# Unearthing the Humanistic Predilection of Daseinsanalysis

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**Abstract**

In recent years, there has been renewed interest among the mental health professions in the principles of humanism. This rekindled discourse can be supplemented by an examination of the existential-phenomenological psychotherapy approach known as daseinsanalysis, as primarily influenced by the works of Martin Heidegger and Medard Boss. Daseinsanalysis complements humanistic values while providing a sophisticated philosophical scheme to frame the human way of being. The authors provide a brief explication of humanistic philosophy and daseinsanalysis, particularly as each are consistent in informing psychotherapeutic practitioners.

**Unearthing the Humanistic Predilection of Daseinsanalysis**

Using poetry to illuminate the human experience, the philosopher Martin Heidegger (1889 – 1976 AD) offered the following lines: "The world's darkening never reaches to the light of Being. We are too late for the gods and too early for Being. Being's poem, just begun, is man" (2001a, p. 4). Man, for Heidegger (1927/1996), is best understood through the concept of *Dasein*, which means the self as extant in the world. This idea is a hallmark of the existential movement and, by extension, rests at the foundation of meaning-making by humanists.

Heidegger was concerned with the manner in which the self as Dasein operates in the world - what are the givens of human existence? To translate Heidegger's Dasein into operations for psychotherapeutic activities, Medard Boss (1903 – 1990 AD) appropriated Heidegger's philosophy into a brand of existential-phenomenological psychotherapy known as daseinsanalysis. It may be helpful for practitioners to view the structure of daseinsanalysis as providing a *gestalt switch*, much in the same way as described by Kuhn (1962), whereby the therapist undergoes a holistic perceptual shift in his or her worldview. The daseinsanalytic view as put forth by this article can help facilitate such a paradigmatic change in the way a practitioner views the process of therapy.

In order to make Heidegger's (1927/1996) ideas applicable to therapy, Boss (1963) appropriated what were originally ontological structures into ontic givens. As a result, the authors caution against reducing the ideas of Heidegger's philosophy into mere talking points between a therapist and client. In fact, Boss (1963) recognized the difficulty of making Heidegger's ideas practical. Boss recommended that psychotherapists interested in this approach first understand how the different elements of daseinsanalysis work together to create a holistic picture of the way individuals are embedded in the world.

Humans' intrinsic absorption in the world is echoed by the philosophical system known as humanism which became formalized in the middle of the twentieth century. Both humanism and daseinsanalysis share many of the same postulates regarding the human condition.

**Humanism as Philosophical Ally to Daseinsanalysis**

While contemporary humanism emerged in the middle of the twentieth century (Hansen, 2010), it was largely overshadowed by the natural sciences in terms of positivism, objectivism, and medicalization, in part, because humanistic theory objected to a natural science vision of human nature. As Toulmin (1990) argued, the natural sciences advanced during the Enlightenment of the 17th and 18th centuries when an engaged way of knowing shifted to detachment that emphasized abstraction and universality. Generally, the philosophical dualism of Descartes is credited with facilitating the wide acceptance of the natural sciences as the established arbiter of truth (Toulmin, 1990).

The scientific worldview remained more or less the reigning discourse until the middle of the twentieth century when the *Third Force* of psychology arrived, which was known as humanism and was led partly by Abraham Maslow, Rollo May, and Carl Rogers (cf., Malsow, 1962/1999; May, 1967; Rogers, 1989). While securing an understanding of what this Third Force meant presents a challenge, the authors of this article find helpful a recent definition of humanism as put forth by Schneider and Längle:

> Humanism is a philosophical perspective whose subject matter is the whole human being. Humanism is concerned with such existential themes as meaning, mortality, freedom, limitation, values, creativity, and spirituality as these arise in personal, interpersonal, social, and cultural contexts. In psychotherapy humanism places special emphasis on the personal, interpersonal, and contextual dimensions of therapy and on clients' reflections on their relationship with self, others, and the larger psychosocial world. (Schneider & Langle, 2012a, p. 428)

The holistic and philosophical perspective, the exploration of existential themes, the giveness of cultural-social facticity, and the fostering of personal reflection demonstrate that the spirit of humanism is alive and well in the daseinsanalytic approach to psychotherapy. Even though daseinsanalysis is typically considered an existential-phenomenological approach, it considerably overlaps the humanist tradition.

Moreover, it is important to note that all psychotherapies share tenets that may loosely be called humanistic (Wampold, 2012). Schneider and Längle (2012b) have argued that humanism is a foundational element of therapeutic effectiveness, that humanistic practice principles are a salient dimension of therapeutic training, and that the humanistic treatment philosophy is an important contributor to social well-being. Daseinsanalysis fits into this framework of humanistic psychotherapies.

