

KNOW YOURSELF: PSYCHOLOGICAL CONCEPTS OF THE HUMAN BEING APPLIED IN HELPING PROFESSIONS USING THE EXAMPLE OF COACHING

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Purpose: The paper presents selected psychological concepts supporting the professional work of a coach as well as supporting representatives of other helping professions. The aim of the article is to indicate how many psychological sources are already present in coaching practice and to describe those which are most important for its practice.

Design/methodology/approach: Coaching is a new form developmental approach to working and interacting with other people. In the article, I use the method of comparative analysis.

Findings: According to the authors, it is an unjustified conclusion to connect coaching with only the humanistic-behavioral approach. Consequently, the authors' aim is to convince the reader that coaching uses many psychological and psychotherapeutic approaches, while the aim of this text is to organize them and to indicate how various concepts can support coaches and other helping professionals. The first part of the article explains the concept of coaching and its relation to philosophy, psychology and psychotherapy. This is followed by a description of the psychological concepts and methods, with an indication of their possible application in coaching.

Research limitations/implications: The research is limited to the analysis of the impact of broadly understood humanistic knowledge on the quality of the coach's work and coaching as a modern/new form of helping profession.

Practical implications: This text proves that coaching uses psychological concepts/positions and philosophical theories. These become a specific theoretical and scientific basis for coaching.

Social implications: Coaching is a subdisciplinary practical discipline drawing from humanistic knowledge: psychological and sociological.

Originality/value: Coaching is a new form of the helping professions. The article explains the concept of coaching and its relation to philosophy, psychology and psychotherapy. This is followed by a description of the psychological concepts and methods, with an indication of their possible application in coaching.

Keywords: practical philosophy, history of philosophy, coaching, psychological concepts of human being, Socrates.

Category of the paper: review article.

1. Introduction

The paper discusses selected psychological concepts of the human being which can be used in helping professions. These approaches may be important in the work of coaches, school guidance counsellors, tutors, guardians, community workers, job counsellors and philosophical counsellors. The authors of the paper focused on the example of coaching because coaching is sometimes described as a different way of working with the client compared to the psychological and therapeutic approach (cf. Starr, 2015). The aim of the paper is to indicate how many psychological sources are already present in coaching practice and to describe those (both historical and more recent) which are most important for its practice. The authors refer to the psychological concept types described, among others, by Józef Koziński (2000), i.e. to the psychoanalytic, behavioural, cognitive and humanistic-existential approaches, at the same time performing analyses from the angle of contemporary psychology, i.e. for example that in which psychoanalytic assumptions are challenged as unscientific or in which empirical research is conducted in order to confirm or refute assumptions adopted in the history of psychology concerning human functioning (cf. Grzesiuk, 2006; Paruzel-Czachura, 2015).

It can be assumed that one of the objectives pursued by helping professions, including that of a psychologist, a psychotherapist or a coach, is the philosophical *gnōthi seauton* (know yourself), to be able to provide effective professional support. Initially, this Greek maxim was inscribed in the Temple of Apollo at Delphi, and although the relevant fragment has not survived to this day, Socrates, who repeatedly referred to it, and Plato, who wrote down the thoughts of this ancient master of method¹, contributed to the current situation, in which the aphorism is considered an important element of practice in modern-day helping professions (cf. Negri, 2016). All these professions can be based on different concepts of the human being. It is not the case that a specific concept is characteristic of a given helping profession. For example, according to the authors, it is an unjustified conclusion to connect coaching with the humanistic-behavioural approach. Consequently, the authors' aim is to convince the reader that coaching uses many psychological and psychotherapeutic approaches, while the aim of this text is to organise them and to indicate how various concepts can support coaches and other helping professionals in their work.

¹At present, Plato's dialogues are a significant source of knowledge about Socrates and his teachings. It is worth mentioning at this point that due to the philosophical method applied by Socrates, he is nowadays referred to as the first coach in history. The certain relevance between the approach adopted by Socrates in ancient times and the job of a coach as a contemporary form of a helping profession is described by Artur Negri in the article entitled *Dialog Sokratejski w coachingu* [*Socratic dialogue in coaching*].

