

CONTEMPORARY THEORY IN PSYCHOTHERAPY

Independent Study Course Proposal, Fall 2006-Spring 2007

General Description:

This is a course I taught as an Independent Study to several students based on the constructivistic focus of the Contemporary Theory course that I co-taught with Barbara Okun at Northeastern University.

This course provides an introduction to contemporary theories in psychotherapy, with a focus on constructivist and cognitive-constructivist theory. To provide some background, we begin by reviewing some basic theory in psychotherapy, including Object Relations, Humanistic, and Experiential theory with particular attention to their implications for relationship building to enable later analysis of how contemporary constructivistic theories integrate these foundations. Contemporary theory emphasizes constructivist perspectives in psychotherapy and also include feminist and multicultural/liberation theories with an emphasis on their connections to constructivism.

Goals and Objectives:

The aim of this course is to provide the student with a wide-range of basic and contemporary theory in psychotherapy, with the goal of fostering the student's own clinical development and theoretical understanding of therapeutic change and interventions. Basic theory will provide the student with an historical context for understanding the development of more contemporary theoretical perspectives. Both basic and contemporary theories are expected to foster the student's understanding of how the therapist can facilitate positive and healthy change in clients, while maintaining a standard of cultural sensitivity.

Students complete two papers: The first paper is a short (7-10 pages) paper in which the student will critically reflect on basic theories and their meaning for clinical practice. The second paper is a longer paper (15-20 pages) in which the student will be asked to integrate their learning about constructivist or cognitive-constructivist theory into a personal theoretical understanding of the change process in therapy.

Required Texts and Additional Readings:

Books:

- Combs, G. & Freedman, J. (1990). *Symbols, Stories, and Ceremony: Using Metaphor in Individual and Family Therapy*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc.
- Mahoney, M.J. (2003). *Constructive Psychotherapy: A Practical Guide*. New York: The Guilford Press
- Raskin, J.D. & Bridges, S.K. (Eds.) (2003). *Studies in Meaning: Exploring Constructivist Psychology*. New York: Pace University Press

Basic Theory:

- Okun, B. F. (1990). *Seeking connections in psychotherapy*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass, p. 1-115.
- Watkins, C. E. (1983). Transference phenomena in the counseling situation. *Personnel and Guidance Journal*, p. 206-209.
- Comas-Diaz, L. & Jackobsen, F.M. (1991). Ethnocultural transference and countertransference in the therapeutic dyad. *Amer. J. of Orthopsychiatry*. 61(3). p. 392-402.
- Gelso, C.J., Hill, C. E., Kivlighan, D.M. (1991). Transference, insight, and the counselor's intentions during a counseling hour. *J. of Counseling & Development*. 69, p. 428-433.
- Guntrip, H. (1968). Object-relations theory and psychotherapy. In Guntrip, H. *Object Relations and the Self*. New York: Basic Books. p. 335-356.
- Mahler, M.S. (1972). A study of the separation-individuation process. In *The Psychoanalytic Study of the Child*, 26, New York: Quadrangle Books..
- Winnicott, D.W. (1958). *The theory of the parent-infant relationship*, p. 233-252.
- Kernberg, O.F. (1992). An ego psychology-object relations theory approach to the transference. In Hamilton, N.G. (ed.). *From Inner Sources: New Directions in Object Relations Psychotherapy*. London: J. Aronson.
- Mitchell, S. A. (1986). Interpersonal analysis. In I. L. Kutash & A. Wolf (Eds.), *Psychotherapist's casebook* (pp.159-165, 170-174). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Linder, R. (1954). Solitaire: The story of Laura. In *The fifty-minute hour* (pp. 79-118). New York: Bantam.
- Rogers, C. A silent young man. Originally published in C. Rogers (1967) *The therapeutic relationship and its impact*, Madison WI: Wisconsin University Press.
- Perls, F. (1969). Selections from: Dreamwork seminar. In *Gestalt therapy verbatim* (77-81, 87-95, 129-137). Moab, UT: Real People Press.
- Bugental, J. F. T. (1986). Existential-humanistic psychotherapy. In I. L. Kutash & A. Wolf (Eds.), *Psychotherapist's casebook* (pp.222-236). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass
- Rogers, C. R. (1957). The necessary and sufficient conditions of therapeutic personality change. *Journal of Consulting Psychology*, 21, 95-103.
- Rogers, C. R. (1987). Rogers, Kohut, and Erickson: A personal perspective on some similarities and differences. In J. K. Zieg (Ed.) *The evolution of psychotherapy*. New York: Brunner/Mazel.

