Multicultural Humanistic Psychology

2.1 A Wider Lens

Theoretical lenses are helpful for growing as a person because they provide different perspectives or positions for understanding shared phenomena. These lenses can help illuminate thoughts and questions that were not previously considered and open ways of being that are conducive to growth and altruism. However, while some lenses appear new and exciting, they always have the risk of distorting perceptions. For example, in the early twentieth century, certain theoretical lenses that framed scientific inquiry created a eugenics movement in the US, which sought to improve the human species through selective breeding programs. The goal was to develop or promote certain heredity traits that adhere to a culturally desired image of the human race and leave others out. The eugenics lens influenced national, state, and local policies. In the state of Texas,

> the state constitution established that school segregation applied to "colored children," the White power structure relied on testing to do the de facto work of segregating Mexicans and Mexican Americans in Texas schools . . . During the 1920s, support for eugenics was widely spread, influencing not only educational practice and policy but national policy as well. An example is the Immigration Act of 1924, which favored Northern European countries and excluded other groups such as Asians entirely. (Au et al., 2016, p. 102)

The social, political, and cultural trauma caused by the eugenics movement had global consequences that still resound today. Theoretical lenses in eugenics influenced, confounded, and skewed sciences that were not about discovery but reflected themes of politics, racism, control, power, and subjugation. In these cases, lenses can promote racism and discrimination, where science is used for "empirical" justifications (Gould, 1996).

In addition, the myopic lenses that informed paradigms such as behaviorist psychology have been severely detrimental to science, culture, and society.

> A century ago, foundling homes and orphanages followed the advice of a school of psychology that, in my opinion, has wreaked more havoc than any other: *behaviorism*. Its name reflects the belief that behavior is all that science can see and know, and therefore all it should care about. The mind, if such a thing even exists, remains a black box. Emotions are largely irrelevant. This attitude led to a taboo on the inner life of animals: Animals were to be described as machines, and students of animal behavior were to develop a terminology devoid of human connotations. (de Waal, 2009, pp. 11–12; italics in original text)

Behaviorism only considers external observable behaviors and ignores internal processes, such as emotions and thoughts (de Waal, 2016). Within behaviorism, experiments were conducted to prove that emotions are irrelevant and unnecessary to psychology. In the 1920s, behavioral psychologist John Watson conducted experiments by raising children without emotional stimulation from caregivers. They ultimately became developmentally stunted, developing chronic illness and lifelong emotional disturbances, and some experienced early deaths. Without emotional stimulation, empathy, and growth-promoting relationships with adults or peers, these young children and babies experienced decline and the loss of opportunity for actualizing any personal potentials.

Scientific understandings of emotional phenomena have been held back by the dominance of behaviorists. They held a firm disregard of human and animals' social and emotional intelligences (SEI), and their influence inspired other schools of psychology and biology to adopt a similar perception. According to de Waal (2016), "while each school fought the other and deemed it too narrow, they shared a fundamentally mechanistic outlook: there was no need to worry about the internal lives of animals, and anyone who did was anthropomorphic, romantic, or unscientific" (p. 4). Behaviorism does not consider ecology, nor the presence or absence of adaptive learning to satisfy personal needs.

The behaviorists wanted to control the behavior of animals by conducting experiments in artificial environments without natural stimuli, but only using instruments that would get them to perform to the experimenter's expectations; when they did not perform, it was considered misbehavior. To illustrate, B. F. Skinner ignored the natural inclinations of animals but, rather,

> preferred a language of control and domination. He spoke of behavioral engineering and manipulation, and not just in relation to animals. Later in life he sought to turn humans into happy, productive, and "maximally effective" citizens. While there is no doubt that operant conditioning is

> a solid and valuable idea and a powerful modifier of behavior, behaviorism's big mistake was to declare it the only game in town. (de Waal, 2016, p. 37)

Skinner's experiments understood animal behaviors in artificial environments, where he wanted to control behavior through stimulus–response stakes. He ignored any understanding of spontaneous behavior and disregarded the importance of a living being's natural habitat. Behaviorists that aligned with Skinner's paradigm reigned for almost a century. Today, it has widened its perspective a little with the popularity of evolutionary cognitive psychology.

Yet, through the development of evolutionary cognitive psychology, behaviorists were confronted with their limitations and misperceptions, especially in understanding animals. As de Waal (2016) described, "instead of treating mental processes as a black box, as Skinner and his followers had done, we are now prying open the box to reveal a wealth of neural homologies. These show a shared evolutionary background to mental processes and offer a powerful argument against human-animal dualism" (p. 117). Behaviorism was bound to fail because it argued that all behavior could be linked back to a sole learning mechanism. This dogma made behaviorism lose its growth as a science and became comparable to a strict religious doctrine. Scholars and researchers like Skinner or Watson would not consider any other lens or critical self-analysis. These types of scientists and scholars typically seek to reduce phenomena to gain authority over others (and the phenomena themselves). At the same time, many others are open to the critical understanding of their research paradigm.

The key to deepening understandings, transcending static paradigms, and becoming enlightened to the nature of phenomena is to engage with a paradigm that widens the lens for accepting the self, others, and the world. The greater diversity of lenses within a paradigm, the more one is able to engage with a phenomenon from different perspectives. The qualities that one understands from experiencing the essence of a phenomenon "belongs to the type of development peculiar to certain categories of essential being that essences belonging to them can be given only 'one-sidedly', whilst in succession more 'sides', though never 'all sides', can be given" (Husserl, 2012, p. 12). The understanding from an essence is just one perspective, while employing a greater diversity of lenses to illuminate overlooked or disregarded aspects can reveal more of the infinity of perspectives.

Theoretical lenses can create entire paradigms for understanding the nature of the universe. For example, phenomenology, multiculturalism,

primatology, anthropology, and humanistic psychology continue to widen understandings of existence and cultivate the growth of the human community. With these lenses, one can better assess the *ontology* of a being or phenomenon – a study of how things are, essences of a being and the world (Bateson, 2000). Multicultural humanistic psychology is a paradigm that seeks to gain perspective and further explore social and emotional phenomena. To understand how multicultural humanistic psychology is related to SEI, one must first begin with a brief overview of the history of humanistic psychology and multiculturalism.

2.2   Revolutionary Movements

Paradigm shifts and cultural transformations within societies result from the efforts of generations of people, developments in relationships with animals and nature, or natural phenomena (i.e., weather events, natural disasters). However, paradigm shifts can be negative, such as those associated with fascism, racism, and behaviorism – all of which can set human communities back in terms of growth and exploration of potentials. For instance, dominant schools of psychology during the early to mid twentieth century were more about reifying the social status quo, materialism, and authoritarian norms, all of which atomized and removed agency from the individual. They viewed psychology in reductionist terms, where everything was the product of mechanization. The effects would influence people to limit their potentials, desires, and expectations.

The two most influential schools of psychology in the twentieth century were Watsonian–Skinnerian behaviorism and Freudian psychoanalysis. Although differing in their clinical methods, they reduced people and phenomena to parts related to a function. Due to both schools' popularity or uncompromising nature, clinical psychology stagnated because it adhered to monolithic theory and was solely concerned with psychotherapeutic techniques rather than understanding and engaging with psychological phenomena. As Noddings (2006) warned, "a theory held stubbornly against every objection becomes an ideology, and as an ideology it loses some of its usefulness as a guide to practice. Instead, it becomes an end to itself and demands continual and vigorous defense" (p. 14). Although Sigmund Freud is historically important for helping transform psychology into a credible science through the engagement with clients' subjectivity, his approach kept the power and authority of therapy solely in the hands of the psychologist. Freud had significant influence from his nineteenth-century Western paradigm that was highly reductionist – where culture and intelligence were

devalued, and humanity's irrational drives explained everything. The Freudian clinicians "worked very hard, then, to prove that grapes can grow on thornbushes" (Watts, 1966, p. 12).

Just as impermanence is the nature of existence, the most enlightened psychological paradigms will not resist change and growth. As Sagan (1995) stated, "for me, it is far better to grasp the universe as it really is than to persist in delusion, however satisfying and reassuring" (p. 12). For science to transcend older ways of thinking or inquiry, there must be a dance between loose and strict thinking that appreciates previous knowledge but also lets ideas play into the realm of possibility (Bateson, 2000).

Historically, Western schools of psychological inquiry have not supported new sociocultural perceptions, values, and behaviors. This was the case for a small group of psychologists in the US during the early to mid twentieth century that did not align with the dominant paradigms of Freudian psychoanalysis or behaviorism. Instead, they were versed in phenomenology, existentialism, Eastern philosophy, transpersonal psychology (i.e., spirituality, transcendence), constructivist psychology (i.e., meaning, culture, political awareness), Greek and Roman philosophy, and literary works (e.g., Shakespeare) (Bland & DeRobertis, 2019; Greenblatt, 2011). These influences inspired a radical clinical approach to therapy that kept these psychologists "reflectively attentive to the ways human beings experience and are conscious of the world before reflecting on it and thematizing it" (van Manen, 2016, p. 58).