The first part of the article presents an attempt to explain the concept of coaching and its relation to philosophy, psychology and psychotherapy (cf. Musioł, 2018a, p. 150). This is followed by a description of the psychological concepts of the individual (psychoanalytic, behavioural, cognitive as well as humanistic-existential ones), with an indication of their possible application in coaching using examples of specific psychotherapeutic concepts and methods. The authors devote most attention to the humanistic concepts, as they have had the greatest impact on contemporary coaching, but also indicate other areas of psychotherapy which coaching makes use of (Scoular, 2014, pp. 157-177; Gornall, Bird, 2015), often ignoring their psychological sources (Kozielecki, 2010). In the conclusion, the authors indicate why it is important to constantly refer to psychological theories in helping professions, as well as describe the limitations of their analyses and further directions of their development.

2. The relationship of coaching to philosophy, psychology and psychotherapy – the human being as a shared subject of interest

When writing about psychology and coaching, it is impossible to ignore the source from which they both stem, namely philosophy. Philosophers have been developing their science for over two thousand years now, analysing different aspects including nature, God, soul, the human being, and language. Thus, a certain problem still exists when it comes to defining philosophy in a manner satisfactory to all researchers, especially since it has undergone a huge transformation over these two thousand years. Arno Anzenbacher once wrote that „every branch of philosophy is ultimately about the human being” (Anzenbacher, 1992, p. 239). Similarly, psychology, psychotherapy, as well as coaching refer to philosophy to a significant extent, giving priority to the question concerning the human person. The difference between them is related mainly to the time when the relevant approaches appeared and their role in the world of science and practice.

It is commonly said, when comparing psychology to philosophy, that „psychology has an long past but a short history” (Stachowski, 2000, p. 12). If we wanted to honestly pinpoint the place of coaching in this relationship, coaching would be the most recent practice, which emerged in the mid-1970s². This does not mean that coaching, or for that matter psychology, had not been practised before. The coaching methodology had started to be applied much earlier, but coaching began to be referred to relatively late as a helping profession, i.e. a process

² Coaching has been described as a profession since the 1970s. At that time, exactly in 1974, Timothy Gallwey's book was published under the meaningful title *The Inner Game of Tennis*. It connected the world of business to the results achieved by athletes working with their coaches. The systematic cooperation between business managers and sports coaches became a distinctive fashion back in the day. At the subsequent stages of coaching development, sports coaches were replaced by psychologists and trainers. Currently, the roles associated with the function of coach and trainer differ slightly, although the two words tended to be commonly used as synonyms in English.

that helps to realise some elementary yet vital components of human existence, often difficult to identify.

Psychology is the science of individual behaviour and mental processes (Zimbardo, Johnson, McCann, 2010), and psychotherapy is a process of treatment or development of the individual, based on the results of scientific research conducted in the field of psychology (Paruzel-Czachura, 2015). This does not mean that psychologists do not engage in practical activities, as they also support people, although not in the therapy process, but rather through prevention and education, for instance. Psychologists can also be psychotherapists, but they do not have to. Psychotherapists, on the other hand, do not need to have a psychological education, although it is recommended. In Poland, a psychologist holds a master's degree (having completed a course lasting usually five years), and a psychotherapist is a specialist who completed a four-year psychotherapy course after obtaining a master's degree. However, it happens in practice that people refer to themselves using these terms without meeting the requirements recommended by the Polish Psychological Society in the Code of Ethics of the Psychologist's Profession (cf. Brzeziński, Chyrowicz, Toeplitz-Winiewska, Poznaniak, 2017).

Authors of the article will subsequently focus on explaining what coaching is, referring the reader to the source mentioned above. In order to understand the relationships between coaching, philosophy and psychology, it is necessary to acknowledge that coaching is based on philosophical as well as on psychological and psychotherapeutic concepts, focusing on the practical development of the individual.

Coaching was born as a form of practical continuation of philosophical, psychological and psychotherapeutic thought. It usually takes the form of a processual relationship, developing over time, of the alliance between the coach and the coachee (Whitworth, Kimsey-House, Kimsey-House, Sandahl, 2010). The term „professional coach” is usually used to describe someone who uses professional methods, tools and techniques in their work that are appropriate for coaching, skilfully separating them from strictly advisory, training, consulting, therapeutic and mentoring services. A future coach acquires the appropriate competences in the course of higher education in the field of coaching. These are usually full-time or part-time studies lasting from one year (for instance in the case of postgraduate studies) to several years (bachelor's and master's studies). The following types of coaching are distinguished most often: *life coaching*, *business coaching*, *corporate coaching*, *executive coaching*, *career coaching*, *leadership coaching* and *team coaching* (Wilson, 2010). Regardless of the type of coaching practised, any coaching practice requires the coach to comply on an obligatory basis with the Code of Ethics for the coaching profession³.

