist's techniques or interventions. This emphasis on the person being treated underscores the importance of the client's perspective and experiences in the therapeutic process, which is foundational to Rogers' approach.

This therapeutic method has generated substantial research and continues to be widely used in counseling settings today. Carl Rogers' approach became so influential that various schools of thought in therapy, while differing in techniques, often incorporate key principles of client-centered therapy. This highlights the lasting impact of Rogers' ideas on the therapeutic landscape and underscores their significance. His theory is firmly rooted in humanistic psychology, with an emphasis on the patient-therapist relationship as a fundamental aspect of the therapeutic process. This focus on fostering a genuine, empathetic connection between therapist and client is central to promoting healing and personal growth.

Since this theory evolved primarily from therapeutic sessions, many of the concepts are closely related to therapy itself. We will explore the specifics of his theory in more detail later. Unlike other theories that were developed through laboratory experiments, Rogers

formulated his ideas based on his clinical experiences with clients. While many psychological theories emerged from controlled experiments, field research, and empirical studies, Rogers' approach emphasizes the real-life experiences and interactions that take place in a therapeutic setting, making it unique in its focus and application.

Indeed, Rogers' theory developed out of his clinical experiences with clients, which is a significant distinguishing feature. While it shares a similarity with psychoanalysis—also rooted in therapeutic sessions—Rogers made a notable choice in terminology by referring to those he worked with as "clients" rather than "patients." This distinction reflects his emphasis on viewing individuals as active participants in their own healing process, highlighting a more collaborative and egalitarian relationship between the therapist and the person receiving therapy. This shift in terminology aligns with the humanistic principles that underpin his theory.

This shift in terminology is indeed rooted in the humanistic approach, emphasizing respect for individuals seeking treatment. One of the central ideas of humanistic psychology is self-actualization, which was also a key component of Maslow's theory. Carl Rogers contributed significantly to this concept, providing a detailed perspective on self-actualization and its crucial role within his theory. However, it's important to note that the conceptualization of self-actualization differs somewhat from Maslow's perspective. While both theorists recognize its importance, Rogers focused more on the process of achieving one's potential through personal growth and authenticity, emphasizing the individual's journey toward becoming a fully functioning person..

We will explore how Rogers' view of self-actualization differs from Maslow's perspective. Carl Rogers emphasized the uniqueness of each individual, asserting that clients are the best experts on themselves and are capable of solving their own problems. This notion is central to humanistic psychology—the idea that each person is unique and possesses the inherent ability to understand and navigate their own experiences. To truly understand human beings, it's essential to focus on the individual, recognizing their distinctiveness and empowering them to take charge of their own growth and development. This focus on

individual expertise promotes a more collaborative and supportive therapeutic environment.

To truly understand human behavior, it is essential to focus on individuality. Carl Rogers believed that everyone possesses a natural tendency toward growth and self-actualization. This means that every individual is intrinsically motivated to pursue growth and to reach their full potential. This idea resonates with Maslow's concept of an innate positive drive to realize one's potential. Rogers specifically termed this motivation the "actualizing tendency," which he identified as our primary motivator for growth from the moment we are born. This actualizing tendency exists within all of us, driving us toward personal development and expansion in our lives. Rogers posited that individuals can effectively cope with life's challenges and maintain psychological health as long as their actualizing potential is not hindered. This highlights the importance of creating supportive environments that nurture this inherent motivation for growth.

If individuals are in tune with their actualizing tendency and live in alignment with it, psychological health and well-being will naturally follow. This is a fundamental aspect of the actualizing tendency—it inherently drives us toward well-being. However, when this tendency is obstructed due to various life circumstances, such as psychological obstacles or adverse experiences, issues can arise. According to Rogers, psychological problems emerge when the actualizing tendency is blocked for certain reasons. This represents a departure from Maslow's perspective, which views self-actualization as something that is reached after fulfilling more basic needs. In contrast, Rogers conceptualizes the self-actualizing tendency as a more foundational and overarching motivation present within everyone. When this inherent motivation is hindered, individuals are more likely to encounter psychological difficulties and challenges. This distinction emphasizes the importance of fostering environments that support and facilitate personal growth and self-actualization.

Rogers' view highlights that when the actualizing tendency is obstructed, individuals are more likely to experience ill-being and psychological issues. His conception of self-actualization encompasses both biological and psychological aspects. On the biological side, this includes basic drives such as the need for food, water, sleep, safety, and

reproduction. The psychological aspect, on the other hand, focuses on the development of one's potential qualities that enhance human worth and promote personal growth. While Maslow categorized self-actualization as a peak need that one reaches after fulfilling all other basic needs, Rogers integrates these various needs within the broader concept of self-actualization.