This group of rogue psychologists began experimenting with new clinical methods that challenged social norms and values that atomized the person into parts. They felt that psychological classification and reductionism only generated a false sense of security without engaging with reality. Ideas from existential philosophy helped remove tenuous diagnostic concepts and classifications. These psychologists focused on the power of each person to take responsibility for creating a life filled with meaning, adaptive to challenges, and always exploring potentials of the self and relationships. They wanted to make the clinical experience adaptable through taking a person-centered approach. The therapeutic process was grounded in the client–therapist relationship and the client's realities, which were always more meaningful than standardized therapeutic techniques. According to Jung (1989):

> So much is said in the literature about the resistance of the patient that it would almost seem as if the doctor were trying to put something over on him, whereas the cure ought to grow naturally out of the patient himself.

> Psychotherapy and analysis are as varied as are human individuals. I treat every patient as individually as possible, because the solution of the problem is always an individual one. Universal rules can be postulated only with a grain of salt. A psychological truth is valid only if it can be reversed. A solution which would be out of the question for me may be just the right one for someone else. (p. 131)

Thus, in 1964, with the momentum of the US Civil Rights movement changing the country's sociocultural landscape, these rebellious psychologists met in Old Saybrook, Connecticut (Kazanjian, 2021). In attendance were Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, James Bugental, Rollo May, Clark Moustakas, and Charlotte Bühler, to name a few. Many of these founding members stayed at the Castle Inn at Corfield Point (Smrtic, 2010).

The group's ideas and perspectives mixed in a way that cultivated a new paradigm, known as *Third Force Psychology*. Freudian psychoanalysis was the first force, and Watsonian-Skinnerian behaviorism was the second. Third Force Psychology addressed the undervalued, overlooked, or distorted areas of psychology, such as human potential, freedom of choice, the search for meaning, and exploring phenomena in a scientifically rigorous manner. In addition, Third Force Psychology was supported by developments in cognitive psychology, which, together, helped dethrone the reign of behaviorism.

According to DeRobertis (2021), in historical records of the downfall of behaviorism, the cognitive revolution has a greater presence than Third Force Psychology, but in reality it was a combined effort. Cognitive psychology focused on mental processes and fell out of favor due to the rise of behaviorism, but then resurged again with Third Force Psychology.

As Third Force Psychology actualized its potentials, it became a humanistic revolution in psychology. Thus, the paradigm became known as **humanistic psychology**, which

> stresses the unique quality and innate goodness of every human being. Humanism is ever mindful of the importance of personal integrity, autonomy, and freedom for the effective functioning of man. It is concerned with our existential dilemmas, and is relevant in a society where many ask, "Who am I? What is the meaning of life?" This perspective is very much concerned with the subjective experience of the individual. (Smrtic, 2010, p. 3)

Humanistic psychologists value relationships, empathy, and understanding the person in the contexts of society and culture with ecopsycho-spiritual elements (Luchins, 1964; Rogers, 1980, 1989). The phenomenological (e.g., Edmund Husserl) and existential (e.g., Victor Frankl) influences affirmed that each

person has potential and seeks to create meaning with the freedom of choice. As Cantril (1967) stated, "psychologically, freedom refers to the freedom to experience more of what is potentially available, the freedom to move about and ahead, to be and to become" (p. 16). This sense of freedom radically differed from the philosophy and clinical approaches of behaviorism and psychoanalysis, where the therapist held the power of determining meaning and reduced psychology to behaviors and drives.

It is important to note that creating meaning does not imply that life is without meaning, as if it were devoid of significance. Rather, meaning exists in no-thing-ness, where not one-thing is inherently meaningful over others, but every-thing is meaningful – it is the ability or will to determine what life can mean for the individual that brings phenomena into focused awareness.

Humanism in humanistic psychology is not about isolation, exclusiveness, or celebration of being human, but rather about critically analyzing the efforts of humans, such as labor, social justice, enlightenment, and, of course, the misunderstandings and misconceptions that are found throughout human history (Said, 2004). There is always a possibility of revising, growing, and changing misunderstandings. The humanists are in a way never comfortable too long with any conclusion or any place. Efforts to challenge and explore existential mysteries create opportunities to actualize human potentials. Humanism is not about finding a stable place or position but about delving into human societies' contradictions, ideas, and values.

Humanistic psychology honed the parameters of its paradigm and practices over the mid to late twentieth century, as founding member James Bugental outlined the five pillars:

1. Human beings are more than the sum of their parts;
2. Human beings exist in a human context;
3. Human beings are aware;
4. Human beings have choice in creating their experience;
5. Human beings are intentional (future oriented with purpose, values, and meaning). (Schulenberg, 2003, p. 273)

These became guiding principles for which humanistic psychology could maintain momentum toward empowering the individual to embrace the changing nature of society and the transience of the living world.

Humanistic psychology caused fundamental changes in how clinicians understood personality, approached psychotherapy, and formed conceptions

of motivation, pathology, and research methodologies (DeRobertis, 2021; DeRobertis & Bland, 2020). Moustakas (1956) described how humanistic psychology had a deep value for the uniqueness of the person:

> From the beginning the human person wants to feel that his who-ness is respected and his individuality is treasured. Too often the person is respected for what he represents in intelligence, achievement, or social status. This distorts the real nature of the person and interferes with human understandingness. It blocks the potential forces that exist within the person for creativity, for unique, peculiar, and idiosyncratic expression. True growth, actualization of one's potential, occurs in a setting where the person is felt and experienced as sheer personal being. (p. 4)

Although these ideas and practices were foundational in humanistic psychology, they were at the time considered radical. Yet, over the decades, humanistic principles have become the standard for many areas of study. As stated by Bugental (1965), "*humanistic psychology does not deny the contributions of other views but tries to supplement them and give them a setting within a broader conception of the human experience*" (p. 14, italics in original text). The humanistic psychology revolution inspired subdivisions in approaches to therapy, such as positive psychology, transpersonal psychology, and existential-humanistic therapy.

2.2.1 The Power of Relationships

Relationships are essential in humanistic psychology, especially in the therapeutic alliance; the therapist supports the unfolding process for the client of the ability to disclose, integrate dissociated areas of life, and emerge in new directions (Moustakas, 1992). Moustakas (1956) described his clinical approach as follows:

> When a person comes to me, troubled by his unique combination of difficulties, I have found it most worthwhile to try to create a relationship with him in which he is safe and free. It is my purpose to understand the way he feels in his own inner world, to accept him as he is, to create an atmosphere of freedom in which he can move in his thinking and feeling and being, in any direction he desires. How does he use this freedom? It is my experience that he uses it to become more and more himself. He begins to drop the false fronts, or the masks, or the roles, with which he has faced life. He appears to be trying to discover something more basic, something more truly himself. (p. 196)

Humanistic psychologists engage with clients to affirm dignity, uniqueness, and that each person must choose growth and healing or succumb to decay.

The perception of the client is always beyond category or diagnoses – there is a person behind the disturbances with dreams, desires, and meanings (Jung, 1989). The humanistic psychologists understood the following:

> Every individual embodies and contains a uniqueness, a reality, that makes him unlike any other person or thing. To maintain this uniqueness in the face of threats and pressures, in times of shifting patters and moods, is the ultimate challenge and responsibility of every man. In true experience, perception is unique and undifferentiated; there is a sense of wholeness, unity, and centeredness. In such moments, man is immersed in the world, exploring, spontaneously expressing himself, and finding satisfaction in being rooted to life as a whole person. (Moustakas, 1967a, p. 1)

Psychological disturbance is a barrier to relationship, potential, development, and growth (Bland & DeRobertis, 2019). The person has the authority to choose if they will transcend the things that prevent growth, live according to inner values, and pursue inner directions. The personality is informed by a person who seeks to actualize potentials in a stream of experience and within limitless relationships (DeRobertis, 2021; Gibb & Gibb, 1967).

2.2.2   Facing Opposition

Humanistic psychology was the first collaborative effort in Western clinical psychology to explore what emotional phenomena (e.g., empathy, loneliness, anxiety) could mean for the therapeutic process. Over the years, other sciences, such as neuroscience, began investigating emotional phenomena from their separate paradigms. However, fields that adopted an atomized approach in their methods of inquiry experienced stagnation. For instance, exploring, defining, and understanding empathy continues to be challenging because empathy cannot be contained in a single biological, sociological, or evolutionary explanation. Neuroscience may find important physical features within the experience of empathy, such as mirror neurons, but that does not explain empathy. Humanistic psychology had the surest footing for engaging with the nature of empathy because it utilized phenomenological inquiry to understand the meanings of human experience, often through a multidisciplinary approach.

Although humanistic psychologists gained momentum because of their revolution in the 1960s and 1970s, humanistic psychology encountered great difficulties in the 1980s as opponents questioned its scientific rigor and validity as an alternative psychology (DeRobertis, 2022). Many fields

have left the humanistic psychology name out of their paradigm because it tended to attract skepticism and mockery. It was seen as a hippie or outdated soft, unscientific, and overly optimistic psychology.

