

— Spring 2025 —

Counseling Theory Chronicles

International Institute For The Advancement of Counseling Theory



Welcome!

*Welcome from the Executive Director,
Dr. Ed Neukrug*

I am excited to introduce the first newsletter of the International Institute of the Advancement of Counseling Theory (IIACT). Developed about four years ago, the Institute's mission is to advance counseling theories through mini-grants, research, information on counseling theory and healing practices globally; create awareness of multicultural issues related to theory; and provide resources, such as books, videos, podcasts, and websites, to increase knowledge regarding counseling theory from a global perspective.

And we are pleased to have an internationally known faculty (my esteemed colleagues), serving as researchers and practitioners on the IIACT board of directors. We will introduce you to them when you scroll below. In addition, numerous, resolute counselors, psychologists, and educators serve on the Institute's advisory boards. The Batten Endowment at Old Dominion University funds this important work.

**INSIDE,
WE
TALK
ABOUT:**

**Welcome
from Dr.
Neukrug**

**Meet the
IIACT
Leadership
Team**

**Roles,
Research, and
Resources**

*“...realization that we
are complex
humans.”*



I hope you will take a moment to review both the newsletter and the institute's website, which features hands-on resources, including podcasts on theoretical issues and a tool to assess your theoretical orientation.

Being the Executive Director of the Institute puts me in touch with research and ideas that I would never have had the opportunity to experience before. The Institute, for me, is magical. It stays away from endorsing any specific theoretical approach. It assumes that all theories have something important to say about therapy and that most theories can be helpful to many people, much of the time. I think the research of my colleagues, Bruce Wampold and John Norcross, bears that out.

I hope this newsletter will be a helpful resource for you in the days ahead, and I encourage you to peruse the IIACT website and utilize the many features available to the international counseling theory community.

With kind regards,

Ed

Dr. Ed Neukrug, LPC, LP

Batten Endowed Chair of Counseling (CHS)

Department of Counseling and Human Services at ODU

Meet the IIACT Leadership Board

- Drs. Danica Hays, John Norcross, and Bruce Wampold on the Executive Advisory Board
- Drs. Courtland Lee and Barbara Herlihy directing the Global Issues subdivision
- Drs. Sylvia Nassar and Daniel Gutierrez heading the Multicultural Issues subdivision
- Drs. Chris Sink and Mike Kalkbrenner leading the research subdivision.

The Institute's Role

- To further research to advance the understanding of counseling theory.
- Examine cross-cultural issues and global issues related to the application of counseling theories.
- Provide an open-access website, surveys, oral histories and stories, and podcasts to increase the understanding of theory.
- Offer mini-grants for research that supports the understanding and advancement of counseling theory.
- Provide resources, such as books, videos, and artifacts, which highlight classic theories, emerging theories, and lesser-known international theories and healing practices.

Current Research

Through the initiatives of the subdivisions, some of the published and current research includes the following:

- Bunting, K., Lee, C., & Herlihy, B. (In process). *World mapping of theories of counseling/helping/healing, Phase I: South America*.
- Gantt-Howrey, A., Brookover, D. L., & Robins, L. B. (2024). Addressing social determinants of mental health through cognitive behavioral therapy. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 103(1), 86-961-11. <https://doi.org/10.1002/jcad.12540>
- Gutierrez, D., Nassar, S., et al., (In process). *Counseling theory and intersectional culture: A podcast series*. IIACT.
- Nassar, S., Gutierrez, D., et al. (In process). *Common and unique culturally appropriate healing practices: Implications for counseling theory*. IIIACT.
- Neukrug, E., Kalkbrenner, M., Sink, C. & Kubilus, R. (in process). *Validation of the View of Human Nature Survey*.
- Neukrug, E., Sink, C., & Kalkbrenner. (In process). *An updated survey of the most influential theorists as identified by licensed therapists*.

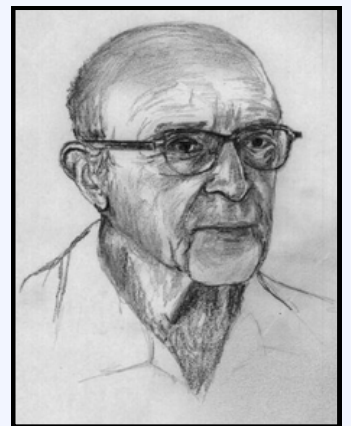
Parting Words

Finally, let me leave you with a couple of stories that speak to the value of embracing all theories and theorists. I was always enamored with the famous theorists and went out of my way to meet some of them. Two of my most interesting encounters were with B.F. Skinner and Carl Rogers. These encounters changed my dualistic understanding of who these people were. As a young therapist, for instance, I was convinced that Skinner would be this cold, meticulous researcher and that Carl Rogers would be this warm, nurturing man. I had a lot to learn.

