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EDUC 6380
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Week 4 – My Psychological Orientation

Respond to the "Assessment of the Ethical Human Relations Orientation" survey on pages 104-107 in your text. Compute your rating for each section of the survey and then write a brief (about 500 words) analysis your personal orientation toward your psychological orientation.

I completed the assessment on myself, my thinking and my responsibilities found on pp. 105-107 in our textbook (Rebore, 2014). My ratings seemed to confirm what I already suspected: I don't put a lot of stock into **psychodynamics** (score: 20/33), but I lean most heavily towards a **humanistic approach** (score: 40/42), and I also see value in a **cognitive-behavioral** orientation (score: 28/30).

I liked how Rebore described the humanistic approach at the end of the chapter: "...from this perspective, *people are empowered* to such an extent that *they can determine their own destiny*" [emphasis added] (p. 103, 2014). I believe this to be true. Ultimately, we are free agents in our lives. Yes, there are some things that are out of our control. This is life. However, as author Charles R. Swindoll so insightfully stated: "I am convinced that life is 10% what happens to me, and 90% how I react to it." And he is so right.

It is true that there are some things we cannot avoid: death, disasters, and aging, to name a few. This is part of the humanistic perspective, but so is the idea that *I* can and will decide how to react to life's challenges. Ultimately, *I* am responsible for my actions, and the turns that *my life* takes. *I* am not merely some waif blown about upon the seas of misfortune and chance, though I could act like that is the case, and blame others when hardship befalls me, or others for my personal failings. That such misfortune exists, no doubt, but I dictate where I go. I decide how I will react and engage the maelstroms, gales, and squalls that arise. And just as the poet William Ernest Henley concludes in his famous 1875 poem *Invictus*, I am of similar mind: "It matters not how strait the gate, how charged with punishments the scroll, I am the master of my fate: I am the captain of my soul."

Another humanistic idea that I subscribe to is the idea that "each relationship has meaning... significant relationships are those in which... a mutually supportive awareness of each other exists" (p 95, 2014). This is certainly true for me. I work hard to establish a rapport with those I work with, and I strive to engage & continually build and fortify such relationships. I've found that my students engage much more when I do so, and I find it easier to help and care for them as well. Respect is like a two-way street, and if it isn't maintained and nurtured, it will become overrun with proverbial potholes, discarded junk, and miscreants, and soon becomes impassable.

These ideas of self-awareness and self-responsibility are also prominent in the **cognitive-behavioral** approach to ethics. I agree with the goals of this approach, to "give people control over their actions and ultimately their life-world" (p. 98). Ultimately, this approach reasons that thought, decision making, and action are the vital ingredients needed for gaining control in one's life. These concepts tie in heavily with my own. When combined with William Glasser's perspective (as quoted by Rebore), that perception of reality is important (p. 101), we begin to arrive at some of the essential qualities of an effective administrator.

For instance, it doesn't matter that a teacher spends 60+ hours a week working to make their classroom an inviting, engaging environment, if (for some reason) there is a general perception among

students and parents that the teacher is aloof and not very interested in them or their learning. Working with said teacher as an admin to help them see things from another perspective (i.e., the students' / parents' perspective), and to correct that perception (or change things that may be leading to it) would make a big difference. Understanding that perception is effectually reality is crucial to being an effective administrator, and I strive to be aware and responsive to such things.

Ultimately, all three approaches have value, but I tend to personally focus most on the humanistic approach in my own leadership philosophy and ethical approach. I believe that when we are self-aware, and understand how we think, we can more effectively lead and work towards improvement. Working with others, and developing meaningful relationships are critical to success as an administrator, a position that requires buy-in and cooperation among many different groups in any school district. Without such cooperation, no admin would get very far. With it however, we can achieve great things, not just for ourselves, but more importantly, for the schools and students that we serve.

Sources:

Rebore, R. W. (2014). *The ethics of educational leadership* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education.