Scholars in other schools of psychology deemed humanistic psychology to be only a philosophy without the qualifications for being a psychology or science. Even today, the scientific status of humanistic psychology continues to be criticized. The potentials of humanistic psychology, according to DeRobertis (2022), have "thus been made dubious because its more idiographic, existentialist refusal to work within the parameters of what has become standard, customary empiricism has alienated it from the world of essences in psychological research and theory" (p. 8). Humanistic psychologists argue that their approach implies rigor and scientific exploration of the essences of phenomena.

Furthermore, humanistic psychology was not trying to revolt against psychological sciences. Instead, it argued that psychologists needed to be held to higher standards and to engage with their responsibility to the life and psychological phenomena they sought to explore (Bühler, 1967; DeRobertis, 2021). The founders contended that behaviorism and Freudian psychoanalysis were not actualizing the potentials of psychology. Humanistic psychology supported the principles of scientific investigation, quantitative and qualitative research, and even developing innovative research methodologies. The humanistic psychologists knew that to uphold scientific rigor and integrity, they would not just have to modify the dominant schools of psychology but instead needed an entire paradigm shift. This shift would force psychology to face existential givens and psychological realities of human beings, rather than interpretations, concepts, and theories best used to describe other beings.

There were also many distortions, repackagings, and misinterpretations of humanistic psychology. For example, Carl Rogers' clinical research on empathy as a fundamental condition in the therapeutic alliance was misinterpreted as a technique called "last-line therapy," where a therapist could appear empathic if they paraphrased the last words of the client. Many fields promoted empathy as a technique or tactic that one could use to obtain a desired result with a client. Rogers (1980) spent years working to clarify his position, but his approach for empathy as *a way of Being* only reached larger audiences posthumously. Throughout his career, Rogers wanted to refrain from engaging in intellectual battles or using the tactics and language of war. He opened creative possibilities where the conditions for a revolution could blossom.

In addition, humanistic psychology was criticized as narcissistic, but this characterization is false because it is not an unhealthy preoccupation with the self; the paradigm promotes social engagement, altruism, and social justice as processes that resonate with self-actualization (Moustakas, 1992; Serlin, 2011). Humanistic psychology is not over-optimistic because its existential foundations require acceptance of the tragedy and destructive aspects of human nature. Accepting the dark areas of the self and life encourages the person to go deeper and explore potentials. In this, one reveals a sense of courage that aligns with self-actualizing processes. The self-actualizing person is typically involved in causes outside of the self. Engaging with the world integrates areas of the person that reveal new potentials; areas such as spiritual, emotional, interpersonal, and intrapersonal abilities are involved to create meaning from experience and regain the grace reflecting human nature and not society.

With resilience, determination, strong empirical research, and a focus on possibilities, humanistic psychologists gained momentum over oppositions with the aid of cognitive psychology and social movements for civil rights, social justice, and equity. Currently, humanistic psychology has become foundational in fields such as education, child psychology, and nursing. Unfortunately, humanistic psychologists' names remain largely absent from educational materials, such as undergraduate textbooks. In educational psychology texts, humanistic psychology is not explicitly discussed; instead, there is brief coverage of Maslow's Hierarchy of Human Needs and how it relates to learning frameworks. Moreover, many humanistic psychological methods continue to be reduced to techniques or gimmicks – such as fixing a relationship in minutes or curing someone of a particular fear in front of an audience to prove the healer's power. The spectacle still works to convince audiences, where confirmation bias wins out over critical thinking.

Moreover, the humanistic approach still needs to be addressed in child and adolescent developmental research, despite the current trends stressing procedure and predictability (DeRobertis & Bland, 2020). Humanistic theories and approaches may still be too radical to accept them in their intended form. Although oppositions and misunderstandings continue, humanistic psychology has seen more collaboration and consilience from scholars and scientists in diverse fields of research, academia, and medicine (Bland & DeRobertis, 2019). For example, nursing students may seek to understand how empathy has biological effects on recovery. The developing trends in all fields are gravitating toward opening perspectives, with

humanistic psychology continuing to do the same as it explores areas such as spirituality. Humanistic psychology explores potentials of the person and paradigm in the twenty-first century.

2.2.3   Freedom to Be

The humanistic psychology revolution had historical sociocultural effects in the US by helping dissolve perceptual barriers that prevented people from facing existential realities, uncertainties, and taking responsibility for determining the meaning of their lives. To reiterate, Yalom (1985) noted how the humanistic psychologists "rebelled strongly against the mechanistic model of behaviorism, the determinism and reductionism of analytic theory. 'Where,' they asked, 'is the person? Where is consciousness, will, decision, responsibility, and a recognition and concern for the basic and tragic dimensions of existence?'" (p. 496). As a result, more people became open to accepting their mortality. This paradigm shift helped countless people explore the impermanence of life uncertainty with childlike wonder.

Opening one's perspective and worldview means transcending older paradigms, which can be an uncomfortable and disturbing process because

> to grasp the truly cosmic scale of the phenomenon of man, we had to follow its roots through life, back when the earth first folded in on itself. But if we want to understand the specific nature of man and divine his secret, we have no other method than to observe what reflection has already provided and what it announces *ahead*. (de Chardin, 1959, p. 190; italics in original text)

Understanding human nature means exploring relationships with other life, Earth, and the universe. Exploring what it means to be human encourages people to look in the present moment instead of searching in the past or seeking a future. As Kierkegaard (1959) stated, life "must be lived forwards. And if one thinks over that proposition it becomes more and more evident that life can never really be understood in time simply because at no particular moment can I find the necessary resting-place from which to understand it – backwards" (p. 89). The essences of human phenomena can only be revealed in the living moment. Humanistic psychologists work(ed) to support people in understanding the phenomenon of Being in the here and now (Yalom, 1980). Within the existential moment, realizing oneself within the impermanence of life, there is a sense of terror and awe that existence is not a separate or static thing but part of the no-thing-ness: an expression. To remedy this overwhelming feeling or

realization, Western sciences have sought to embrace rationalization to bring a sense of comfort.

Rationalizing through observation can produce neurotic senses of logic that displace freewill and ability. Once rationalization begins, reductionism often follows. It may be easier to buy into collective beliefs that life is mundane, where human nature is primarily violent and cruel, or even that some external force determines lives. However, rationalization of the nature of life often generates frustration or creates obstacles for creating meaning, where free will is often given up in favor of the comfort and security of others' meanings (Frankl, 2006). In reality, the freedom within the processes of human meaning-making is infinite.

In many of the biological sciences, particularly in the neurosciences, there is a trend to reduce emotional phenomena to the product of neurotransmitters, chemicals, and hormones (DeRobertis, 2015). For example, it has been argued that the bond between a person and a dog is the result of oxytocin or that depression is the outcome of low circulation in the brain and insufficient levels of dopamine. Although these are observed cases, they are features, not conclusions about emotional phenomena.

Some scholars may focus on finding the cause of emotional disturbances within the brain as if there were a solution or secret to discover. Yet, the brain cannot function or develop in isolation. Reducing phenomena to just brain processes leaves out limitless personal, relational, and contextual factors. One ceases to understand the phenomenon entirely if it is removed from the contexts and relationships. However, learning that depression results from low dopamine can provide a sense of safety and power to invent therapies to alleviate symptoms or suffering. Neuroscientists can pinpoint traces of a disturbance and figure out how to remedy the neuro-anatomical or chemical issue. Great strides have been made in reducing suffering, yet understandings of emotional disturbances continue to perplex even the most astute scientists and clinicians.

The momentum of scientific rationalization of phenomena has grown in popularity, as "the mainstream of neuroscientific thought has successfully popularized a new, watered-down and muddled form of Cartesianism. According to this view, all aspects of worldly experience are perpetually suspect and subject to doubt until or unless some internal, neurological activity can be found to both justify and explain away their existence" (DeRobertis, 2015, p. 2). This type of scientific reductionism has gained momentum, which can be seen in an argument made by Harari (2019) that human psychology and behavior are basically algorithms which can be hacked.

> In the last few decades research in areas such as neuroscience and behavioral economics allowed scientists to hack humans, and in particular to gain a much better understanding of how humans make decisions. It turns out that our choices of everything from food to meats result not from some mysterious free will but rather from billions of neurons calculating probabilities within a split second. (p. 21)

This understanding of people removes free will and reduces them to be like computers – which is an old reductionist logic that has somehow become revitalized over the years.

However, humanistic psychology argues that living beings are not shells driven by neurons, biological forces other than themselves, or hackable algorithms. Human relationships and potentials are not preprogrammed processes that go through the motions of genetic expressions or predeterminations. Separating the mind and body and using empirical research to justify the paradigm hinders the depth of understanding of human existence (Bradford, 2020). When psychology accepted the biological and cultural aspects of human beings, the humanistic psychologists questioned: *Where was the person in the bio-cultural summations or classifications?* (DeRobertis, 2021).

