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INTEGRATION

OF POLARITIES AS A TREND TOWARDS INTEGRITY OF THE PERSONALITY

INTEGRACIÓN DE LAS POLARIDADES COMO TENDENCIA HACIA LA INTEGRIDAD DE LA PERSONALIDAD

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ABSTRACT

The study of the self and its relationship with personality is important for several reasons, such as self-knowledge (to understand who we are, how we perceive ourselves, how we relate to others and how the experiences and situations we live influence us), mental health allowing us to address problems such as lack of self-esteem, insecurity, anxiety or depression, and for personal development since it can help us identify our strengths and weaknesses, and work on our personal development to achieve our goals and objectives. Considering this, this paper discusses the main approaches to the problem of holistic development and the concept of polarities in scientific and practical psychology. On the basis of a comparative analysis of the question of holistic development, the psychological content of this phenomenon and its significance in the study of personality structure are revealed. Undoubtedly, self and personality are closely related, and the way a person sees and behaves in the world is influenced by the interaction between these two concepts.

Keywords: integration of polarities, integrated essence, holistic development, integrity.

RESUMEN

El estudio del yo y su relación con la personalidad es importante por varios motivos, como el autoconocimiento (para entender quiénes somos, cómo nos percibimos, cómo nos relacionamos con los demás y cómo nos influyen las experiencias y situaciones que vivimos), la salud mental permitiéndonos abordar problemas como la falta de autoestima, la inseguridad, la ansiedad o la depresión, y para el desarrollo personal ya que puede ayudarnos a identificar nuestras fortalezas y debilidades, y trabajar en nuestro desarrollo personal para alcanzar nuestras metas y objetivos. Considerando esto, este artículo discute los principales enfoques del problema del desarrollo holístico y el concepto de polaridades en la psicología científica y práctica. Sobre la base de un análisis comparativo de la cuestión del desarrollo holístico, se revela el contenido psicológico de este fenómeno y su importancia en el estudio de la estructura de la personalidad. Sin duda, el yo y la personalidad están estrechamente relacionados, y la forma en que una persona ve y se comporta en el mundo está influenciada por la interacción entre estos dos conceptos.

Palabras clave: Integración de polaridades, esencia integrada, desarrollo holístico, integridad.

INTRODUCTION

Personality is understood as a distinctive way of thinking, feeling, and behaving. Personality embraces moods, attitudes, and opinions and is most clearly expressed in interactions with other people. It encompasses behavioral traits, both innate and learned, that set one person apart from another and may be seen in how people interact with their surroundings and social groups. The concept of personality has been defined in many ways, but as a psychological concept two main meanings have evolved. The first is related to the enduring distinctions that exist among individuals; in this sense, the study of personality is concerned with categorizing and understanding generally constant human psychological traits. The second meaning stresses the traits that unify all people and set psychological man apart from other species, it directs the personality theorist to search for those regularities among all people that define the nature of man as well as the factors that influence the course of lives (Holzman, 2022).

According to Robins and John (2021) these two themes—human nature and individual differences—ideally should not occupy separate and isolated branches of the field of personality psychology. Initial “grand theories” of personality, such as those advanced by Freud and others, incorporated propositions about ways in which human nature and individual differences are systematically linked. However, over the past few decades, the field of personality psychology has retreated somewhat from this grand goal. Most empirical research on personality psychology deals with individual differences, not with human nature, let alone with the links between human nature and individual differences.

Hogan and Sherman (2020) emphasize that modern personality psychology began in Vienna at the late 19th century, during an amazing outburst of human creativity that brought revolutions in architecture, music, physics, medicine, music, painting, literature, economics, and philosophy. Personality theory started then as a new version of psychiatry; it argued that mental illness was a function of intra-psychic dynamics which created the physical symptoms for which the patient sought treatment. The pioneers of this new way of conceptualizing psychic troubles included Pierre Janet, Sigmund Freud, Carl Jung, Alfred Adler, Otto Rank, Erik Erikson, and others.