The essence of this dialogical meeting consists in a gradual, step-by-step, multi-phase process of self-cognition on the part of the coachee as a result of active work on selected levels of his or her existence. The coaching process is an interactive procedure in which the coach,

³ Coaches' work pursued in each of the coaching types listed above is regulated by the provisions of the Code drawn up by the *International Coach Federation* (ICF), whose members are professional coaches. The organisation's headquarters are in Lexington, USA.

using methods and systems of tools⁴ characteristic of coaching (cf. Scoular, 2014, pp. 157-177; cf. Gornall, Bird, 2017), supports their client in genuine participation and assessment of the quality of various areas of his or her life in a *pro futuro* context. The work of a coach focuses on various spheres of the coachee's life. The coach supports the client in identifying individual, more or less significant components of his or her life; releases energy in the client helping the latter to recognise his or her own axiological horizon, including both the sphere of declarative values and that of the ones actually put into practice; the coach also supports change design processes, and consequently also the process of setting the paths to reach a specific *scopus*. The coach focuses on analysing the environment in which the client lives, his or her behaviour, abilities, competences and skills, beliefs and values, identity, vision, mission and life purpose (cf. Musioł, 2018b, pp. 279-290; Dilts, 2003). Each of these levels fosters cognitive participation in various spheres of life by referring to a selected/different coaching level. These levels are usually defined as operational, competence, psychological and transformational coaching (cf. Świeży, 2017; Czarkowska, 2014, pp. 85-103, Baca-Lönn, 2014, pp. 129-144, Dąbrowska, Wiśniewska 2014, pp. 169-200).

To sum up, this paper assumes that the task of obtaining knowledge about the human being is pursued by philosophy, psychology and psychotherapy as well as coaching. Philosophy and psychology seek to give a scientific answer to this question (remaining more in the realm of science theory), while psychotherapy and coaching reduce this question more to practice: through the process of self-cognition, the client obtains a chance to accept themselves or change. Coaching is therefore, like psychotherapy, a meeting (or a series of meetings) with the client, whose objectives may include improved self-acceptance, a subjective feeling of happiness, regaining mental health or coping with one's life. A distinct practical difference between psychotherapy and coaching is that a psychotherapist usually works with mentally ill individuals who suffer from certain disorders or dysfunctions that prevent them from functioning in life in a satisfactory manner. It may be anorexia, but also a situation of divorce, mourning, or marital conflict. The work of a coach, on the other hand, involves the development of a mentally healthy individual, through acceptance-based support given to the individual in their life choices or in important decisions. However, this is a simplified vision, as psychotherapists also work with people who want to realise their potential, redefine their values and improve their perceived quality of life. Coaches, on their part, also happen at times to work with people in divorce situations, etc. The difference between the goals of psychotherapy and coaching may therefore become blurred in practice. The same is true of their clients.

⁴ Professional coaches rely most often on their work on individual coaching structures (GROW, T-GROW, SCORE, SKILLED HELPER, as well as the popular STEPPPA structure, which takes into account the element of goal reformulation and work on values and emotions) or on group/team coaching structures (COACH, STORM, GOLD, DROPS and STAGES). These structures have varying degrees of complexity, covering different aspects or levels of life of individual or collective clients (groups or teams).

To sum up, it is difficult to indicate unambiguous definitions of the concepts analysed, because there are situations in which their objectives, assumptions and working methods are very similar. Nevertheless, in very simple terms, coaching can be described as based on philosophy, psychology and psychotherapy, focusing rather on supporting individual development, while psychotherapy can be described as being based on philosophy and psychology, with the aim of restoring the individual's functioning to a normal level. Below, significant psychological concepts of the human being are described, using the division suggested by Koziellecki (2010), applied in psychotherapy practice and potentially equally important in coaching practice.