2.2.4 Expanding the Paradigm

The humanistic psychology revolution vastly expanded the Western cultural paradigm from old conceptions and illusions that impeded the acceptance of existential realities (e.g., death, freedom, isolation, meaninglessness). However, the acceptance of existential realities meant there also needed to be a paradigm shift in the empirical sciences that reduced phenomena to isolated entities. As de Chardin (1959) described, "the investigations of science have proved beyond all doubt that there is no fact which exists in pure isolation, but that every experience, however objective it may seem, inevitably becomes enveloped in a complex of assumptions as soon as the scientist attempts to express it in a formula" (p. 30). To reduce human beings' behaviors, desires, emotions, or thoughts to genes, hormones, neurotransmitters, or chemicals is to make each part of a machine filled with cogs. Empirical research is integral to the scientific community but is most effective through multidisciplinary collaborations representing the contextual realities of the subjects and phenomena under investigation (Schneider, 2019).

Humanistic psychology cautioned against sciences that reduce, atomize, or isolate, which move fields further from understanding (DeRobertis,

2015). People are more than their histories, cultures, biology, and societies, and that the individual "does not necessarily have a singular, self-mind, but may be of many minds, have mixed feelings, contradictory ideas and diverse responses depending on the situation they are in" (Bradford, 2020, p. 339). To exist as a person is not to be a product of history or reified thing, but a stream of becoming, unfolding, blossoming of potentials for a being that *is* and *yet to be* (DeRobertis, 2021; Moustakas, 1992). Within this paradigm, there is courage to accept life's existential givens and impermanence. The person is motivated to embrace the unknown that previously caused anxiety by disrupting certainty and security. Courage is not to be obtained or developed, but is a natural essence of Being, and can be expressed most profoundly through letting go of social concepts and discovering faith in existence. The letting go is a total acceptance of the existential givens and sense of self, to a point where nothing can be worked toward, hoped for, or acquired. Acceptance brings forth the courage that the essence of the organism can only exist in this moment, enduring or enjoying whatever may be. This radical element of humanistic psychology was seen as a threat to the sense of security on which many sciences built their prestige.

Yet, countless people who may feel humanistic psychology is a privileged paradigm continue to live under oppression, threat, and subjugation. Whether it be a person living under an oppressive government regime or a victim of domestic abuse, many have little to no social freedoms. Having been an inmate in the Nazi concentration camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau, psychologist Victor Frankl described how

> everything can be taken from a man but one thing: the last of the human freedoms – to choose one's attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one's own way . . . And there were always choices to make. Every day, every hour, offered the opportunity to make a decision, a decision which determined whether you would or would not submit to those powers which threatened to rob you of your very self, your inner freedom; which determined whether or not you would become the plaything of circumstance, renouncing freedom and dignity to become molded into the form of the typical inmate. (Frankl, 2006, p. 66)

Frankl (2006) helped develop the field of existential psychotherapy, which significantly influenced humanistic psychologists. The humanistic psychological paradigm sought to empower individuals to recognize the threats to human freedom and develop the tools to dismantle them – it would be the only way for a global human community to explore its possibilities.

2.3 Modern-Day Humanistic Psychology

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, humanistic psychologists realized they must revitalize their approach to meet the needs and challenges of the current generation's world (Bland & DeRobertis, 2019). They considered how humanistic psychology can serve and find a place in a world that does not value reflection, empathy, and freewill, but pushes conformity, confirmation bias, and intense gratification of the senses. Some have called for a return to phenomenological or transpersonal traditions.

Twenty-first-century humanistic psychologists have developed empirically based clinical practices grounded in Carl Rogers' person-centered approach (Bland & DeRobertis, 2019). Rogers' influence continues to resonate with contemporary humanistic psychology because of the focus on authentic relationships, empathy, and centering the locus of decision on the client. These person-centered avenues empower the individual to discover meanings just below awareness, become comfortable exploring unknown areas of the self, and cope with life's challenges. The immediate experience is focused not on why people did things but on why they do them now. This generates a sense of self-awareness that clients take with them after a course of therapy.

Many academic and clinical approaches to psychology, education, healthcare, and social services have traces and influences from humanistic psychology. The paradigm has and continues to make lasting changes to explore what it means to exist as a human being and to actualize the person's and community's limitless potentials.

2.4 Actualizing Potentials: The Power of Multiculturalism

The humanistic psychologists were multiculturalists as they synthesized Eastern wisdom within their paradigm – that all things are interconnected and interdependent; pure isolation cannot exist (Bradford, 2020). In the mid twentieth century, new cultural and spiritual paradigms and practices were introduced to Western psychology and culture, such as Taoism, Hinduism, and Buddhism. These helped deconstruct the Western sociocultural forces that caused the estrangement of an individual that results from an over emphasis on exerting power over nature and the self (May, 1953). Humanistic psychology adopted many Eastern spiritual practices, such as mindfulness, to become part of foundational therapeutic practices. By opening up Western cultural perspectives to Eastern philosophies,

humanistic psychologists challenged the illusion of the isolated self (Spinelli, 2019).

Culture is essential to human and nonhuman animal evolution by providing the resources necessary for stimulation, community, and growth. As observed in humans, culture is a facet that has evolved immense complexities in societies that do not have to focus solely on satisfying basic needs (i.e., food, shelter, safety). As an individual is reared in a community, they experience *enculturation*, a process by which culture influences the development of values, beliefs, meaning-making processes, and the formation of neural networks of associations and habits (Lent, 2021). Many cultural values, traditions, and paradigms are taught explicitly. In contrast, other paradigms may transmit them implicitly, but both help the person learn how to function and what role they can take to contribute to society.

It is common for children to formulate their cultural worldview through enculturation. This provides attitudes, values, assumptions, and perceptions of how the world functions through social norms and ethics. Cultural values are engrained in one's daily life; as Habermas (1990) explained, they are "embodied and fused in the totalities of life forms and life histories permeate the fabric of the communicative practice of everyday life through which the individual's life is shaped and his identity secured" (p. 177). It does not prove easy to separate oneself from the practices and perceptions linked to cultural values. Such value orientations influence the meanings behind how to live, which are primarily collective. Those that critically reflect on cultural values and institutions question the self and how the world is perceived. Estrangement from a cultural orientation can thus engender an existential crisis.

Culture creates distinct ways of separating the past and present. Knowing reality by relocating historical authority to the present does not always create an accurate representation from historical memory (Bhabha, 1994). Yet, culture can be determined and created by people in the present in relation to the historical, but not determined by it. In understanding cultures, there is a difference between cultural phenomena and cultural abstractions; Bateson (2000) described

> that our categories "religious," "economic," etc., are not *real* subdivisions which are present in the cultures which we study, but are merely *abstractions* which we make for our own convenience when we set out to describe cultures in words. They are not phenomena present in culture, but are labels for various points of view which we adopt in our studies. (p. 64; italics in original text)

In an interconnecting and interdependent world, the question of relation-
ships to other cultures, peoples, beliefs, values, and histories has caused
discomfort and confusion.

The challenge with research is that what is presented is directly influ-
enced by the world of the writers of history, making it sometimes more of
a reflection of the researcher's paradigm and process of interpretation than
the phenomena under investigation. However, since the turn of the
millennium there have been developments in anthropologies. As Said
(2000) noted, "if we no longer think of the relationship between cultures
and their adherents as perfectly contiguous, totally synchronous, wholly
correspondent, and if we think of cultures as permeable and, on the whole,
defensive boundaries between polities, a more promising situation
appears" (p. 315). One can decontextualize, reduce, and even enact violence
against people (and their history, culture, paradigm) through a scholarly
representation or image which purports to have control and production of
the image (Said, 2001). The result is a degree of estrangement and confu-
sion caused by the presenter.

Social learning is not about associated rewards, but the sociality and
conformity is the motivation: Young apes and children will imitate role
models. De Waal (2016) proposed the idea of *Bonding- and Identification-
based Observational Learning* (BIOL) which refers to the observation that
humans and apes prefer to mimic their own species, especially those they
have close relationships to. For example, female children imitate ape
mothers and learn an immense amount. Both apes and children like to
imitate powerful role models. Animals are not solely driven by instinct or
emotions, but they demonstrate immense inhibitions, within hunting and
even raising their young, yet Western society will not acknowledge this
capacity. De Waal (2016) explained about the phenomenon of culture:

> One can see here the interplay between the redefinition of a phenomenon
> and the quest to know what sets us apart, but also a deeper methodological
> problem, because whether apes imitate us or not is wholly beside the point.
> For culture to arise in a species, all that matters is that its members pick up
> habits from *one another*. (p. 152; italics in original text)

2.4.1   Animal Culture

Historically, Western scholars and scientists (e.g., behaviorism) have
argued that animals are just animated forms of life that can only live in
the moment and are solely driven by preprogrammed genetic instincts. In

this line of thought, animals are devoid of thought, dreams, reflection, memories, desires, imagination, or emotion. Western science held that animals are wild, and humanity is civilized, and this idea became part of the social and cultural fabric (de Waal, 2016). The dichotomy between man and animal reveals that the wildness of animals is beastly, crazy, and without restraint, while civilization has manners, intelligence, rules of behavior, and refinement. The word *animal* continues to have negative connotations when used to describe a person.

