



PHILOSOPHICAL COUNSELING AS A QUEST FOR WISDOM

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Abstract

The goal of philosophical counselling is to help individuals deal with life's circumstances in a way that works for them. Nurses who work with individuals who need support managing life events will find it interesting as a result. The method makes use of both antiquated and modern philosophical theories and promises. On the plus side, it presents the idea that philosophy may address the issue of advising individuals on how to lead morally upright or healthy lives. Regarding philosophy, it presents the idea that philosophical investigation and theory can guide individuals in the direction of such solutions. Therefore, nurses whose profession tries to promote in their clients a good or healthy lifestyle will find value in the theory and application of philosophical counselling. To illustrate the philosophy and techniques of the approach, the application of philosophical counselling in a substance abuse centre will be examined.

Keywords: Philosophical counselling, healthy lifestyle, philosophical investigation, profession, advising, etc.

A general characterization of philosophical counselling

Philosophy was used to counsel, direct and enrich everyday life as early as the sixth century B.C. in ancient Greece. The philosophies of the Pythagoreans, Stoics, Cynics and other ancient schools as well as various religious philosophies, Renaissance philosophies, Romanticism, Communism and Socialism, Existentialism, Feminism and many others were used to help people understand themselves, live their lives more fully and deal with personal problems.

We'll demonstrate in this essay that the response is unfavourable. The distinctive topic matter and objective of philosophical counselling set it apart from psychologically-oriented therapies at a basic level. It is intended to convey the concept that the Greek term "philosophy" originally meant—philo-sophia, or the love of wisdom. In our technologically driven, egocentric and comfortable age, wisdom's age-old purpose has all but been forgotten. Reminding us of this crucial objective is, in my opinion, the purpose of philosophical counselling. A personal intellectual journey toward wisdom is what philosophical counselling is all about.

Philosophical counselling places a strong emphasis on the philosophical conversation between the counsellor and the counselee which is the main difference between it and traditional psychotherapy. Throughout the session, the counselee and the philosophical counsellor engage in philosophical conversations. It's common for philosophical counsellors to have philosophical conversations with their clients; what matters is how and why these conversations are held. Some claim that the counsellor uses philosophizing to assist the counselee in resolving personal issues by examining the counselee's opinions or attitudes towards their situation.

The traditional objectives of philosophy, which include wisdom, enrichment, edification and a greater awareness of oneself, should be the focus of philosophical therapy. Although this might assist people in managing their circumstances and resolving certain issues, it is really a secondary objective. A primary objective of counselling for many philosophers is the growth of philosophical self-understanding, frequently accompanied by the assistance of the counselee in resolving particular situations.

How can philosophy, which has historically centred on theoretical and abstract debates, be applicable to a person's everyday life? According to a study written a few years ago, each person has a personal philosophy that articulates their own philosophical presumptions or points of view on the nature of life and the universe. A person's approach to life may be viewed as their personal philosophy, which consists of their unique answers to fundamental philosophical issues about life.

People frequently lack awareness of their nature, fundamental presumptions, structure, logic and ramifications, though. Philosophical counselling seeks to assist clients in identifying and elucidating the web of ideas and concepts that underpin pertinent facets of their lives, examining the fundamental ideas that shape their diverse perspectives, revealing implicit assumptions in their lifestyle choices, delving into conceptual relationships or researching their personal philosophy. With this clarity, they want to get a deeper philosophical knowledge of the world and themselves, which may improve their ability to deal with particular personal issues.

Though they encapsulate the spirit of most contemporary techniques, the author contends that present philosophical counselling approaches fall short of realizing the full potential of philosophizing in our lives. This method misses opportunities to discover new dimensions of ideas, concepts and meanings since it concentrates only on the philosophy that is present in a person's attitudes, neglecting to investigate areas of knowledge that extend beyond their real lives. The author thinks that if a counsellor looks beyond their current situation and into other areas of life, the content within may be more meaningful and motivating.

After years of development, the author hopes to solve important intellectual and spiritual difficulties by concentrating on this method and examining its basic features. The goal of this strategy is to go beyond the counselee's existence.

