The Development of Additional Propositions of the Actualising Tendency: Person-Centred Theory and Practice

Amanda McGarry[1]
Liverpool, UK

Abstract. *This paper discusses the actualising tendency in order to clarify meaning within Rogers' original presentation of the concept, and outline additional propositions to advance contemporary thinking regarding theory. The paper aims to discuss the research which led to the development of the new propositions and recount the fundamental theoretical underpinnings for each proposition. Possible applications for practice are then discussed alongside opportunities to further this research. The additional propositions are consistent with the guiding principles of person-centred theory and demonstrate the potential for contemporary reinterpretations of Rogers' original work for person-centred therapists.*

Introduction

The actualising tendency is one of the fundamental tenets of the person-centred approach. Rogers first introduced the theory of actualisation in his book Client Centred Therapy (Rogers, 1951), where he presented the nineteen propositions of person-centred theory, of which the actualising tendency was number four. Finke (2002) highlights how essential this concept is for many practitioners, largely defining their attitude to the therapeutic process. With Bazzano (2012) stating 'trust in the actualising tendency is akin to faith in the unknown' (Bazzano, 2012, p. 140) further highlighting that 'by rooting the person-centred approach on a fundamental trust in the actualising tendency, Rogers firmly inscribed person-centred philosophy within the phenomenological tradition.' (Bazzano, 2012, p. 142).

The purpose of the study which this paper is derived from was to consider the relationship between suicide and actualisation within person-centred theory, while additionally exploring the theoretical underpinnings of the actualising tendency itself and how it sets out to explain what Rogers (1951) termed constructive and destructive behaviour. Rogers (1951) stated

---

[1] Amanda McGarry is a person-centred counsellor working in private practice. Alongside this, Amanda is a Visiting Lecturer at the University of Chester and is reading for her PhD. She can be contacted at amanda@amandamcgarrycounselling.co.uk.

'The organism has one basic tendency and striving - to actualise, maintain and enhance the experiencing organism' (Rogers, 1951, p. 487) thus centring the actualising tendency as constructive. Current theoretical commentary discusses if destructive behaviours, such as one breaking the law, can amount to an individual actualising (Brodley, 1999). However, research that discusses whether suicide can be included within the scope of destructive behaviours is limited with Simanowitz and Pearce (2003) stating:

> *'There are, of course, examples of people who cannot escape from self-destructive behaviours, which often means they cannot become clients or benefit from counselling. Sometimes, sadly for these people, dying is the alternative to actualizing.'* (Simanowitz & Pearce, 2003, p. 52).

In order to understand this area further a research sample of suicide notes, taken from Schneidman and Farberow (1957) and Etkind (1997), were analysed, firstly using stanza analysis followed by a narrative analysis, with a focus on understanding why individuals had chosen to end their life. On completion of the data analysis it was noted that proposition four on its own did not provide enough information for the narratives to be analysed in relation to it. Therefore, following a review of the literature on the actualising tendency, additional propositions were developed to encompass more of its fundamental principles and the notes were further analysed on that basis; this paper presents those additional propositions.

Firstly, this paper will explore the background to this research and offer a review of the literature on the actualising tendency, including contemporary developments. An overview of the original study follows explaining how the additional propositions were developed; these additional propositions are then presented. Lastly, potential applications to counselling practice are considered, followed by opportunities for further research.

Background and Review of the Literature

Rogers (1951) highlighted that the actualising tendency was the sole motivational concept and formed part of the basic functioning of an organism. Others have since described this tendency as being either fundamental (McMillan, 2004), there to protect life (Merry, 2002), or ever present within human experiences (Brown, 2015). Finke (2002) highlights the essential nature of the concept in defining many practitioners' attitudes toward the therapeutic process.