Yet, in the year 1952 in Japan, primatologist Kinji Imanishi introduced the world to empirical evidence: Animal cultures exist just as humans do, and they have thoughts and emotions that drive behavior. Imanishi argued that animals, particularly primates, learn habits developed from social relationships, which fosters cultural and group diversities (de Waal, 2016). Although this discovery was widely accepted in Japan for decades, it was considered radical by scholars in the US and Europe. Animal cultures remain controversial in Western societies. As de Waal (2016) stated:

> Naturally, when the first reports of animal culture came along, defined as habits learned from others – from potato-washing macaques and nut-cracking chimpanzees to bubble-net hunting humpback whales – they faced a wall of hostility. One line of defense against this offensive notion was to focus on the learning mechanism. If it could be shown that human culture relies on distinct mechanisms, so the thinking went, we might be able to claim culture for ourselves. Imitation became the holy grail of this battle. (p. 151)

Imitation, meaning replicating observed behaviors, was then redefined into *true imitation*, which meant a being had to intentionally reproduce a certain observed technique associated with a certain goal. The refined definitions sought to keep the lines between humans and animals distinct.

To confirm that true imitation only exists in human beings and not animals (i.e., to prove culture is solely a human thing), experimenters put children against apes in various puzzle tasks. Apes often failed, not because they do not have abilities for learning and adaptation, but because species are more apt to copy their kind – human child to human adult experimenter, not ape to human experimenter. Within a better experimental design, where researchers raised and cared for apes in the same way and environments as children, the apes performed better at imitating human experimenters (de Waal, 2016).

Apes and humans are predisposed to imitate others, most strongly by those who raised them. This is important for understanding the influence

of social institutions on children, such as in public education. Teachers often seek to create their image of success in children, expecting them to fulfill this image by raising performance standards (de Waal, 2016). Teachers are much like researchers, who will label the children or devalue their intelligence because they do not fit the model they seek.

As past generations' static ideas and sciences are dissolved by global integration and technological revolutions, Western science is beginning to broaden its perspective to the profound similarities humans share with animals. To understand, value, and affirm animal cultures, human communities have the potential to progress scientific inquiry, both in method and implications. Societies can learn with scientists about the phenomena and complexity of animal cultures, which will develop an understanding of human cultures, social justice, and equity. From this standpoint, collective efforts can be made to end the exploitation of animals and support their cultures.

Animal cultures can expand the human community's existential paradigm, as animal cultural meanings reflect how they understand the existential givens: death, meaning-making, isolation, and freedom (Yalom, 1980). Existential thought and moral reasoning have been historically exclusive to human beings as defining features of the human condition, yet fields of research (i.e., ethology, neuroscience, biology) continue to find them in both human and animal communities (Bekoff, 2007).

2.4.2 Discrimination

Globalization has increased the complexity and diversity of each human society, which has created more substantial efforts at challenging discrimination, human rights violations, and racial violence (Haynes Writer, 2008). Two notable forms of discrimination have historically challenged minorities and marginalized populations. The first type of discrimination is known as *de jure*, which indicates discrimination based upon law or legislation, such as laws against miscegenation and laws concerning residences, healthcare, and who can be buried in certain cemeteries. This was prominent during the Jim Crow era of slavery, toward Mexican immigrants in the early to mid twentieth century, and in the treatment of Native American tribes during the era of the Indian Removal Act (Cave, 2003). *De jure* segregation before *Brown v. Board of Education* was strongly enforced in US public schools, where Black schools were required to have shorter term lengths than White schools (Liu et al., 2015). This law continued for

decades, creating systemic racial inequities and discrimination, ultimately causing many educational and social disadvantages that a correction in term length would not fix.

The second type of discrimination is *de facto* discrimination, which is not found in any legislation or law, but is practiced by a majority over a minority. *De facto* segregation or structural racism is evident in areas such as culture, education, healthcare, and the criminal justice system, to name a few (Hardeman et al., 2021). In a study by Schleimer et al. (2022), researchers examined measures of racial and economic *de facto* segregation, comparing them to violent crimes across thirteen major cities in the US during the 2020 COVID-19 pandemic. Their findings align with previous research demonstrating the evident socioeconomic and racial differences in violence. The study revealed that news media reported higher levels of violence during the pandemic for marginalized communities. Schleimer et al. (2022) called for a need to develop preventative strategies for violence that address the challenges created or exacerbated by the pandemic, especially for communities of color living in lower-income area codes. In addition, they found that under-served communities have higher levels of violence and that the COVID-19 pandemic caused inequitable impacts, especially in terms of the severity and form of violence people experienced.

De facto and *de jure* racial segregation have deep histories in the US and have deeply affected all levels of culture, especially in the south, where people of color continue to experience inequities in educational services and resources (Morgan et al., 2020). US history has focused on racial divisions between Black and White, while other people of color and racial identity, such as Hispanic or Latino/a people, have been disregarded or deemphasized. The *de facto* racial identity of Mexican-origin people in the US has been seen by scholars as off-White, or in-between White and non-White. The category of Hispanic or non-Hispanic White in the 1980s US census continues to distort this population along the spectrum of Whiteness. Even though Hispanic people were born as US citizens in the twentieth century (*de jure* status), they have faced *de facto* racial discrimination that results in discrimination in education, employment, and housing (Varsanyi, 2020).

2.4.3   Culturalism

Although communities have and continue to work against *de jure* and *de facto* racism, discrimination and hateful attitudes appear to have transformed into culturalism. Although there is no official term, Harari (2015) explored

the concept of culturalism: "Among today's elites, assertions about the contrasting merits of diverse human groups are almost always couched in terms of historical differences between cultures rather than biological differences between races. We no longer say, 'It's in their blood.' We say, 'It's in their culture'" (p. 303). Thus, racist assertions today have no supporting empirical evidence or scientific basis, which leads people to reframe them in terms of culture (Harari, 2019). For example, people will no longer argue that Mexican immigrants that cross the border illegally commit the most crimes in the US because of their genes. Instead, they say Mexican people will commit crimes due to cultural dysfunction. Often, these culturalists seek empirical studies or statistics to support their claims, feeding into their confirmation bias. The confounded and biased conclusions are used to pass judgment on individuals, leaving out personal history, socioeconomic conditions, global politics, and genetic potential to only focus on culture as the impetus for behaviors that deviate from the norm.

Discrimination and violence under *de facto*, *de jure*, or culturalism are dehumanizing – these have no place in a developing global community. However, they remain challenges for human communities because many still have a limited perception of what constitutes as human condition and nature. Scholars "rarely, if ever, consult the vast knowledge of human behavior accumulated in anthropology, psychology, biology, or neuroscience. The short answer derived from the latter disciplines is that we are group animals: highly cooperative, sensitive to injustice, sometimes warmongering, but mostly peace loving. A society that ignores these tendencies can't be optimal" (de Waal, 2009, p. 5). Cultures open up opportunities to explore potentials through relationships, meanings, and personal abilities – a focus on *becoming*. Yet, there is also the potential for a culture to impede growth or development, or cause social unrest when the values do not resonate with communities. DeRobertis (2021) explained that the general US culture of the twentieth century

> was viewed as fraught with contradiction, giving rise to both collectivistic conformity, obedience to authority, and tribalism, as well as blind individualistic rebellion as its counterpoint. In either case, what is excluded is the sense of personal responsibility that is required for genuine relatedness and intimacy. In their place, Western society was left with a growing isolation of morality, loneliness, and alienation that an adequate, mature psychology would have to face. (p. 12)

Social and cultural unrest culminated in the early 1950s and gained significant momentum throughout the 1960s in what became known as

the US Civil Rights movement. Uprisings, protests, activism, boycotts, and democratic participation for racial and social justice took place, advocating for minorities, oppressed, underserved, and marginalized populations, such as Blacks, Latinx, people with disabilities, different sexual orientations, and gender.

The US Civil Rights movement generally reflected the positive aspects of human nature (a quality shared with other nonhuman primates), in which communities will not tolerate oppression and injustice. This intolerance is fueled by the empathy that offers critical perspectives for how life might be experienced as another. Media exposure helped transmit the realities of the racial violence enacted toward minorities to millions worldwide. This media exposure was also leveraged against the US during the Cold War as communist countries purportedly promoted racial equity to win people over (Dudziak, 2000). Protests on college campuses by students, educators, and activists called for a multicultural movement to achieve social justice for oppressed and discriminated minorities, immigrants, and refugees. Hoffman et al. (2019) stated that "it is often the most vulnerable people who have suffered extensively and have no platform to defend themselves that are dehumanized by those in power" (p. 5). The education system has the power to dismantle culturalism and racism, confront widespread biases, and build a sense of community for an equitable society. Education is an institution that can leverage lasting and global changes. Each person can learn to undergo a critical self-analysis of lessons learned early in life about race and culture because these imprints have influenced value and attitude formation (hooks, 2003).

