

Developing Gestalt Counselling: A Comprehensive Guide for Practitioners

Gestalt counselling, developed by Fritz Perls, is a person-centered approach that focuses on the individual's present experience and the relationship between the client and therapist. The goal of Gestalt counselling is to help clients become more aware of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and to take responsibility for their own lives.

This comprehensive guide will provide practitioners with the essential knowledge and skills necessary to develop their practice in Gestalt counselling. We will explore the core principles of Gestalt counselling, the therapeutic techniques used, and the applications of Gestalt counselling in various settings.

The core principles of Gestalt counselling are based on the concept of holism, which views the individual as a whole being, rather than as a collection of separate parts. Gestalt counsellors believe that the individual's present experience is the most important factor in therapy, and that the past and future are only relevant insofar as they affect the present.



Developing Gestalt Counselling (Developing Counselling series) by Jennifer Mackewn

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Other key principles of Gestalt counselling include:

- **Phenomenology:** Gestalt counsellors focus on the client's subjective experience of the world, rather than on objective reality.
- **Contact:** Gestalt counsellors believe that contact between the client and therapist is essential for growth and change.
- **Responsibility:** Gestalt counsellors believe that clients are responsible for their own lives and choices.
- **Creativity:** Gestalt counsellors encourage clients to use their creativity to find new ways to solve problems.

Gestalt counsellors use a variety of therapeutic techniques to help clients become more aware of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. These techniques include:

- **Empty chair work:** Gestalt counsellors often have clients interact with an empty chair, to help them explore their relationships with others.
- **Dreamwork:** Gestalt counsellors believe that dreams can provide insight into the client's unconscious mind.
- **Bodywork:** Gestalt counsellors use bodywork to help clients connect with their physical sensations.
- **Art therapy:** Gestalt counsellors sometimes use art therapy to help clients express their feelings and thoughts.

Gestalt counselling can be used to treat a wide range of psychological issues, including:

- **Anxiety**
- **Depression**
- **Relationship problems**
- **Trauma**
- **Addiction**

Gestalt counselling can also be used in a variety of settings, including:

- **Private practice**
- **Hospitals**
- **Schools**
- **Businesses**

If you are interested in developing your practice in Gestalt counselling, there are a number of things you can do:

- **Get trained:** There are a number of training programs available in Gestalt counselling.
- **Join a professional organization:** There are a number of professional organizations for Gestalt counsellors, such as the Gestalt Therapy Institute of Los Angeles.
- **Attend workshops and conferences:** There are a number of workshops and conferences available on Gestalt counselling.

- **Read books and articles:** There are a number of books and articles available on Gestalt counselling.

Gestalt counselling is a powerful and transformative approach to therapy. It can help clients become more aware of their thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and to take responsibility for their own lives. If you are interested in developing your practice in Gestalt counselling, there are a number of resources available to help you get started.



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