3. Can a coach continue to draw inspiration from scientifically refuted psychoanalysis?

When describing the psychological approaches to the individual, it is first worth looking at the psychoanalytical concept, as this is the oldest psychotherapeutic vision of the individual, perceiving the latter as an imperfect and flawed being, guided by internal, usually unconscious motivating forces. The author of this approach was the founding father of psychoanalysis, Sigmund Freud (1967), who referred to ancient philosophical systems, including Plato. The Austrian psychiatrist and neurologist, who valued natural sciences, wrote that the only purpose of his life was to „infer or guess how the mental apparatus is constructed and what forces interplay and counteract in it” (Skinner, 1956, p. 77, quoted in: Paszkiewicz, 1983, p. 121). Freud concluded that the structure of the human consciousness (the mental apparatus was usually explained as a combination of id, ego, and superego⁵) is like Plato's chariot pulled by two winged horses and driven by a charioteer. While one horse is disobedient and stubborn, symbolically expressing the activity of base motives, the other is composed and calm, symbolizing the noble aspirations of the soul (Plato, 1993, p. 35). The self, just like Plato's chariot, is a “regulator of opposing inclinations” (Grobler, Koczanowicz, 2016, p. 41). In the Freudian approach, human behaviour is irrational, albeit fully pre-determined, so this irrationality can be predicted with a certain pattern of behaviours. The father of psychoanalysis tried to describe this pattern, and the concepts that were developed on the basis of his deliberations included that of the Oedipus and Electra complex (being a manifestation of the sexual drive, i.e. the libido), the drive for death and aggression (the idea of *Thanatos*), as well as the huge impact of childhood on adult life. However, these concepts are now perceived merely as a part of the history of psychotherapy, and modern psychotherapists no longer make literal use Freud's approach in their work, even though psychotherapy still draws on some of the findings of the psychoanalytical school. With time, the approach kept changing, creating new branches such as the psychodynamic school (cf. Nieckarz, Celińska-Nieckarz, Godlewska-

⁵ According to Bruno Bettelheim (1983), this explanation is incorrect. The correct one is the human soul.

Werner, 2013, pp. 35-36), Alfred Adler's individual psychology, Carl Gustav Jung's analytical psychology, and neops psychoanalysis (Grzesiuk, 2006; Jacobi, 2014). Some of these branches are currently considered merely a part of the history of psychotherapy, just like psychoanalysis. It should be emphasised that many of Freud's views have been refuted for lack of scientific evidence, subjectivity, and unethical actions in the process of psychotherapy and in his scientific activity (Witkowski, 2015; Prochaska, Norcross, 2006). Still, however, the Freudian philosophical concept of the individual may provide inspiration for contemporary coaches. Why is that?

It could seem that human nature understood in this manner has nothing to do with the coaching process. In coaching, emphasis is placed primarily on the possibility of changing, on individual responsibility and freedom, as opposed to classical psychoanalysis, in which determinism is the core of the vision of the individual.

However, two aspects can be indicated that may be used in the coaching process and have their sources in psychoanalysis. Firstly, in the sphere of coaching work, the psychoanalytical approach supports activities consisting in becoming conscious of the unconscious: gaining knowledge about one's own unconscious behaviour, ways of acting, feelings, emotions, motivations and thoughts. Secondly, it also helps in the identification of the psychological phenomenon of transference (projection⁶) and countertransference; as well as in recognising the phenomenon of natural resistance to change. It can be helpful for the therapist to adopt the blank screen approach (Paruzel-Czachura, 2015), and to use a couch separating the therapist from the patient, so that the patient obtains a chance to redirect his or her experiences related to some other individual from the past to the therapist, which can in turn help in the process of treatment and proper interpretation of the patient's problem. Therefore, while most of Freud's concepts have been refuted by empirical research, psychology still recognises the existence of certain defensive mechanisms that provide helpful terminology in attempts to explain human behaviour.

4. Deterministic behaviourism vs indeterministic coaching

The second concept of the individual after psychoanalysis is the behaviourist approach. The mechanistic behaviourist concept dehumanizes the individual and makes him or her dependent on the influence of genes and of the physical and social environment, pointing in a way to outer-direction, lack of autonomy and being determined by external factors (Kozielecki, 2010). According to the father of behaviourism, John Broadus Watson, and his continuator Burrhus Frederic Skinner, the autonomous individual is a myth. The overriding principle of behaviourism is environmental determinism, and the human mind is like a closed

⁶ Projection as an unconscious defence mechanism is a habitual method of "dealing with conflicts" (Kozielecki, 2000, p. 117). It consists in projecting personal negative traits on another individual.

box one must cease to try to open, focusing instead on what is observable as human behaviour understood in terms of stimulus and response. Behaviourists believed that personality is a set of consolidated behavioural habits, not a result of operation of internal human processes. Charles Duhigg (2013) analysed the contemporary concepts in scientific research on the power of habit.