Through reading Rogers' work on the actualising tendency, it is clear that definitions and terminology have changed over time. Indeed, Ford and Maas (1989) highlight inconsistency in the ways the actualising

tendency is defined, associating this with a lack of understanding of historical shifts in terminology. They outline the changes made between Rogers' (1951) conceptualisation of the actualising tendency, which was termed self-actualisation, and Rogers' (1959) later explanation which now includes the actualising tendency and self-actualisation. Rogers (1959) stated that self-actualisation is a secondary tendency, which follows the development of self and exists to maintain that self. Unlike the actualising tendency, self-actualisation does not necessarily indicate that an individual is functioning at an optimum level, instead it suggests that, regardless of wellbeing, the individual is in the process of self-actualisation, in order to maintain the self (Ford & Maas, 1989). Bozarth and Brodley (1991) explain this further, stating actualisation of the secondary tendency, can become discrepant from organisms, in unfavourable conditions. Under favourable conditions the actualising tendency and the sub-system of self-actualisation are harmonious (Bozarth & Brodley, 1991).

Rogers (1980) states in relation to life's directional process,

'We can say that there is in every organism, at whatever level, an underlying flow of movement toward constructive fulfilment of its inherent possibilities' (Rogers, 1980, p. 117).

Rogers (1980) clarifies that this is present in all living things, including human beings. Throughout his work on the actualising tendency he offers examples within nature, including potatoes (Rogers, 1951), sea urchins (Rogers, 1980), seaweed and dinosaurs (Rogers, 1963) (although he recognised the latter were part of their own downfall). Commentators such as Finke (2002), state that these biological examples of self-regulation are useful for illustrative purposes but should only be viewed as metaphorical. However, for Rogers (1980) the organism, including human beings, can be trusted to behave in a way that is directional towards the maintenance, enhancement and reproduction of the organism.

Rogers (2004) outlined some of the behaviours of his clients which he believed, were a result of the actualising tendency. These behaviours included recognising their true self and moving away from meeting expectations, 'oughts' and pleasing others (Rogers, 2004). Instead they moved toward self-direction, complexity, openness to experiences and trusting the self (Rogers, 2004). Rogers (1989) summarised these behaviours as the ability to simultaneously experience life and experience feelings without the need to block them from awareness. On this basis, individuals can act on what they feel is right and, by trusting this, the resulting behaviours will be satisfying ones (Rogers, 1989).

Rogers (1962) highlights his belief that the behaviour demonstrated by human beings is rational and this behaviour, in its subtle and complex way, enables the organism to move toward its chosen goal. The actualising tendency is, therefore, selective, and also constructive inasmuch it 'does not actualise its potentiality for self-destruction, nor its ability to bear pain' (Rogers, 1963, p. 6). It is stressed that only in perverse or unusual circumstances is the potential for these aspects actualised (Rogers, 1963). Rogers did not, however, go on to clarify what perverse or unusual circumstances might be.

Contemporary Developments Of The Actualising Tendency

Illogicality Of Conditions Of Worth

Based on these views proposed by Rogers (1962, 1963, 2004), it is suggested that self-actualisation, not actualisation, is the only explanation for suicide and other 'destructive' behaviours. However, Merry (2008) highlighted through his comments on the illogicality of conditions of worth how an apparent destructive behaviour can, in fact, be constructive if it protects the individual from damage or hurt.

Merry (2008) stated that the formation and presence of conditions of worth are indicative of an individual's incongruence. However, as the actualising tendency is the sole motivational tendency, these conditions must be an expression of this (Merry, 2008). This logic seems inconsistent, particularly given that conditions of worth are often viewed as having a destructive impact on the individual (Merry, 2008). But, if conditions of worth can be viewed as acting to benefit the individual this 'inconsistency' is resolved (Merry, 2008). For example, one might supress anger as an unacceptable characteristic that may lead to a withdrawal of love from others. The individual's potential to express their feelings in that moment was dismissed. However, the higher risk of not being loved was neutralised by the behaviour resulting from the specific condition of worth (Merry, 2008). This thinking is supported by Brodley (2019) who states that one assumption or belief of the person-centred approach is the 'belief that persons are realising and protecting themselves as best they can at any given time and under the internal and external circumstances that exist in that time' (Brodley, 2019, p. 40).

