The Philosophical Counsellor and Unconditional Positive Regard

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Abstract: Being a relatively new practice started by Gerd Achenbach no more than 40 years ago, the methods and techniques implied in philosophical counseling, as well as the qualities a philosophical counsellor should possess are still up for debate. The theme of the current paper revolves around the traits of the philosophical counselor, starting from Roger Paden’s statement that the three characteristics identified by Carl Rogers as being essential for a counsellor are also suitable when it comes to philosophical counsellors as well, with the mention that the approach should nonetheless be modified when it comes to unconditional positive regard, as he believes it to be incompatible with the nature of philosophical counselling. Our thesis is that the two are not incompatible and that, at least in the case of alienation, the philosophical counsellor should also grant the client unconditional positive regard. In support of our thesis, we will bring Rogers’ own ideas, Ran Lahav’s view of philosophical counselling as creating a link between philosophical discourse and everyday life, as well as the perspectives developed in the area of community philosophy.

Keywords: alienation, unconditional positive regard, philosophical counselling, philosophical counsellor.

Introduction

Even though it has deep roots in ancient philosophy, philosophical counselling is still a rather new practice that has emerged only 40 years ago, in 1981, with Dr. Gerd Achenbach’s practice setup near Cologne, Germany. And as with all new practices, philosophical counselling is also faced with debates when it comes to its methods and techniques, as well as the traits that are essential for the philosophical counsellor in the client-counsellor relationship. In this article the main focus will revolve around the traits that are considered essential for the philosophical counselor, specifically whether unconditional positive regard should be taken into account as one of them or not. Our thesis is that, at least in the case of alienation, the philosophical counsellor should also grant the client unconditional positive regard.

What is Philosophical Counselling?

Let us first begin by trying to better understand what the practice of philosophical counselling consists of. Even though philosophy has been seen as having a positive impact on the human psyche ever since antiquity, it hasn’t been playing a big part in the practices developed in this area until recently. Apart from some practices that admitted having their
foundations tied to philosophical doctrines, like CBT and REBT that are both rooted in ancient stoic philosophy, up until the appearance of Dr. Gerd Achenbach's philosophical counselling practice in 1981 in the proximity of Cologne, Germany, philosophy was not directly tied to the mental wellbeing practices. Nowadays, the practice of philosophical counselling has bloomed, having spread to other European countries, as well as overseas, in the United States, Canada, and many other countries, as more and more people are seeking professional help when they are faced with ethical dilemmas, paradoxes or life questions.

We believe the most illustrative definition of philosophical counselling was given by Ran Lahav as he characterized it as “an approach for addressing the dilemmas, predicaments, and life-issues of the person in the street through philosophical self-examination.”¹ In a 1999 article on philosophical counselling, Tim LeBon states that the literature in the field of philosophical counselling reveals four categories of “life problems” that fall within the competence of philosophical counselling:

- “Decision-making dilemmas, including career choices and ethical dilemmas (Boele, 1995, Marinoff, 1995, Lahav, 1993)
- Difficulties regarding meaning and/or direction and in life (Lahav, 1993, Mijuskovic, 1995).”²

Being such a recent practice, with only 40 years of history, philosophical counselling’s methods and techniques are widely varied from one philosophical counsellor to another. Thus, we can encounter from philosophical counsellors that focus on logic in trying to identify the client’s “faulty” arguments, to others that employ dialogical techniques, like the Socratic dialogue or others that have added an educational step to their method, like in the four-stages method of Peter Raabe.

This wide variety of methods and techniques, Ran Lahav believes is caused by a lack of a “fundamental paradigm” from which philosophical counselling could have started its development, a lack of “a Freud-like figure whose ideas were widely accepted as a fundamental paradigm, and as a starting point for debate.”³ In spite of all this wide variety of methods and techniques, Lahav has managed to identify two distinct approaches: the more common one, termed as the Critical Thinking Approach and its alternative, the so-called Edification Approach.

The Critical Thinking Approach, as its name implies, employs a set of critical thinking tools and techniques in order to critically investigate the client’s issues, beliefs or behavior. Being an approach “based on the art of reasoning,”⁴ it usually focuses on trying to find a solution on specific problems presented by the client through the means of critical thinking.

