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Schemas, Core Beliefs, Worldviews, and Clinical Practice

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Clinicians generally seek to do the right thing in their work. In this process, they stand guided daily by their worldviews, which are intertwined with their cultures. Worldviews include beliefs about knowledge claims, the nature of human persons, ethical and moral perspectives, what is healthy and dysfunctional, what makes for optimal human functioning, and specific notions about good and evil (Bufford, 2012). Such belief sets are often referred to as core schemas or cognitive structures.

In America today, three widespread schemas are: 1) Strict empiricism - or science as the preferred way of knowing 2) Materialist reductionism (physicalism) as a view of all that exists 3) Relativism in ethics

We will use clinical examples to illustrate the implications of these schemas.

CONCLUSIONS

Worldviews matter. They shape the way we understand ourselves, each other, and the world around us. Counseling or psychotherapy is a thoroughly worldview-embedded enterprise. Our worldviews shape the ways we conceptualize human problems, interventions, and treatment goals. Truer or more accurate worldviews would likely benefit clients, while less accurate worlds may interfere with or cause harm.

REFERENCES


What is your Worldview?

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