

Counseling Theories: Essential Concepts and Applications

By Samuel T. Gladding

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For Theories of Counseling and Psychotherapy courses. This practical text provides clear, succinct coverage of the core concepts of all of the major contemporary theories of counseling and psychotherapy, including separate chapters on solution-focused and on feminist theory. Each theory chapter begins by discussing the major theorist or theorists responsible for the theory. The chapters then examine how the theory views (1) human nature, (2) the role of the therapist in counseling, and (3) the theraputic process and techniques. Chapters then present an evaluation of the theory, including an assessment of multicultural and gender issues. Then each chapter concludes by applying the theory to a single case-the case of Linda-that is used across all of the chapters. The text is ideal for instructors who want to give their students a clear understanding of theories' essential concepts and applications.

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Editorial Review

About the Author

Samuel T. Gladding is the chair of and a professor in the Department of Counseling at Wake Forest University in Winston-Salem, North Carolina. He has been a practicing counselor in both public and private agencies since 1971. His leadership in the field of counseling includes service as president of the American Counseling Association, the Association for Counselor Education and Supervision, the Association for Specialists in Group Work, and Chi Sigma Iota (an international counseling honor society).

Gladding is the former editor of the *Journal for Specialists in Group Work* and the author of more than 100 professional publications. In 1999 he was cited as being in the top 1% of contributors to the *Journal of Counseling and Development* for the 15-year period 1978-1993. Some of Gladding's most recent books are *Counseling: A Comprehensive Profession* (5th ed., 2004); *The Creative Arts in Counseling* (3rd ed., 2005); *Community and Agency Counseling* (with Debbie Newsome) (2nd ed., 2004); *Group Work: A Counseling Specialty* (4th ed., 2003); *Family Therapy: History, Theory, & Process* (3rd ed., 2002); *Becoming a Counselor: The Light, the Bright, and the Serious* (2002); and *The Counseling Dictionary* (2001).

Gladding's previous academic appointments have been at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and Fairfield University (Connecticut). He also worked as director of children's services in a mental health center and in a private practice counseling group for a number of years. Gladding received his degrees from Wake Forest (B. A., M. A., Ed.), Yale (M. A., Religion.), and the University of North Carolina-Greensboro (Ph.D.). He is a National Certified Counselor, a Certified Clinical Mental Health Counselor, and a Licensed Professional Counselor (North Carolina). Gladding is a former member of both the Alabama Board of Examiners in Counseling and the Research and Assessment Corporation for Counseling. He is also a Fellow in the Association for Specialists in Group Work.

Dr. Gladding is married to the former Claire Tillson and is the father of three children—Ben, Nate, and Tim. In addition to counseling, he enjoys tennis, swimming, and humor.

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Theories are like guiding lights. They give us some direction when we are with clients who have come to us in pain with problems or concerns they do not know how to address. Like light, theories can and do change. Some become brighter with time; others shift their focus. Some fade because they either lack a solid foundation or lose their relevance for the populations we serve. Wondrously new theories, like emerging lights, are generated as insightful clinicians and academics craft them out of the context in which people live.

Because this book is about counseling theories that are most prevalent at the beginning of the 21st century, it should be read in the light of its time. Some of the material covered will shine even brighter in the future whereas other ideas will falter or fade. In addition, some theories explained here may change their emphases. New ways of working with client populations will be created as practitioners discover other ways of helping individuals in mental distress. Thus, the knowledge gained from this text will be finite. To keep growing as a professional, you will have to study and read continuously about the latest developments in counseling and therapy circles.

So why should you study these theories at this time? They are the best and most complete that we know Furthermore, they provide ways of conceptualizing the words and actions of clients and working constructively with them. In other words, these theories, if employed judiciously, will shed light on your work and give you direction. Without such a basis for making plans and decisions, you would have to rely on trial and error or intuition, neither of which is apt to be as efficient or effective.

This book is laid out developmentally so that you can see how various theories of counseling and therapy have emerged: psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic theories, Adlerian therapy, existential therapy, person-centered therapy, Gestalt therapy, reality therapy, behavioral therapy, cognitive and cognitive-behavioral therapy, rational emotive behavior therapy, transactional analysis, feminist therapy Bowen family systems therapy, strategic family therapy, and solution-focused therapy Each theory chapter presents important essentials without irrelevant details and follows a uniform outline: Major Theorist(s), View of Human Nature/Personality Role of the Counselor/Therapist, Goals, Process and Techniques, Multicultural and Gender-Sensitive Issues, Evaluation of the Theory, Treating Linda with the Therapy, Summary and Conclusion, Summary Table, Learning More, Classroom Activities, and References.

The final chapter of the book discusses ethical and legal concerns related to counseling.

Throughout the book I have used the words *counselor* and *therapist* interchangeably, just as professionals in the helping fields commonly use them. Some individuals prefer other terms: *psychotherapist, psychologist, social worker, psychiatrist, psychiatric nurse, pastoral counselor,* or *mental health counselor.* However, I believe that using just *counselor* and *therapist* makes the text clearer, easier to read, and less distracting.

I would like to thank my colleagues both past and present for the many contributions they have made to my understanding of theories and the therapeutic process. My work and interactions with fellow clinicians in mental health, private practice, and academic settings have allowed me to gain firsthand experience as a practicing counselor using major theories. For their constructive suggestions during the preparation of the manuscript, I thank reviewers Kenneth F Hughey, Kansas State University; Julia K. Mirras, Middlesex Community College University; John Reese, Waubonsee Community College; and Eric A. Sleith, Jefferson Community College. I would also like to thank my editor at Prentice Hall, Kevin Davis, for continuously urging me to put my thoughts about theories on paper. Finally, I wish to express my gratitude for the support and love that my family, especially my wife, Claire, have shown me through this writing project. Our children—Ben, Nate, and Tim—are all teenagers now, and without a lot of understanding and some rare quiet moments, I could not have completed this project in a timely way.

I hope you will benefit from reading this book. In the writing process I have grown to appreciate even more the light that theories provide. Such may be the case with you as you reflect on the thoughts of the individuals who have provided the foundation for all that we do in counseling and therapy.

Users Review

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