

# EXISTENTIAL APPROACH IN PSYCHOLOGICAL HEALING

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There have been instances where you felt that living in itself adds a lot of void in everything. There is no meaning in the things you do. No hope in the things you wished for. You keep questioning, but you feel there isn't any answer that could quench your curious mind.

Existentialism brings out such concepts of familiarizing oneself with the unknown. It is a pathway by which individuals can seek clarity, more effectively on discovering meanings in scenarios of one's living. It is a concept which adheres to personal views on events, perceptions and interpretations while at the same time understanding the deeper aspect of one's composed personality. Soren Kierkegaard, a European philosopher is believed to be the first and the finest philosopher of existentialism, which followed by the contributions of Friedrich Nietzsche and Jean Paul Sartre. They all believed that self awareness and mindfulness would provide an answer to lives questions and enable individuals to decide their way of living and find meaning.

While dealing with this concept, it is important for anyone to consider certain factors of human functions. According to McLeod, there are six major aspects that structures a human's belief system, they include: Autonomy and relatedness, self multiplicity, living in time, agency, bodily experience and, truth and authenticity. These could be considered as core issues that individuals could face while dealing with any existential crisis.

**Techniques used in Existential approach:**

This approach can be incorporated to any type of psychotherapy. Major four techniques used are talking, listening, answering questions and engaging with your therapist for a long period. Here the therapist tries to convey important message to the client about the inbuilt resources that are available for any resolution. Suppose a person is struggling with an addictive disorder, and the symptoms are diagnosed to be anxiety and fear, it is important for the therapist to handle the situation by bringing the symptoms on surface to the awareness of the client. Make them understand the causal factors of those symptoms at the same time create an atmosphere of freedom, empathy, and concepts of courage, relationships or spirituality for the individual to enhance their hope in their own frame of reference. This adds on for the individual to embrace different positive aspects of their lives and help them take responsibility to find meaning in life.

### **Limitations of existential approach:**

It is found to be portraying the darker area for the fact that individuals deal with death or hopelessness. Because of this not many prefer to adhere to this way of therapy. Besides, this approach is more likely to be efficient through group therapy rather than one-to-one interaction. One research concluded that educated women being homeworkers are more likely to be flourishing individuals and find easier meaning in life when they are involved in existential group therapy. Persons who aren't comfortable in group activities face a big challenge for this approach.

Being afraid or overwhelmed by deeper thought about past or future could be considered as a normal facet of human functioning. It is a threat when someone gets stuck with such deep thinking creates a pattern by which makes a person grow in the loop of existential crisis. Hence the role of a therapist is to facilitate the client with empathy and find balance between being overwhelmed and being responsible for one's wellbeing.

### **About the Author:**



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