Personality theory is developing rapidly, with the number of published papers mentioning the word “Personality” more than doubling between 2007 and 2017 (4844 vs. 10,836, according to the Web of Science). The field seems to be expanding in studies that investigate the social, developmental, behavioral, cognitive, neurobiological, and

other processes that underlie individual differences in well-known personality traits like the Five Factor Theory, sensation seeking, or behavioral avoidanc. This has led us to increase our understanding of these concepts and apply them in processes such as personality assessment for personnel selection and training, or the development of novel situational-judgement tests to assess leadership potential (Cooper, 2019).

It is important to note that the movement of a human being towards integrity is the main trend of evolution, both for the individual and for all mankind. Scientific and practical psychology describe this trend in terms of the integration of polarities. The development of the idea of the person as an integrated entity can be traced throughout the history of psychology. Scientific psychology finds the solution of the psychophysiological problems in the synthesis of the ideas put forward by scientists from different fields of science at different times. The essence of this solution is that the physiological and mental are seen as different sides of a single process. However, in order to see the scale and more accurately define it, it is necessary to understand that there are many more sides to this process than the psychophysiological problem describes. Physiological and mental processes are just two aspects of the many components of the life process. Those “filters” that help to highlight different aspects of this process are different methods of cognition, as well as different levels of description in the system of various sciences, operating units of different scales [1, p.245].

Each of the researchers of the structure and essence of a human implements his own approach to the problem of polarities in the model of personality described by him. For most models, the problem of polarities appears in the form of their conflict, while the model itself, as a rule, contains the aspect of resolving this conflict as a central one. Considering this, the goal of this work is to analyze the integration of polarities as a trend towards integrity of the personality. To accomplish this the theoretical-method of reconstruction, analysis of psychological, philosophical and other aspects of human activities given in the literature of the different periods, generalization as well as conceptual modeling, and interpretive-system-structural analysis were used as research methods.

DEVELOPMENT

People’s conceptions of the self, others, and the interconnectedness of the two are remarkably different across cultures. The fundamental character of an individual’s experience, including cognition, emotion, and motivation, can be influenced by these construals, and in many circumstances is determined by them. For instance, many Asian

cultures have unique ideas of individuality that emphasize how fundamentally connected people are to one another. The focus is on being considerate of others, blending in, and having a positive dependency with them. But, by taking care of oneself and identifying and expressing their special inner qualities, people also aim to keep their independence from others. These interpretations are far more potent than previously thought. This way theories of the self from both psychology and anthropology are integrated to define in detail the difference between a construal of the self as independent and a construal of the self as interdependent (Markus & Kitayama, 1991).

In his structural model (early 1920s), Freud describes three parts of the personality - Id, Self, and Superego (Id, Ego, Superego) (Gippenreiter, 2019, p. 104). Each of the three components of the structure of the psyche in this model plays its own role and performs its functions in relation to the basic drives of a person. Id is guided by the principle of pleasure and seeks directly and directly to satisfy any desire. Self is guided by the reality principle and satisfies attraction, taking into account the restraining forces from the external and internal world. Superego is a part of the psyche that requires a general renunciation of inclinations, being the forbidding beginning of the personality.

Self can be called an integrating component in this model. Self is an integral part of a complex systemic formation - the human psyche, which is in contact with external reality. It is associated with consciousness, but partially unconscious. Self includes self-awareness and protection functions, ensuring the safety and self-preservation of the organism. Following the reality principle, the Self performs the function of testing reality and making a differentiation between events in the mental plane and real events in the external world. To do this, the Self develops and uses cognitive and perceptual strategies, through which it performs the necessary actions in the outside world in its own interests.

These strategies are aimed at avoiding excessive incentives and accommodating moderate ones. This helps the Self to structure and direct behavior in an intelligent way so that instinctive needs are met in a safe and ecological way, both for the individual and for his environment. Thus, the Self is an element of the structure, which is the area of intellectual processes and problem solving.