He views self-actualization as a superordinate motivation that includes and encompasses physiological needs like food, water, safety, and reproduction. In this framework, all needs can be considered expressions of the self-actualization drive. By emphasizing the psychological aspects, Rogers underscored their importance for psychological health, which was central to his therapeutic approach. Essentially, he articulated a view of self-actualization that integrates all dimensions of human motivation, illustrating how interconnected these needs are in the pursuit of personal growth and fulfillment.

This brings us to another key difference in the conceptualization of self-actualization between Rogers and Maslow. Rogers posited that harmful behaviors typically develop only under adverse conditions. When individuals are in a negative environment that restricts their ability to express their self-actualizing tendency, they are more likely to exhibit harmful or negative behaviors. For instance, if a person faces a challenging environment or lacks the freedom to develop in alignment with their true nature, these conditions can block self-actualization. As a result, individuals may experience psychological distress and display antisocial or other problematic behaviors. This perspective emphasizes the critical role of the environment in shaping behavior and highlights that well-being is contingent upon the ability to fulfill one's inherent potential in a supportive context. Rogers' focus on these adverse conditions reinforces the importance of creating nurturing environments that foster personal growth and psychological health.

What role does the actualizing tendency play in human development? In this regard, Rogers' theory, much like Freud's, is grounded in clinical experiences and insights gained from extensive therapy sessions. Both theories are rich and mature, characterized by logical coherence and broad applicability. However, a fundamental difference lies in their perspectives on human nature.

While Freud often viewed human beings through a pathological lens, Rogers perceived individuals as fundamentally good or healthy, a central tenet of humanistic psychology. Rogers interpreted human nature in a largely positive light, asserting that individuals are inherently good when allowed to express their actualizing tendency. Negative behaviors, according to him, arise only when this tendency is obstructed by adverse environmental conditions. This perspective sharply contrasts with Freudian concepts. Rogers regarded mental health as the natural state of being, suggesting that mental illnesses or issues are merely distortions of this inherent tendency. When the actualizing tendency is blocked or distorted, psychological problems may arise; however, if it is allowed to flourish, mental health becomes a natural outcome.

Rogers' theory is notable for its simplicity and elegance, as it focuses on the central concept of the actualizing tendency. This intrinsic motivation exists in all life forms, not just humans, as plants and animals also strive to realize their fullest potential. This idea underscores the universality of the actualizing tendency, reflecting its significance across various forms of life. Ultimately, Rogers' framework emphasizes the importance of fostering environments that encourage this natural drive towards growth and self-actualization

This drive goes beyond mere survival; it encompasses the aspiration to make the most out of existence. Rogers argued that human beings, like all life forms, are not solely focused on expanding their lives; rather, they seek to express the best version of their existence. Every animal endeavors to make the most out of its life and to lead the best life possible. Similarly, even plants strive to express themselves to the fullest extent of their potential.

The fundamental commonality among all animals and organisms is the actualizing tendency. This intrinsic motivation drives each entity to express itself to the best of its ability. While the degree of success varies based on numerous environmental factors, the basic motivation to actualize is present in all life forms. Whether an individual achieves its potential successfully or not depends on various circumstances, but the desire to grow, thrive, and express oneself remains universal across the spectrum of life. This highlights

the profound interconnectedness of all living beings and the innate drive to reach one's fullest potential.

This self-actualizing tendency is indeed a common thread among all life forms, distinguishing Rogers' ideas from those of Maslow. While Maslow primarily viewed self-actualization as a distinctly human phenomenon that arises only after fulfilling basic needs, Rogers argued that this actualizing tendency exists within all living beings, including animals, plants, and microorganisms. He proposed that fundamental desires—such as the need for air, water, food, safety, love, competence, and even the drive to innovate and create—stem from this core motivation of the actualizing tendency. Rogers viewed all these needs as expressions of the self-actualizing tendency itself, making it a more foundational motivation that encompasses other needs rather than restricting it to humans alone.

He emphasized that every life form is inherently motivated to make the best use of its life and to express itself to the fullest ability. This is illustrated by how even weeds or saplings can thrive under harsh conditions, showcasing the resilience of this actualizing drive. Moreover, Rogers extended this principle to larger ecosystems, suggesting that more complex ecosystems like forests have greater potential for actualization compared to simpler ones, such as cornfields. In a complex ecosystem, the diversity and interplay of various life forms increase the opportunities for expression and growth, much like individuals. He posited that individuals, similar to ecosystems, will thrive when they live in alignment with their true nature—the actualizing tendency. When people align themselves with this inherent drive, they can develop greater complexity, resilience, and flexibility in facing the challenges of life. This alignment leads to improved mental health and overall well-being, reflecting the interconnected nature of personal growth within the broader context of life.

