

## **Abstract**

With the uncontained growth in the number of individuals facing severe situations that are hinged to their past experiences most of them have found themselves leading unhappy lives. Most of these miseries are brought about by wars, poverty and political unrest in their native homeland forcing them to seek solace in a foreign land. This completely ruins the lives of individual in that it creates a gateway for a series of problems. This people we have to be faced with issues of race and ethnicity, discrimination, low self esteem and failed relationships. People run out of courage to face the realities of life head on in these situations. In the light of all these issues, a theory called choice theory was developed in relation to the reality therapy.

Reality therapy plays a major role in training individuals on how to overcome the psychological needs. Reality therapy maintains that we have the power to control our behavior. It also assists people to identify what they need and be in a position to evaluate whether they are able to realize them realistically. It's then followed by developing a workable plan to assist them take control over their lives as they try to fulfill their needs in a more realistic manner. The end result of reality therapy is increased strength, self confidence, better relationships and an individual based plan for a more comfortable life. The reality therapy has played a major role in assisting a list of individuals such as immigrants, physically challenged among others. It has help people not to be victims of external forces but hustle their ways to satisfy these needs. For these reasons the paper set out to review different literature on the various benefits of utilizing reality therapy.

## **Introduction**

The paper sets out to look at the importance of reality therapy in working with immigrants, perspective on the choice theory, how it's utilized in a group and the benefit of utilizing reality therapy with people with disabilities. Reality therapy is a concept that came into being in the year 1960. To many it was perceived as the dose to reality but it proved to be a more people-centered and people friendly. Like any other approach to psychology, reality therapy maintains that people have definite basic needs. The needs are classified into five different categories which include power, love and belonging, freedom, fun and survival. The key principle of the reality therapy is that individuals at all times strive to meet their needs. Individuals tend not to act successfully. So when life is uncomfortable, we are troubled or in difficulty we need to check if our psychological needs such as freedom, belonging, fun and power are meet.

In essence individuals should be in charge of their own behavior and choices they make in life. The purpose of the reality therapy is to assist individuals connect with realities of their lives. Many problems that are faced by individuals are as a result of failure to concur with the reality. Emotions tend to mislead these individuals concerning the situations of their lives. It is through reality therapy that these people are assisted to have the right perception about their situations. For individuals to accept the situations of their lives it is important for them to be accountable of their behavior. Reality therapy will mainly focus on training individuals on how to mainly focus on the present moment because the future and the past have little role to play in our quest to get rid of problems. It is only when an individual lives in the present moment that he/she can transform his/her problems for the best.

## **Importance of Reality Therapy in working with immigrants**

According to an Oxford dictionary, an immigrant is a person who moves to other country and permanently settles there. Settling in a foreign country may not be as interesting as we may think simply because an individual will have to cope with loneliness, self esteem, and lack of belonging and establishment of friends. All these may cloud the psychology of an individual leading to frustration and eventually problems may grip in slowly by slowly. Immigrants are believed to have psychological needs that they strive to fulfill. This is captured by the fact that they decided to relent their native homeland for search of better things in a foreign land. Many immigrants arise due to poverty and political unrest in their native country.

Many immigrants in the world face racial and ethnic problems. Race and ethnicity comes along with brutal discrimination, segregation, marginalization, extermination and enveloping unfairness. Ethnicity in some cases may correlate with social issues such as poverty which adds up to anxiety, stress and restrictive social life. Reality therapy conducted in line with these issues will help the immigrants relate well with others, pick up their self esteem, and hang on to a sense of self respect and independence.

A huge number of immigrants usually are victims of organized fights in their homeland and despite migration they may be still in an unsound environment (Rousseau and Drapeau, 2004). Despite struggling with hard times, they generally make limited request for assistance from psychotherapists. The therapists normally have a lot of problems in coming up with intervention and prevention measures to assist the new arrivals compact with their long-ago experiences and face the new realities (Hodes, 2000). Therapists resort to artistic works so as to help the immigrants detail identity issues and assemble meaning around the occurrence.

A program known as Sand Play developed by Dora (1973) aimed at improving the social adjustment through play for the immigrant's children. It has also been employed at the individual therapy level (Wohl and Hightower, 2001). This technique has helped a lot of immigrants fight their past painful and miserable experiences.

## **Choice theory**

Choice theory was developed by William Glasser. William in the theory posits that the key factor in our life is behavior and the individual behavior rests in five needs that depict those of Abraham Maslow hierarchy of needs. The theory maintains that behavior is driven by needs that include; survival (basic needs), love and belonging, power or significance, Freedom or responsibility and fun or learning.

The choice theory hypothesizes the being of a "Quality World." The saying "Quality World," symbolizes a person's entire attitude and perceptive of the world just about them as it relations to beliefs, possessions, people, among others. Beginning from birth and abiding throughout our lives we position those individuals who are significant to us, things we accolade, and value systems such as religion, cultural, among others within the confines of our "Quality World." Glasser also hypothesized a "Comparing Place" where we put side by side and contrast our true world occurrences adjacent to our Quality World viewpoint (Budman & Gurman, 2002).