In the K. Jung's three-level structure of the personality, consisting of the ego, personal and collective unconscious, the most significant component is the archetype of the Self (Jung, 1969, p. 194). The Self is the core of the personality, which organizes all other elements around itself in order to achieve their integration. A person's

feeling of harmony, internal unity and integrity is a sign of his integration and self-fulfillment. A well-known symbol of the archetype of the self, a self-fulfilled integrated personality since ancient times, is the mandala and its various variations - the halo of a saint, etc. Similar symbols are presented in a variety of cultures and religious directions.

They can manifest themselves and find their expression in myths, mystical experiences, and dreams. The process of integration, which is realized in the harmonization of all parts of the soul and the balance of all elements of the personality structure, Jung considered a complex process. In his opinion, it is impossible to achieve complete completion of this process. In addition, the archetype of "myself", the mature Self, does not manifest itself initially. This, of course, is an innate archetype, but for its manifestation in a particular personality, constant and persistent inner work is needed to harmonize all aspects of the soul, as well as to integrate the different roles of the person and the shadow aspects of the personality into a single integrity.

On the other hand, the central object of consideration of Erickson's theory is the Self, as an independent structural element of the psyche, responsible for the formation of human behavior and its social adaptation. Erickson's view of human nature and the structure of his personality is radically different from psychodynamic. Erickson perceives a person to be more conscious of his needs and more rational in making decisions and choosing forms of behavior.

The main channels of interaction between an individual and reality through the Self, as an autonomous system, ego psychology calls perception, thinking, attention and memory. Erickson considers as one of the most important functions of the Self the adaptive function, which ensures the process of development and realization of a person in the world. Erickson's goal was to study the ability of a person to adapt to the outside world and society and the ability to solve problems of a psychosocial nature. Erickson countered Freud's fatalistic approach about the social decline of humanity with the idea of the continuous development and improvement of the Self, and the constructive role of personal and social crises that encourage the individual to personal growth in the process of finding new solutions and overcoming life's problems (Erikson, 1968, p. 286).

Fromm considered the conflict between a person's desire for freedom and the desire for security to be the main one in human development. He saw the main way to resolve this conflict in the realization of positive freedom by the individual. Positive Fromm was called freedom, in which a person acts according to his inner nature, spontaneously, as opposed to social morality and prohibitions. In this

case, a person realizes his individuality and integrity, not coming into conflict with society, but being in unity with it. Fromm believed that the leading role in the development of positive freedom is played by love and work (Fromm, 1994, p. 208).

Allport considered the personality as an organized and self-regulating whole, providing unity, structure and integration of all aspects of personality. At the same time, he understood that in order to comprehend and explain the nature of the personality, it is logical to assume the existence of some organizing principle that collects different personal dispositions into one structural whole. He described this principle in his theory, giving it the name *proprium*. Allport describes *proprium* as an evolving, creative property of human nature, "realized as the most important and central" (Allport, 1968, p. 4). This is the self of the person, which covers all aspects of the personality and forms a sense of inner unity. *Proprium* is a category that describes a person as a whole, creating a unique personality.

John Kelly perceives a person in his integrity and development. He does not consider separated aspects of the individual's behavior in isolation from the general context and does not consider him a passive implementer of unconscious impulses and external stimuli. For Kelly, personality is a researcher driven by his future-oriented constructs (Kelly, 1955, p. 46). Kelly considers life as a movement or development, and man for him is one of the forms of this all-pervading movement.

In the context of the problem under study, the approaches of humanistic and Gestalt-psychology deserve special attention. If scientific psychology in the development of the doctrine of polarities relies more on the materialistic ideas of Aristotle, which affirm the primacy of a categorical and causal analysis of the phenomena of reality in order to comprehend their essence, then Gestalt psychology is closer to Eastern philosophical and spiritual teachings about the unity and integrity of the Universe. In this frame, the process of synthesis for comprehending the essence of objects and processes of reality is understood as more important and informative than the process of analysis. Eastern spiritual practices suggest that only rational thinking is not enough for a true understanding of the world. A person truly comprehends reality with his entire structure-using his entire sensory apparatus (Lebedeva & Ivanova, 2015, pp. 51–53).

