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## SHARED THERAPEUTIC COMPONENTS OF SOME PSYCHOTHERAPY MODELS

Mary Gloria C. Njoku, Ph.D  
Godfrey Okoye University,  
Enugu

### Abstract

*Psychotherapy has been defined as an emotionally charged and planned interaction between a trained socially accepted healer and someone with psychological difficulties. There are four basic elements shared by all psychotherapeutic modalities. These are 1) an emotionally charged, confiding relationship with a helping person, 2) a healing setting which strengthens the therapist and the client's expectation and fosters confidence, 3) a rationale, conceptual scheme, or myth that provides a plausible explanation for the client's symptoms and prescribes a ritual or procedure for resolving them and 4) a procedure that requires active participation of both the client and the therapist and is believed by both to be the means of restoring the client's health. This paper reviews three psychotherapy orientations.*

Keywords: Healing, psychotherapy, ritual, client's health

### Introduction

Psychotherapy has been defined as an emotionally charged and planned interaction between a trained socially accepted healer and someone with psychological difficulties. Nichols & Schwartz (2004) described the therapy room as a consulting place of healing where individuals who are troubled in life find refuge from their troubles. In considering psychotherapy a sanctuary, Nichols & Schwartz suggested that psychotherapy took over the roles of the family in daily problem solving of its members. In other words, psychotherapy provides options for talking through and healing the pains of our daily living both those that emanate from work, relationships, loss of loved ones, chronic stress, daily hassles or other catastrophic events.

According to Nichols and Schwartz (2004), psychoanalysis and client-centered (humanistic) therapy were the most prominent therapeutic models during the twentieth century. Behavioural and cognitive-behavioural therapies emerged later.

### Psychodynamic (Psychoanalysis) Psychotherapies

Psychoanalysis also called psychodynamic psychotherapy took its root from the work of Freud during the nineteenth century on the diagnosis and treatment of hysteria (McWilliams & Weinberger, 2003). Freud defined psychoanalysis as a strategy that involves transference and resistance. In term of the components of this form of therapy, a review conducted by Blagys and Hilsenroth (2000) showed that psychodynamic therapy has seven elements that distinguish it from other therapies. These are "(a) a focus on affect and expression of emotion; (b) exploration of the patient's efforts to avoid certain topics or engage in activities that retard therapeutic progress (i.e., defense and resistance); (c) identification of patterns in the patient's actions, thoughts, feelings, experiences, and relationships (object relations); (d) emphasis on past experiences; (e) focus on interpersonal experiences; (f) emphasis on the therapeutic relationship (transference and the therapeutic alliance); (g) explorations of wishes, dreams, and fantasies (intrapsychic dynamics)" (p.264, as cited in McWilliams & Weinberger, 2003).

Psychodynamic (Freud's method) involves one-to-one method of treating people and a systematic search for relationships between one's life history and current problems; Freud believed that mental illness stems from a failure of the ego to mediate in the recurring conflict between the id's impulses and the demands of the superego. He placed emphasis on thoughts, emotions, and motivations in treatment and on the client-therapist relationship. The Psychodynamic orientation was developed out of Freud's medical practice. Freud was partially successful with treating "hysterical" ailments with hypnotic suggestions. He experienced more success using the process of "free association." Results of this "talking cure" led Freud to conclude that hysterical symptoms developed out of conflicts about one's unconscious impulses and fantasies. Psychodynamic therapy involved the use of free association, dream analysis and analysis of the way the client reacts to therapist (transference). Insight into problems is gained by recognizing unconscious thoughts and