

Carl Rogers: The Life and Thoughts

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Abstract

Carl Rogers developed the humanistic branch of psychology and is very closely related to Jung, Adler, Maslow and Horney. Rogers is known for the development of psychotherapy known as non-directive, also referred to as person-centered. In person-centered therapy, the therapist enters the room taking on the role of a friend rather than that of a doctor or scientist; the reason being that the client can be honest and open as well as allowing the therapist to give his/her honest thoughts and views. Rogers also introduced many concepts such as using a tape recorder so he could have a permanent recording (Carl Ransom Rogers, 2002, para.2). Rogers used his background knowledge as well as his observations of others in order to develop the branch of humanism.

Carl Rogers: The Life and Thoughts

An American psychologist, Carl Rogers, lived during the 1900s and helped develop one of the seven main schools of thought, which are still in use today. The schools of thought are groups of theories or beliefs that a person can follow or believe in. Thanks to the works of Dr. Rogers, humanism is now a main school of thought in psychology out of the seven schools.

Beginning of Life and Schooling

Carl Ramson Rogers was born on January 8th 1902 in Oak Park, Illinois the fourth of six children (Boeree, 1998, para. 1). During his younger years his father, Walter A. Rogers bought a farm as a successful business man for his family to grow old on (Rogers, 2005, para. 1). Rogers started performing experiments on the farm as he was learning the scientific method and first thought he would become a modern farmer. He was surrounded by a religious family which influenced his decision in attaining a degree (Kirschenbaum, 2015, para. 2). As a young adult, Rogers was constantly hearing his father tell him to get a degree in agriculture from the University of Wisconsin, but Rogers decided to become a Protestant minister changing his degree to history. During his college years, Rogers had the privilege of traveling to China where he was allowed to break away from his families' beliefs. Rogers graduated from Wisconsin and then enrolled at the Union Theological Seminary, where he was soon inspired to take some classes at Columbia University Teachers College and soon after lost his passion for becoming a minister. In 1928, he received his M.A. degree and then received his Ph.D. from Teachers College in 1932 (Rogers, 2005, para. 1).

Marriage, Family and Work

In 1924, Rogers was able to marry Helen whom he later had a son and daughter with (Kirschenbaum, 2015, para. 2). Shortly after marrying in 1928, Rogers began working with kids in New York at the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children and later began to teach at the University of Rochester. While working with kids Rogers wrote books about the personality in children as well as clinically treating children (Rogers, 2005, para. 2). His first major book was *Clinical Treatment of the Problem Child*, which helped the reader understand his what he had learned regarding environmental and clinical treatment; this book helped Rogers get a job at Ohio State (Kirschenbaum, 2015, para.3). Years after the book's publication, in 1940, Rogers decided to become a full-time professor at Ohio State University and was involved in clinical psychology; while teaching he realized that his ideas did not correspond with the current methods of the Freudian psychoanalysis (Rogers, 2005, para. 2).

Development of Nondirective, Client-Centered Therapy and Awards

Rogers then developed the idea of nondirective client-centered therapy, which allowed patients to find their own pathways to health without a psychotherapist imparting their own values and instead only acting as a listener to give very little to change their personal views. He also started to believe that the effectiveness of treatment had more to do with empathy and genuine nature and not as much with the therapeutic technique. Rogers's viewpoint helped establish humanistic psychology (Rogers, 2005, para. 2). In 1941, Rogers book *Counseling and Psychotherapy: Newer Concepts in Practice* helped describe the nondirective approach and referred to each patient as a client (Kirschenbaum, 2015, para. 4). Following this discovery, Rogers became president of the American Psychological Association, also known as the APA,

from 1946-1947 and received the Distinguished Scientific Contribution Award in 1956 (Rogers, 2005, para. 3).

Still Contributing Even at the End

Rogers from 1945 to 1957 taught as a professor at the University of Chicago and then moved once again to the University of Wisconsin in 1957 continuing to teach until 1962. Rogers founded the Center for Studies of the Person in La Jolla, California after he finally moved to California. Rogers was still presenting workshops, seminars, as well as writing books explaining the cause for humanism (Rogers, 2005, para. 3). Rogers also spent the last years of his life working to end oppression and cultural conflict, working diligently to bring together the Catholics and Protestants in Ireland. Carl Rogers passed away at age 85 on February 4, 1987 (“Carl Rogers,” 2015).

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