For Perls, a person is a living organism, and the body, consciousness and soul are its aspects. Even if we assume the "structural integration" of these three concepts, this division is still artificial and does not correspond to reality. The reason for the division of a human being into soul,

body and consciousness is the fear and helplessness of a person before death (Perls, 2000, p. 16). All such hypotheses that have existed so far are dualistic, they try to find a connection between the soul and the body, in fact, artificially separating them. In reality, there is no such division. The unity of body and soul never ceased to exist (Perls, 2000, p. 17). Gestalt psychology claims that in our body there are many systems centered on a zero point, the displacement from which leads each of these systems to division into opposites (Perls, 2000, p. 9).

If in everyday understanding, as well as in psychoanalytic theory, the cause of neurosis is considered to be a conflict between individual needs and the requirements of the social environment ("trauma theory" in psychoanalysis), or an internal conflict of motives ("the theory of instincts"), then, according to F. Perls, an internal conflict contains the potential for personal growth, and not the basis of neurosis. He considered the basis of the development of neurosis not the conflict itself, but its premature reconciliation (Nemirinsky, 2023b). Perls proposed to use this potential difference between polarities by setting outward movement on this energy. To do this, he proposed to strengthen the polarities, manifesting each as much as possible, giving it space for realization. Starting to strengthen the manifested polarity, giving it energy for extreme manifestation, we bring its opposite out of the background (Lebedeva & Ivanova, 2015, p. 53).

This reconciliation is implemented according to the following scheme: there is an internal conflict, the functional reaction to which is that the most urgent need at the moment becomes a figure. To realize this need, a person performs some action in the external world. This action leads either to the realization of the need and internal confirmation of the correctness of the choice, or to the search for another action. With premature reconciliation, the individual does not deploy an external action, but remains in the space of an internal struggle, without making a choice and hanging between two polar figures of need (Freud, 2022).

Describing the work of a therapist aimed at the integration of polarities, O. Nemirinsky notes that "this principle is technically implemented in different ways in two situations." In the first case, the client exhibits either one or the other of two conflicting tendencies. The task of the therapist in this case is to support the fullest possible expression of these tendencies - to enable him to live both to the fullest. In another case, the client, being in a state of internal contradiction, seeks to achieve both at the same time. The therapist reinforces and maintains this inconsistency (Nemirinsky, 2023a).

E. Polster and M. Polster (1974) believed that in order to gain integrity and flexibility in adaptation, in the course of therapy it is necessary to enable the client to recognize the possibility of the existence of both opposites. To do this, without rejecting any of the roles, you need to create a context in which he can be associated with each of them. If contact can be established between the opposing parts, something completely new may be born. The ability to see the benefits of each of the opposite poles will allow you to direct energy to the search for resources to meet an urgent need, using it in the most effective way.

“The acting out of polarity is a dramatic embodiment of human character, but in this case we are talking about two opposite character traits – “angelic” and “devilish”; large and small, etc. Two opposite directions of action can also participate here - to stay and leave, to speak or be silent. Such a split within one person can lead to division or confusion, or it can bring you closer to achieving the desired goal - getting rid of uncertainty” (Polster & Polster, 1974). They also describe therapeutic methods for working with polarity. This is, first of all, support and frustration of resistance, as a therapeutic intervention in working with polarities. By whether the energy of the protest or response in the client rises, or the forces fall, you can navigate in which direction he is moving and accompany him in this. Another method is dialogue between the polar parts, where the client, by associating with each of the parts, can allow it to speak out loud and fully express its individuality.

Sleep work is one of the methods of integrating polarities, which F. Perls called “the royal road to integration”. The technique itself lies in the fact that the client, associating with the participants or images of the dream that are significant for him, gets the opportunity to live the situation here and now, while appropriating his unconsciously rejected parts. Perls believed that “all the different parts of sleep are fragments of our personality. Since our goal is to make ourselves a whole person, we must put the different fragments of the person together” (Perls, 2017, p. 72).

