

# **ROGERS THEORY OF PERSONALITY**

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**THE ABOVE TOPIC IS A PART OF CURRICULUM OF MASTER STUDENT**

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# **EMERGENCE OF HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY**

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- Humanism psychology come with different school of thought in 1960 to 1980 with the intention to change the psychology's methods and subject matter.
- Humanistic psychologists objected the thought concept of psychoanalysis and to behaviorism, because of presenting too limited and demeaning an image of human nature.
- As Psychoanalytic was criticised because of studying only emotional turmoil of human nature. Rogers rejected the deterministic nature of both psychoanalysis.
- Further, they criticized behaviorist's view of conditioned responses to stimuli which consider human beings more than mechanized robots, who reacts to events in pre-ordered ways.

# **ASSUMPTIONS OF HUMANISTIC PSYCHOLOGY**

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# ASSUMPTIONS ABOUT HUMAN NATURE

- This theory believes that human beings are rational and emphasizes the role of individual.
- This theory focuses on present.
- The theory emphasizes on the change, growth, and the potential for human.
- People are innately good and that mental and social problems are consequence of their deviations from this natural tendency.
- The theory believes that people are able to control and determine their state of mental health.
- Consciousness is experienced from the first-person point of view (perceiver /client/person in therapy).
- Behaviour is a consequences of self-belief.
- Necessary psychological change is dependent upon a safe emotional environment.
- ***Furthermore, in his opinion: "the core of man's nature is essentially positive" (1961, p.73), and he is a "trustworthy organism" (1977, p.7). These beliefs are reflected in his theory of personality.***

# **CORE OF ROGERS THEORY: ORGANISM, PHENOMENAL FILED, TYPES OF SELF, & DEVELOPMENT OF SELF**

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## **Organism, Organismic value and conditions of worth:**

Rogers have defined individual (refers to organism) who is the sum of subjective perceptions that organism experiences. It includes both conscious and unconscious material. It is assumed that a developing organism will perceive all experience and separate them, labeling them as self.

Human has a tendency to value positively those experiences perceived as maintaining or enhancing our lives and value negatively those experiences that would negate our growth. We are born with actualizing forces that motivate us and with valuing processes that regulate us. What's more, we can trust that these basic organismic processes will serve us well When significant others, give positive regard based on conditions rather than unconditional. The self concept then becomes based on these standards of value rather than on organismic evaluation and therefore the organismic valuing process gets affected then.

## Phenomenal Field:

Phenomenal field is generally a perception based on reality. It includes both external and internal experience. Our world is our experienced or phenomenal world . Here, the major focus is, what a person understands to be true (perceived reality) rather than what actually is true. Therefore, the perceptions of taste, sound indicates how we experience the world are as individual as ourselves. If other wish to understand our particular actions, they must try to place themselves as much as possible into our internal frame of reference and subjective world.

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## *According to Rogers, The Self has three aspects: • Real Self ,• Perceived Self , • Ideal Self*

- Self Worth i.e. Ideal Self : Also known as self esteem , What we think about ourselves. Rogers believes it develops in early childhood and gets influenced by the interactions with our parents. When we compare ourselves to others and find that we are better at something than others and/or that people respond favorably to what we do, our self-esteem in that area grows.
- Self- Image i.e. Ideal Self : How we see ourselves. It is essential for good psychological health. It explains the impact of functioning and process of our body image on our inner personality. It Effects how a person thinks, feels, and behaves in the world. Self-image doesn't always match reality. Some individuals hold an inflated perception of one or more of their characteristics. These inflated perceptions may be positive or negative, and an individual may have a more positive view of certain aspects of the self and a more negative view of others.
- Ideal Self: The person we would like to be. It consists of our goals and ambitions in life and it keeps on changing. The problems arises when there is an overlap/disturbances in self (real and Ideal self).