On the other hand, the alternative approach, termed by Lahav as the Edification Approach, is more concerned with the ideas and theories that can be found in traditional philosophy rather than with the critical thinking tools and skills that were employed in their development. Lahav thinks that, in this approach, philosophical counselling is not a mere tool used in trying to help the client solve personal problems, but an “ongoing process” the
client goes through in his quest for meaning and wisdom. The goal of this never-ending process is “to enrich rather than simplify counselees’ world, to problematize rather than resolve their personal problems.”

**The Traits of the Philosophical Counsellor**

Having all of the above in mind, one has to wonder what are the essential traits that a philosophical counsellor should possess in order to be able to meet the needs of the client, as well as to establish a “therapeutic” relationship with the client. Apart from the obvious knowledge of philosophical theories and/or analytical thinking tools, Roger Paden believes that Carl Rogers’s perspective on the client-therapist relationship he developed in his client-centered therapeutic approach would fit and benefit the philosophical counsellor as well.

Rogers thought that the counsellor/therapist must possess three core traits in order to be able to establish a relationship with the client that can be conducive to growth and personal development: congruence (genuineness, realness), unconditional positive regard and empathic understanding. In fact, he firmly stated that these three characteristics are not limited to the counselling or therapeutic relationship, but that they “apply whether we are speaking of the relationship between therapist and client, parent and child, leader and group, teacher and student, or administrator and staff (...) in fact, in any situation in which the development of the person is a goal.”

Congruence refers to the counsellor’s capacity to display realness and authenticity in the relationship with the client. Rogers thinks there is a direct link between the genuineness the counsellor shows in the counselling relationship and the likelihood of constructive personal development from the client: the more genuine the counsellor, the more the possibility of constructive growth. He describes congruence as being “transparent” with the client, in the sense that the counsellor “can openly express feelings, thoughts, reactions, and attitudes that are present in the relationship with the client.”

Unconditional positive regard is explained by Rogers through synonyms such as “acceptance”, “caring” or “prizing” and is seen as a non-conditioned and non-possessive acceptance of the client as a person. It is described as being an attitude of “I’ll accept you as you are”, rather than one of “I’ll accept you when ...”. This attitude is also–directly proportional with the prospect of constructive change on the part of the client.

Empathic understanding is described as “a deep and subjective understanding of the client with the client.” Rogers believes that when this capacity is functioning at its best, then the counsellor “is so much inside the private world of the other that he or she can clarify not only the meanings of which the client is aware but even those just below the level of awareness.”

Going back to Paden’s perspective on the philosophical counsellor’s essential traits, he mentions that the “supportive, nonthreatening, relationship” that would result by using Rogers’s suggestions would be a good match when it comes to philosophical counselling as well. But, further on, he dismisses the granting of unconditional positive regard to the client on the grounds that this is incompatible with the nature of philosophical counselling. He
Adriana Vlaicu posits that, when it comes to philosophical counselling, some modifications must be made to Rogers’s approach concerning the granting of unconditional positive regard.

In Paden’s view, the client should still benefit from emotional support from the philosophical counsellor, but he is to be granted respect only if he adopts a “rational attitude”. Paden describes this “rational attitude” as that of a being “who must necessarily make claims about the world, understand that those claims might be true or false, and value truth.” He believes that if the client fails in adopting this “rational attitude”, then he should be helped to do so, and if he cannot or does not want to adopt this attitude, then “he or she will not (be) able to benefit from philosophical counseling and should be referred to other types of counselors.” Paden’s conclusion is that what the counsellor should grant the client instead of unconditional positive regard is “an attitude of Kantian respect, tempered by a Rogerian warmth.”

While we are in complete agreement with Paden’s proposal to adopt Rogers’s view on the client-therapist relationship, we believe that unconditional positive regard is essential to philosophical counselling and excluding it would not benefit the counselling relationship. But, before bringing our arguments in favor of this perspective, let us first take a closer look at what is understood by unconditional positive regard and the implications that have been identified in practice and are linked with the granting of unconditional positive regard by counsellors to their clients.

**Understanding Unconditional Positive Regard**

In his article “Unconditional Positive Regard Reconsidered”, Paul Wilkins gives a great account on the meaning and implications of unconditional positive regard in practice. His idea of reversing each of the elements of unconditional positive regard can help us have a better grip on its significance.

