

## A Level Psychology - Fifth to Sixth Transition: Week 6

### Humanistic Approach

#### **Step 1: Discover**

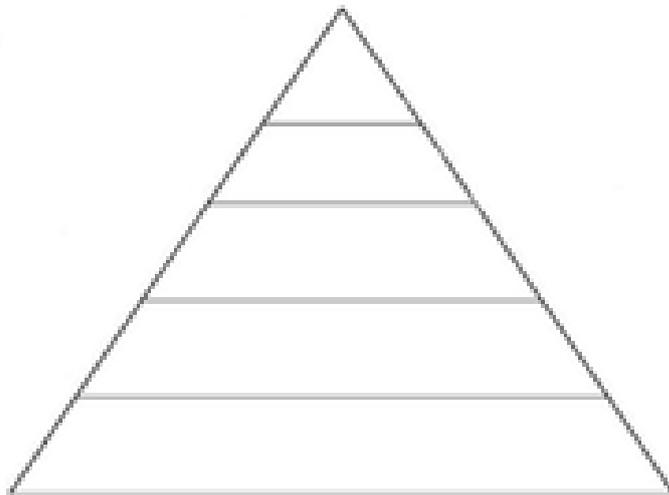
The Humanistic Approach is very different from the other approaches in psychology. Rather than trying to explain individual behaviours (such as studying memory by itself), the humanistic approach tries to understand the whole person and the things that make each person unique.

The approach was founded in the 1950s by Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow. Maslow's theory proposed a 'hierarchy of needs'. Each level must be fulfilled before a person can move to a higher need.

**Task 1:** Do some research and fill in Maslow's hierarchy of needs below with examples for each stage.



### Maslow's Hierarchy of needs



The hierarchy of needs isn't the only assumption of the humanistic approach. Another important aspect of the approach is the concept of **congruence**.

**Task 2:** conduct your own research into what congruence means in the context of the humanistic approach, write its meaning below:

**Task 3:** Calculating your own congruence

1) Below is a list of adjectives. Pick the 10 which most describe you, then rank these in order. (No.10 is most like you, no 1 is least like you)

2) Write these down under the title 'Actual self (list A)' in the correct ranking.

3) Look at the list of adjectives again, pick the 10 which most describe how you would like to be, then rank these in order. (No. 10 being the most important for you to be, no 1 is least important for you to be)

4) Write these down under the title 'Ideal self' in the correct ranking.

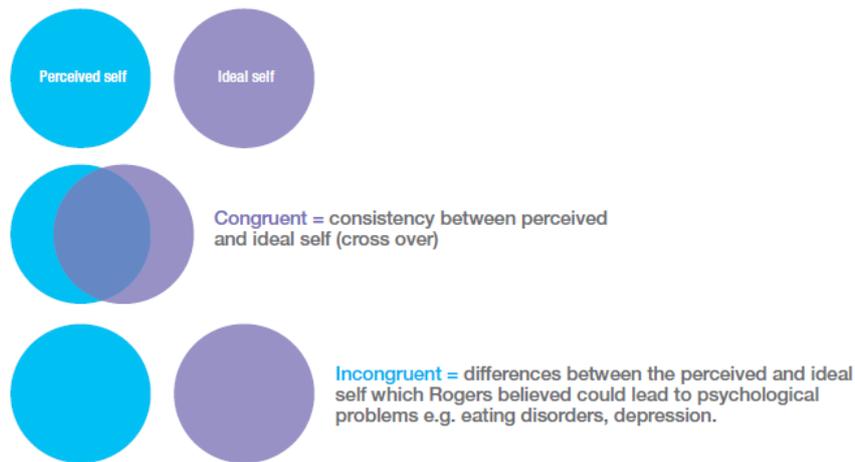
Adjectives to choose from:

|            |             |           |            |            |
|------------|-------------|-----------|------------|------------|
| Shy        | Outgoing    | Energetic | Happy      | Careless   |
| Funny      | Anxious     | Kind      | Attractive | Honest     |
| Brave      | Intelligent | Relaxed   | Selfish    | Thoughtful |
| Determined | Serious     | Generous  | Confident  | Lazy       |

| Score | Actual Self (list A) | Ideal Self (list B) |
|-------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 10    |                      |                     |
| 9     |                      |                     |
| 8     |                      |                     |
| 7     |                      |                     |
| 6     |                      |                     |
| 5     |                      |                     |
| 4     |                      |                     |
| 3     |                      |                     |
| 2     |                      |                     |
| 1     |                      |                     |

Calculating congruence:

1. For any adjective that only appears in one list and not both, change its value to 0.
2. For terms which appear in both lists, give the value assigned for the term in list A to the term in list B. For example, if you have "happy" as a score of 5 in your actual self list and 9 in your ideal self list, give 5 as the score of both list A and B.
3. Next calculate the sum of list A and the sum of list B.
4. Add these together and divide by 1.1
5. Your congruence score should come out between 0 and 100. The higher the score, the more congruent your actual self is with your ideal self! The median score is 50.
6. (If these instructions are confusing, there is an example on the last page of this document with a full walk-through)
7. Your congruence score is:



When discussing congruence, it is important to understand what is meant by term: 'conditions of worth'. Write the definition of this below:

How might conditions of worth result in incongruence between someone's actual self and their ideal self?

