

## **TYPES OF PSYCHOTHERAPY** *A Menu for Integral Practitioners*

**This list of some recognized (major) types of psychotherapy is an attempt to provide Integral Practitioners with a helpful guide to identify the therapy best suited for particular needs. You may want to keep in mind that the person (formation, training, development, experience) of the psychotherapist is quite significant. Most psychotherapists focus on a particular type of therapy, while others are more eclectic. Typically, a seasoned psychotherapist has been trained in one or two of the following types of psychotherapy and may use various other modalities as she/he works with the individual's needs/developmental issues.**

**Integral Psychotherapy:** The Integral Psychotherapist offers psychological healing and growth which extends beyond the development of 'ego'; thus, a full spectrum therapy recognizing matter, body, mind, soul, and spirit, i.e. wholeness. The therapist sees the individual as being on an evolutionary journey to an increasingly complex consciousness. An individual's growing perspectives, of self, other, environment and beyond, are fostered within the framework of an integral map developed by Ken Wilber including 'states', 'stages', and 'shadow'. The Integral Psychotherapist is prepared to assist (as needed) with self structure, shadow work, and trans-personal exploration.

**Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy:** Psychoanalysts believe that the unconscious motives along with unresolved conflicts lead to maladapted behavior. There are numerous theoretical movements within psychoanalysis (i.e. object relations, self psychology, ego psychology) Shadow material (split-off parts of the self) is uncovered within the various movements of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalysis is a good 'shadow work' therapy.

**Transpersonal Psychotherapy:** The Transpersonal Psychotherapist helps the individual toward self-transcendence, or a sense of identity which is deeper, broader, and more unified with the whole. The Transpersonal Psychotherapist brings a stronger spiritual element into the mix. Ken Wilber started out in this school but separated from it because it confused states and traits (not developmental enough), was internally inconsistent, and couldn't help people bridge the science-spirituality split.

**Existential Psychotherapy:** The Existential Psychotherapist focuses on freedom of choice in shaping one's own life. The therapist teaches the individual to be responsible to shape his / her own life, and for self-determination, and self-awareness. The uniqueness of each individual forms his / her own unique personality, starting from infancy. Existential therapy pays particular attention to the present and future rather than the past.

**Gestalt Psychotherapy:** The Gestalt Psychotherapist wants to integrate the body and mind factors, by stressing awareness and integration. Integration of behaviors, feelings, and thinking is the main goal in Gestalt therapy. Individual's are viewed as having the ability to recognize how earlier life influences may have changed their lives. The individual is made aware of personal responsibility, how to avoid problems, to finish unfinished matters, to experience things in a positive light, and in the awareness of now.

**Jungian Psychotherapy:** The Jungian Psychotherapist is highly trained to help you uncover, or bring to consciousness, unconscious information. Dreams and symbols are often discussed including a specialized understanding of 'shadow'. The Jungian therapist offers personal meaning for a client, and symbols come to have a trans-personal or archetypal meaning.

**Cognitive Behavioral Psychotherapy:** The Cognitive Behavioral Psychotherapist focuses on a set of psychotherapeutic principles as well as knowledge based upon empirical investigation. CBT is effective with a wide range of disorders and appears to enhance the impact of medications used to treat such disorders. It has appeal as an active, structured and time-limited psychotherapy. Helpful for symptoms of depression, self-esteem issues, and self-structure.

**Behavior Psychotherapy:** The Behavioral Psychotherapist focuses on the systematic application of principles of learning theory with the analysis and treatment of behavior. The therapist seeks to relate problematic behaviors (symptoms) to other observable physiological and environmental events. This involves behavioral analysis of what is occurring (and has occurred) and alteration of various symptoms.

**Rational-Emotive Psychotherapy:** The Rational-Emotive Psychotherapist is highly action-oriented and deals with the individual's cognitive and moral state. The therapy stresses the individual's ability to think on their own and on their ability to change. The rational-emotive therapist believes that we are born with the ability of rational thinking but that we may fall victim to irrational thinking.