- R. May & I. Yalom (2000). Existential psychotherapy. In R. J. Corsini & D. Wedding (Eds.), *Current psychotherapies* (6th ed.). Itasca, IL: Peacock.
- Elliott, R. & Greenberg, L. S. (1995). Experiential therapy in practice: The process-experiential approach. In Bongar, B. & Beutler, L. E. (Eds.), *Comprehensive Textbook of Psychotherapy*, (pp. 123-139). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Espin, O. (1994). Feminist approaches. In L. Comas-Diaz & B. Greene *Women of color: Integrating ethnic and gender identities in psychotherapy* (pp. 265-286). New York: Guilford.
- Yalom, I. D. (1985), *The theory and practice of group psychotherapy*, (3rd ed.). Basic Books. Chapter 6: The therapist: Working in the here-and-now. pp. 135-198
- Weiner, I. (1975). *Principles of psychotherapy*. Wiley. Chapter 8: Communicating Understanding: Interpretation. pp. 115-159.

Contemporary Theory:

Introduction:

- Martin, J., & Thompson, J. (2003). Psychotherapy as the interpretation of being: Hermeneutic perspectives on psychotherapy. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 16(1), 1-16.
- Fireman, G. D. (2002). Approaching accountability in psychotherapy. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 15(3), 219-231.
- Mahoney, M. J. (2005). Suffering, philosophy, and psychotherapy. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration*, 15(3), 337-352.

Introduction to constructivism:

- Mahoney, M. J. (2004). Human change processes and constructive psychotherapy. In A. Freeman, M. J. Mahoney, P. DeVito & D. Martin (Eds.), *Cognition and psychotherapy (2nd ed.)* (pp. 5-24). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Co.
- Neimeyer, G. J. (1993). The challenge of change: Reflections on constructivist psychotherapy. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy*, 7(3), 183-194.
- Mahoney, M. J., & Marquis, A. (2002). Integral constructivism and dynamic systems in psychotherapy processes. *Psychoanalytic Inquiry*, 22(5), 794-813.
- Neimeyer, R. A. (2005). The construction of change: Personal reflections on the therapeutic process. *Constructivism in the Human Sciences*, 10(1), 77-98.

Criticism and response:

- O'Hara, M. (1995). Is it time for clinical psychology to deconstruct constructivism? *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 8(4), 293-303.
- Held, B. S. (1995). The real meaning of constructivism. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 8, 305-315.
- Neimeyer, R. A. (1995). Limits and lessons of constructivism: Some critical reflections. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 8(4), 339-361.
- Sanders, B. (1998). Why postmodern theory may be a problematic basis for therapeutic practice: A feminist perspective. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Family Therapy*, 19(3), 111-119.
- Efran, J. S., & Heffner, K. P. (1998). Is constructivist psychotherapy epistemologically flawed? *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 11, 89-103.

Types and connections:

- Lyddon, W. J. (1995). Forms and facets of constructivist psychology. In R. A. Neimeyer & M. J. Mahoney (Eds.), *Constructivism in psychotherapy* (pp. 69-92). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Fergus, K. D., & Reid, D. W. (2002). Integrating constructivist and systemic metatheory in family therapy. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology, 15*(1), 41-63.
- Lyddon, W. J. (1995). Cognitive therapy and theories of knowing: A social constructionist view. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 73*(6), 579-585.
- Lyddon, W. J. (1993). Developmental constructivism: An integrative framework for psychotherapy practice. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy, 7*(3), 217-224.

Constructivism and psychopathology:

- Gergen, K. J., & McNamee, S. (2000). From disordering discourse to transformative dialogue. In R. A. Neimeyer & J. D. Raskin (Eds.), *Constructions of disorder: Meaning-making frameworks for psychotherapy*. (pp. 333-349). Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
- Dickerson, V. C., & Zimmerman, J. L. (1995). A constructionist exercise in anti-pathologizing. *Journal of Systemic Therapies, 14*, 33-45.
- Gonsalves, V., Korman, Y., & Angus, L. (1995). Constructing psychopathology from a cognitive narrative perspective. In R. A. Neimeyer & J. D. Raskin (Eds.), *Constructions of disorder: Meaning-making frameworks for psychotherapy*. (pp. 265-284).