The more we connect with our actualizing tendency and express it, both individually and within communities or groups, the greater our resilience becomes. This connection enhances our ability to face both minor and major life challenges more effectively. Carl

Rogers expanded on the actualizing tendency by introducing related concepts, including organismic valuing, positive regard, and positive self-regard, which will help us connect these ideas within his overarching model. Let's explore the meanings of these concepts one by one. Rogers proposed that organisms inherently know what is beneficial for them, referring not only to human beings but to all living entities. This inherent knowledge allows organisms to make choices that support their well-being and growth, aligning with their actualizing tendency. This concept emphasizes the importance of trusting one's instincts and understanding what is truly necessary for personal development and fulfillment. In the subsequent sections, we'll delve deeper into each of these concepts to understand how they interconnect and contribute to the overall framework of Rogers' theory.

He discusses the concept of organismic valuing, which suggests that every organism has an intrinsic evolutionary tendency that guides them toward what is beneficial. Essentially, organisms inherently know what is good for them if they follow their actualizing tendencies. For instance, if you place a cow in a grassland, it instinctively selects the grasses that are advantageous for its health. This evolutionary mechanism equips organisms with the ability to discern what is nutritious and beneficial, allowing them to avoid harmful options. Therefore, they naturally gravitate toward choices that promote their well-being.

While this principle applies clearly to animals, it becomes more intricate when considering humans. Although humans also possess this natural tendency, our complex environment and the artificial constructs we have created may cloud our understanding of what is genuinely good for us. In the animal kingdom, the instinct to select appropriate food is apparent; they do not require guidance to identify what to eat. Evolution has given them senses and preferences that align with their nutritional needs. Generally, foods that taste good are nutritious, while those that taste bad may indicate spoilage or toxicity. This evolutionary conditioning is embedded within us all, helping guide our choices toward what is healthy and beneficial.

This concept is known as organismic valuing, which leads us to another important idea proposed by Rogers: positive regard. Positive regard encompasses love, affection, attention, and nurturance, and it's something that all organisms, including humans, inherently seek from others. From the earliest stages of life, such as in infancy, the need

for positive regard is crucial. Babies require love and attention to survive and develop healthily. Without this nurturing environment, their growth can be stunted, underscoring the significance of positive regard not just for survival, but for thriving in adult life as well.

As social beings, we all need love and affirmation from others to feel fulfilled. Following the concept of positive regard, Rogers introduces positive self-regard, which relates to self-esteem—the way you perceive your own worth. It's about how you value yourself and your identity. This aspect of self-regard reflects how well you appreciate your own abilities and understand your value as an individual in the broader context of life. Together, these constructs of organismic valuing, positive regard, and positive self-regard form a foundational framework for understanding human experience and development.

Having positive self-regard means you possess a favorable perception of yourself and a healthy view of your own worth. This positive self-regard typically develops as a result of experiencing positive regard from others. When people show us love, affection, and support, we are more likely to cultivate a positive image of ourselves. Conversely, if we are often neglected or not nurtured by those around us, it can lead to a negative self-view. This connection highlights how our experiences and the behaviors of others significantly influence our self-esteem. During our formative years, if we lack positive self-regard, we may feel inadequate and struggle to realize our potential. This underscores the importance of positive regard; it not only fosters a sense of worthiness but is also essential for accessing our self-actualizing tendencies. In essence, positive self-regard is intertwined with the positive regard we receive from others. It shapes our ability to connect with our true selves and pursue growth, ultimately helping us reach our full potential.

Rogers, like Maslow, posits that if left to their own devices, organisms tend to consume what is beneficial for them in balanced amounts. This natural inclination extends to infants, who innately understand their needs. For instance, when a baby is born, it instinctively knows how much milk to take, reflecting an evolutionary mechanism embedded within all organisms. However, the context for human beings has changed dramatically over time. Our modern environment is vastly different from the natural habitats in which we evolved. Historically, humans thrived in straightforward, natural environments, whereas today, we navigate a complex and often artificial world that we have constructed ourselves. This shift

in environment can impact our ability to connect with our innate tendencies, making it more challenging to trust our natural instincts and maintain a balanced approach to our needs.