**Adlerian Psychotherapy:** The Adlerian Psychotherapist uses the growth model approach. The therapist focuses on and examines the individuals' lifestyle. The therapist and individual will then mutually set goals and the therapist will provide encouragement to the individual in reaching their goals. The therapist may also assign homework, setup contracts between them and the individual, and make suggestions on how the individual can reach their goals.

**Person-Centered Psychotherapy:** The Person-Centered (Rogerian) Psychotherapist understands that specific characteristics of the therapist are necessary and sufficient for effective treatment. The immediate (rather than emotionally distant) accessibility of the therapist is required. This school of psychotherapy essentially rejects the medical/disease model and utilizes the growth model of individual change. A focus upon the experiences of the individual as well as the individual's ability to live within the moment is encouraged.

**Transactional Analysis:** The Transactional Analyst focuses on the individual's cognitive and behavior functioning. The therapist helps the individual evaluate their past decisions and how those decisions affect their present life. They believe self-defeating behavior and feelings can be overcome by an awareness of them. The therapist believes that the individual's personality is made up of the parent, adult, and child. It is important for the individual to examine past decisions to help them make new and better decisions.

**Bioenergetics Psychotherapy:** The Bioenergetics Psychotherapist claims that unresolved childhood wounds are not only repressed out of consciousness, but are often tied with a physical symptom, usually a chronic muscle group tightness that a person has habituated to and can't feel until it relaxes. Therapy may involve some physical exercises to release muscle tensions (or constricted breathing). Associated repressed emotions come to the surface, along with memories, available for direct healing, via direct emotional release and insight.

**Reality Psychotherapy:** The Reality Therapist teaches the individual ways to control the world around them and how to meet their personal needs. They believe that the individual can and will change their life for the better. The reality therapist focuses on the 'what' and the 'why' of the individuals' actions. They point out what the individual is doing and then help them to evaluate it.

**Short-term Issue Focused Psychotherapy:** The Psychotherapist begins with a comprehensive diagnostic examination which determines whether the problems/disorder can be appropriately treated by a particular psychotherapeutic technique. The therapist also determines whether the individual has the strength to confront the underlying causes for their problems and that there is the potential for positive response to short term intervention. As in psychoanalytic psychotherapies, STIFP does involve examination of the means by which unconscious needs and drives influence an individual's behavior and functional capacity.

**Focal Psychodynamic Psychotherapy:** The Psychotherapist identifies a central conflict arising from the individual's early experience that is being re-enacted in adult life and producing mental health problems. The therapist aims to resolve this through the vehicle of the relationship with the therapist thereby giving the individual new opportunities for emotional assimilation and insight.

**Couple and Family Psychotherapy:** The Couple/Family/Marriage Psychotherapist deals with concurrent problems in communication, conflict resolution, and anger management. Problems that occur within a relationship or family often emerge from interactional problems, the nature of feedback which individuals provide each other, the difficulties in maintaining functional balance within the relationship/family, and the struggles for power and control which emerge. Family systems theory is a primary resource for couple and family psychotherapy. However, most types (schools) of therapy have their own particular view of working with relationships.

**Group Psychotherapy:** The Group Psychotherapist offers the individual a good in-depth experimental situation for interpersonal/social skill building. As in psychoanalytic therapy, some of the "curative" factor is seen as being in one's relationships (especially within the context of the group), although there's always some discussion of a person's life situation. Group Psychotherapy is particularly good in dealing with the issue of shame.

This 'menu' is intended as a 'work in progress' and will be update periodically. Please send comments and suggestions to Richard Pfeiffer, MDiv, PhD.

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#### Further Resources

Growth Central <http://growthcentral.com>

Integral Mind Enhancement <http://integral-mind-enhancement.com>

Integral Institute <http://integralinstitute.org>

Integral Naked <http://integralnaked.org>

Whole Child & Adolescent Center <http://wholechild.net>