

Appendix C

Theories Overview Handout with Disability Critique

Person-Centered Theory

Person-centered therapy emphasizes individuals' unique experiences and is non-directive in nature. Person-centered therapists support clients in their journey of self-discovery and identity formation, which can include disability identity formation. Person-centered therapy also focuses on an individual's strengths, which can be especially helpful for disabled clients (Millington, 2017).

Strength-Based Theory

Strength-based therapists support clients in exploring and further developing their personal strengths. This theory emphasizes a person's ability to overcome obstacles using skills, values, and characteristics they already own. Clients who engage in strength-based counseling generally experience an increase in feelings of self-worth and have a healthy self-perception (Jones-Smith, 2019).

Cognitive-Behavioral Theory

Cognitive-behavioral theory (CBT) focuses on the influence of thought processes on emotions and behavior. CBT therapists support clients in recognizing core and intermediate beliefs that provide a foundation for their thinking patterns and then they address maladaptive beliefs. Disabled persons may experience maladaptive core and intermediate beliefs in relation to their disability. CBT therapists can assist clients in addressing maladaptive beliefs and developing healthy and adaptive core beliefs.

Optional Readings:

Jones-Smith, E. (2019). Culturally responsive strengths-based therapy for individuals with disabilities. In Jones-Smith (Ed.), *Culturally diverse counseling: Theory and practice* (pp. 452–477). Sage Publications, Inc.

Millington, M. (2018). Which counseling theories and techniques work best with different disability populations and why. In I. Marini, N. M. Glover-Graf, & M. J. Millington (Eds.), *Psychosocial aspects of disability: Insider perspectives and strategies for counselors* (2nd ed., pp. 365–414). Springer Publishing Company.