Wilkins identified and described three reversed stances: conditional positive regard, unconditional negative regard, and unconditional positive disregard. He talks about conditional positive regard in terms of offering “warmth, respect, acceptance, etc.” only under certain circumstances, when the other has met some expectations we have laid on them or has fulfilled some requirements we have requested of them. He describes this attitude as one of “I will only approve of, like, favor you if you do this, give me this, act in this way.”

Unconditional negative regard, on the other hand, is, in Wilkins’s view, an attitude that transmits to the other “Whatever you say or do, however you are, I will hate, despise, demean or denigrate you.” He believes that unconditional negative regard can be found at the root of discriminatory attitudes like racism or sexism.

The worst one, though, seems unconditional positive disregard, that depicts an attitude of total indifference towards the other person, an attitude of refusal of any type of relationship with the other person, no matter their behavior, their actions or their words. The extreme form of this attitude, Wilkins believes, is a total negation of the other as a person, that “can be so powerful that receivers of it come to doubt their right to life.”
Having all of this in view, we cannot help but to observe that neither attitude would suit or benefit the philosophical counselling relationship better than unconditional positive regard. The last two, unconditional negative regard and unconditional positive disregard, would most definitely have a negative impact, while conditional positive regard, even though not as rejecting as the other two, still implies that the client has to meet certain criteria or to meet certain expectations that the philosophical counsellor has imposed on them.

Going back to Paden’s view on unconditional positive regard and analyzing it through the lens that Wilkins has provided us with, we are bound to notice that Paden’s modification upon unconditional positive regard resembles one of the reversed stances Wilkins is talking about, namely conditional positive regard. By constraining the client into adopting a “rational attitude”, the counsellor is adopting a stance where he only favors some patterns of thought that are viewed as positive, while refusing to deal with the negative ones. Wilkins believes this leads to a neglect of the totality of the client’s being, which is “likely to be a block to therapeutic change and may be damaging.”19 He also mentions that this sort of attitude of the philosophical counsellor towards the client might point to the counsellor pursuing a different agenda than that of the client and thus, seeking to “reward appropriate behavior.”20

Before going further on and analyzing Paden’s view from the perspective of alienation, there are two more counterarguments that need to be addressed. First of them is related to Paden’s definition of a “rational attitude” as that of a being “who must necessarily make claims about the world, understand that those claims might be true or false, and value truth.”21 To begin with he seems to be talking from a classical logic standpoint only, by restricting the truth value of claims to a Boolean domain, while in reality we might have to deal with probable or possible scenarios presented by the client. Also, he talks about the client valuing “truth”, but which of the many truth theories is to be taken into account in this valuing of the “truth”? Should the client value only truth according to correspondence to facts, should he weight it against its coherence with the rest of his belief system or should he consider this truth from a minimalist, pragmatic or rather constructivist perspective?

Another point that must be mentioned is stressed out by Wilkins and is related to a person’s right to choose “not to change, to be cured or to grow.”22 He believes that it comes natural for the counsellor to seek the development and growth of the client to the extent he might even “form a vision of what change might lead to,”23 but, as Wilkins points out, for some clients it is only when the counsellor gives up the desire to instill change within the client, that changes actually start to take place.

Further on, we will analyze Paden’s perspective on unconditional positive regard more in depth from the perspective of alienation, starting with a brief depiction of what the concept of alienation stands for and what the view of philosophers has been throughout centuries on this phenomenon.

The Concept of Alienation

The phenomenon of alienation has been linked with different meanings throughout the history of philosophical thought, starting from its early roots in the Latin noun “alienatio”,
that used to hold three distinct meanings: the transfer of ownership or rights in the legal domain, the idea of mental illness or derangement in the medico-psychological area and the idea of separation, estrangement from fellow human beings, one’s country or God in the social sphere. In the Middle Ages, the theological meaning, that of estrangement from God, was the one that was the most prominent.

But, our current understanding of this concept has started being developed during the 17th century, especially in Jean-Jacques Rousseau’s writings, where one can find “the bridge between the now-dominant psychosocial interpretation and the legal-political interpretation that prevailed prior to his writings.”24 For the “social contract theorists”, of which Rousseau is considered to be a part of, alongside Hobbes and Locke, alienation was interpreted in connection with the idea of the social contract and the renunciation of an individual’s rights to a sovereign power.