Merry's (2008) thoughts support those of Brodley (1999), who discusses how behaviour, which could be considered evil, is still being constructively directed by the actualising tendency. Brodley (1999) provides an example of so-called honour killings of females within some cultures. In such circumstances the individual's conditions of worth direct

the behaviour away from value of right to life, in order to maintain love and social standing within their community (Brodley, 1999). Scholars such as Kim (2018), later discussed the importance of recognising specific and unique cultural influences that may impact an individual within circumstances, like those demonstrated by Brodley (1999). Brodley (1999) explains that this behaviour may not be seen as constructive within many cultures, however, recognising the actualising tendency's ability to maintain and defend the self, Merry (2008) provides an explanation for seemingly destructive behaviours within person-centred theory and the conditions of worth. In relation to Rogers' (1963) thoughts on the constructive nature of the actualising tendency it can be assumed that some instances of other seemingly destructive behaviours such as suicide may have the potential to be viewed as constructive by the individual.

Pluralistic Perspectives

Another relevant development in person-centred theory, in relation to the actualising tendency, is Cooper's (1999) proposed model of plurality, which seeks to explain the seemingly different 'selves' clients discuss during counselling. Cooper (1999) theorises that when an individual is presented with an experience which is discrepant with their self-concept, they may either deny or distort it, as Rogers' (1959) theory would state, or they create a new self-concept which allows this experience into awareness. For example, developing a self-concept that allows for anger rather than the calm state they usually experience (Cooper, 2013).

Alternatively, recognising Cooper's (1999) work on plurality and Warner's (2000) work on disassociated process, Mearns and Thorne (2000) discuss their theory of configurations of self, which seeks to explain their clients' tendency to label different parts of themselves. Merry (2004) explains that these configurations allow the individual to be flexible to their circumstances, and to combine different values, attitudes and personal characteristics depending on the appropriateness of the context whilst maintaining a consistent self (Merry, 2004). Ultimately, within these different configurations, Mearns and Thorne (2000) recognise that some have a tendency for growth and others do not.

Despite Mearns and Thorne's (2000) recognition of Cooper's (1999) plurality theory, Merry (2008) believed that the two were distinctly different in that Mearns and Thorne's (2000) configurations of self does not involve an individual having multiple self-concepts. This is more in line with personality theory within person-centred theory, which highlights the importance of a single self (Merry, 2008). Cooper (2013) however, states that Rogers (1959) was not against the idea of a plural self, with Merry (2008) concluding that 'the various 'configurations of self' demonstrate the

creativity and flexibility of actualisation' (Merry, 2008, p. 52) therefore different qualities can be called upon by the self in different situations. And, as previously mentioned, if the actualising tendency seeks to actualise the individual's potential of self-defence then the theory of the actualising tendency is consistent and logical and the theorising of multiple self-concepts is not required (Merry, 2008). Based on Merry's (2008) conclusions, it is possible to suggest that seemingly destructive behaviours such as suicide, are an example of an individual actualising their self-defences within a specific configuration of self.

The Actualising Process

Mearns and Thorne (2000) point out that Rogers' (1959) explanation for disturbance within the individual occurred because the actualising tendency conflicted with self-actualisation or, as Merry (2008) explains, with itself, as self-actualisation is a sub-system of the actualising tendency. Mearns and Thorne (2000) propose that disturbance is conflict between actualisation and environmental factors; influences that are not simply parental introjections, although they may play a part (Mearns & Thorne, 2000). This disturbance, known as 'social mediation', is termed the actualising process (Mearns and Thorne, 2000) and its importance is highlighted by Mearns (2002), who recognised it through a new proposition within a person-centred theory of self.