The environment we live in today is markedly different from the one in which our ancestors thrived. In our modern context, we have introduced numerous artificial elements, such as refined sugars and processed foods like chocolate, which can appeal to our organismic valuing. While these items may taste good and are enjoyable, they do not necessarily support our actualization or overall well-being. These pleasurable foods may satisfy our taste buds, but they can undermine our ability to reach our potential and maintain good health. This disconnection arises from the artificial environment we've created, which, according to Rogers, poses challenges to human life and the process of actualization. Rogers also emphasized the significant role that society plays in our journey toward self-actualization. One important concept he introduced in this context is "conditions of worth." These conditions refer to the expectations and standards society places on individuals regarding their worth and value. Understanding this concept helps illuminate how external influences can shape our perceptions of ourselves and impact our ability to grow and realize our true potential.

Conditions of worth refer to the societal expectations that can obstruct our natural actualizing tendency. From an early age, individuals often receive love and positive regard only when they meet certain criteria established by others. In many cases, these criteria dictate when someone is considered worthy or deserving of affection and support. In society, unconditional regard is rare; people typically experience positive feedback contingent on their behaviors and achievements.

For instance, messages that children receive from parents, teachers, peers, and even media can create a framework of conditions they must meet to be perceived as worthy. A common example is a child being told, "You are a good boy only when you behave in a certain way" or "You will receive a reward if you eat what is expected." As a result, children learn to associate their worth with specific actions and achievements, internalizing the idea that they must fulfill particular conditions to be regarded as good individuals. This reliance on external validation can carry over into other areas of life, such as in educational settings,

where students encounter similar expectations and conditions placed upon them. Ultimately, these conditions of worth can hinder individuals from fully embracing their authentic selves and realizing their potential.

In society, we encounter numerous conditions of worth that influence our lives from childhood and continue throughout our existence. These societal expectations can often clash with our natural actualizing tendency. For instance, you may have a desire to pursue a particular passion or path, but if that pursuit is not accepted or valued by those around you, it can create a conflict that stifles your growth. When this external validation is lacking, your innate drive to actualize yourself may be obstructed because these conditions of worth impose limitations on how you perceive your worthiness. This dynamic highlights how societal pressures can impact personal development and individual fulfillment. Furthermore, these conditions of worth give rise to what is known as conditional positive regard. In our human interactions, we often receive love and affection only when we meet certain criteria or expectations. While many like to believe that parental love is unconditional, it can be conditional in practice; parents may expect their children to behave in specific ways or achieve certain milestones to receive their affection. This pattern extends beyond parental relationships to other figures in our lives, such as teachers, peers, and even society at large. The result is that individuals may feel they must conform to external standards to gain love and acceptance, which can inhibit their ability to fully explore and realize their authentic selves. Understanding this dynamic is crucial for acknowledging how societal conditions influence our self-worth and our journey toward actualization.

This concept is known as conditional positive regard, where love and affection are given only under specific conditions. In our society, many aspects of our interactions and relationships become conditional, leading to a situation where we receive positive feedback only when we meet certain expectations. This desire for positive regard serves as a powerful motivation, driving individuals to fulfill various criteria set by others, which can ultimately distort their behavior. Often, this need to gain approval can interfere with our actualizing tendency. In the pursuit of acceptance and love, we may compromise our true selves and act in ways that don't align with our authentic desires. As a result, many people

struggle to connect with their natural instincts and potential because they feel compelled to conform to external expectations.

This conditioning also extends to self-regard, giving rise to what can be termed conditional positive self-regard. In this scenario, individuals may only feel good about themselves when they meet the conditions laid out by others. Their self-respect becomes contingent on external validation, meaning that their perception of self-worth is directly tied to how others regard them. Consequently, the ability to appreciate and value oneself may be significantly undermined, highlighting the complexities of self-esteem in the context of societal expectations.

When positive regard becomes conditional, it directly affects our self-regard, leading us to value ourselves only if we meet the standards set by others. This shift detracts from our true potential for self-actualization, illustrating how societal influences shape our behavior and self-perception. Initially, the concept of culture and society stemmed from a desire to help individuals actualize their potential. However, as time progresses and larger groups of people form societies, these systems can develop rigid rules and regulations. Over time, the societal conditions that were once intended to support individual growth may fail to align with the actualizing tendencies of many individuals. While some people may find ways to express their tendencies within these societal frameworks, numerous others struggle to do so.

The rigidity of societal norms often means that they won't easily adapt based on the needs or desires of a single individual. Instead, society solidifies into a structure with its own inherent rules, which can stifle personal expression and hinder growth for many. This dynamic illustrates that society itself is not inherently negative; it was originally established with the intention of supporting individual actualization. However, as it evolves into a rigid entity, it can create barriers that prevent people from fulfilling their true selves, leading to a disconnect between individual potentials and societal expectations.

