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Welcome to the Brooks/Cole Counseling E-Communicator. The goal of our quarterly newsletter is to communicate with you, our valued customer. Our intent is to provide you with informative news, announcements, great ideas in teaching, and an opportunity for you to find out more about us.

Announcements

- Do you have any announcements that you would like us to include in our next edition? Please e-mail Caroline with your announcement by 7/07/04 at caroline.concilla@thomson.com

Great Ideas in Teaching

We'd like to highlight and share great ideas in teaching counseling... whether it's an activity, a unique lesson, or a self-created web component, we'd love to showcase your great teaching efforts. To submit a "Great Ideas in Teaching" counseling example, please e-mail Caroline at caroline.concilla@thomson.com OR, if you have a text proposal in mind that reflects YOUR great teaching, please email Executive Editor, Lisa Gebo at lisa.gebo@thomson.com (skills & practicum areas) or Senior Editor, Marquita Flemming at marquita.flemming@thomson.com (for all other counseling areas).

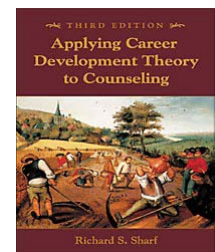
Hot Topic

NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN CAREER DEVELOPMENT

Article by Richard S. Sharf

Author of *Applying Career Development Theory to Counseling*
2002©

Brooks/Cole Publication



In the broad fields of counseling and therapy, there is arguably no content area that changes more often than career development. Creative ideas are put forth and tested by a small group of theorists and researchers. Larger areas, such as psychotherapeutic interventions, have had many new ideas added over the years so that currently there are relatively few new additions. As I have been working on updating *Applying Career Development Theory to Counseling* for the fourth edition, I have come across some new approaches to career development. In research in counseling and therapy, "new" can mean "studied over the last 10 to 20 years". There are four different approaches to career development and career counseling that I would like to describe as they have implications for counseling and research. They are also likely to attract new counselors to the field of career counseling/development. These are social cognitive career theory, Phillip's developmental-relational model, spiritual approaches to career development, and constructivist approaches to career development.

Robert Lent, Steven Brown, and Gail Hackett have developed social cognitive career theory (SCCT) rather quickly (about 20 years). I believe that SCCT has been responsible for much more research than any other career development theory in the last few years. Although the theory itself, in terms of predictions, is very complex, the basic goal of the theory is not. It is based on career self-efficacy theory, which was concerned about the lack of self confidence that women and minorities might experience as they encounter discrimination and other barriers to choosing a career and implementing a career choice. SCCT is concerned with individuals' sense of self-efficacy and their expectations of what will happen to



Sharf article continued

them (outcome expectations). These variables are studied in relationship to interests and abilities, as well as the career goals individuals choose and the actions that they take to reach these goals. This theory helps counselors to attend to the effect that supports and barriers to reaching career goals have on their clients' views of their own self-efficacy. In the last few years, supports and barriers to career choice has been a major focus of research in SCCT.

There has been an interest for many years in the effect of others (especially parents) on the career development of children and adolescents. Several areas of study from psychotherapy have been applied to career development. Attachment theory and family therapy are two examples. Perhaps the most continuous research has been done by Susan Phillips and her colleagues at SUNY Albany. In their developmental-relational model of career development they examine the effects of relationships on career development. There are two basic themes: Actions of Others and Self-Directedness. Actions of Others refers to ways other people involve themselves in the career decision-making of the individual. Self-Directedness deals with the ways the individual seeks out others to assist in the career decision-making process. These two themes can be helpful ways for counselors to view their clients' decision-making. Discussing the impact of others on career decisions as well as the need for support and non-interference in career decision making adds a useful dimension to career counseling.

The notion of spirituality being a factor in career counseling often takes both beginning and experienced counselors by surprise. Bloch and Richmond wrote *Soul Work* in 1998. It brings together a number of different views of career development. They describe 7 themes: change, balance, energy, community, calling, harmony, and unity. When they describe change they are talking about external and internal change that prompt emotions and feelings that individuals must deal with. Most theories of career development do not talk about balance. Attending to how individuals can balance many aspects of their lives including career issues is an important counseling issue. Energy is another important concept. Often doing hard work in a field that one really enjoys can be exhilarating rather than tiring. Likewise harmony which comes from finding satisfying work can help individuals develop a strong sense of appreciation and understanding of their world and their lives. Some clients and counselors relate well to the spiritual way of looking at the role of career in client lives.

Although constructivist approaches to therapy and to personality theory have been around since George Kelly's work in the 1950s, constructivist approaches to career development are relatively new. Greg Neimeyer and his colleagues have developed the Vocational Role Construct Repertory Test (Vocational Reptest) and have used card sorts to help individuals determine important constructs that are unique to them in making career choices. Mark Savickas has used a structured approach to determining the constructs that are important to individuals as they fit career choice into their life story. Savickas attends to individuals' career adaptability, their concept of themselves, and themes important to their careers. Narrative career counseling views one's career as a novel, where clients are the agents, their life environment is the setting, and their choices and activities are the action. Exercises that have individuals describe their lives in descriptive book chapter titles or use a long time line for individuals to write down important events in their lives are ways to use story or narrative career counseling approaches. Innovative career counseling techniques are a hallmark of constructivist approaches.

Career research and career counseling are often seen as boring or plodding by some students and counselors alike. The four approaches that I have described go far in bringing innovative ways of thinking about career development and career counseling. Social cognitive career theory addresses an important current issue for many in social services- the need to attend to multicultural issues in career counseling. Attending to relational issues in counseling and psychotherapy has been a consistently important topic for many years. Addressing this in the context of career development can help students and counselors connect personal and career issues. Both spiritual and constructivist approaches can appeal to students and counselors who are attracted by a different, and perhaps more exciting way of viewing career counseling. I find all of these new career developments to be impressive.

I would appreciate any comments that you have about the topics I raise. You can email me at rsharf@udel.edu.



Brooks/Cole News

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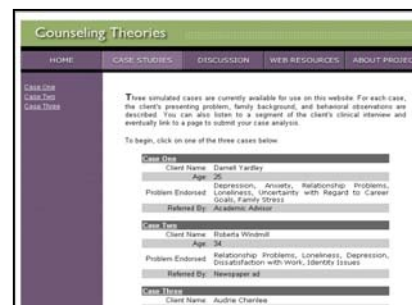
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