Can coaching draw inspiration from another deterministic psychotherapeutic approach (after psychoanalysis)? It may be valuable for the coaching process to emphasise the role of the external environment in the formation of human behaviour, thoughts and emotions. Although this role will not be as significant as behaviourism would like it to be (i.e. 100%), it is worth referring in coaching to the concept of the so-called positive and negative reinforcements (commonly referred to as awards and penalties), i.e. to instrumental conditioning (cf. Paruzel-Czachura, 2015). The idea of conditioning can be helpful in the development of new behaviours by the client. It should be stressed that the source of reinforcement (rewards) may be sought in what is referred to as self-reinforcement, i.e. positive thoughts about oneself (Bandura, 1977).

Moreover, during coaching sessions it is possible to use the modelling phenomenon known from the social psychology branch, albeit with reference to the influence of external stimuli on the individual. It allows the client, by observing a person who, in his or her opinion, has achieved a goal like the one pursued, to start imitating the model and achieve similar success (Bandura, Walters, 1959).

Behaviouristic techniques such as systematic desensitisation can also be used successfully in coaching (Wolpe, 1969). This consists in inducing a state of relaxation in the client in order to present stimuli to them that cause their fear (gradually, slowly, in an increasingly strong form). As such attempts intensify, the likelihood of anxiety disappears. This method can be used not only in real life, especially since sometimes one does not have the opportunity to attend a preliminary job interview before the actual one, for instance, but also in one's imagination or as part of an enacted scene. The implosive technique is like this, consisting in the client being immediately exposed to a strong stimulus causing their fear (e.g. you can ask them what the worst thing is that could happen during a job interview). In coaching, one speaks of working with the Kantian schematism paradigm⁷, referring precisely to this behaviourist technique. In order to support the client in getting rid of harmful habits, aversion therapy may be applied, which consists in associating undesirable habits (e.g. beer drinking) with negative stimuli (e.g. emetics), which leads to the association of two stimuli, so that the undesirable habits are no longer repeated (cf. Paruzel-Czachura, 2015).

⁷ Schematism is reflected in the "taming the tiger" allegory. The tiger reflects the patterns of thinking which we engage in and which often increase our feelings of fear, tension or anxiety. The only way of overcoming these mental states is to address them boldly by trying to stand face to face with them. By taming these fears (as the trainer tames the tiger), we notice that we can live with them, and then they become less terrible than they seemed at the beginning.

5. Closer to coaching – cognitive psychotherapy

In the coaching process, elements of cognitive psychology are used successfully in terms of shaping the client's thinking styles and in altering their thought patterns. Psychoanalysis and behaviourism are based on a deterministic concept of the individual. Cognitive therapy, on the other hand, assumes that our thoughts can influence what we do, so it allows indeterminism to enter, in a way, into our way of thinking about who we are. Consequently, it has become a great source of inspiration for coaching.

This approach gives the individual the philosophical status of an autonomous subject: a person that freely controls their fate; a being who defines himself or herself according to their own idea, independently and unhindered by unconscious drives or environmental factors; a person endowed with intelligence, with the ability to think abstractly, who „receives, stores, interprets, creates and communicates information (knowledge, data) through language/speech, giving them a certain value (meaning, sense), building culture” (Koziellecki, 2000, p. 170). In the perspective of cognitive psychotherapy, the subject perceives and consciously changes their thoughts using the power of their intellect.