Particularly, Rousseau’s theory is a counterargument to Hobbes’s view, who didn’t see this relinquishment of an individual’s rights as something negative, as he thought that living in society is good for human beings. Hobbes believed that the advantages of civilization are to be preferred to humanity’s natural state of freedom, where life was ruthless and brief and was dominated by wars between human beings. On the contrary, Rousseau’s theory talks about an idealistic natural state of the human being, where humans live in a state of peace and harmony. He believed that life in society, by instilling a sense of competition and constant comparison, is what generates the state of war humans are waging against each other.

For Hegel alienation was also linked with the individual’s renunciation of his rights in favor of a sovereign power, but he also added a new, distinct type of alienation: self-alienation, the alienation of the individual from his very self. Inspired by Hegel’s writings on this concept, Marx went further on and identified four distinct types of alienation, all of them in connection with his theory of labor. He believed that the phenomenon of alienation is generated by the very way capitalist society is organized, with the worker ending up being a mere tool in the production machine and thus, becoming alienated from the object of his labor, from the working process, from society and others, and, lastly, from his own self.

Alienation for Heidegger is linked with one of his fundamental concepts, that of “authentic” existence, but alienation is seen as being the opposite of it, “inauthentic” existence, in Heidegger’s words, pointing to, as Schacht shows, an “existence which is absorbed in the present, determined by impersonal social expectations and conventions, and which exhibits a systematic refusal to face up to the above-mentioned conditions [conditions of human life (e.g., having to die, being responsible for what one is and does)].”25

For Sartre self-alienation has something to do with the Other’s objectifying look, as this look forces the consciousness to experience itself as an object and thus to become alienated from its own self: “Thus in the shock which seizes me when I apprehend the Other’s look, this happens – that suddenly I experience a subtle alienation of all my possibilities, which are now associated with objects of the world, far from me in the midst of the world.”26
The Frankfurt School thinkers associated alienation with the philosophical program of the Enlightenment, which they believed put too much emphasis on technological development that could have disastrous consequences in the future, leading men to become slaves of the technology they developed. In Erich Fromm’s (philosopher associated with the Frankfurt School thinkers) perspective, modern society is already characterized by a state of “almost total” alienation, as “it pervades the relationship of man to his work, to the things he consumes, to the state, to his fellow man, and to himself.”

Alienation is a concept that has also been dealt with in the social sciences, ever since the starting point of these sciences, as the founding fathers of sociology, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim, have both written on this subject. As Frankfurt School thinkers, Max Weber also pointed to the program of the Enlightenment as being the cause of alienation. Emile Durkheim thought that the phenomenon alienation (anomie, as he termed it) was caused by an under-regulation by the society of the norms it imposes on the individual. Later on, in 1959, Melvin Seeman tried to classify the distinct types of alienation sociologists have come to deal with in their works, having come to a classification containing five distinct types of alienation: powerlessness, meaninglessness, normlessness, isolation and self-estrangement.

In the meantime, lots of new, distinct meanings have been associated with the concept of alienation. Currently, we can identify a myriad of distinct types of alienation, such as alienation from work, alienation from others, alienation from nature, self-alienation, social isolation, powerlessness, cultural estrangement, meaninglessness, normlessness, economical alienation, religious alienation, political alienation, and so on. As Richard Schacht points out in his book on alienation, the concept has come to be associated with so many distinct phenomena, that “it enjoys no special association with any of them.”

But one thing is common to all of these distinct meanings and types of alienation, that is the idea of separation, of isolation from someone or something: “when confronted with the term, one can be reasonably sure that the matter under consideration is some sort of separation.” Whether we are talking about alienation from nature, from fellow human beings or even from his own self, the alienated individual feels excluded from, unaccepted to a certain type of experience.

**Alienation and unconditional positive regard**

Going back to our thesis, namely that, at least in the case of alienation, philosophical counsellor should grant the client unconditional positive regard, we will bring as supporting arguments in its favor three distinct viewpoints: Carl Rogers’s own ideas, Ran Lahav’s perspective on philosophical counselling as connecting philosophical discourse and everyday life through his “transformational philosophies” approach, and the perspectives developed in the area of community philosophy.

