

PREFACE

Non-directivity is the distinguishing feature of the revolutionary, anti-authoritarian approach to psychotherapy and human relations developed by Carl Rogers. At its most basic, non-directivity implies being responsive to the client's direction. It implies that individuals have the capacity and the right to direct their own therapy and lives. This book brings together an international collection of person-centered theorists and practitioners, each exploring an important facet of non-directivity as it relates to person-centered theory and practice. Their writings examine the history, theory, applications, and implications of the non-directive attitude. Non-directivity emerges in these pages as *a way of being* that remains vital, flexible and highly relevant to the practice of person-centered therapy and other person-centered applications.

Three broad themes underlie the organization of the chapters in this book: historical and theoretical perspectives on non-directivity, the non-directive attitude in individual psychotherapy, and an exploration of ethical issues and applications of the non-directive attitude beyond the realm of individual psychotherapy. Barbara Brodley's introductory chapter lays out the basic meanings of non-directivity, challenging common misunderstandings and setting the stage for the chapters that follow. The first section of chapters opens with Brian Levitt's exploration of non-directivity as foundational to client-centered practice. An essential historical backdrop is presented in Nathaniel Raskin's review of historic events in the development of client-centered therapy and the person-centered approaches. Garry Prouty provides a thread that connects the non-directive aspects in the work of Carl Rogers, Eugene Gendlin, and his own Pre-Therapy (a powerful approach to working with people with 'psychosis' and those with a severe, pervasive learning disability or dementia that is perhaps the most profound contemporary development in non-directive theory and practice). Marvin Frankel and Lisbeth Sommerbeck follow this with an examination of a philosophical error that occurred in the development and presentation of client-centered theory. Their discussion brings greater clarity to understanding non-directivity and person-centered theory and practice. Françoise Ducroux-Biass grounds non-directivity in the philosophical traditions of Europe with her exploration of non-directivity as an ontological concept. Peter Schmid rounds out the first section with an exploration of non-directivity from anthropological, epistemological and ethical perspectives.

The section on non-directivity in individual psychotherapy opens with a chapter that offers a transcript from one of Barbara Brodley's audio-recorded, client-centered therapy demonstration sessions, and a discussion by Brian Levitt and Barbara Brodley on the non-directive elements in that session. Beth Freire provides us with a chapter that

adds to the body of client-centered research, with a qualitative analysis of a complete 12-session course of psychotherapy from the perspectives of the client and the therapist. This chapter includes transcripts drawn from selected sessions.

Marvin Frankel explores the Socratic method of inducing self-examination, which he sees as the progenitor of directive schools of psychotherapy. He contrasts Socratic dialogue with non-directive empathic understanding, shedding new light on the meaning of the non-directive attitude in psychotherapy. Along the way, he analyzes portions of transcripts from the well-known Rogers and Gloria filmed demonstration session (Rogers, 1965), as well as transcripts from his own non-directive work with a man just diagnosed with cancer, and later with that man's wife.

In the now famous Wisconsin studies (Rogers, Gendlin, Kiesler and Truax, 1967), Rogers and his colleagues found mixed results, leading many to the unfortunate and mistaken conclusion that non-directive psychotherapy could not be effective with psychotic clients. Garry Prouty's development of Pre-Therapy (Prouty, 1994; Prouty, Van Werde and Pörtner, 2002) has since proven this is not the case. Lisbeth Sommerbeck examines her own non-directive work with people diagnosed with severe mental illnesses, often informed by her understanding of Prouty's Pre-Therapy. She includes portions of transcripts that highlight her insights.

Sometimes commonly accepted treatment practices and guidelines go unexamined because they have the appearance of being correct and carry the authority of popular usage. This is true with regard to established, directive practices and guidelines in the field of alcohol and substance abuse treatment. Sue Wilders questions conventional wisdom and makes a strong case for the efficacy of non-directive work with alcohol and substance users.

Jerold Bozarth first published 'The Art of "Being" in Psychotherapy' in 2001 in *The Humanistic Psychologist*. It is updated and appears as Chapter 12 in this volume under the title: 'The Art of Non-directive "Being" in Psychotherapy'. It is Bozarth's definitive statement on the place of non-directivity in the being of the therapist and also offers an illuminating journey through Jerold's professional life as a non-directive psychologist.

Clients are vulnerable to therapist influence and situational influences in therapy. Marge Witty begins the last section by tackling this issue in the context of non-directivity and presents non-directivity as an essential 'antidote' to sources of social influence in psychotherapy. Barry Grant presents non-directive therapy as an ethically grounded therapy, and provides insight into the implications for empathic understanding. Kathy Moon examines congruence in terms of theory, ethics and practice. Her exploration helps to resolve the confusion that many have over the place of congruence in non-directive practice.

Non-directivity has numerous applications beyond the realm of individual psychotherapy, and the final chapters of the book explore four such areas. Jerold Bozarth examines the history and development of the non-directive group, and formulates postulates about its efficacy. John McPherrin provides us with a history of and guide to non-directive psychotherapy with couples and families. In their chapter, Jeffrey and

Cecily Cornelius-White provide a meta-analysis of research in education and examine the efficacy of non-directivity. The last chapter of this section is a reprint of a small gem written by C.H. (Pat) Patterson and C. Edward Watkins Jr, first published in 1982 in *Measurement and Evaluation in Guidance*. Although non-directivity and assessment are often seen as incompatible, their seminal essay shows how the non-directive attitude can have a place in an area of practice that is largely seen as directive.

We come full-circle and conclude with Nathaniel Raskin's 1947 paper, 'The Nondirective Attitude', a paper that has been widely referenced but unpublished until now. It is found in this book as an historical afterword. Nat Raskin has been kind enough to provide a copy that included Carl Rogers' comments to him in the margins in longhand. These comments are incorporated as footnotes. Though non-directive therapy was relatively new at the time, Nat was quick to realise its depth. Given societal norms, he also recognized the potential for this promising approach to be misunderstood:

It has become clear that learning nondirective therapy is not a matter of acquiring technique, but of gradually gaining the conviction that people do not have to be guided into adjustment, but can do it themselves when accepted as they are ... It is not surprising that learning this method and philosophy is a slow process. For acceptance is one of the principles of human relationships which does not run very deep in our culture. (1947/2005: 346, this volume)

These words still ring true. Raskin first identified the non-directive attitude in client-centered psychotherapy almost six decades ago. It remains a rich, radical and often misunderstood concept, providing the impetus for the writings that follow.

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