Mearns and Thorne (2013) recognise Brodley's (1999) statement that the actualising tendency is a pro-social tendency and cite Rogers' (1951) minimal comments on socialisation as reasons for revisiting this element of person-centred theory. They state that the growth process is only able to progress following recognition of the impact of social contexts, such as having others in one's life (Mearns & Thorne, 2013). These contexts may provide the basis for growth in future, and therefore would be recognised in the moments of potential growth (Mearns & Thorne, 2013). An example from a client might be the opportunity to take a new job which would involve a family move to another country. The actualising process seems to provide a construct with which to understand the potential conflict between the actualising tendency and the client's environment.

This proposition situates the individual within their environment and recognises how the individual both shapes their environment, and how they are shaped by it (Merry, 2008). It also recognises how the actualising tendency may operate to protect the individual from hurt by prioritising the social space in which it occupies (Merry, 2008). However, Merry (2008) emphasises Mearns and Thorne's (2000) language in relation to the actualising tendency whereby they refer to the actualising process allowing

the actualising tendency to express itself to a certain degree. Merry (2008) states that the actualising tendency does not have the ability to operate at a certain degree, it is only able to operate fully at all times (Merry, 2008). The existence of any inhabitation is thereby only further evidence of the actualising tendency as it works to not only enhance the self but also to defend it (Merry, 2008). This thinking may provide another perspective with regards to risk and the actualising tendency.

Overview of the study

The focus of the research was to explore whether suicide could ever be an expression of the actualising tendency or whether, as a form of 'destructive' behaviour, it could only be viewed as self-actualisation. A further objective of the study was to gain an understanding of how this could affect the counsellor's work in relation to ethics, with a particular focus on the principles of autonomy and non-maleficence within the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy (BACP) (2018) Ethical Framework. This paper is focused on the development of the additional propositions which developed from this research.

Development of the additional propositions

When analysing the data, it was concluded that the proposition on the actualising tendency did not provide enough clarity in relation to the narratives identified within each suicide note. In addition, it was also noted that the original presentation of the actualising tendency did not encompass all of the fundamental principles and limited the researcher's ability to establish whether the explanations for an action, suicide being one example, could have the potential to be considered an expression of the actualising tendency or not. More precisely, Finke (2002) highlighted the need for the actualising tendency to be operationalised in order for it to '…be useful with for practical applications…' (Finke, 2002 p. 29). The experience of conducting the research informing this article seemed one such practical application. Therefore, through interpretation of the theory, possible additional propositions were suggested, and each completed suicide note was analysed based on these propositions, which enabled some conclusions to be drawn.

The Propositions

The following framework is based on the fundamental principles of the person-centred approach and are explained as follows:

1. The chosen action is self-directed. Rogers (1959) highlighted that a characteristic of the actualising tendency was the individual

'moving towards autonomy away from heteronomy, or control by external forces' (Rogers, 1959, p. 196).

2. Within the individual's perceptual field, the action can be viewed as constructive.
    a. The action maintains or enhances the organism (up to the point of death if appropriate)
    b. The action may have a positive overall evolutionary impact
    c. The action could be viewed as problem solving in nature

    This proposition as a whole underlines the phenomenological positioning of the actualising tendency and allows for the acknowledgement of individual cultural factors/influences such as gender, race, religion, and community (Kim, 2018). Alongside this, part a) is in line with Rogers' (1951) propositions of his theory of personality. In addition, as the actualising tendency is the primary tendency, Brodley (1999) and Merry's (2008) conclusions - regarding behaviour that acts in self-defence or to maintain the self being an expression of the actualising tendency rather than self-actualisation - is also applied here. Part b) refers to Rogers' (1980) statement that the actualising tendency serves to reproduce the organism. The inclusion of the positive evolutionary aspect accounts for this reproductive element in a similar way to perhaps those who choose not to reproduce for the greater good of the human population. It is a constructive decision for evolution to not reproduce or affect the population that remains in a detrimental way. Part c) references Brodley's (1999) point regarding trusting in an individual's actualising tendency to discover constructive ways to solve their problems.