2.4.4   *Leveraging Education*

Multicultural education began as a global movement by scholars such as James Banks in the US and Paolo Freire in Brazil, who sought to empower learners with critical literacies to expose and dismantle oppression, inequity, culturalism, and racism. Empowering minority and marginalized communities meant forming partnerships in which to help them fight for equity in education, where their languages, histories, and cultures were valued in the curriculum (Au, 2014; Nieto & Bode, 2012; Rossatto, 2005; Tanaka-Matsumi, 2011; Young, 2020). Multicultural education develops literacy in systems of oppression and hegemony, in order to learn how to create lasting social changes through democratic participation.

In addition, these processes for social justice were also meant to bring value and dignity to dehumanized populations. As Rogers (1989) described about the person of the future:

> If he can be aware of his hostile impulses, but also of his desire for friendship and acceptance; aware of the expectations of his culture, but equally aware of his own purposes; aware of his selfish desires, but also aware of his tender and sensitive concern for another; then he behaves in a fashion which is harmonious, integrated, constructive. The more he is open to his experience, the more his behavior makes it evident that the nature of the human species tends in the direction of constructive social living. (p. 353)

To leverage these changes, humanistic psychologists knew of the power of education and how cultivating lasting, global changes would need to include youth (Moustakas, 1969). Within public schools, multiculturalism took the form of multicultural education. This paradigm was shaped around the 1970s and 1980s to engage students in real-world challenges and issues. Students learned about and developed skills for negotiating personal and political freedoms, justice, equity, and human rights, as outlined by free nations of the world and the United Nations.

Multicultural education prepares students to value democracy and to learn how to effect social and political changes that reflect humanistic ideals. The National Association for Multicultural Education (2022) described that multicultural education "values cultural differences and affirms the pluralism that students, their communities, and teachers reflect. It challenges all forms of discrimination in schools and society through the promotion of democratic principles of social justice" (para. 1). This approach empowers marginalized populations with the skills, knowledge, and relationships by which to achieve equitable opportunities and representation.

Multicultural education was not meant to achieve a final utopian vision of society, the person, or democracy. Rather, it is a process of change in which youth establish equitable opportunities to discover personal potential and learn skills to create a global community that works to overcome shared challenges together. Multicultural education is not contained within the classroom but enacted in the institution's structure, from teachers, administrators, institutional goals and vision, and state policies.

2.5   Multicultural Education

In schooling, *equity* means that every person has the opportunity for a fair chance to receive learning opportunities, access holistically stimulating curricular materials, engage in highly relevant experiential lessons, and develop social and emotional intelligences. In comparison, *equality* indicates that all students receive the same educational experiences – in which many do not benefit from this model due to social, cultural, and economic limitations. Multicultural education focuses on equity because different schools have unique circumstances that result in inequitable educational experiences, and it seeks to support learners in an educational experience that values subjectivity and contexts.

Equity is important because it acknowledges the socioeconomic, ability, structural, political, and cultural barriers that prevent minority, marginalized, or hidden communities from attaining stimulating developmental opportunities. Multicultural educators work to form partnerships with students, families, social institutions, and the community to dismantle structural inequities and create opportunities and resources for underserved populations. These include bilingual tutoring, specialized services for students with disabilities, financial assistance for minority and immigrant students, after-school programs to develop SEI, or adopting culturally relevant curricular resources. Multicultural education is empowering for all students because it forms partnerships within diverse student communities to learn how to deconstruct racism, culturalism, ageism, ableism, intolerance, ignorance, xenophobia, and discrimination of all forms through the use of critical pedagogies.

Multicultural education is aligned with humanistic psychology in that both paradigms are person-centered, where students' diverse cultures, realities, histories, and knowledge are valued foundations for learning, healing, and growth (The National Association for Multicultural Education, 2022). As a result, students can perceive the meanings and effects of power relationships within the community in the global dynamic. Noddings and Brooks (2017) argued that it is common that we are "guided by ethics of rights and justice, we base our interventions on *assumed* needs and highly generalized principles; we fail to consult the recipients of our care and respond to their *expressed* needs" (p. 16; italics in original text). Community leaders, psychologists, educators, and professionals have the power to increase the quality of life and learning within relationships.

2.5.1 Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

A major factor for why many children are disengaged in schools and why there is cynicism toward education is that the experience presents itself as irrelevant, impersonal, and disconnected from students' realities, interests, desires, and needs (Moustakas & Perry, 1973). The sense of alienation is from the self, social circles, adults, and society. The loss of the self is the most significant way to impoverish a country, as young people find themselves in a living death, where this destruction is the source of anger, violence, or apathy, which becomes everyday life.

In the late twentieth century, one prominent scholar utilized humanistic psychology's person-centered approach to achieve the goals of multicultural education. Gloria Ladson-Billings argued for educators to utilize *culturally relevant pedagogy*, which is a student-centered approach to learning and academic success that develops and affirms diverse student identities and cultural paradigms while also empowering a critical consciousness to expose and dismantle social and cultural inequities (Hammond, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2014). The goal is to "empower students to critically examine the society in which they live and to work for social change. In order to do this, students must possess a variety of literacies: language-based, mathematical, scientific, artistic, musical, historical, cultural, economic, social, civic, and political" (Ladson-Billings, 2001, p. 202). Educators reinvigorate the relevance of academic content by utilizing students' knowledge, values, worldviews, cultural paradigms, languages, experiences, and realities as curricular resources.

To develop culturally relevant pedagogy, the instructor must connect with students on a human level. Moustakas and Perry (1973) argued as follows:

> In no way should human values be neglected. Sensitivity, awareness, uniqueness, responsiveness, respect for the integrity of the learner and his preferences and interest, authenticity, honesty, truth, love; each has its place in everyday meetings and each is more important than the most important fact or skill. In no way should expediency, efficiency, organization, and achievement push the self of the learner away, for the self of the learner is his one unique contribution to humanity, his one tie to meaning and to life. (p. 19)

In education, the person comes before standardized curriculum. Teachers share the disengagement, meaninglessness, and frustrations that most students experience (Noddings, 2006). The key is linking irrelevant curricular material to teachers' and students' interests, challenges, and

identities. Students are not sold on the idea that degrees will bring rewards, but are better off understanding how education entails a lifelong process of creating meaning, developing relationships, and exploring potential.

For implementing culturally relevant pedagogies or initiatives, Minkos et al. (2017) recommended that "new procedures, adequacy of resources, opportunities for ongoing training, and culturally competent supervision should be reviewed by district and building level leaders to ensure that they are in concert with the school's values and mission" (p. 1264). Administrators and leaders are essential for distributing information to higher-level administrators about the effects and efficacy of culturally responsive initiatives. Culturally relevant practices are best implemented systematically to provide feedback and insights that develop strong relationships within the community, ultimately enhancing students' social and emotional development and creating a more comprehensive support system. However, the process is not so much a mechanical approach as it is an ecological approach – an institution is not building machines but providing the conditions in which life can flourish.

When schools reach out to families to learn about their cultural rules and values, educators can develop greater empathic awareness. For example, Valdés (1996) conducted a seminal ethnographic study of ten immigrant families from Mexico to learn about their cultural values and rules. The collectivistic processes of learning in Mexican culture were different than what the individualistic US culture norms promoted. Valdés (1996) found that

> for the individual, tapping the family repository of collective wisdom provided a way of dealing with the unknown and of weighing different possible actions or responses. For the family groups, the sharing of problems and the seeking of advice by different members provided insights into the kinds of problems and issues that could arise for them in the future. Lessons were extracted from mediated experience, and these lessons served as a guiding framework for dealing with the unfamiliar. A complex and multileveled information structure was built from pieces of knowledge contributed by members of the network. These pieces of "knowledge" were in many cases incomplete, distorted, or simply wrong. Within the structure, however, they made sense. They provided direction, and they allowed family members to survive intelligently in a confusing world. (p. 96)

The Mexican families' values and strategies for learning and adapting clashed with the cultural norms in the US The data obtained in the ethnography is important for developing culturally relevant pedagogies

that empathize with the subjective and contextual cultural meanings of students who immigrated from Mexico. The collective wisdom from families is a critical repository for cultural information, which culturally relevant pedagogy values and seeks to use as a curricular foundation. Educators and administrators may offer learning resources that align with the challenges or interests of the learners and tailor instruction to reflect home life values and rules.

