Chapter 5 Onion-peeling theories: Psychodynamic and person-centred approaches

Online readings

[‘Introduction to psychodynamic theory in social work’ – Online MSW Programs](https://www.onlinemswprograms.com/social-work/theories/psychodynamic-theory/)

This article introduces Sigmund Freud’s psychodynamic theory from a social work perspective. It begins with a brief history of psychodynamic theory; explains the theory’s key assumptions, goals, strengths, and weaknesses; and discusses how the theory applies to social work practice. It also critiques psychodynamic theory for failing to consider the broader social justice and structural issues that impact the client, instead focusing entirely on personal causes of individual problems. An extensive reference list is included.

[Treatments – The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust](https://tavistockandportman.nhs.uk/care-and-treatment/treatments/)

The Tavistock and Portman NHS Foundation Trust offers a variety of mental health services and therapeutic treatments to individuals and families, including child psychotherapy and psychoanalytic psychotherapy. Each treatment type is described in terms of its key targets and outcomes, nature of assessment, nature and length of intervention, effectiveness, risk and side effects, and alternative psychological treatments.

Multimedia links

[Carl Rogers on person-centered therapy – PsychotherapyNet [YouTube]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o0neRQzudzw)

Carl Rogers is among the founders of humanistic and person-centered approaches. In this short video, Rogers speaks briefly about empathy, genuine understanding, unconditional care and being oneself in the therapeutic relationship. Rodgers also discusses the impact of these strategies on the client and their capacity for growth.

[Introduction to psychodynamic theory and therapy (for beginners) – Perennial Psychology [YouTube]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fmF9-wnTapI)

In this video, Alina Müller, a clinical psychology graduate student, introduces the core features and assumptions of psychodynamic theory, as well as some key treatment features. Through an examination of a person’s development and the role of the unconscious mind, psychodynamic theory tries to understand why psychopathology is there in the first place.

[Person-centred counselling – a brief introduction – Chris the Counsellor [YouTube]](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kwrbmKtOAGY)

In this video, Chris introduces a key assumption of person-centred theory called the actualising tendency, which is theorised to move the individual towards change and growth. Chris also explains the three core conditions of person-centred therapy – empathy, unconditional positive regard and congruence.