

Actualising Tendency

Person-Centred Therapy in Focus (Counselling & Psychotherapy in Focus Series)

Paul Wilkins

- loc 335 | people legitimately adopting the label 'person-centred' have chosen to believe in the actualising tendency with its various implications.
- loc 1,019 | **5 Self-Actualisation: A Culture-Bound, Naive and Optimistic View of Human Nature?**
- loc 1,024 | van Deurzen-Smith (1988: 56) criticises the assumption
- loc 1,025 | human beings are 'basically positive creatures who develop constructively, given the right conditions',
- loc 1,027 | Central to this criticism is the person-centred belief that people are positively driven towards constructive growth by the actualising tendency and (mistakenly) that there is, in person-centred philosophy, an ideal endpoint to growth, the state of self-actualisation or being 'fully functioning'.
- loc 1,030 | so many people are manifestly not operating optimally that the belief we can do so must be mistaken. Henderson, 1990b: 27
- loc 1,036 | Contrary to those therapists who see depravity at men's core, who see men's deepest instincts as destructive, I have found that when man is truly free to become what he most deeply is, free to actualize his nature as an organism capable of awareness, then he clearly appears to move toward wholeness and integration.
- loc 1,039 | Rogers is clear that his belief in the actualising tendency is based in empirical observation
- loc 1,050 | to attack a belief in the actualising tendency is to strike at the heart of person-centred therapy
- loc 1,051 | it is the defining characteristic of the approach.
- loc 1,052 | **Self-Actualisation, the Fully Functioning Person and the Actualising Tendency – One and the Same?**
- loc 1,061 | Rogers (1959: 196) refers to the 'general tendency toward actualization' of 'that portion of the experience of the organism which is symbolized in the self',
- loc 1,063 | Bozarth (1998: 30) puts it thus: 'the concept defined as "Self-Actualization" is a construct referring to the actualization tendency manifest in the "self" – a subsystem that becomes differentiated within the whole person'. Merry (2000: 349)
- loc 1,068 | Self-actualization does not always result in optimal functioning because each person, whether psychologically healthy or unhealthy, is self-actualizing to the extent that each has a self-structure to maintain.
- loc 1,071 | in terms of person-centred theory, self-actualisation is relatively unimportant because the aim of therapy is to facilitate the congruence of the self-concept and the organism.

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- loc 1,077 describing the 'process of functioning more fully', Rogers (1967: 191–2) wrote of the person who is 'psychologically free
- loc 1,078 He is more able to experience all of his feelings,
- loc 1,079 is more open to evidence from all sources
- loc 1,080 engaged in the process of being and becoming himself,
- loc 1,080 lives more completely in this moment,
- loc 1,083 The emphasis is clearly on a process of 'becoming'.
- loc 1,084 **the actualising tendency, a movement towards the fulfilment of potential, not 'self-actualisation'**
- loc 1,097 the actualising tendency is a biological force, common to all living things,
- loc 1,475 Perhaps **foremost among critics is Jeffrey Masson.**
- loc 1,478 He presents (pp. 233–6) a critique of the 'core' conditions and clearly regards unconditional positive regard and congruence in particular as impossible to guarantee – perhaps even impossible to achieve.
- loc 1,486 Masson (p. 234) refers to unconditional positive regard as an emotion, but it is described by Rogers and others as an attitude.
- loc 1,499 The unconditional positive regard of the counsellor for the client is a necessary condition for constructive change.
- loc 1,501 'Faced with a brutal rapist who murders children, why should any therapist have unconditional regard for him?'
- loc 1,502 There is no reason at all why any therapist should but the therapeutic endeavour will be pointless without it.
- loc 1,533 Rogers stated that to hold someone in unconditional positive regard is 'sometimes very difficult' (Rogers, quoted in Hobbs 1987: 20). Lietaer (1984)
- loc 1,536 (p. 41): 'unconditional positive regard is probably one of the most questioned concepts
- loc 1,537 that unconditionality has its problems
- loc 1,538 (1) There is a potential conflict between genuineness or congruence on the one hand, and unconditionality on the other
- loc 1,538 (2) It is a rare person and a rare time in which the constancy of acceptance can be provided by any therapist for any client.
- loc 1,539 unconditionality is not impossible, It is improbable

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loc 1,540	(3) Unconditionality calls upon the therapist for a devoted self-effacing that often leads to a compensatory reaction in which confrontation becomes a form of self-assertion.
loc 1,542	these questions and difficulties arose as client-centred therapy became more relationship-centred
loc 1,543	Bozarth (1998: 85) believes Lietaer to be in error
loc 1,544	'client-centred' and 'relationship-centred' are not differently defined
loc 1,545	Lietaer's 'behavioral definition of genuineness as involving feedback and confrontation' leads to a shift in emphasis from trusting the client's experience towards trusting the 'expertise' of the therapist. Wilkins 2000a: 33–4),
loc 1,547	communication of unconditional positive regard to be the active facilitator of constructive change
loc 1,548	actualising tendency of the client is the actual agent.
loc 1,762	Non-directivity in the sense of assiduously avoiding imposing the therapist's will upon the client and trusting that the client will progress in the most appropriate way (that is, belief in the actualising tendency) remains at the heart of the approach.