3. Any action which actualises the potential to bear pain or act self-destructively is under perverse or unusual circumstances.
    Rogers (1963) stated in reference to the organism, '…nor does it actualise its potentiality for self-destruction, nor its ability to bear pain. Only under unusual or perverse circumstances do these potentialities become actualised.' (Rogers, 1963, p. 6). Rogers (1963) does not define or explore what these circumstances might be, however in line with the phenomenological basis of person-centred theory it is reasonable to suggest this is viewed from within the individual's perceptual field.

4. Receiving the core conditions in therapy or otherwise would not have affected the individual's action. Rogers (1980) highlighted that by providing the core conditions a positive directional tendency

would occur. If, by receiving the core conditions, the individual's chosen course of action may have been affected, this may provide an insight into whether the chosen course was self-actualising rather than actualising.

As previously stated, the development of the above propositions enabled the research informing this article, which explored the relationship between suicide and the actualising tendency, to continue. Without them the research would not have been able to come to any informed conclusions, no matter how tentative. The propositions provided a framework within person-centred theory to engage with the stories told by individuals that allowed for a greater understanding within the fundamental principles of the person-centred approach. Although this research was based on the act of suicide, there may be opportunities to use these propositions to understand other behaviours or actions, both seemingly destructive and constructive.

Potential Application To Counselling Practice

Reeves (2015) highlighted the importance of using supervision when dealing with risk, enabling the client work to be explored fully. Using the additional propositions of the actualising tendency may provide a structure within person-centred theory in which to discuss the client. Additional models of suicide or recognition of specific individual risk factors could potentially be used alongside this, but the use of the propositions may offer support in maintaining a person-centred supervisory conversation, if so desired. In a similar way they may be useful to discuss any behaviour or actions that initially appear destructive not just those related to risk, such as the example of so-called honour killings highlighted earlier (Brodley, 1999). Brodley (1999) discussed how behaviour which may be considered to be destructive or evil is still being driven by the actualising tendency and is therefore essentially constructive. In addition, there was a recognition of the perceptual field and culture in the case of honour killings, when understanding how this behaviour could be considered constructive (Brodley, 1999, Kim, 2018). Despite the moral position that many counsellors may take in regard to this example, the application to the actualising tendency is still valid with Brodley (1999) stating 'Many people are unlikely to recognise the constructive drive or pro social tendencies in 'honour killings'. Nevertheless, wrong as this practice seems to many of us, the behaviour in part expresses the actualising tendency and pro social human nature' (Brodley, 1999, p. 114-115).

The BACP Ethical Framework (2018) is clear that confidentiality can be broken if permitted by the client or by law. What is less clear, is the criteria to establish if the client's current risk is 'enough' in order to do so.

Principles of autonomy and non-maleficence within the BACP Ethical Framework (2018) may be particularly relevant here. The first highlights the client's right to self-govern and the latter the counsellor's commitment to avoiding harm to the client. The practitioner has the task of making the decision that strikes the 'best' balance between these principles. A supervisory discussion utilising the propositions as outlined above may enable a clearer understanding in relation to these principles, before a decision to break confidentiality is made.

In this regard, Reeves and Mintz (2001) discussed the possible impact of counsellors' views about suicide on client work with regard to confidentiality, noting that counsellors who believed in a client's right to make an individual choice felt greater uncertainty about when to break confidentiality, and those who were clearer on breaking confidentiality were more likely to personally disagree with suicide. Potential use of the newly proposed propositions of the actualising tendency may enable continued development of understanding. It may also potentially provide the counsellor with increased clarity regarding their own beliefs and enable them to separate these from the views and beliefs of the client.

