

P.G Department of Psychology

Transpersonal Therapy

Course-EC-2 Paper 2 (Psychotherapy)

Unit 3; Sem IV

By

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- *Transpersonal psychotherapy integrates spiritual tools and traditions with modern psychological thinking.* “The idea is that it’s not just the mind and body that can need healing and looking after, but also your spirit itself”
 - Unlike most forms of psychotherapy that concentrate on improving mental health, transpersonal therapy takes a more holistic approach, addressing mental, physical, social, emotional, creative, and intellectual needs, with an emphasis on the role of a healthy spirit in healing. To facilitate healing and growth, transpersonal therapy places great emphasis on honesty, open-mindedness, and self-awareness on the part of the therapist as well as the client.
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A BRIEF HISTORY OF TRANSPERSONAL PSYCHOTHERAPY

- Transpersonal psychotherapy was birthed in the 1960s, although it only made its way into academic journals in the 1970s. It was influenced by such big figures in psychology and psychotherapy as [Carl Jung](#), Roberto Assagioli, and Abraham Maslow, the latter of whom actually became seen as the founder of transpersonal psychotherapy.
- Maslow and his colleagues were interested in a new movement that included all forms of human experience, including non-ordinary states of consciousness, mystical states, psychedelic experiences (it was the 60s, after all), creativity, and inspiration.
- It was at a meeting in 1967 that they came up with the term 'transpersonal psychology', which they saw as the 'fourth force' in psychology, after [psychoanalysis](#), behavioural psychology, and humanism.

- Transpersonal psychology enhances the study of mind–body relations, spirituality, consciousness, and human transformation. The three key areas that are considered through transpersonal psychotherapy are:
 - Combined/holistic and natural psychology
 - Transformative psychology
 - Ego–transcended psychology

 - Transpersonal psychology uses positive influences, rather than the diseased human psyche and our defenses, as a model for the realization of human potential. Saints, artists, prophets and heroes are all revered and examined as embodying the true nature of our human psyche. This technique encourages a person to see their inner capabilities and view themselves as in the process of reaching that state that has been achieved by the models represented. Model integrates the spiritual, social, emotional, intellectual, physical and creative being into one complete element and addresses the six components equally for the purpose of treatment. It strives to discover divinity through our own humanity and is a by–product of a person’s growth and development.
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Transpersonal therapy is used to treat

- Anxiety,
- Depression,
- Addictions,
- Phobias, and
- Other mood and behavioural problems.

Those who are open to exploring their spiritual side, becoming more spiritually aware, or finding a spiritual path, or who are having trouble finding meaning in their life, may benefit from transpersonal therapy.

TRANSPERSONAL PSYCHOTHERAPY TECHNIQUES

MEDITATION, VISUALIZATION, AND GUIDED IMAGERY

- Perhaps the most common method noted in transpersonal treatment is meditation. Traditionally, meditation was used for stilling the mind, becoming aware of each moment, and ultimately, as a means to become awakened or enlightened. However, meditation can also be easily adapted for use in personal centering, dealing with extreme emotions, stress relief, and management of physical symptoms.
- When used in conjunction with visualization, mediation is an important part of guided imagery exercises. Unlike regular meditation, with this technique the practitioner directs the client's experience. In this way, the individual may be asked to visualize or imagine a desired end such as the lessening of symptoms or be taken on a journey to safely explore and heal past traumas. Often images such as animals or symbols are employed to personalize the experience thus increasing the potential effectiveness.

ENERGY WORK, DREAM WORK, SHAMANISM, YOGA, MUSIC, AND CHANTING

- Other transpersonal techniques may not be as commonly recognized. These include hands on treatments, exercises involving breath work, or other physically based practices such as bioenergetics, Alexander's technique, tai chi, yoga, Rolfing, Reiki, and massage. Other more spiritually, metaphysically, or mystically charged activities such as lucid dreaming, shamanistic healing, chanting, and transpersonal uses of music, art, and psychedelic drugs are also known to be beneficial to transpersonal efforts.
 - Thus, a wide variety of methods and techniques are available to the transpersonal psychologist. These individuals may choose to specialize in one area of expertise such as energy psychology or provide a range of treatment options. Often therapists combine uniquely transpersonal techniques such as meditation with traditional psychoanalysis.
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