The best-known within this trend are Albert Ellis's rational emotive therapy and Aaron Temkin Beck's cognitive therapy (cf. Paruzel-Czachura, 2015). The first psychotherapist mentioned above focused on dysfunctions of cognitive processes, on irrational thinking and on the fight against it (Ellis, 2013). Examples of unhealthy thinking include phrases such as “I will never be happy”, “If I had done that, everything would be better now”, or “I always have to win”. The second psychotherapist focused on erroneous cognitive patterns and on inappropriate ways of interpreting events, such as Beck's famous negative triad: when people with depressive disorders see themselves, the world and the future negatively. The task of the therapist and of the coach is therefore to bring about a situation in which the client does not make unreasonable conclusions, does not select facts in a biased manner, does not generalise, exaggerate and underestimate the problem, and finally does not look at the world pessimistically (Kratochvil, 2003, p. 83). Beck is also the author of the Socratic dialogue method, making use of the open dialogue method mentioned before, which Socrates applied in Plato's dialogues, and whose aim is to allow the interlocutors to reach legitimate conclusions themselves (cf. Reale, 2000, p. 371). The coach, practising Socratic maieutics, i.e. “spiritual midwifery” (Reale, 2000, p. 379), is to become like a midwife helping a woman bear a child, i.e. to help the client discover the problem and solve it on their own. This trend also involves self-instruction training, which consists in teaching clients to say phrases about themselves in their mind, which helps to constructively modify their behaviour, and stress-resistance training (Meichenbaum, 1975, 1985). Both types of training can be used in the coaching process.

6. Humanistic and existential concepts for coaching process practice

The final group of psychotherapeutic approaches described in this paper involves the area of humanistic and existential therapies. Psychologists explain the differences between these approaches, although they are described at times as a more similar branch of psychotherapy (Grzesiuk, 2006) and at other times as a separate method of working with people (Prochaska, Norcross, 2006). This includes the following therapies: Carl Rogers's client-oriented therapy, Victor Frankl's logotherapy, Irvin Yalom's existential psychotherapy, and Gestalt therapy developed by Fritz Perls and his collaborators. The humanistic approach to the individual psychology was also present in books by Abraham Maslow, Gordon Allport and Kazimierz Dąbrowski in Poland.

This approach is characterised by a philosophy of affirmation of the individual, emphasising the value – assuming a process – of striving towards self-fulfilment. According to this trend, humans are by their nature good, unique, autotelic and, above all, free. They have a chance of changing and this change depends to the greatest extent on themselves – not on their parents, the environment or the therapist. The aim of therapeutic work is to increase awareness of the client's own needs *here and now*, including the need for self-development and change (cf. Koziński, 2000; Dąbrowski, 1974). Examples of techniques used here are empathy, unconditional acceptance of the patient, reflecting feelings, the therapeutic alliance and openness of the therapist. Selected concepts from this area, which can be used in the coaching process, are described below.

7. Abraham Maslow's affirmative-humanistic approach

In the history of psychology, a psychologist who wrote about the important value of individual self-fulfilment more than anyone else was Abraham Maslow. Although Maslow's theses have never been confirmed empirically, which is particularly the case of Maslow's famous pyramid (cf. Aronson, 2011), his theory can still be used in coaching. The creator of the psychology of existence project called the humanistic concept helpful in generating an individual way of life of the individual, "not only for the person himself within his own private psyche, but also for the same person as a social being, a member of society" (Maslow, 1986, p. 7).

The origins of Maslow's humanistic system of psychology had already appeared in ancient philosophy, especially in Plato's teachings and in the stoicism of Seneca and Epicurean thought (Reale, 2000). It is worth adding at this point that since the ancient times, the value of self-fulfilment or self-actualisation has been widely used by various branches of knowledge about humans. The significance and importance of this knowledge are fulfilled in the perspective of the effort made to discover and utilise one's own potential and thus become who one wants to

be. The possibility of self-determination, as the ability to fulfil one's own vocation and destiny, leads to fulfilment and to a complete life (i.e. what is referred to as *eudemonia*). A self-fulfilling person is someone who opens himself or herself up to another individual and finds fulfilment in the relationship with another person, at the same time pursuing their own life projects.

Maslow's affirmative-humanistic, relational, human-centred approach is consistent with what philosophers and social psychologists' postulate, namely that if an individual has good relations with other people, his or her projects will be efficiently implemented. It is enough to recall at this point the numerous studies on work-life balance (Matuska, Christiansen, 2009; O'Bannon, 2007).