Therapeutic experience shows that integration occurs spontaneously when both polarities are accepted and experienced. Thus, the difference between Gestalt therapy and other areas of practical psychology is that it is aimed at living and appropriating both polarities by the client. This allows you to integrate polar qualities, restoring your integrity and preserving vital energy. The client becomes free in his choice and able to bear responsibility for it.

In contrast to theories that were carried away by a detailed analysis of individual events or personal qualities of an individual and manifestations of his behavior, while losing individuality, Maslow approached the study of a person as

a single, unique, organized whole. This Maslow's position is consonant with the principle of integrity in the Gestalt approach, where: “the whole is greater than and different from the sum of its parts”. If Freud considered the nature of man to be destructive, controlled by unconscious irrational forces, then Maslow held a completely different point of view. Supporters of the humanistic theory consider human nature to be constructive or at least neutral while destructive forces are the result of frustration, unmet basic needs. Within the potential of the human being lies enormous scope for positive growth and improvement.

Maslow described a particular lifestyle that he called the B-style, or meta-lifestyle. B-life can be defined as an effort or a jerk, when a person uses all his abilities to the fullest. Maslow characterizes God-life as the full realization of his abilities, and believes that a self-actualizing personality has the following qualities - composure, spontaneity, creativity, openness to new experiences. Only such a way of life leads to the maturity and flowering of individuality and can give a feeling of fullness and happiness of human existence. Maslow considered the highest stage of B-reality to be a peculiar state of completeness, in which there are no aspirations, goals, needs and desires - as if a person has crossed the boundaries of ordinary needs and aspirations in life. This stage is also characterized by a lack of effort - a person no longer does anything to achieve something, does not seek to avoid pain or discomfort. “He only is. Joy is achieved, which means a temporary end to the pursuit of joy” (Maslow, 1966, p. 103).

Unlike orthodox Christianity, which affirmed the irrational - sinful and destructive nature of man, as well as from Freud, representing him as a selfish and weak-willed executor of unconscious instinctive urges and impulses, Carl Rogers saw the innermost nature of a human being as realistic and constructive. According to him, a person is a rational being, striving for inner harmony, focused on revealing his innate potential, on moving towards a goal, on self-development. Rogers himself had a deep sense of respect for human nature. And behind it, the whole humanistic trend claims that all of humanity has a natural tendency to move towards independence, social responsibility, creativity and maturity. Thus, both Rogers and Maslow believed in the constructive nature of man and in the fact that people have unlimited possibilities for self-improvement.

In terms of the theory of motivation, the only construct developed by Rogers was his hypothesis that human behavior is shaped and regulated by some kind of unifying motive, which he called the tendency to actualization. It represents “the tendency inherent in the organism to develop all its faculties in order to preserve and reveal the personality” (Rogers, 1959, p. 196). Thus, under the

tendency to actualization, Rogers understood the preservation and disclosure of the best qualities of the personality inherent in it by nature.

CONCLUSIONS

The "I" is a central concept in psychology and refers to the subjective experience of being a conscious and autonomous person. Personality, on the other hand, refers to the patterns of thinking, feeling, and behavior that characterize a person and that are maintained over time and in different situations. Personality is closely related to the self, since the self is the entity that experiences, interprets, and makes sense of experiences, including emotional experiences and social situations. Personality influences how the self-processes, interprets, and responds to these experiences. Personality can also be viewed as the outward expression of the self, since the patterns of thought, feeling, and behavior that constitute personality are visible to others. Thus, the way a person presents himself to the world is influenced by his personality, which in turn is an expression of his self. Finally, an important category of the phenomenological approach is the holistic point of view on personality - the idea that a person behaves as a whole organism, and this unity cannot be reduced to its constituent parts. This way the assertion of the integrity and uniqueness of man, associated with the emphasis on the importance of the self-concept, had and still has a huge impact on modern theory and practice of psychology.

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