As a doctoral student, I was an ardent existential-humanist, and I will never forget the time, during my dissertation oral exam, that my chair asked me: “Can a behaviorist be a humanist?” Understanding the theoretical distinctions between the two, I quickly and strongly said, “No,” and explained the different theoretical underpinnings of the two philosophies. I was quite proud of myself, as was my chair.

A few years later, I was living in New Hampshire and heard that B.F. Skinner was going to give a talk at a Unitarian Church, about two hours away. He was in his mid-80s, and I was excited to hear this icon talk. I drove to the church and keenly listened to his eloquent talk about behaviorism. Afterwards, I managed to work my way to the front of the room and ask him, “Dr. Skinner, can a behaviorist be a humanist.” He looked at me and, with this erudite and warm stare, said, “Well, I don’t know about that, but he can sure be humane.” That short sentence cut through my rigid understanding of behaviorism and humanism (bad vs. good), and I came to see that all theories can be driven by a benevolent force within each of us. Skinner's talk changed my life, and surprisingly, so did Carl Rogers' talk.

For a second time, I heard Carl Rogers speak in front of a large audience. Previously, I heard him talk about the importance of globally becoming more humanistic, or we might see the end of our existence. So, I decided to ask him if he still believed this. I raised my hand, and lo and behold, he called on me immediately. I posed my question, at which point he looked at me and said he did not understand the question and asked me to repeat it. I tried to repeat my question, but admittedly, I was nervous talking in front of this huge crowd. After blurting something out, he said, with a rather curt



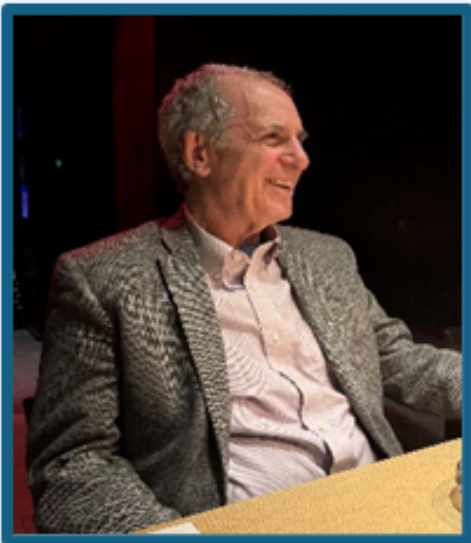
Parting Words Continued

voice, “I’m not sure what you’re saying,” and left me standing there, embarrassed and without an answer. I thought he was supposed to be “Dr. Empathy,” but he certainly wasn’t with me. I was crushed. It was then that I had to come to grips with the notion that none of us, even our heroes, would live up to our expectations of them!

My experiences meeting Rogers and Skinner helped me move from a dualistic perspective on life to the realization that we are complex human beings. It enhanced my understanding that we are all made up of many parts. Indeed, when getting to know someone, we should be open to all aspects of who they are—whether they are clients, family, friends, colleagues, acquaintances, or famous theorists.

And thus, the development of IIACT. My hope is that the Institute will offer a complex understanding of ourselves and some of the theorists we love and theories to which we adhere. As time goes on, I hope that we continue to expand the knowledge of different theorists and theories on our website.

Meanwhile, want to hear more stories or find other information about other theorists or theories? Visit us at: www.odu.edu/iiact.



Thank you!

Ed Neukrug

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What is Your Theoretical Orientation?

In addition to research, the Institute houses ample resources on the website. For instance, you will find an instrument in which you can assess your [theoretical orientation](#).

This instrument, currently under revision and validation, examines the values and beliefs associated with 13 theories (15 in the revised version) and presents respondents with the theories and theoretical schools to which they are most closely affiliated.

It is available in English, Spanish, and Simple Chinese (Mandarin).

- Take the English version at:
<https://ww2.odu.edu/people/e/eneukrug/therapists/survey.html>.
- For Spanish and Chinese versions, go to: www.odu.edu/iiact.

Dive into a Podcast

Other interesting resources on the website include podcasts regarding theoretical issues, discussions by a caricature of famous therapists about their lives and theory, books and videos on theories that can be borrowed through interlibrary loan, oral stories about famous theorists/therapists, and soon, we will have AI-generated videographic biographies about several famous theorists/therapists.