8. Carl Rogers's person-centred therapeutic approach

The above words correspond with Carl Rogers's non-directive, person-centred therapy. This influential 20th century psychotherapist created a system expressing a certain way of life conducive to healthy change and facilitating human development in the personal dimension. His approach to psychotherapeutic help assumes that the individual as a single whole is a being with a high capacity of self-comprehension (cf. Jakubowski, 1970, pp. 68-91). The sources of the individual's behaviour lie immanent in themselves, which is why, as Rogers himself wrote, „the individual essentially lives in their own subjective world and even the most objective aspects of their functioning (...) are the result of subjective goals and subjective choices” (Rogers, 2016, p. 175). According to him, the human individual is prepared to make constructive changes in their way of life and in their behaviour. However, each person's Self develops „through interactions with the environment, including in particular with the environment composed of significant persons” (Rogers, 2016, p. 79). Hence in this trend one sees the specific nature emerge of the interpersonal, individual and fully authentic helping relationship with the person providing professional support: a therapist or a coach, someone who displays an unconditionally positive attitude, a non-judgemental, empathetic attitude of understanding, congruity and acceptance towards the client (Rogers, 1991, pp. 5-6). In such a situation, both the psychotherapist and the coach can be a trusted companion for reflective wanderings within the inner world of their client; they can act as an assistant who, during the process, suspends their own views, personal types, subjective judgments and value-judgment patterns in order to enter the other person's world without prejudice (cf. Rogers, 1991, pp. 80-85), and provide reliable, credible and balanced feedback as an active and tolerant listener.

9. The open personality according to Gordon Allport

Gordon Allport's approach (1950) completes the humanistic vision of the individual in the field of psychology. The American psychologist reflected on the theory of motivation, conscience and human personality, considering the methodology of its formation. In his opinion, the aspects mentioned above play a leading role in the structure of the system of values of each individual.

The author of *The Nature of Prejudice* abandoned all attractive, albeit schematic programmes that merely contributed to the creation of distorted forms of human nature. According to his idea „personality is too complex to be forced into a strictly scientific conceptual corset” (Allport, 1988, p. 70). The psychologist attributed an open and eclectic character to personality. According to him, every individual develops their own personal style of functioning (existing) and shapes their own axiology, which determines the quality of their life. Developing one's own individual form of life allows one to put one's own personal image in sharp focus and to live a happier life, in harmony with oneself. This now-historical approach used in psychology can still be used now as a source of inspiration for therapeutic and coaching work. Above all, it is the client who determines their own hierarchy of values and the way in which they want their life to progress. Neither a therapist nor a coach provides specific solutions or advice in this respect. They do not judge the client's system of values either, and their only goal is that the client should feel comfortable with themselves and their values. Of course, such an approach may trigger some ethical controversy, especially in psychotherapeutic work, hence the client's acceptance should have its limits. If another person's life or if the client's life is threatened, the therapist should try to modify the client's value system, and if they do not succeed, they should notify the relevant services, so they have the right to breach the psychologist's professional secrecy (cf. Brzeziński, Chyrowicz, Toeplitz-Winiewska, Poznaniak, 2017).

10. Kazimierz Dąbrowski's approach

Kazimierz Dąbrowski also wrote about the human being as an autonomous personality. As a clinical psychologist, philosopher and educationalist at the same time, Dąbrowski a Polish representative of the humanistic concept of the individual. Looking from the humanistic perspective, he noticed that every developed personality is as complete, cohesive, harmonious and self-aware as possible. It is characterised by a high degree of self-insight, i.e. insight „into one's own structure, one's own aspirations and goals” (Dąbrowski, 1984, p. 4). This self-conscious individuality unwaveringly believes in the correctness of this attitude and in the legitimacy of the goals set.

The author of the theory of positive disintegration went beyond the analyses of human development levels used by biologising psychologists, educationalists and physicians, which he considered inadequate. Dąbrowski believed that research was usually limited to strong and exclusive emphasis being placed on physiological-biological determinants. He, on the other hand, stressed the role of focusing on the individual's hierarchy of values and goals, including the importance of the position according to which such values are not only intellectually founded, but are above all an expression of developing human emotions. The author explained that „the higher the levels of consciousness are that come to the fore in human actions, the more connections there are between the hierarchy of feelings and drives, and the rather clear hierarchy of goals. The higher levels of experiencing active in us set creative imagination and organised fantasy in motion” (Dąbrowski, 1988, p. 11). An example of reason and emotions combined is provided by outstanding individuals with distinctive “mental traits, talents, interests, ways of life, ambitions or aspirational power. [...] Individuality is determined by [...] the tone, by a certain trace, most often associated with temperament and character features, the specificity of approaching the given matter as well as the tension of will and the power of external expression (Dąbrowski, 1988, p. 4). Coaching is also based on a system of values and on supporting the creativity and development of the client. Examples of methods that effectively help to organise the client's value system in coaching focus on specific tools for creating visions and setting goals, tools for working with motivation and values as well as tools for reflection, breaking deadlocks and creative thinking. The most commonly mentioned practical coaching tools that are used include: the value hierarchy chart, core values and beliefs worksheets, motivation discovery worksheets, creative self-visualisation, individual mission plan, and change context determination matrix (cf. Marciniak, Rogala-Marciniak, 2013, pp. 195, 211, 217, 227, 265, 297).