Behavior according to Glasser's is comprised of four components that include thinking, acting, physiology and feeling. An individual have choice or control over thinking and acting and slight ability to straightforwardly choose the other two components that is physiology and feeling. All the

four components are intertwined since what we make with our acting and thinking greatly affects our physiology and feeling.

The theory also maintained that non functional relationships with individuals who are significant in our lives like parents, spouses, children among others are the source of our distress. The symptoms of distress are normally depicted by mental illness though they are variable. Therefore, the choice theory through the reality therapy focus on assisting the clients makes satisfactory choices.

Choice theory is premised on ten axioms which include; we have the capacity to control our behaviors, we can only give information to others, relationship problems as a psychological problem are long lasting, problems in our relationships are part of our present life, the past defines our present situations but we can only counter the situations now and plan for a better future, needs can only be satisfied through satisfaction of Quality World needs, we have to behave, behavior is four fold: acting, thinking, feeling and physiology, we choose our behavior and behavior is selected by verbs. The theory also encourages classroom meetings as a way of communicating and solving the problems.

The choice theory entails processes such as involvement, current behaviour and evaluating your behavior, planning possible behavior, commitment to plan and no excuses, no punishment, never gives up. These are looked at below;

**Involvement;** the most important factor in reality therapy is the establishment of a relationship between the client and the therapist. In case of absence of a relationship between the two the rest of the steps will be ineffective. This can also be referred to as mounting a "good" bond with the client.

In acute cases, the therapist will be on the lead as the one trying to withstand for a long time the individual's behavior with an aim of establishing a relationship. This will demand a lot of patience from the therapist side. In additional cases, the individual forms part of several relationships, but just desires a relationship with a more constantly helpful emphasis (Baldwin, 2000).

**Current behavior and evaluating your behavior;** The psychotherapist should at all time ensure that the client focus only on current behavior and not past experiences. The client is asked by the therapist to make a significant judgment concerning his or her current behavior. In several cases the therapist must push the individual to look at the effects of his or her conduct, but generally it is relevant if the client makes the judgment other than the therapist.

**Planning possible behavior;** the client should plan behavior that is expected to work better. The client is expected to require some proposals and without delay from the therapist, but it is of great help if the client himself generates the plan. It is significant that the first steps be minute enough that the individual is almost definite to achieve something, in order to assemble confidence.

In numerous cases, the individual's problem is the outcome of an awful relationship with somebody, and given that the client can't alter anyone else's conduct, the therapist will look into those things that the client can do independently. The client could be worried that the therapist will have gain of this and not give back, but in nearly all cases an adjustment in conduct will ease the nervousness sufficient that the new individual also backs off. If this does not happen, the client will be encouraged by the therapist to have more positive relationships with extra people. The relationship between the client and the therapist will lead the client to establishment of other relationships.

**Commitment to the plan** The individuals must make an assurance to undertake the plan. This is of essence because a number of individuals tend not to do the things for themselves but for the therapist. For this case commitment should go down on paper.

**No Excuses, No Punishment, Never Give Up;** normally in circumstance where punishment do not exist there should be no room for excuses. The therapist maintains that the client should either undertake the plan, or develop a more feasible plan. When the therapist sustains a healthy association with the client, it is sometimes difficult to refuse to undertake a plan that the client has settled would be viable. If the plan is much motivated for the individuals' current abilities, then the therapist should have to work out a different plan with the client.

How Reality Therapy is utilized in working with groups

Reality therapy trains people on how to overcome their problems. It does so by assisting people to identify what they need and be in a position to evaluate whether they are able to realize them realistically. It's then followed by developing a workable plan to assist them take control over their lives as they try to fulfill their needs in a more realistic manner. The end result of reality therapy is increased strength, self confidence, better relationships and an individual based plan for a more comfortable life (Ayella, 1998).

### **The benefit of utilizing reality therapy with people with disabilities**

For individuals with physical limitations and mental difficulties, virtual reality therapy provides a feeling of being in charge of the environment (Rothbaum, 1999). Many patients in particular those with physical illness or disabilities go through a feeling of acquired helplessness which relates to an individuals sense of control. The individuals lack the confidence that they are in a position to take control over their bodies and destinies. The virtual reality therapy will provide these individuals with sense of control to enable them build their own realities in the practical environment (Glantz et al. 1997). The individuals through the power they have experienced in the virtual world they can be able to increase their perceived powers in the real world. Apart from sense of control, the individuals can also gain empowerment approaches that can play a great role in the real environment.

According to Rothbaum and Hodges (2003), virtual reality therapy is a cost effective and efficient treatment of mental illness for example anxiety disorders. Some of these cases cannot be treated in hospitals but they can only be gotten rid of through virtual environment. Virtual reality therapy is safe as compared to the real environment and it be utilized with a high level of control. It also timesaving since the therapist can do it at his or her office.

### **Conclusion**

Reality therapy has stands out to be the most convenient and unique way of assisting individuals facing psychological needs with a way out. It is therefore recommendable that individuals facing problems that lower their self esteem and deprive them of the sense of control should seek reality therapy. In addition, the therapy should not be confined only to physically challenged and mentally ill individuals but to all those who fear to face the realities of life. The development of virtual reality therapy is a development that has far reaching benefits.