Cognitive therapy and constructivism:

- Jones, J. V. J., & Lyddon, W. J. (2000). Cognitive therapy and empirically validated treatments. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy, 14*(3), 337-345.
- Neimeyer, R. A. (1993). Constructivism and cognitive psychotherapies: Some conceptual and strategic contrasts. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy, 7*(3), 159-171.
- Mahoney, M. J. (2004). Synthesis. In A. Freeman, M. J. Mahoney, P. DeVito & D. Martin (Eds.), *Cognition and psychotherapy (2nd ed.)* (pp. 349-366). New York, NY: Springer Publishing Co.
- Gonsalves, V. (1997). Postmodern cognitive psychotherapy: From the university to the multiversity. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy, 11*(2), 105-112.
- DiGiuseppe, R., & Linscott, J. (1993). Philosophical differences among cognitive behavioral therapists: Rationalism, constructivism, or both? *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy, 7*(2), 117-130.

Cognitive-constructivism:

- Arnkoff, D. B. (1980). Psychotherapy from the perspective of cognitive theory. In M. J. Mahoney (Ed.), *Psychotherapy processes* (pp. 339-361). New York: Plenum.
- Lyddon, W.J., & Weill, R. (1997). Cognitive psychotherapy and postmodernism: Emerging themes and challenges. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy, Vol 11 (2)*, 75-90.
- Mahoney, M. J. (1994). Cognitive psychology and contemporary psychotherapy: The self as an organizing theme. *Journal of Psychotherapy Integration, 4*(4), 417-424.

Connecting cognitive and narrative therapies:

- Gonsalves, V. (1995). Cognitive narrative psychotherapy: The hermeneutic construction of alternative meanings. In M. J. Mahoney (Ed.), *Cognitive and constructive psychotherapies: Theory, research, and practice*
- Ramsay, J. R. (1998). Postmodern cognitive therapy: Cognitions, narratives, and personal meaning-making. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy, 12*(1), 39-55.

Narrative Therapy:

- Terrell, C. J., & Lyddon, W. J. (1996). Narrative and psychotherapy. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology, 9*(1), 27-44.
- Neimeyer, R. A. (2002). The relational co-construction of selves: A postmodern perspective. *Journal of Contemporary Psychotherapy, 32*(1), 51-59.
- McAdams, D. P. (2006). The problem of narrative coherence. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology, 19*(2), 109-125.
- Gremillion, H. (2004). Unpacking essentialisms in therapy: Lessons for feminist approaches from narrative work. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology, 17*(3).
- Gonsalves, V., & Machado, P. P. P. (2000). Emotions, narrative and change. *European Journal of Psychotherapy, 3*(3), 349-360.
- Hoyt, M. F. (2002). How i embody a narrative constructive approach. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology, 15*(4), 279-289.
- Laird, J. (2001). Theorizing culture: Narrative ideas and practice principles. *Journal of Feminist Family Therapy, 11*(4), 99-114.
- Botella, L. (2004). Working with narrative in psychotherapy: A relational constructivist approach. In L. Angus & J. McLeod (Eds.), *The handbook of narrative and psychotherapy: Practice, theory, and research* (pp. 119-136). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Applications:

- Efran, J. S., & Clarfield, L. E. (1993). Context: The fulcrum of constructivist psychotherapy. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy, 7*(3), 173-182.
- Neimeyer, R. A. (1996). Process interventions for the constructivist psychotherapist. In H. Rosen & K. T. Kuehlwein (Eds.), *Constructing realities: Meaning-making for psychotherapists*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Mahoney, M. J. (1991). *Selected techniques.(inner companion exercises) from human change processes: The scientific foundations of psychotherapy*. New York: Basic Books.

Metaphors:

- Raskin, J. D. (1999). Metaphors and meaning: Constructing the creative psychotherapist. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology, 12*(4), 331-347.
- Gonsalves, O.F., & Craine, M. H. (1990). The use of metaphors in cognitive therapy. *Journal of Cognitive Psychotherapy, 4*(2), 135-149.
- Lyddon, W. J., Clay, A. L., & Sparks, C. L. (2001). Metaphor and change in counseling. *Journal of Counseling & Development, 79*(3), 269-274.
- Combs, G., & Freedman, J. (1990). *Symbol, story, and ceremony: Using metaphor in individual and family therapy. Chapter 4.*

Feminism and culture:

- Biever, J. L., De Las Fuentes, C., Cashion, L., & Franklin, C. (1998). The social construction of gender: A comparison of feminist and postmodern approaches. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 11(2), 163-179.
- Pope-Davis, D. B., & Liu, W. M. (1998). The social construction of race: Implications for counselling psychology. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 11(2), 151-161.
- Lyddon, W. J. (1998). Social construction in counselling psychology: A commentary and critique. *Counselling Psychology Quarterly*, 11(2), 215-222.
- Guyer, L. T., & Rowell, L. L. (1997). Gender, social constructionism, and psychotherapy: Deconstructing feminist social constructions. In T. L. Sexton & B. L. Griffin (Eds.), *Constructivist thinking in counseling practice, research, and training*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Waldegrave, C. (1998). The challenges of culture to psychology and postmodern thinking. In M. McGoldrick (Ed.), *Re-visioning family therapy: Race, culture, and gender in clinical practice* (pp. 404-413). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Rigazio-Digilio, S. A., Gonsalves, O. F., & Ivey, A. E. (1996). From cultural to existential diversity: The impossibility of psychotherapy integration within a traditional framework. *Applied & Preventive Psychology*, 5(4), 235-247.
- Porter, N. (2005). Location, location, location: Contributions of contemporary feminist theorists to therapy theory and practice. *Women & Therapy*, 28(3-4), 143-160.
- Ballou, M., Matsumoto, A., & Wagner, M. (2002). Toward a feminist ecological theory of human nature: Theory building in response to real-world dynamics. In M. Ballou & L. S. Brown (Eds.), *Rethinking mental health and disorder: Feminist perspectives* (pp. 99-141). New York, NY: Guilford Press.
- Ivey, A. E. (1995). Psychotherapy as liberation: Towards specific skills and strategies in multicultural counseling and therapy. In J. G. Ponterotto, J. M. Casas, L. A. Suzuki & C. M. Alexander (Eds.), *Handbook of multicultural counseling* (pp. 53-72). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Rigazio-Digilio, S. A., Ivey, A. E., & Locke, D. C. (1997). Continuing the postmodern dialogue: Enhancing and contextualizing multiple voices. *Journal of Mental Health and Counseling*, 19(3), 233-255.
- Rosen, L. V., & Lang, C. (2005). Narrative therapy with couples: Promoting liberation from constraining influences. In M. Harway (Ed.), *Handbook of couples therapy* (pp. 157-178). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- Hernandez, P. (2002). Resilience in families and communities: Latin american contributions from the psychology of liberation. *Family journal: Counseling and therapy for couples and families*, 10(3), 334-343.
- Keen, E. (1998). Are pharmacology and constructivist psychotherapy mutually exclusive? *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 11(2), 31-47.

Alternative Reading:

- Neimeyer, R. A. (1998). Social constructionism in counseling context. *Counseling Psychology Quarterly*, 11(2), 135-149.
- Neimeyer, R. A. (1997). Problems and prospects in constructivist psychotherapy. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 10(1), 51-74.
- Gonsalves, V. (1995). Hermeneutics, constructivism, and cognitive-behavioral therapies: From the object to the project. In R. A. Neimeyer & M. J. Mahoney (Eds.), *Constructivism in psychotherapy*. Washington, D.C.: American Psychological Association.
- Gonsalves, V., & Machado, P. P. P. (1999). Cognitive narrative psychotherapy: Research foundations. *Journal of Clinical Psychology*, 55(10), 1179-1191.
- Gonsalves, V. (1994). From epistemological truth to existential meaning in cognitive narrative psychotherapy. *Journal of Constructivist Psychology*, 7(2), 107-118.
- Carlsen, M. B. (1996). Metaphor, meaning-making, and metamorphosis. In H. Rosen & K. T. Kuehlwein (Eds.), *Constructing realities: Meaning-making perspectives for psychotherapists* (pp. 337-368). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Neimeyer, R. A., & Stewart, A. E. (2000). Constructivist and narrative psychotherapies. In C. R. Snyder & R. E. Ingram (Eds.), *Handbook of psychological change: Psychotherapy processes & practices for the 21st century* (pp. 337-357). Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.
- McNamee, S. (1996). Therapy and identity construction in a postmodern world. In D. Grodin & T. R. Lindlof (Eds.), *Constructing the self in a mediated world* (pp. 141-155). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.
- Rigazio-DiGilio, S. A., & Ivey, A. E. (1995). Individual and family issues in intercultural therapy: A culturally centered perspective. *Canadian Journal of Counselling*, 29(3), 244-261.
- Evans, K. M., Kincade, E. A., Marbley, A. F., & Seem, S. R. (2005). Feminism and feminist therapy: Lessons from the past and hopes for the future. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 83(3), 269-277.
- Rubalcava, L. A., & Waldman, K. M. (2004). Working with intercultural couples: An intersubjective-constructivist perspective. In W. J. Coburn (Ed.), *Transformations in self psychology: Progress in self psychology* (Vol. 20, pp. 127-149). Hillsdale, NJ: Analytic Press, Inc.