Furthermore, since the 1970s, there has been a movement to incorporate and reaffirm Hawaiian culture and language in schools (Fitzpatrick, 2022). Schools have adopted culturally relevant pedagogies for Indigenous languages and cultures in Hawaii to diversify the curriculum and achieve social justice for historically marginalized groups. However, there are many Hawaiian scholars that favor culture-based education over culturally relevant pedagogy. The difference in culture-based education is that it is based on teaching and learning that is not static but developing with cultural languages, values, histories, geographies, knowledges, behaviors, and beliefs. Culture-based education expresses culturally relevant pedagogy but is more progressive in revitalizing and reaffirming cultures that have been oppressed or suppressed through colonization. The expansive nature of culture-based education develops awareness of the self and world; with new experiences that they have the freedom to explore, students "are offered new avenues of expression and new opportunities for exploration and action. Life expands and deepens as children are free to respond, talk back, reach out to touch life, and actualize their potential" (Moustakas & Perry, 1973, p. 2).

2.5.2 Multicultural Considerations

Multicultural education may be a road paved with good intentions, meaning it might not always lead to the destinations it intended to reach. There are many distortions and misinterpretations of its intent that some have used to serve their agendas. To safeguard its ideals, Au (2014) stated that "multicultural education should seek to draw on the knowledge, perspectives, and voices of the actual communities being studied . . . multicultural education has to be based on dialogue – both amongst students and between students and teachers" (p. 84). The focus is on affirming identity, giving value and dignity to diverse perspectives, identities, and personal histories.

For educators to succeed with culturally relevant pedagogies, they must acknowledge the limits and limitations for which they, as professionals,

influence the knowledge shared, discovered, and interpreted in the classroom. There is a necessity to recognize the complicity in continuing bias and inculcating values (hooks, 1994). Multicultural education was created to actualize the potentials of a diverse human community by embracing difference, developing critical consciousness, and empowering students to become creators of knowledge, not just consumers. It is a movement that creates learning opportunities that connect students in a complex and interconnected global community (Sleeter, 2005). As Maslow (1971) noted:

> Self-actualizing people have to a large extent transcended the values of their culture. They are not so much merely Americans as they are world citizens, members of the human species first and foremost. They are able to regard their own society objectively, liking some aspects of it, disliking others. If an ultimate goal of education is self-actualization, then education ought to help people transcend the conditioning imposed upon them by their own culture and become world citizens. (p. 184)

The worldly nature of education and citizenry is a goal of humanistic psychology, in which each person is responsible for which directions the human community will accept.

As humanistic psychology was the Third Force in psychology, some scholars labeled the multicultural movement in psychology as the Fourth Force. According to Hoffman et al. (2019), "The early waves of multicultural psychology tended to emphasize knowledge about cultures rather than skills and competencies in working with difference" (p. 11). Multiculturalism called forth issues of cultural literacy and therapist success with diverse populations, most notably cultural competence.

However, strategies and research to create culturally inclusive therapies cannot single-handedly solve the challenges of inequity because cultures are not the product of socially unjust matters; rather, it is about the power that leverages certain demographics to divert people from understanding the core issues or phenomena at hand. Gorski (2016) asked, "If we are teaching cultural proficiency, are we also teaching equity proficiency – the knowledge and skills required to create and sustain an actively anti-racist, anti-sexist, anti-other-oppressions classroom, school, and society?" (p. 226). Although the intent to develop cultural competences was meant to be growth-promoting, it proved to be

> quite limiting as it further perpetuates the "othering" of peoples' cultural experiences and the "expert stance" of the provider in needing to know the other. It encourages a false sense of efficacy in that an ethnically/culturally diverse workforce is not warranted in the production of competent

European American practitioners. In response to the limitations of cultural competence, attention to the interplay among power, privilege, and oppression and implications is imperative. (Jackson, 2019, p. 38)

Culturally relevant pedagogies need to respond to the unique cultures of students and their rights to achieve equitable opportunities for social and emotional development.

As with any paradigm, multiculturalism has limitations. Humanistic psychology is willing to admit its limitations and be open to transformation, while there is resistance from multicultural scholars. One such limitation of multiculturalism includes essentializing cultures and identities, where people are represented or explained through stereotypical parameters or generalized traits. The focus is on cultural heroes, festivals, and superficial aspects of a culture, which do not represent the nuance, meanings, and perspectives that are ever complex and transforming (Soheilian et al., 2014). These reductions can create distorted curricula and educational materials that feed into misperception, ethnocentrism, division, and ignorance.

Gorski (2016) pointed out that cultural sensitivity is "an important element in a more robust approach to educational equity, so long as we embrace the whole selves of all students rather than assigning them to 'cultural groups' based on single dimensions of their identities" (p. 222). Categorizing groups of people in any form can diminish empathy and dehumanize people by making diversity spectrums homogenous. Many cultural categories are formed to promote cultural competence, yet these remain precarious. There is no evident truth or one established way, for example, to develop a Latinx communication style because there are countless cultural, regional, and personal diversities. Cultural competence approaches typically result in creating stereotypes and essentializing groups of people. Classifications are problematic because "all students are culturally and linguistically diverse relative to one another: No student is culturally and linguistically diverse on her or his own without being compared to somebody else. This raises the questions: Who or what are we attempting to protect with this sort of empty framing?" (Gorski, 2016, p. 222). Searching for a single, enduring, and predictable absolute truth about a group of people is a fruitless endeavor because it always remains in the past and is rarely aligned with the living moment.

Another limitation of multiculturalism is demonstrated when scholars argue for a hierarchy of diversities, where those that experienced the most oppression deserve the most attention. This can be problematic as many

groups worldwide are experiencing oppression, genocide, and exploitation. Serving only one demographic does not represent the spectrum of diversity within that category or umbrella term, which shows that a standardized approach to multiculturalism is a challenge and limitation (Rosen et al., 2017). Categorical discrimination or exclusivity is antithetical to the ideals of multiculturalism, which is meant to be inclusive of all people and acknowledges that each person has a culture and is worthy of contributing to the discourse.

2.5.3 Strength in Numbers

The fight against racial injustice and inequity is arduous, complex, and emotional. There will be greater success in achieving social (and global) justice, equity, and deconstructing oppressive power and hegemony if people worldwide develop SEI that align with humanistic psychology and multicultural paradigms. Enabling all facets of SEI will offer the person transcendental enlightenment so that they can appreciate and value human differences, but, more importantly, value the existential realities that are shared among all beings.

When schools build relationships with students and families, it forms a powerful sense of community, which translates into higher student learning outcomes for all student populations (Minkos et al., 2017). The family provides the school with important information about their child's academic experiences, languages, challenges, cultural norms, and expectations at home and school. Teachers and students form partnerships to reposition themselves to perceive how education connects to the world – a process that generates political and cultural action (Apple, 2018). This also means developing empathic partnerships with marginalized and dispossessed communities to work together against oppressive institutional processes and conditions.

2.5.4 Tolerance

It is important for a person to learn from SEI and to explore the meanings of their diverse social encounters in the world. However, what is often left out of the SEI conversation is the concept of tolerance. *Tolerance* is the ability to manage the uncomfortable emotions that come with opening one's perspective, transcending older ways of knowing or believing, and working toward mutual, growth-promoting understandings. This cannot be achieved in one semester or course but through a lifelong developmental

process. Tolerating the disquiet and discomfort of issues such as race, sexuality, or identity requires emotional management abilities within SEI. The stronger a person's SEI, the more likely they will be able to develop more profound tolerance levels. In addition, tolerance does not have a final level or endpoint. Still, the emphasis is on a lifelong process of exploring and understanding not only the discomforting issues, but, more importantly, why the person feels that way – confronting bias, privilege, and ignorance that are uncomfortable when engaged with.

Tolerance means working toward accepting the profound complexity and uncertainty of phenomena in our social worlds, which are connected deep within the self. Compassion, curiosity, and empathy are the key to developing tolerance. As Rogers (1989) noted, tolerance "means lack of rigidity and permeability of boundaries in concepts, beliefs, perceptions, and hypotheses. It means a tolerance of ambiguity where ambiguity exists. It means the ability to receive much conflicting information without forcing closure upon the situation" (p. 353).

However, one must be careful not to succumb to the one-upmanship of tolerance, another limitation within multicultural education. Many seek to become more tolerant than others, where they seek to develop an image of the self that can attain the highest level of tolerance. However, this ultimately negates the whole idea of tolerance because by being better than others, they exclude, categorize, and discriminate. The most tolerant person can then only seek a static category that contains this tolerant self, removing themselves from the reality of a complex and diverse world.

2.5.5 Singled Out

Multiculturalism is not about alienation or dividing people with labels. Sometimes there will be excessive praise or interest, singling out a culturally diverse person. The result is typically a condescending and dehumanizing celebration of cultural stereotypes. This alienates the person from the group, causes embarrassment and shame, and even reinforces stereotypes. In addition, celebrating one person or cultural aspect evokes a tourist paradigm, where cultural elements are novel or entertaining. This distorts value for the person and cultural meanings (Granger, 2019). Singled out, the person feels reduced to their culture and only valued for those aspects. The result can be a deep sense of loneliness. Utilizing cultural humility, people greet others with dignity and empathy – where curiosity and value are given to each person's complex identity.