This scenario can indeed be problematic for many individuals, as external standards and societal expectations often overlook personal needs and variations. When these standards do not align with the unique experiences or tendencies of every individual, it can lead to significant challenges in maintaining self-esteem and pursuing self-actualization. Consequently, many people may struggle to live in a way that truly reflects their potential.

and actualizing tendencies. To encapsulate all the concepts we've discussed, a diagram or model can be very helpful.

This chart illustrates how the various ideas interconnect and interact with one another. Each concept builds upon the previous ones, showing the relationship between organismic valuing, positive regard, conditional positive regard, and self-regard. As we explore this visual representation, we can gain a deeper understanding of how these elements work together to shape our behaviors, motivations, and overall sense of self. It's important to analyze these interactions to identify areas where individuals may need support in overcoming the obstacles posed by societal expectations, ultimately allowing them to reconnect with their true selves and potential.

Now, if you see this side, this is basically a journey when one is... There is no obstruction in the path of actualizing tendency. Whatever inherent potential you have, you are able to express it smoothly. No one is obstructing you. So this is the left side one. He is showing this path. If everything goes well in your life, this will be the path. So what is happening? You have an actualizing potential, an actualizing tendency. This actualizing tendency gives you something called organismic valuing. That means you know what is good for you. A natural evolutionary sense is there. There is a natural tendency that you want to express something. Maybe somebody wants to express....

Let us say somebody has a potential for painting or writing. Whatever it is, organismic valuing will automatically direct you toward those directions because that is within you. It wants to express itself. So if one is in touch with the actualizing tendency, organismic valuing will guide them to find the right kind of things in their life — the right kind of activities. And let us say while pursuing those right activities, they are getting positive regard. No one is obstructing them, no one is creating a problem. They are receiving love and affection, nurturance. There is no problem or obstacle; they are getting positive regard.

Now, if they get positive regard, automatically, they will develop positive self-regard. When people are giving you love and affection, you're more likely to have a positive view of yourself. We tend to question ourselves mainly when others are saying negative things about us, which can lead to doubts about our self-esteem. However, when you are surrounded by positive regard, gaining positive self-regard becomes a natural outcome.

Now, if we are in touch with positive self-regard, we will arrive at something called the real self. This is the real self that you inherently want to become—the true essence of who you are at the core of your being. If you follow this pathway, you will naturally end up discovering your real self.

However, this often doesn't happen in most of our lives. So, what occurs? Why doesn't this happen? Because our lives are not isolated; they involve interactions with others. This actualization tendency interacts with society, and that interaction can influence our journey in various ways.

Society has its rules, regulations, norms, and values regarding what should be perceived and what shouldn't, along with a lot of conditions. This societal framework leads to what we refer to as the "conditions of worth" that we discussed earlier. These conditions interact with organismic valuing. When organismic valuing drives you to pursue something, but society deems it worthless or suggests that you should be doing something else, a conflict arises. This interaction can lead us to overlook or disregard our own organismic valuing process, causing us to stray from our true potential.

We may end up following these conditions of worth because they are tied to conditional positive regard. When you adhere to these conditions, you receive love and affection from those around you, which can pressure you to engage in activities that you might not genuinely want to pursue. This phenomenon is known as conditional positive regard. As a result, conditional positive regard transforms into conditional positive self-regard; you begin to value yourself only when you meet those external criteria. You feel worthy only when you fulfill the projections imposed by the outside world. Ultimately, if you continue to pursue those projections, you will find yourself with an ideal self—this is a self that is largely shaped by the expectations of others.

This is not your real self; in this process, you gradually become someone else shaped by other people's projections. This is what we refer to as the ideal self. Carl Rogers emphasized that if there is a discrepancy between the real self and the ideal self, it can lead to feelings of unhappiness and restlessness, which is often referred to as neurosis. The greater the gap between your real self and your ideal self, the more pronounced your neurosis will be.

This results in greater emotional instability, a lack of peace, and diminished happiness. The reason is that your true self differs from what you have become, leading to a mismatch between your authentic self and your ideal self. This incongruence can manifest in many people's lives, causing psychological disturbances and issues. For instance, someone might have a genuine desire to be a painter, but societal values or parental expectations might push them toward more lucrative careers. Although they might achieve success in these fields, they may find themselves living as their ideal self, which might not align with their true self, leading to discomfort or dissatisfaction. The greater the gap between the real and ideal selves, the more emotional challenges they might face. This scenario is common in many people's lives. However, it's important to note that not everyone in society will experience this.