## SELF ACTUALIZATION THEORY

- Since the idea of self actualization was brought most fully to prominence in Maslow's hierarchy of needs, where self-actualization was the highest level of psychological development. Here, "actualization" is considered as a stage where full personal potential is achieved, that occurs only after basic and mental needs have been fulfilled.
- However, Goldstein has put in this way- "the tendency to actualize itself as fully as possible is the basic drive ... the drive of self-actualization."
- *Carl Rogers similarly wrote of "the curative force in psychotherapy – man's tendency to actualize himself, to become his potentialities ... to express and activate all the capacities of the organism"*.
- *Couture et al., 2007 has defined Self-actualization as "the psychological process aimed at maximizing the use of a person's abilities and resources. This process may vary from one person to another"*
- Putting it differently, self-actualization is the full realization of one's creative, intellectual, and social potential through internal drive (versus for external rewards like money, status, or power).

# SELF ACTUALIZATION

- Carl Rogers used the term "self-actualization" and described it differently as the idea developed by Maslow: the actualization of the individual's sense of 'self.'
- In Rogers' theory of person-centered therapy, self-actualization is the *life-long process of maintaining and enhancing the individual's self-concept through reflection, reinterpretation of experience, allowing the individual to recover, develop, change, and grow. Self-actualization is a subset of the overall organismic actualizing tendency, and begins with the infant learning to differentiate what is "self" and what is "other" within its "total perceptual field," as their full self-awareness gradually crystallizes. "The organism has one basic tendency and striving - to actualize, maintain, and enhance the experiencing organism"* (Rogers, 1951, p. 487).
- With this, person interact with the environment and through the process of evaluation, the structure of the self is formed which is an organized, fluid but consistent conceptual pattern of perceptions of characteristics and relationships of the 'I' or the 'me', together with the values attached to these concepts.

# DEVELOPMENT OF PERSONALITY

Rogers argues, unconditional positive regard play crucial role in the development of the self-concept. People who are nurtured in the environment of unconditional positive regard (acceptance, respect, sympathy, and love regardless of performance) have the opportunity to fully actualize themselves. However, people raised in an environment of conditional positive regard (parents or society insists upon; the person is valued for what he/she does, not for who he/she is) feel worthy only if they match conditions (i.e. conditions of worth) defined by them.

The personality development can be understood in terms of self and fully functioning person.

*Rogers have defined Fully functioning person as:*

- Fully functioning persons are aware of all experience.
- Fully functioning persons live fully and richly in every moment.
- Fully functioning persons trust in their own organism, they don't get guided by other's opinion.
- Fully functioning persons feel free to make choices without constraints or inhibitions and don't get compelled by anything
- Fully functioning persons are creative and live constructively and adaptively as environmental conditions
- Fully functioning persons may face difficulties.

## Carl Rogers: 19 propositions on Fully Being Humans\*

- All individuals (organisms) exist in a continually changing world of experience (phenomenal field) of which they are the center.
- The organism reacts to the field as it is experienced and perceived. This perceptual field is “reality” for the individual.
- The organism reacts as an organized whole to this phenomenal field.
- A portion of the total perceptual field gradually becomes differentiated as the self.
- As a result of interaction with the environment, and particularly as a result of evaluational interaction with others, the structure of the self is formed – an organized, fluid but consistent conceptual pattern of perceptions of characteristics and relationships of the “I” or the “me”, together with values attached to these concepts.
- The organism has one basic tendency and striving – to actualize, maintain and enhance the experiencing organism.
- The best vantage point for understanding behavior is from the internal frame of reference of the individual.
- Behavior is basically the goal-directed attempt of the organism to satisfy its needs as experienced, in the field as perceived.
- Emotion accompanies, and in general facilitates, such goal directed behavior, the kind of emotion being related to the perceived significance of the behavior for the maintenance and enhancement of the organism.

\*Carl Rogers. The 19 propositions. Source Rogers, Carl (1951). *Client-centered therapy: Its current practice, implications and theory*. London: Constable.