Can you think of some examples of how humans might have conditions of worth placed on them? Write your examples below:

**Task 4:** There is another aspect of the humanistic approach that varies greatly from many of the other approaches. That is its' view on free-will/determinism. Free will versus determinism is a very important debate in psychology. Do some research and indicate where on the spectrum below the humanistic approach falls on this debate. Underneath, explain your choice and humanism's view on the debate:



Is humanism deterministic or on the side of free will? Why?

## Step 2: Apply

**Task 1:** Imagine you are on a ship sailing through a terrible storm. The ship capsizes and the next thing you know, you are shipwrecked on a seemingly deserted island. You and 15 survivors are washed ashore with some of the wreckage from the ship.

What are the first ten things you would do from when you wake up on the sand?

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

9.

10.



Look at the things you have written and apply them to Maslow's hierarchy of needs (from the Discover section). You can either annotate your choices for which need it applies to, or create a pyramid with your decisions in to show how they relate to Maslow's hierarchy.

## Task 2:

Humanistic psychologists have a unique way of explaining mental illness based on Maslow's hierarchy of needs. These needs are unique to humans and self-actualisation is extremely important if you want to have a meaningful life (according to Maslow). However, you need to meet all of the other needs before you can reach self-actualisation.

With this in mind, how do you think Maslow would explain mental illness such as depression? Refer to the hierarchy in your answer:

The hierarchy is not the only way that humanistic psychologists explain depression. Conditions of worth and congruence between the actual self and ideal self play a part in it also (according to the humanists). For example, parents not giving unconditional love but giving love on the condition of good behaviour, or friends giving love on the condition of a personality trait such as being outgoing. Someone experiencing this might pretend to fill these roles so that they are loved and positively regarded – but it might not be who they truly are and how they want to behave.

Using this knowledge and what you previously learned about the importance of congruence, how do you think humanists might explain depression in this case?

Humanism has had a big impact on counselling psychology. In this, the therapist acts as a 'guide' or 'facilitator' to help people understand themselves and to find ways for them to reach self-actualisation. What do you think the therapist might do about a patient's conditions of worth for this to happen?

### **Step 3 – Check**

Create a textbook page to explain the main features of the humanistic approach to psychology. It must include the key terms: hierarchy of needs, congruence, free will, conditions of worth, self-actualisation and humanistic. You will need to explain these in a way so that someone who has never heard of the humanistic approach before will be able to understand.

It must also include when the approach was founded, by whom and what impact this has had on the real world (such as therapies).

You are allowed to use pictures and your own examples, you must not copy and paste from any websites (but you can use websites for research) it must be one side of A4.

Please create this on the computer rather than hand-drawing.

**Congruence worked through example:**

Adjectives to choose from:

|            |             |             |            |             |
|------------|-------------|-------------|------------|-------------|
| Shy        | Outgoing    | Energetic   | Happy      | Careless    |
| Funny      | Anxious     | Kind        | Attractive | Honest      |
| Brave      | Intelligent | Relaxed     | Selfish    | Thoughtful  |
| Determined | Serious     | Generous    | Confident  | Lazy        |
| Friendly   | Optimistic  | Pessimistic | Talkative  | Introverted |

| Score | Actual Self (list A) | Ideal Self (list B) |
|-------|----------------------|---------------------|
| 10    | Friendly (10)        | Brave (0)           |
| 9     | Introverted (0)      | Intelligent (0)     |
| 8     | Happy (8)            | Friendly (10)       |
| 7     | Determined (0)       | Funny (6)           |
| 6     | Funny (6)            | Thoughtful (2)      |
| 5     | Honest (0)           | Confident (0)       |
| 4     | Optimistic (4)       | Happy (8)           |
| 3     | Anxious (0)          | Optimistic (4)      |
| 2     | Thoughtful (2)       | Generous (0)        |
| 1     | Serious (0)          | Outgoing (0)        |

1. Anything not on both lists becomes 0
2. Give the scores from list A to list B
3. Total for list A = 30, Total for list B = 30
4.  $(30+30)/1.1 = 54.5$
5. I have 54.5 congruence between my actual self and ideal self (4.5 higher than the median)