The need for wisdom

People in modern western civilization are mainly devoid of depth, knowledge, spirituality, meaningfulness and edification. It takes wisdom to look beyond one's limited self and assumptions, attitudes, beliefs and desires, which are frequently taken for granted as final, unquestionable realities. The inability to get over these boundaries creates a little world that is devoid of purpose and significance. Many people take these ubiquitous components of life for granted in their pursuit of monetary gain, stability, comfort or self-gratification. This causes a crisis in which human existence becomes shallow, self-absorbed and one-dimensional, losing its depth, knowledge and spirituality. Because we are living in a moment of crisis where human existence is becoming increasingly superficial, self-absorbed and one-dimensional, many people take these features for granted. Deepness and spirituality have declined in the contemporary era of scientific and technological developments. Although these developments offer never-before-seen opportunities for travel, healthcare, education and entertainment, they have also resulted in a lack of intellectual and spiritual development. Rather, life has become unpredictable, shallow, reliant on outside events and preoccupied with instant pleasure.

The demand for spirituality and knowledge has always existed in western society; thus, this predicament is not new. But there is a big contrast between the eras we live in now and the ones that went before. Even though most people had little use for it, there had always been a spiritual and wise aspect to earlier historical times. Edification and spiritual richness were possible even during times of extreme depravity.

In contrast, most western culture today—including the more intellectual segments of society—has largely lost aspects of knowledge, depth and spirituality. This has made our intellectual and spiritual requirements so much more pressing that it has brought about a spiritual crisis, which presents a serious challenge to modern mankind.

Our current world is referred to as "post modernity" and the loss of knowledge is one of its fundamental themes. Our intellectual and spiritual demands have been so severely exacerbated by this crisis that it has led to a spiritual crisis which presents a serious obstacle to modern humanity.

In my opinion, philosophical guidance should contribute to the endeavour of resolving this human predicament. The pursuit of knowledge via philosophy is a quest for a deeper and more expansive life. Its purpose is to assist clients in becoming smarter rather than more content; it is not to solve difficulties in their marriages or careers, but to delve into the realm of ideas and progress towards knowledge. And once more, while seeking knowledge may enable one to overcome personal challenges, this is not the main objective of the quest.

Philosophical counselling and psychotherapy

Philosophical therapy functions as an exploration of knowledge and a voyage beyond the individual. It is not the same as psychotherapies, which concentrate on the individual and try to comprehend, identify and/or improve the situations they face. Philosophical counselling, on the other hand, focuses on the journey outside of the individual rather than what occurs within them.

For instance, after years of emptiness and boredom, a person may join a social cause, become a convert to a certain religion or take up painting as a new source of life and purpose. The voyage takes the traveller beyond their current surroundings and into the ground of existence, the basis of their lives. In philosophical counselling, philosophy's function is to introduce the counselee to the vast range of meanings that make up wisdom or our reality.

Philosophical teaching has taken many different shapes throughout human civilizations and historical eras. Understanding and spiritual enrichment are necessary for a greater life and cannot be achieved by adhering to just one explanation of existence. The pursuit of wisdom is a conversation with the limitless web of concepts and viewpoints that are woven across the universe of possible states of existence rather than being limited to a single image of reality.

The foundation of critical therapy is a person's unique experiences and conversation with human reality, rather than a predetermined theory. It is crucial to understand that such a trip may make use of materials taken from conventional ideologies since it would be conceited and shallow to ignore previously offered conversations and insights about life.

To sum up, philosophical coaching functions as an exploration of knowledge, a voyage that extends beyond the individual and the boundaries of the present. Philosophical therapy assists people in navigating the world of knowledge and purpose by concentrating on the journey that extends beyond the individual, ultimately leading to a more contented and significant existence.

The problem of psychologization

Philosophical counselling and psychotherapy can be viewed as complimentary ways of viewing life rather than as necessarily mutually exclusive disciplines. Psychotherapeutic techniques may assist people in managing their lives and personal issues, and philosophical therapy can assist clients in gaining a new philosophical understanding and applying it to their lives. But the culture's propensity to overemphasize the psychological viewpoint might skew our understanding of the significance of everyday problems because it presumes that therapists are equipped to address the complex philosophical question of what constitutes a meaningful and valuable existence.

Philosophical counselling, on the other hand, assists the counselee in exploring the underlying truth revealed via ideas on a path that leads to enlightenment and edification but does not ultimately produce a universal answer. Basic life concerns can only be resolved by philosophical (and maybe other, like religious) methods rather than psychological ones, i.e., by looking inside the conceptual terrain revealed by ideas. Psychotherapists should encourage their patients to pursue wisdom through philosophical self-investigation, which is beyond the purview of psychotherapy, rather than answering the questions for them on their own or encouraging the patient to respond according to her inner voice or personal preferences.