<https://dantrevisani.wordpress.com/2015/08/26/carl-rogers-19-propositions-on-fully-being-humans/>

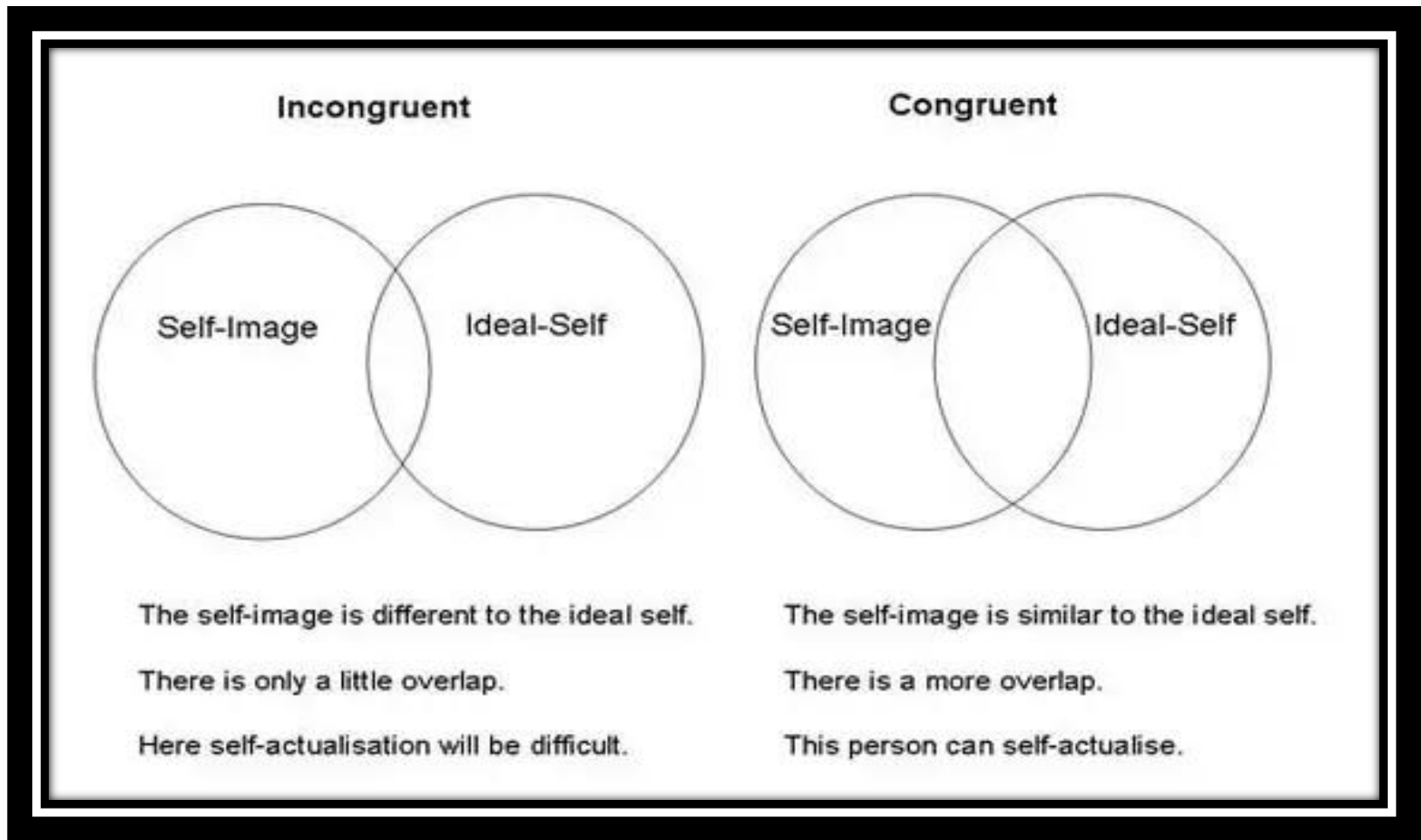
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- The values attached to experiences, and the values that are a part of the self-structure, in some instances, are values experienced directly by the organism, and in some instances are values introjected or taken over from others, but perceived in distorted fashion, as if they had been experienced directly.
- As experiences occur in the life of the individual, they are either, a) symbolized, perceived and organized into some relation to the self, b) ignored because there is no perceived relationship to the self structure, c) denied symbolization or given distorted symbolization because the experience is inconsistent with the structure of the self.
- Most of the ways of behaving that are adopted by the organism are those that are consistent with the concept of self.
- In some instances, behavior may be brought about by organic experiences and needs which have not been symbolized. Such behavior may be inconsistent with the structure of the self but in such instances the behavior is not “owned” by the individual.
- Psychological adjustment exists when the concept of the self is such that all the sensory and visceral experiences of the organism are, or may be, assimilated on a symbolic level into a consistent relationship with the concept of self.
- Psychological maladjustment exists when the organism denies awareness of significant sensory and visceral experiences, which consequently are not symbolized and organized into the gestalt of the self structure. When this situation exists, there is a basic or potential psychological tension.
- Any experience which is inconsistent with the organization of the structure of the self may be perceived as a threat, and the more of these perceptions there are, the more rigidly the self structure is organized to maintain itself.
- Under certain conditions, involving primarily complete absence of threat to the self structure, experiences which are inconsistent with it may be perceived and examined, and the structure of self revised to assimilate and include such experiences.
- When the individual perceives and accepts into one consistent and integrated system all his sensory and visceral experiences, then he is necessarily more understanding of others and is more accepting of others as separate individuals.
- As the individual perceives and accepts into his self structure more of his organic experiences, he finds that he is replacing his present value system – based extensively on introjections which have been distortedly symbolized – with a continuing organismic valuing process.