Many individuals express themselves through society. However, some people may not align well with societal norms, leading to a disconnect with their inherent drive for self-actualization. This misalignment can result in issues like neurosis. The ideas of the real self, self-concept, and ideal self naturally emerge from this framework.

He differentiated between these concepts: the real self, as previously mentioned, is the fundamental organismic self, essentially the genetic potential of who we can become under perfect conditions. On the left side of the model, when circumstances are entirely favorable, we align with this genetic potential, embodying the real self. In such ideal scenarios, our actions would be directed by our actualizing tendency, making self-actualization attainable for everyone after gaining enough life experiences to understand what truly fulfills them. Nonetheless, Rogers contended that these ideal conditions are seldom, if ever, realized.

Typically, most people do not experience these ideal conditions. Thus, the notion of self-concept becomes crucial. As children mature and engage with others, they develop an understanding of themselves, which shapes their self-concept. Through interaction and self-discovery, everyone forms a self-concept, answering the question, "Who am I?"

This self-concept is the perception of ourselves. How do I perceive myself? That is my self-concept. It is largely based on how others have described and evaluated us. We also accumulate this sense of self-concept through others' reactions and how others define us.

For instance, being told by family members, 'You are a clever boy' or 'You are a good-looking one.' So, these things slowly, gradually, we incorporate, and they become a part of our self-concept. We internalize these descriptions as a part of our identity. To assess your self-concept, we generally ask the question, 'Who am I?' Most people can readily list certain adjectives that they think describe themselves.

In essence, this is the fundamental concept of self-concept. The ideal self, or real self, we've talked about, is embedded in our genetic makeup and tends to manifest when conditions are optimal. According to Rogers' personality theory, the ideal self is a version of oneself that a person aims to become, influenced by specific conditions imposed on them. It includes the goals, ambitions, and qualities they wish to acquire. The ideal self is molded by both personal aspirations and societal pressures, reflecting what an individual believes they should accomplish in life. It is shaped by their perception of what they ought to do, influenced by societal and cultural projections. Occasionally, it also involves personal desires influenced by external factors. This ideal version of ourselves is what we aspire to be, based on certain external influences. The discrepancy between the real self and the ideal self leads to neurosis, as illustrated in the model.

According to Rogers, this element of our existence is anchored in the actualizing tendency, steered by organismic valuing, and fostered by positive regard and self-regard, which is referred to as the real self. This real self embodies the person you will become if everything unfolds positively—your authentic self. On the other hand, when societal expectations impose conditions of worth that clash with the actualizing tendency and organismic valuing, resulting in only conditional positive regard and self-regard, egoism emerges.

The ideal self, which Rogers sometimes referred to as the self-concept, is a notion we form about ourselves, representing the ideal self. The real self is the authentic self, not a concept, whereas the ideal self is a concept shaped by external influences. This ideal self is not a true reflection of who we are but rather an idealized benchmark we aim to achieve, based on external expectations and standards. The difference between the real self and the ideal self, the "I am" versus the "I should be," is termed incongruity.

The wider this gap, the greater the incongruity, leading to increased distress and a lack of inner peace. The more aligned you are with your true self, the smaller the gap, and the more

at peace you will feel internally. Rogers equates this incongruence with neurosis, describing it as being disconnected from one's true self. This is what we explore in the model. Our self-concept is socially constructed, meaning we often evaluate ourselves based on others' perceptions rather than our own feelings. This essentially defines the ideal self we discussed. This behavior is driven by a strong need for positive regard, as we all seek attention, love, and affection from others. Consequently, we strive to meet the conditions set by others without considering our true desires, leading to the formation of the ideal self.

Rogers proposed that the desire for positive regard can sometimes overshadow our innate valuing process. This external expectation can cause us to lose sight of our true inclinations, as we seek approval from others. Often, this results in a disconnect from our organismic valuing and actualizing tendencies. However, when individuals are nurtured with ample unconditional positive regard, allowing them to express themselves freely in a supportive environment, they are more likely to reveal their authentic selves. The closer the alignment between these elements, the healthier we become psychologically as adults.

Rogers advocated for parents and educational institutions to cultivate an environment that encourages creativity, curiosity, self-reliance, and mutual respect within safe boundaries. Clearly, there must be limits; not everything can be permitted. Yet, within these boundaries, individuals should be granted certain freedoms to express their actualizing tendencies more fully.