Finally, it should be recognized that psychotherapy and philosophical counselling are distinct disciplines that complement one another and each focus on a distinct aspect of life. Many clients who have visited a psychotherapist in the past report having a favourable experience because they believed that their treatment did not adequately address significant areas of their lives that they classified as philosophical or ideational.

The search for wisdom

In the process of exploring their own thoughts and passions, people engage in philosophical therapy in an effort to understand the vast web of concepts that permeates life and its fundamental realities. This method is contrasted with psychotherapy, which aims to comprehend the fundamental reasons behind our feelings and actions. Philosophical self-examination entails looking beyond one's own self-interests and worries to investigate the limitless web of concepts that permeate human existence. In order to dissect the ideational underpinnings of our universe, including notions of freedom, shame, success, truth, and wisdom, this method is essential to the pursuit of wisdom. Philosophical inquiry focuses on the ideas of guilt and freedom, whereas psychology explores feelings and impulses. Philosophy focuses on the most fundamental conceptions that form the basis of our world and underpin our lives, whereas all disciplines investigate concepts or ideas.

A case study

A form of treatment known as philosophical counselling places more emphasis on the philosophical than on abstract ideas. Allowing the counselee's way of being, including their struggles, attitudes, and hopes, to speak alongside their ideas is the first stage in philosophical therapy. This strategy is essential for steering the discussion in a philosophically and personally beneficial direction.

In the case study that follows, a twenty-year-old student called E tries to approach her problems outside of her psychotherapy sessions. E offers the understanding that humans behave out of egocentric self-interest, which drives all behaviour. This includes acts that seem selfless but are really done with the expectation of getting something in return, generally to satisfy emotional needs.

In the initial phase of philosophical counselling, the client often uses the counsellor's inquiries to help her define herself and share pertinent events and experiences. This phase aims to provide the individual

experiences or stuff that can give rise to philosophizing. Often, a personal dilemma is excellent starting points since it makes the fabric of life stand out for a closer look.

This case study focuses on the initial stages of philosophical therapy since they are important in steering the discussion in a philosophically and personally beneficial direction. It is crucial to refrain from concentrating on the philosophical elements of humanity and to let the counselee's manner of speaking speak as loudly as their professed views.

To sum up, philosophical therapy is a useful tool for assisting people in understanding their lives and creating enduring relationships. Counselees can better comprehend their own experiences and create more potent therapeutic approaches by concentrating on the initial phases of philosophical counselling.

Depending on whether it is analyzed in terms of psychological processes or philosophical questions and concepts, the counselee's personal material can be used as a basis for either psychotherapy or philosophical counselling. E's identification with her mother and her mistrust of other people's intentions might be examined using psychoanalytic object-relation theory. While philosophical counselling acknowledges the value of psychological knowledge and care, it regards itself as a distinct effort that explores the realm of ideas rather than addressing a person's inner energies.

The counselee was questioned about a philosophical question pertaining to a belief she had taken for granted during the first session. One way to frame the question is to ask what it means to relate to someone as a real person, what standards or fundamental qualities characterize a true relationship, or what constitutes an authentic relationship with a person.

Typically, the counselee is not a philosopher and is not conversant with high-power analysis techniques or technical language. It is crucial to take your time when raising the question and providing a response, to carefully consider its implications for her life, and to formulate it gradually.

The counsellor stated that individuals have no interest in caring about other people's problems and are just thinking about their own. The client concurred that this was typical for her. The client questioned the counsellor to clarify that she and the other are two distinct persons and that the other is never who she is.

Speaking in a discussion, the speaker asks whether being with a buddy is like having a chair and table and is something external to each other. They can cross the line because, as the speaker says, they can meet in a manner that tables and chairs cannot. But they also point out that individuals frequently treat one another as a table or chair. The many ways people treat others—some better, some worse, some more sensitive, some less sensitive—are discussed. Subsequently, the orator requests that the listener see every possible combination of connections that individuals may have and determine which ones exhibit greater empathy or accept the other for their true nature. Additionally, they invite the speaker to name the relationships that, in

their opinion, are more real or appropriate. The discussion emphasizes the variety of connections and the value of appreciating and comprehending the distinctive characteristics of others.