# IN-CONGRUENCY

- According to Rogers (1959), we want to feel, experience and behave in ways which are *consistent with our self-image and which reflect what we would like to be like, our ideal-self*. The closer our self-image and ideal-self are to each other, the more consistent or congruent we are and the higher our sense of self-worth. The development of congruence is dependent on unconditional positive regard. The state of congruence is essential for achieving self-actualization.
- In fact many a times, a person's ideal self may not be consistent with what actually happens in life and experiences of the person. Therefore, difference may exist between a person's ideal self and actual experience and this is known as Incongruency (discrepancy between the actual experience of the organism and the self-picture of the individual).
- Therefore, in order to see ourselves in ways that are consistent with our self-image, we may use defense mechanisms like denial, perceptual distortions, or repression in order to feel less threatened by some of what we consider to be our undesirable feelings. A person is said to be in a state of incongruence if some of the totality of their experience is unacceptable to them and is denied or distorted in the self-image. For example,
- *\*The Self- Congruency: I am a good student, I see myself that way, I enjoy it, I strive to become even more of way, I enjoy it, I strive to become even more of a scholar.*
- *The Self- Incongruence: Example: I strive to be a good student, I don't like studying, people see me as I don't like studying, people see me as a student though.*
- <https://www.slideshare.net/getyourcheaton/humanistic-theories-carl-rogers>



**Degree to which person's self concept matches up to reality is known as congruency and Incongruency.**

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Apart from this, Rogers has suggested two types of needs that determine their behavior goals. They are : Maintenance needs and Enhancement needs. For Rogers,, Life has one basic drive-survive, grow and develop.

**Maintenance needs:** This need helps in maintaining the individual. With this the individual takes care of themselves through satisfying various basic needs such as biological need and security need. Apart from this, the person also makes an attempt to maintain those experiences that helps them in preserving their self. Therefore, the thoughts that are harmful are generally oppose by the person.

**Enhancement needs:** The individual try to maintain their self concept thereby developing and extending their self. Enhancement needs are expressed through curiosity, self-exploration, maturation and friendship This needs doesn't provides immediate reinforcement.

# EVALUATION OF ROGERS THEORY OF PERSONALITY

- It offered the new approach to understand human behavior and motivations and led to develop a novel therapeutic techniques in psychotherapy.
- Emphasis on internal consistency of human nature.
- This theory gives the unique interpretation of human potential that how a human recognizes their potential and behaves accordingly.
- It stresses on the importance of growth and self actualization.
- The theory keeps on empowering individuals, enhance wellbeing, push people towards fulfilling their potential and improve communities all over the world.
- The theory is totally subjective in nature, and the importance of individual experience makes it difficult to study objectively and measure humanistic phenomena. For example, objectively telling how someone is self actualized?
- Observations are unverifiable, there exists lack of ways to measure these qualities.

# REFERENCES

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