11. Closing remarks

Regardless of the individual psychological preferences of the specific systems, each psychological concept (according to Koziński's approach) contains valuable aspects that can be used within the coaching process. The aim of the paper was to present selected concepts that may support the professional work of a coach, but also other helping professionals.

Although only a small percentage of professional coaches currently have appropriate psychological preparation, the number of coaches expanding their knowledge in the field of psychology is systematically growing (Smółka, 2016). Psychology provides elementary information about the individual and the latter's mental condition (the meaning and the value of inner life); the impact of life experiences on human behaviour, including the impact of situational variables (such as random circumstances) and the role of the genetic equipment one

is born with, which constantly influences human functioning, especially on the cognitive level (Zimbardo, Johnson, McCann, 2010). It is extremely important for practitioners in every helping profession, including coaching, to broaden psychological knowledge about the human person. In addition to acquiring information, it is also important to work on psychological competences in working with people, referred to as soft skills (such as empathy, emotional intelligence, active listening, constructive feedback, assertiveness), which make it possible to support the client's development (Marczyszyn-Berendt, Tyralik-Kulpa, 2016).

Finally, the authors would like to point to the limitations of this text and to further directions of development of analyses in this area. It should be emphasised that the authors relied in their deliberations on Kozielecki's division, passing over other important contemporary psychotherapeutic approaches, such as the systemic approach, the Ericksonian approach, Gestalt psychotherapy and transactional analysis, for which there was insufficient space. These trends can also be valuable sources of knowledge and practice for coaches. The authors encourage practising coaches to familiarise themselves especially with Eric Berne's transactional analysis and his concept of life script, with a distinction made between the parent, the adult and the child (present in every person), and types of attitudes (I'm OK, you're OK, I'm not OK, you're not OK) (cf. Berne, 1965; cf. Stewart, Joines, 2017), as well as with Gestalt psychotherapy, including especially its concept of figure and ground, closure, the topdog/underdog distinction, working in here-and-now, the role of bodywork and the paradoxical theory of change (Perls, 2018).

Moreover, within the framework of the psychological concepts of the individual they analysed, the authors did not analyse all the varieties of the concepts, focusing only on the main and most popular approaches. Further analyses in this field could concern different psychological and psychotherapeutic approaches, as well as more in-depth analyses within a specific psychological concept of the individual.

Another important aspect that may be addressed as a follow-up to this issue is that of empirical research in psychology, i.e. the current replication movement taking place in the 21st century. It turns out that some of the psychological findings practitioners rely on have been refuted empirically. For example, fifty years ago psychology used more imperfect methods to confirm scientific hypotheses, inappropriate research samples used to be selected (e.g. Bandura studied modelling for the first time among children of researchers from the university campus), the samples were either too small or very homogeneous (so-called WEIRD psychology is mentioned most often, namely analysing data only from countries with a high socioeconomic status, such as the USA). Nowadays, scientists replicate studies and therefore conduct them once again applying stricter methodological requirements, often in parallel in many countries across the world (cf. Bago, 2019; Landy et al., 2019). It would therefore be worthwhile for practitioners to take into consideration the increasingly frequent reference made to research conducted over the last few years, whose findings have been published in scientific journals, but which have not found their place yet in academic textbooks.

To sum up, the aim of this paper was more to present historical sources of value for helping professions, which would be worth expanding in further works by adding new psychological concepts and empirical data. It should be stressed, however, that it will never be possible to verify some of these concepts empirically, for instance the idea of determinism or indeterminism of the individual, as this is a certain *a priori* assumption and although we have a certain set of scientific data available, e.g. suggesting a significant influence of genes on our behaviour, it is impossible, from the point of view of psychological methodology, to provide definitive answers to such philosophical questions as the question of human freedom or human good.

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