Furthermore, Reeves (2018) notes the willingness of practitioners to favour the use of questionnaires to assess risk rather than verbal communication. It may be possible that the newly formulated propositions would allow practitioners to understand this behaviour the same way they would any other, given the lack of support either philosophically or empirically that the act of suicide is principally different from any other act (Szasz, 1986). Reeves (2018) acknowledged the desire, as a practitioner, to want clients to be safe, but also acknowledges how tools aimed at predicting risk, can be inaccurate (see for example Large, Kaneson, Myles, Myles, Gunaratne & Ryan, 2016). This reinforces the importance of dialogue between counsellor and client. It also underscores that having a specific person-centred 'tool' (such as the newly formulated propositions) for person-centred counsellors to consider with regard to their clients, would perhaps bolster them to continue discussing the nature of risk.

One example from the study is the following suicide note:

Dear Mary. You have been the best wife a man could want and I still love you after fifteen years.

Don't think to badly of me for taking this way out but I can't take much more pain and sickness also I may get to much pain or so weak that I can't go this easy way. With all my love forever-

Bill

(Schneidman and Farberow. 1957, p. 203)

It seems that what Bill is saying is that his decision to end his life is a self-directed one (Proposition One), and within his perceptual field it could be considered constructive as he would no longer be in unbearable pain (Proposition Two). From the researcher's interpretation, it was reasonable to say that Bill was in perverse or unusual circumstances given the context explained in his note, (Proposition Three) and it did not seem that this would be affected whether he received the core conditions, in therapy, or elsewhere (Proposition Four) (McGarry, 2018).

Overall, the propositions of the actualising tendency outlined within this research, which include recognising the individual's perceptual field, may provide additional support to a counsellor when dealing with material that is particularly challenging. Clearly, further research is required to attest to any of the tentative assertions made here.

Opportunities For Further Research

This research revealed many areas for further study in relation to both theory and practice. From a theoretical perspective, there appears to be a lack of commentary on what can be deemed as unusual or perverse conditions, in relation to the actualising tendency (Rogers, 1959). It may be useful to have more commentary on this to support counsellors in their client work. There also seems to be a lack of discussion about suicide as it relates to person-centred theory and practice. The language of 'destructive behaviour' (Rogers, 1959), of which suicide may be considered, may be based on the judgement of others rather than the client. If this is the case, it would seem to contravene the fundamental principles of the person-centred approach. However, if all behaviour is indeed directed by the actualising tendency (Merry, 2008), then given its goal orientated nature, the words constructive or destructive may not be necessary.

In terms of the definition of the actualising tendency, it may be timely to revisit the fundamental element of the theory related to evolution. It seems reasonable to state that individuals have far more choices, regarding both life and death, at this juncture in history than during the 1950s when the theory was developed. For example, with regards to having children more individuals now choose to remain childfree for a variety of reasons (BBC, 2010), and those who travel abroad to receive assistance to die demonstrate more agency over their death (The Guardian, 2009). Both decisions on the surface, would appear to be 'anti-evolutionary'. Therefore, further research may be needed in order to understand these choices within the boundaries of the theory of the actualising tendency.

Finally, in relation to risk, from a practice perspective there may be an opportunity to understand whether those working from the person-centred perspective would be more willing to continue with dialogue rather than moving to risk assessments, as pointed out by Reeves (2018). If person-centred practitioners are able to utilise clarified propositions of the actualising tendency, such as those developed within this research, they may provide a framework for dialogue with clients that is in line with a more relational approach. If risk assessments continue to be as inaccurate as they currently are (Large et al, 2016), and government policy, such as that in the UK, continues to centre around a prevent agenda (Department for Health, 2012), it seems the responsibility on counsellors to work 'well' with risk will continue.