We will start by analyzing Carl Rogers’s ideas on counselling a client who is dealing with alienation. Rogers believed that the key to alleviating the feelings of alienation the client might go though is empathy, as it helps the client reconnect as being a part of humanity. But the way he described this empathic understanding of the client is clearly deeply connected with the granting of unconditional positive regard also. He clearly stated that “the highest expression of empathy is accepting and nonjudgmental.” He believed this
to be true in light of the impossibility one faces in accurately perceiving the inner world of another person, when they have already “formed an evaluative opinion of that person.” Rogers believed that the granting of what he termed “true empathy”, described in his own words as being “always free of any evaluative or diagnostic quality”, is what helps the client in the process of self-acceptance and, thus in gaining a sense of identity. He also clearly points out that, even when a client is experiencing hurt, confusion, anxiety or alienation, the granting of empathic understanding by the counsellor is invaluable in helping the client overcome these experiences, the counsellor must also “possess the other two attitudes.”

Wilkins also noticed the fine line that separates in practice unconditional positive regard and deep empathy. He gives an example where the counsellor acceptingly voices an extreme negative emotion the client was dealing with but was afraid to admit, which caused a deep relief within the client who felt understood and was, thus, able to grow past his negative feelings and resolve the issue he went to the counsellor for.

Examining Paden’s suggestion from this viewpoint, we are left wondering what impact would his proposal of modifying Rogers’s unconditional positive regard have on the granting of empathic understanding, since the two seem so closely interrelated. Also, taking into account that he didn’t exclude empathic understanding, but only unconditional positive regard, as being incompatible with the nature of philosophical counselling, we cannot help but wonder: if the two are separated by such a thin line, wouldn’t that make empathic understanding also incompatible or close to being incompatible with philosophical counselling if we are to look at things from Paden’s perspective?

Our next supporting argument comes from Ran Lahav’s transformational philosophies approach, that is part of the edification approach group. Lahav based this approach on a list of “transformational thinkers”, such as the Stoics, Spinoza or Nietzsche, and what he coined as “perimeter” and “perimetal worldview”, or “worldview”. This second part is of interest for our thesis, as Lahav defined the perimeter as being “a kind of personal prison, analogous to Plato’s cave.” He believes that this perimeter is kept in place by psychological mechanisms and forces, that we are accustomed with and thus are rarely aware of. What is characteristic of this perimeter is that it has “a specific inner logic, and it expresses the person’s particular way of interpreting and understanding life.” A person’s perimeter is an expression of their view of the word, themselves or others, that is rarely conscious and that can even at times be in contradiction with the conscious perspective the person might express verbally. Lahav believes that, even though it might not be conscious, this still represents “a definite understanding of life,” that he called the person’s “perimetal worldview”, or simply the person’s “worldview”. He sees this “worldview” as a person’s “philosophy of life,” that is implicit and is usually not expressed through words, but it is rather an “understanding of life which is expressed in the person’s habitual patterns.”

Lahav gives a great example in the case of Laura, a client that has reached out to a philosophical counsellor due to feeling “alienated from her workplace, her colleagues, her career, even her friends.” He explains how using an edification approach, the counsellor
does not focus on solving the client’s immediate problem, but uses this as an opportunity for examination, understanding and growth. Lahav explains that in using his approach of transformational philosophies, the first task of the philosophical counsellor is “to examine everyday situations and identify central behavioral and emotional patterns,” in order to explore the client’s perimeter and form a perspective on their worldview. In Laura’s case, the philosophical counsellor by exploring the client’s perimeter identifies Laura’s worldview and, thus, the root cause of her alienation in the lack of inner life her own self was experiencing and her constant need to fill this lack with the experiences of others. But the second step is most relevant for our thesis, as this is where Lahav mentions the distinction between how problem-solving approaches would handle the case by trying to find a solution for the client’s problem through the use of “reasoning to define an alternative attitude for Laura, and then try convincingly her to change her ways.” Lahav believes that this approach doesn’t lead to deep and lasting change within the client, as it only scratches the surface. In edification approaches, though, that have as a goal, the development and enrichment of the client’s life, the philosophical counsellor, by accepting the worldview of the client and working within that worldview would then “seek to inspire and awaken ‹voices› that already live deeply within her—so deeply that they are normally drowned by everyday concerns and inner tumult.”

Looking at Paden’s proposal through this lens, it seems to us that, when making his proposal, he is interpreting philosophical counselling more from a critical thinking approach, that is concerned with solving the immediate problem of the client, and not really taking into consideration the perspective of the edification approach, which is more concerned with helping the client’s worldview develop and grow. As Rogers believed that in order to instill growth in the client the counsellor should possess all three traits, at least from an edification approach, which seems to work very well in cases of alienation, we believe that the philosophical counsellor should also take into account unconditional positive regard as a quality to display towards the client.