A *dialogic* approach is necessary when two people from differing cultural paradigms enter a clinical or educational encounter – which means that the worldviews are different in terms of interpreting the meanings of phenomena due to cultural relativism, but there is a mutually agreed-upon ongoing conversation aimed at understanding, empathically listening, and openness to different perspectives. Here, even the silences have meaning, and each person seeks to understand the cultural meanings behind words, behaviors, and values. In this dialogic approach, the conflicts in cultural values and meanings can prevent the unfolding of the relationship's potential. Similar to cultural and color blindness, being oblivious to the differences in cultural meanings and values can cause unintended harm or evaluation, both of which are detrimental to the relationship.

2.6   Multicultural Directions

The momentum of the multicultural movement in psychology is reflected in many social institutions and psychological organizations worldwide, notably the American Psychological Association (APA). Since the turn of the twenty-first century, the APA has been attuned to the cultural diversification of the US They began by implementing a task force in the late 1980s for engaging and serving ethnic minority populations. In 2017, the APA published the *Multicultural Guidelines: An Ecological Approach to Context, Identity, and Intersectionality* to not only update antiquated multicultural resources but also include new understandings and concepts, such as intersectionality (Johnson & Vallejos, 2019). Then in 2019, the APA created the Race and Ethnicity Guidelines, and then the Resolution on Human Rights in 2021. These changes were member-driven, and the APA administration responded by implementing training that could develop their organization to serve a greater multicultural community (i.e., in membership, including diverse psychologists and clients). Yet, these efforts are only beginnings, and the multicultural components of APA training and guidelines are still not enough to transform how psychology is practiced and conceptualized. Through its trials to become multiculturally oriented, the APA (2021) recognized that it

> failed in its role leading the discipline of psychology, was complicit in contributing to systemic inequities, and hurt many through racism, racial discrimination, and denigration of people of color, thereby falling short on its mission to benefit society and improve lives. APA is profoundly sorry, accepts responsibility for, and owns the actions and inactions of APA itself,

the discipline of psychology, and individual psychologists who stood as leaders for the organization and field. (para. 1)

This apology to people of color was followed by action to re-evaluate practices and implement new initiatives to bring equity and social justice to psychology. Bhabha (1994) argued that culture emerges in the face of existential problems and challenges related to race, class, and even nation: "Yet the reality of the limit or limit-text of culture is rarely theorized outside of well-intentioned moralist polemics against prejudice and stereotype, or the blanket assertion of individual or institutional racism – that describe the effect rather than the structure of the problem" (p. 34). One issue with cultural differences is that scholars only acknowledge cultural interactions at the cultural boundaries, where cultural meanings and values are often misunderstood and symbols misused (Bhabha, 1994).

There is still much to be understood, and creating culturally sensitive services takes time, research, implementation, feedback, and revision. Thus, there are many limitations within the multicultural movement in psychology. For example, the discord among schools and fields of study and practice often precludes development. Where one succeeds, the other lags, and vice versa – the divisions among academic fields are limitations for deepening understandings and approaches to phenomena, such as with SEI. A viable solution is to fuse multiculturalism with humanistic psychology to emerge with the needs and realities of an integrating global society.

2.7 Developing a Multicultural Humanistic Psychology

The current global challenges can only be successfully overcome with collaborations and consilience among diverse fields of research and study. Therefore, a theoretical foundation should reflect the interconnecting and complex relationships it seeks to understand. The strengths of humanistic psychology are supported by its existential and phenomenological foundations while bringing in Eastern philosophical paradigms (Kazanjian, 2023). Multiculturalism shares similar goals for assisting marginalized communities in reaffirming dignity, freedom, and equitable opportunities for culturally relative self-actualization. The strengths of multiculturalism are demonstrated within the field of education, where students develop a critical consciousness for creating a humane community.

Humanistic psychology can benefit from multiculturalism's critical consciousness to assist practitioners and educators in developing cultural

humility and participating in democratic change. Empathy continues to be reduced to a strategy/tactic, and multiculturalism can problematize the reductionist perceptual lenses of cultures to open diverse empathic encounters. According to Watters (2010):

> We should worry about this loss of diversity in the world's differing conceptions and treatment of mental illness in exactly the same way we worry about the loss of biological diversity in nature. Modes of healing and culturally specific beliefs about how to achieve mental health can be lost to humanity with the grim finality of an animal or plant lapsing into extinction. And like those plants and animals, the diversity in the human understanding of the mind can disappear before we've truly comprehended its value. (p. 7)

The diversity of cultural meanings for psychological phenomena is key to understanding emotional experiences.

The speed at which the world changes does not leave time or opportunity to understand how things change – all that seems possible is viewing the psychological effects in retrospect. Western diagnostic criteria are laden with cultural assumptions that can impede clinicians from engaging in profound empathic encounters for knowing the realities of culturally diverse patients. If cultural diversity holds potential for the human community's processes of actualization, then humanistic psychology must be fused with multiculturalism.

Multicultural humanistic psychology is a theoretical foundation that seeks to engage with the culturally relative self-actualization processes of the individual and community through the diverse spectrum of multicultural features so that wellbeing and SEI flourish. This paradigm synthesizes the strengths of both humanistic psychology and multicultural paradigms to support clinicians and educators in engaging with psychological, social, and emotional phenomena in the rapidly changing world. The processes of *culturally relative self-actualization* are paramount for multicultural humanistic psychology because they are the paths via which the person fulfills and transcends fundamental psychological, physiological, self, and group needs as they are meaningful to a person's personal and contextual relationships in a cultural paradigm.

Culture is a fundamental aspect of psychology because it "provides a vast storehouse of tools to think and act with. While such tools/solutions routinely need modification because humans must constantly deal with changing circumstances, human infants do not encounter a world created *de novo* just for them" (Cole & Packer, 2011, p. 138). As a result, "Culture

forms our beliefs. We perceive the version of reality that it communicates. Dominant paradigms, predefined concepts that exist as unquestionable, unchallengeable, are transmitted to us through the culture" (Anzaldúa, 1987, p. 16). Cultural wisdom scaffolds learned knowledge and experience so that newer generations can adapt to the new challenges of the world.

However, studies have shown that the more time people spend with out-group members, the more ethnocentrism decreases, which has been the trend of the integrating global community (Harari, 2019). According to Keith (2011), ethnocentrism appears "to be a universal human phenomenon. We have seen that ethnocentrism may take different forms – specifically with or without hostility toward out-groups – but always involving the tendency to evaluates one's own group (in-group)" (p. 29). Ethnocentrism is an important feature of the human condition that cannot be ignored but mindfully addressed through a multicultural humanistic psychological paradigm. This framework seeks to foster collaboration and dialogue among the academic disciplines and research fields to better understand the social and emotional phenomena associated with ethnocentrism.

Multicultural humanistic psychology is not about validating Western cultural paradigms so that a new theory can be prepackaged and distributed globally. Rather, it is a way to awaken the potential of consilience, recognize and transcend limitations, and acknowledge that the two diverse fields are more relevant to global challenges, together. The foundations of multicultural humanistic psychology are as follows:

- Diverse and complex cultural paradigms are integral resources for expanding perspectives on what it means to actualize potentials of humanity.
- Human diversities cannot be reduced to their parts. Cultures are complex, intersectional, and constantly evolving. Cultural differences are traces of human phenomena, in which there is an infinite amount. These cultural phenomena are explored to reveal the human condition.
- It is the responsibility of human beings to establish dignity, equity, social justice, and freedom for all groups, especially for those that are marginalized. It is necessary to empower communities with a critical consciousness to become literate in local and global realities.
- Multicultural education, critical pedagogies, and culturally relevant curriculum are humanistic vehicles that empower children to dismantle inequities, prejudices, and discrimination that marginalize and subjugate people in the community and worldwide.

- It is our responsibility to empower children with the skills and knowledge in which to take responsibility of an interdependent and interconnecting global community, where not only human societies are cultivated to flourish, but also animal, [bird], ecological, fish, and insect communities, to name a few.
- Human beings are able to make choices and determine meaningful ways of living that are constructive, growth promoting, and inclusive. All cultural meanings are valuable when they promote meaning-making, wellbeing, growth, community, and holistic health. Collective meaning-making generates cultural expressions which explore existential concerns.
- Culturally relative self-actualization processes are promoted and achieved in the cultural paradigm that defines its terms. Each culture provides a valuable perspective on what it means to be fully human and the processes necessary to achieve potentials.
- Identity is intersectional, interdependent, and based upon the meanings we choose to create. Multiculturalism enhances our understanding of ourselves, our ability to be empathic, and enlightens us on what it means to be fully human (Kazanjian, 2021, p. 39).

These guiding principles facilitate the actualization of the potentials of multicultural humanistic psychology. The foundations of multicultural humanistic psychology will guide this book's exploration of the social and emotional intelligences.