Educational settings and similar environments play a crucial role in nurturing these tendencies. Carl Rogers also discussed the concept of a fully functioning person, someone who is in harmony with their true self. According to Rogers, the goal of therapy is to help individuals become fully functioning, enabling them to operate more effectively. The culmination of the self-actualization process is a fully functioning person, characterized by openness to experience and self-acceptance, with minimal conditions of worth. Such individuals are typically open to new experiences and possess a strong sense of self-acceptance.

Self-acceptance arises when actions are not solely driven by others' expectations, leading to a natural sense of positive regard and openness to new experiences. This results in fewer conditions of worth being imposed on the individual.

Or at least, they will not allow too many conditions of worth to distort their behavior. So they possess a positive self-concept and high self-esteem which can be considered as another characteristic. Their organismic valuing process guides their life choices. So they will be in touch with the actualizing tendency, and their organismic valuing process will guide them, making them less susceptible to others' expectations. So they will be less influenced by others' expectations. They will do what they love to do. And they will be less influenced by the judgments and expectations of others. When they make mistakes, they can acknowledge them openly and learn from them.

So they will not be defensive in terms of always justifying themselves for what they did. If they did something wrong, they will accept it. In terms of personal relationships, the fully functioning individual respects the rights of others and cares deeply for them. These individuals display high levels of unconditional positive regard for the people in their lives and are capable of forming deep, meaningful relationships.

So they themselves will express unconditional positive regard. So they will not judge people too much. They will allow other people to express whatever they want to do in their life. Because they themselves value that, so they will also express that in their relationships.

So that makes them capable of forming deep, meaningful relationships. When people become too judgmental, they are not able to form relationships with other people. Because they judge people all the time, you know, and if people do not fit their judgment, they will have conflicts. So flexibility is not there.

Carl Rogers, because his whole theory actually came out of therapy. So his therapy is actually called client-centered therapy or person-centered therapy. It is a non-directive form of talk therapy that emphasizes the client's capacity for self-direction and understanding of their development. So it is called client-centered or person-centered therapy simply because the focus is on the person. And it is non-directive.

So therapy doesn't give too much direction on what to do or what not to do. They generally provide only a loving atmosphere, and they believe that the person themselves can find the solutions given the right atmosphere. So, Carl Rogers has identified three core conditions or characteristics of a therapist. A therapist, an ideal therapist, should show these characteristics, and these characteristics will create an environment where healing will happen automatically.

A lot of people will automatically heal from their psychological problems and issues. What are these three conditions? One is unconditional positive regard. Second is empathy. Third is genuineness or congruence.

So let us see what these three things are. Unconditional positive regard, as we have already discussed, contrasts with conditional positive regard in society. Most people give conditional positive regard. If you fulfill certain criteria or conditions, then only will you be loved and accepted. So that's called conditional positive regard.

Now, in the case of unconditional positive regard, there are no conditions. So that is the idea of unconditional positive regard. It means complete acceptance and support. As an individual, you are accepted completely. That doesn't mean the person will not speak up if you do something bad.

The only thing is that, as a person, you will be completely accepted. Regardless of what the client says or does. Everybody may have many positive and negative dimensions. But you are accepted as a person. You may be guided to do the right thing and so on.

That is a different thing. But that acceptance of the person is unconditional. This is a typical example of unconditional positive regard, like a mother's love. Even though the child may not be good at everything. But a mother's love is unconditional, generally people say.

She accepts the child in whatever form it is. She may scold also, but the acceptance is unconditional. So that's the typical case of unconditional positive regard. It creates a safe and non-judgmental environment where clients feel free to express their true thoughts and feelings. When a therapist adopts an unconditional positive regard orientation, the client becomes very comfortable because they feel they are not judged.

So they will be able to express whatever they want to express. And the moment they are able to express all the problems, a lot of solutions automatically happen in that moment only. If they are able to express everything. So that is called unconditional positive regard. And this is something very important in the therapy session.

Also in everybody's life as well. Second is empathy. So empathy is striving to understand the client's experiences and feelings from the client's perspective. So you don't impose your own ideas. Generally, people have their own thought processes and they impose them on others.

That is not empathy. When you are empathetic, you are trying to understand how that person is thinking, how that person is feeling. From their perspective, you are trying to understand. So when a client comes to you, a therapist is not supposed to impose their things on them. It is more important that they should understand what their viewpoint is.

What are their experiences of life? From their perspective. So that is the empathy. Which is very important to understand the person. So this.

Deep empathic understanding helps clients feel heard and valued, fostering trust and openness in the therapeutic relationship. So this is very important. In a therapeutic relationship, also in real-life situations. The third one is genuineness or congruence. So therapists are encouraged to be genuine and transparent with their clients.