Our conversations revolve around the current philosophical problem. I cannot supply the counselee with philosophical answers in my capacity as a philosophical counsellor; instead, I must provide her with "raw materials"—differences, conceptions, assumptions, and lines of reasoning—to utilize in her own manner. This enables her to venture beyond corny catchphrases and investigate fresh angles and spheres of existence. But this needs to be handled delicately; no dictating or lecturing about ideas. In philosophical therapy, this method is essential.

A counselee who is curious about the inner workings, consequences, and genuineness of interpersonal connections engages in a philosophical discussion with the author on a particular topic. They recommend reading two pertinent philosophical passages: one by Indian-born philosopher Krishnamurti (1964) and another by Spanish philosopher Ortega (1959). The author makes the case that these readings can enhance philosophical inquiry. The third phase of philosophical discussions involves delaying providing a response while examining the intricacy of the problem and the variety of potential solutions. The next step is to apply the newly acquired theoretical knowledge to the counselee's situation. When these two phases are combined, a parallel analysis of two discussion levels is conducted. At the philosophical level, the author looks at the networks of ideas that underlie the problem, including interpersonal relationships and their implications, fundamental assumptions, and authenticity. At the individual level, the author explores how the philosophical concepts relate to the counselee's real-world experiences and situation, as well as how moving from the real to the abstract might lead to fresh philosophical discoveries.

By alternating between the philosophical and personal levels, the counselee's horizon of ideas or meanings expands to include those that are outside of her real way of being as well as those that are already ingrained in her existence. Through this process, the counselee is able to transcend her current state of mind and develop deeper and more expansive understandings and attitudes towards others as well as her.

The absence of any mention of self-interest or selflessness in the readings confuses the author, even if she considers them to be illuminating and refreshing. She goes on to say that these philosophers do not discount her views about love and selfishness, but rather that the fundamental problem in relationships is not self-interest at all.

When E started to see the significance of other methods of interacting with people, her viewpoint underwent a dramatic shift. She started to understand the significance of philosophical perspectives that emphasized the past against the present, such as Krishnamurti's idea of true interactions. Her attitude towards others became inauthentic as a result of E's notion of selfishness, and she was able to recognize her assumptions as a barrier that caused distance and isolation.

Regarding E's interest in Krishnamurti's ideas, the counselee exercised caution since it is risky to bring up a philosopher's notion without presenting an opposing viewpoint. They then adopted Ortega's theory of true love, which holds that a person is not necessarily who they are inside themselves. Unlike desire, true love is stepping outside of oneself in the direction of the beloved, and love is an ongoing journey. Desire, on the other hand, draws the desired thing closer to and inside of oneself.

E understood that her intense jealousy and attempts to possess her ex-boyfriend R went against Ortega's concept of migration, even if she had experienced migration in the manner that Ortega defined it. She came to the realization that having someone close to oneself has always required encasing and holding them in a glass cage. She also recalled that another man had bemoaned to her that she was not reaching out towards him, even though he was.

In summary, E's exposure to Krishnamurti's theories on real relationships inspired her to investigate alternative viewpoints and deepen her knowledge of real love. Through treatment, E, the counselee, saw a significant change in her life. She came to understand that being intimate entailed moving beyond her existing knowledge and accepting the other person's perspective, and that love and want are fundamentally different from one another. Through this process, she reached the fifth stage, when she started creating a unique approach to the problem at hand. The counselling procedure continued after this point as new cycles of stages appeared when fresh philosophical and personal problems surfaced.

E's comprehension of the problem and potential philosophical solutions enabled her to form her own unique ideas, adding to the points of view that were expressed and modifying, combining, and removing ideas as needed. She also broadened her perspective to incorporate concepts from Sartre and Buber. As the therapy went on, she started to incorporate these concepts into a more complex, multifaceted picture and draw closer connections between them and her experiences.

The counselling approach resulted in a broad network of thoughts and ideas that went beyond her original attitude, rather than a final conclusion or cohesive theory. In order to improve her philosophical self-understanding and ability to manage her life, the objective was not to "solve" her problem or provide a one-sided summary of her existence. Rather, it was to go beyond it and towards larger views on her existing and potential ways of being.

E completed a questionnaire outlining her experience as part of the counsellor's outcome research. The important chats let her break free from her limited mindset and consider issues from a wider angle. She saw the degree to which her subjective reality is arbitrary and the ease with which one might fall into the trap of unwavering conviction. She felt as though she had completed a voyage with someone who knows many roads and turns their attention to them because of the counsellor's shared ideas and feelings about the problem, which helped her preserve her self-confidence.

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