Conclusion

Brodley (2019) explained that Rogers envisioned his theory would be tried and tested and one that '…could be used as a basis for further research on psychotherapy.' (Brodley, 2019, p. 37). It is on this basis that the presentation of the additional propositions of the actualising tendency are offered. They were developed from the ground up, based firstly on the fundamental principles of person-centred theory and then advanced with contemporary research-based thinking focussed on 'destructive behaviour' as identified by Rogers (1959), namely suicide. These propositions offer a meaningful contribution to person-centred theory and practice and an additional starting point for further research on psychotherapy.

Acknowledgments

References

Bazzano, M. (2012). Immanent vitality: Reflections on the actualising tendency. *Person-Centred and Experiential Psychotherapies, 11*(2), 137-151. 10.1080/14779757.2012.672930

BBC (2010). *The women who choose not to be mothers*. Retrieved from http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-10786279.

British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (2018). *Ethical Framework for Good Practice in Counselling and Psychotherapy*. Rugby, United Kingdom: British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy.

Bozarth, J. D., & Brodley, B. T. (1991). Actualization: A functional concept in client-centred therapy. *Handbook of Self-Actualisation, 6*(5), 45-60. Retrieved from http://bibliotecaparalapersona-epimeleia.com/greenstone/collect/ecritos2/index/assoc/HASH017d.dir/doc.pdf

Brodley, B. T. (1999). The actualizing tendency concept in client-centred theory. *The Person-Centred Journal, 6*(2), 108 – 120. Retrieved from http://adpca.org/system/files/documents/journal/Brodley%20ActualizingT%20PCJ6_2.pdf

Brodley, B. T. (2019). Client-Centred Therapy – What Is It? What Is It Not? The Person-Centred Journal, 24(1-2), 37 – 59. Retrieved from https://www.adpca.org/system/files/documents/journal/B.%20T.%20Client-Centered%20Therapy%20-%20What%20Is%20it%2C%20What%20Is%20It%20Not.pdf

Brown, C. (2015). *Understanding person centred counselling: A Personal Journey*. London: Sage.

Cooper, M. (1999). If you can't be Jekyll be Hyde: An Existential-Phenomenological exploration of lived plurality. In J. Rowan, & M. Cooper (Eds.), *The Plural Self: Multiplicity in Everyday Life* (pp. 51-70). London, United Kingdom: Sage.

Cooper, M. (2013). Developmental and personality theory. In M. Cooper, M. O'Hara, P. F. Schmid & A. C. Bohart (Eds.), *The Handbook of Person-Centred Psychotherapy and Counselling* (2nd ed.). (pp. 118-135). Hampshire, United Kingdom: Palgrave MacMillan.

Department for Health (2012). *Preventing suicide in England*. Retrieved from https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/430720/Preventing-Suicide-.pdf

Etkind, M. (1997). …Or Not to Be: A Collection of Suicide Notes. New York, New York: Riverhead Books.

Finke, J. (2002). Aspects of the actualizing tendency from a humanistic psychology perspective. *Person-Centred and Experiential Psychotherapies, 1*(1-2), 28-40. 10.1080/14779757.2002.9688276

Ford, J. G., & Maas, S. (1989). On actualizing person-centred theory: A critique of textbook treatments of Rogers's motivational constructs. *Teaching of Psychology, 16*(1), 30-31. 10.1207/s15328023top1601_11

Kim, J. (2018). Consideration of the applicability of person-centred therapy to culturally varying clients, focusing on the actualising tendency and self-actualisation – from East Asian perspective. *Person-centred and experiential psychotherapies, 17*(3), 201-223. 10.1080/14779757.2018.1506817

Large, M., Kaneson, M., Myles, N., Myles, H., Gunaratne, P., & Ryan, C. (2016). Meta-Analysis of Longitudinal Cohort Studies of Suicide Risk Assessment among Psychiatric Patients: Heterogeneity in Results and Lack of Improvement over Time. *PLoS ONE, 11*(6), 1-17. 10.1371/journal.pone.0156322

McMillan, M. (2004). *The person-centred approach to therapeutic change*. London, United Kingdom: Sage.