This involves being authentic and honest rather than adopting a professional facade. Congruence helps build real trust in the relationship. So that means the Therapy should not be fake in terms of their expression. They should be genuine and honest in terms of giving feedback and, you know, in terms of the relationship with the client.

So, this, there should not be too, in terms of, you know, too much of a professional facade and not genuine, and that actually blocks a lot of things. So congruence helps to build trust in the relationship between the therapist and the client, which is also very important in terms of the healing of the person. So if you see all these qualities, now this has become a hallmark for almost all the therapies. So a lot of therapies may follow, let us say, psychoanalysis or some cognitive therapy and so on, but these have become hallmarks for

almost all. All therapy sessions for all the schools of thought, so these were found to be very important in terms of successful therapies and so on. So Rogers asserted that these three core qualities—unconditional positive regard, empathy, and congruence—are both necessary and sufficient for effective therapy. If this is provided automatically, a lot of things will happen. If the therapist shows these three qualities, the client will improve even if no other special techniques are used.

If the therapist does not show these three qualities, the client's improvement will be minimal no matter how many techniques are used. So, he gave a lot of importance to the creation of such an environment in the therapy session, less on the techniques given. Some of the other aspects of client-centered therapy are non-directiveness, that is where no specific techniques or directions are given, and more focus is given on the atmosphere. The client leads the discussion. The therapist follows the client's lead, offers reflections and clarifications but not directions.

So from the client's perspective, they try to understand things and they give leads in terms of what the client shows. They basically reflect back if somebody has certain problems or not. They will automatically understand if somebody reflects unconditionally. Not much direction is needed. And also, they focus on the present moment.

The client-centered therapy emphasizes the importance of the present moment. Past experiences are obviously acknowledged; they are important, but what is more important is what you can do in the present moment. Because the past is gone, you cannot do anything about it. The future is imaginary. We do not know what the future will look like.

But the present moment is the only real moment where you can make changes and bring positive changes. So the primary focus is on the client's current feelings, thoughts, and behavior, and how they can achieve self-actualization here and now. These are other focuses. And obviously, the goal is self-actualization. The ultimate goal of client-centered therapy is to help the client achieve self-actualization.

Through these processes, realizing full potential and becoming a fully functioning person. Now let us discuss a few criticisms that Rogers' theory has. Obviously, his theory has

generally received a lot of positive attention and research. It is widely embraced. But every theory are not 100% accepted.

There are a few criticisms, such as the theory lacking structure. However, Carl Rogers was not interested in structure. So one criticism is that client-centered therapies lack structure because they are more focused on creating an environment. Which is sometimes not so easy for a lot of people.

Some argue that the non-directive nature of the therapy might not be suitable for all clients, particularly those who prefer more guidance and specific techniques. So in certain cases where specific guidance is needed, client-centered therapy may not be that suitable. The second criticism is the over-emphasis on self-actualization. Rogers' theory places heavy emphasis on the concept of self-actualization as the ultimate goal of personal development. Critics argue that this emphasis might not be applicable and relevant for all individuals and cultures.

As different cultures might prioritize different values and goals. So it may not be everybody's cup of tea. But this is what Rogers was exploring from his perspective. Many critics argue that this may not be for everybody. In terms of connecting the dots with their self-actualization.

People also kind of see that Rogers' theory may not be very suitable in cases of severe psychopathologies. Patients with severe problems because patients should have a certain understanding in order to be impacted by this creation of environment and so on. People with schizophrenia and severe personality disorders obviously, many of the psychotherapies are not suitable for severe psychopathology. Most of these cases are treated by psychiatrists where medicines are given. When they become a little comfortable and more in touch with reality, then only therapies are given.

So, severe for psychopathology obviously, client-centered therapy or for that matter many other therapies may not be suitable. So, there is a limited applicability for these things. Some also argue that some definitions are not very clear or there is ambiguity involved in it, such as the concept of self and self-actualization. In terms of research, proper structured

definitions are not there. But this is how this whole approach of humanistic psychology is that they are focused on certain ideas which are central to them.

And despite all this criticism, obviously, these criticisms are very minor criticisms, but Rogers' theory has been widely accepted by people, particularly. It has wide application in therapy sessions, and all the schools of therapies integrate these ideas. So, these are some of the ideas about Carl Rogers' theory. So, within the humanistic perspective, we talked about Maslow's theory and Carl Rogers' theory. We will not talk beyond these two theories.

So, with this, I stop here, and this module ends here. We will discuss other theories in the next module. With this, I stop here. Thank you.