The third and last argument we bring in support of our thesis, are the perspectives developed in the area of community philosophy. Deeply rooted in philosophy for children (P4C), developed in the 1970s by Professor Matthew Lipman, a practice that has managed to prove that “even young children can think rationally and abstractly and that they can benefit from philosophical engagement.” The fundamental tool community philosophy is employing is, as in the case of P4C, the community of philosophical inquiry, defined by Matthew Lippman as a place where the participants “listen to one another with respect, build on one another’s ideas, challenge one another to supply reasons for otherwise unsupported opinions, assist each other in drawing inferences from what has been said, and seek to identify one another’s assumptions.” What is specific to this type of approach is that it allows for the dialogue to flow freely and that the philosophical counsellor, as facilitator of the group, is supposed to only guide the discussion, without issuing any value judgements on the arguments brought on by the participants.

This type of approach could prove extremely beneficial in the case of alienation, as the community of inquiry could serve both as a place where the individual could reconnect as being part of a group and feel accepted through the non-judgmental attitude of the
philosophical counsellor, and a place where he could explore and understand his feelings of alienation with the help of the facilitator and of the group.

We will bring our own example in support of this claim, by illustrating the proceedings in the case of a community of inquiry built around the theme regarding the connection between technology and alienation. The stimulus used for this community of inquiry will be a short YouTube video depicting the dangers of social media addiction: Social Media addiction - Short Movie (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QugooaNRnsk).

The philosophical counsellor, acting as facilitator, will first give a brief introduction to the group on what the concept of alienation stands for and what has been said by different philosophers about the link between technology and the phenomenon of alienation. After presenting the stimulus by playing the video for the group of participants, the role of the philosophical counselor will be solely to guide the discussion using questions, such as:

1. Is technology a source of alienation? Do you feel alienated due to the intrusion of technology and social media?
2. Could alienation be a natural process as part of our evolution as human beings?
3. What effects does alienation have on people's needs? What needs are no longer satisfied?
4. Is contemporary society alienated by the intrusion of technology and social media, as the video seems to suggest?
5. Which members of society are the ones that are most affected by the phenomenon of alienation?
6. What is the danger posed by alienation?
7. How will alienation evolve in the future?

The active role of the philosophical counsellor is regained only in the end of the session, when the philosophical counsellor, as facilitator, should ask the group of participants to think of the topic discussed (the link between technology and the phenomenon of alienation, in our case) and draw a conclusion.

Analyzing Paden's perspective on the granting of unconditional positive regard from the view of community philosophy, we cannot help but observe that unconditional positive regard is essential even when it comes to groups. We can clearly notice this in the example of the community of inquiry where the participants are granted unconditional positive regard through the guiding, non-judgmental attitude of the facilitator.

We believe that these three arguments support our initial thesis, namely that philosophical counselling and unconditional positive regard are not incompatible and thus we consider that, at least in the cases of alienation, the philosophical counsellor should also display towards the client unconditional positive regard, along with Rogers 's other two traits: congruence (genuineness, realness) and empathic understanding.

Conclusion

In light of all of the above, we can conclude that unconditional positive regard is not a trait the philosophical counsellor should disregard, favoring only the other two traits mentioned
by Rogers, congruence (genuineness, realness) and empathic understanding. On the contrary, at least in the case of alienation, as the client is experiencing feelings of disconnectedness, isolation, or estrangement, the philosophical counsellor should also grant the client an attitude of acceptance and caring, through unconditional positive regard.

We believe this aspect is very important, as since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, numerous studies have reported an increase in the symptoms associated with alienation, such as depression, anxiety, insomnia, stress or social isolation. So, a lot of the clients that will be addressing philosophical counselling offices in the near future will be dealing with issues caused by this phenomenon. Thus, it is important for the philosophical counsellor to be aware of the necessities this type of client requires and the relationship he must built with him in order to help in alleviating his state of alienation.

In the end, we consider that both approaches on philosophical counselling would benefit from the counsellor adopting an attitude of unconditional positive regard, as we consider that this attitude is concerned not with accepting irrationalities themselves, but with accepting the client as a human being that might sometimes harbor irrational thoughts and to help them overcome these irrationalities by using the tools, methods and ideas that have been developed in philosophical counselling and in philosophy itself.

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