Mearns, D. (2002). Further theoretical propositions in regard to self theory within person-centred therapy. *Person-centred and experiential psychotherapies, 1*(1-2), 14-27. 10.1080/14779757.2002.9688275

Mearns, D., Thorne, B. (2000). *Person-centred therapy today: New frontiers in theory and practice*. London, United Kingdom: Sage.

Mearns, D., & Thorne, B. (2013). *Person-centred counselling in action* (4th ed.). London, United Kingdom: Sage.

Merry, T. (2002). *Learning and being in person centred counselling* (2nd ed.). Monmouth, United Kingdom, PCCS Books.

Merry, T. (2004). Classical client-centred therapy. In P. Sanders (Eds.), *The tribes of the person-centred nation.* (pp. 21-44). Ross on Wye, United Kingdom: PCCS Books.

Merry, T. (2008). The actualisation conundrum. In B. E. Levitt (Eds.), *Reflections on Human Potential: Bridging the person-centred approach and positive psychology.* (pp. 46-55). Ross on Wye, United Kingdom: PCCS Books.

McGarry, A. (2018). Exploring suicide potential and the actualising tendency: A qualitative study of suicide notes. (Unpublished dissertation, 2018).

Reeves, A. (2015). *Working with risk in counselling and psychotherapy.* London, United Kingdom: Sage.

Reeves, A. (2018). Where do we go from zero? *Therapy Today, 29*(7), 30-33.

Reeves, A., & Mintz, R. (2001). Counsellors' experience of working with suicidal clients: an exploratory study. *Counselling and Psychotherapy Research, 1*(3), 172-176. 10.1080/14733140112331385030

Rogers, C. R. (1951). *Client Centred Therapy*. London, United Kingdom: Constable and Company.

Rogers, C. R. (1959). A theory of therapy, personality and interpersonal relationships, as developed in the client centred framework. In S. Koch (Eds.), *Psychology: A study of a Science. Volume 3: Formulations of the Person and the Social Context* (pp. 184-256). New York, New York: McGraw-Hill.

Rogers, C. R. (1962). *Toward becoming a fully functioning person*. Retrieved from http://www.ascd.org/publications/books/199031/chapters/Toward-Becoming-a-Fully-Functioning-Person.aspx

Roger, C. R. (1963). The actualizing tendency in relation to 'motives' and to consciousness. In M. R. Jones (Eds.), *Nebraska symposium of motivation* (pp. 1-24). Lincoln, Nebraska, University of Nebraska Press.

Rogers, C. R. (1980). *A way of being*. Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin.

Rogers, C. R. (1989). A therapist's view of the good life: The fully functioning person. In H. Kirschenbaum & V. L. Henderson (Eds.), *The Carl Rogers Reader* (pp. 409-419). Boston, Massachusetts: Houghton Mifflin.

Rogers, C. R. (2004). *On becoming a person*. London, United Kingdom: Constable.

Schneidman, E. S., & Farberow, N. L. (1957). *Clues to Suicide*. New York, New York: McGraw Hill.

Simanowitz, V. & Pearce, P. (2003). *Personality development*. Maidenhead, United Kingdom: Open University Press.

Szasz, T. (1986). The case against suicide prevention. *American Psychologist, 41*(7), 806-812. 10.1037/0003-066X.41.7.806

The Guardian (2009). Inside the Dignitas House. Retrieved from https://www.google.co.uk/amp/s/amp.theguardian.com/society/2009/nov/18/assisted-suicide-dignitas-house

Warner, M. S. (2000). Person-centred therapy at the difficult edge: a developmentally based model of fragile and dissociated process. In D. Mearns & B. Thorne (Eds.), *Person-centred therapy today: New frontiers in theory and practice*. (pp. 144-171). London, United Kingdom: Sage.