**The Humanistic Renewal**

In recent years, many scholars have noted that the mental health professions have begun to revisit the ideas of humanism (Elkins, 2009; Hansen, 2005, 2010). This is a result, in part, from the postmodern turn. According to Hansen (2000, 2005), postmodern ideas have created new trends and alternative methodologies allowing psychotherapists to revisit their humanistic foundation.

Postmodernists questioned the assumptions of logical positivism, objectivistic science, and medicalization as certain areas of psychology and counseling decentered from a polarized, singular perspective and moved toward a multiple perspective discourse (Savickas, 1993). Mental health culture has traditionally been dominated by reductive ideologies such as diagnosis, psychopharmacology, and empirically supported treatment movements (Hansen, 2003; 2010). The pendulum, however, has started to swing back in the direction of humanistic principles.

Bekerman and Tatar (2005) reviewed abstracts published in three major academic journals that inform the practice of psychotherapy and discovered an incremental interest in alternative methodologies. Wickwire (2000) believed that these changes stem, in part, from a reaction to the information-knowledge-service era. He believed that the existential-experiential-spiritual era is beginning.

Authors, such as Dawes (1994) and Hansen (2004), have found that newer forms of psychotherapy are based on the shift to postmodern ideas. This has resulted in a flurry of theoretical formulations and practice innovations (Xu, 2010), which, in many ways, has brought areas of psychology and counseling back to their beginnings in humanistic thought and philosophy (Hansen, 2005). Elkins (2009) has argued that there are strong indications in the mental health literature of a renewed interest in humanism, and this interest is robust and growing.

It is timely, then, to examine a psychotherapy, such as daseinsanalysis, that can contribute to the growing dialogue regarding the return to the humanistic roots of therapy. In fact, daseinsanalysis may be best suited to meet this challenge, since it provides a philosophical account of what makes therapy possible in the first place. Before engaging in such a dialogue, a distinction must be made between the humanism of the Third Force of psychology and the humanism of Jean Paul Sartre (1905 – 1980 AD).

**Sartrean Humanism and Humanistic Psychology**

For some, juxtaposing Heidegger and humanism in the same article is blasphemous. This problem arises from a misunderstanding regarding the kind of humanism Heidegger (1993) was referencing when he wrote his *Letter on*

*Humanism* – namely, the kind as espoused by Jean Paul Sartre. Heidegger charged Sartre with misconstruing the fundamental insights of *Being and Time*. For Sartre, the human being has often meant the free, choosing individual who is fundamentally created by the choices and values that he or she posits (Scott, 1975).

According to Scott (1975), Sartre's conception of the person is a historical in that there appears no heritage to which the person is responsible. Contrariwise, Heidegger (1927/1996) examined existence not in terms of a willing ego but in terms of Dasein with Being at its ground; Dasein is thrown into the world both free and unfree. Dasein has a responsibility to its tradition just as it has a responsibility for its own death. The Sartrean version of humanism is profoundly different from the contextual and relational definition given by Schneider and Längle (2012a).

Daseinsanalysis' complementarity to humanistic psychology is fundamentally different from the humanism of Sartre. Greening (2007) distilled Bugental's (1964) account of humanistic psychology into five basic postulates. In the following, the authors will articulate each of the five principles of humanistic psychology while succinctly appropriating them in the language of daseinsanalysis.

5. "Human beings, as human, supersede the sum of their parts. They cannot be reduced to components" (Greening, 2007). Dasein contains irreducible philosophical structures.
6. "Human beings have their existence in a uniquely human context, as well as in a cosmic ecology" (Greening, 2007). Dasein is thrown into facticity (i.e., born into a social, cultural, and historical world).
7. "Human beings are aware and aware of being aware—i.e., they are conscious. Human consciousness always includes an awareness of oneself in the context of other people" (Greening, 2007). Dasein is the only being whose being is an issue for it, which gives it exclusive access to the ontological; Dasein is also amidst other Daseins in a shared world.
8. "Human beings have some choice and, with that, responsibility" (Greening, 2007). Although Dasein is thrown into facticity, through authenticity, Dasein can exercise choice and agency.
9. "Human beings are intentional, aim at goals, are aware that they cause future events, and seek meaning, value, and creativity" (Greening, 2007). The very nature of Dasein means that it is always engaged in projects, has foresight, and creates meaning out of its context.

The foregoing has aimed to demonstrate a sharp contrast between the humanism of Sartre and the humanism associated with the Third Force of psychology. The authors argue that the latter, humanistic psychology, is philosophically similar to the daseinsanalytic approach, the particulars of which are more clearly explicated in the following section.

## The Humanistic Elements of Practice in Daseinsanalysis

Psychotherapists using the daseinsanalytic approach ground their intentions in a philosophical understanding (Boss, 1963; Heidegger, 1987/2001b). Heidegger (1987/2001b) and Boss (1963) believed daseinsanalysis sufficiently explained the philosophical ground for the human way of being. This philosophical account takes into consideration that Dasein, a word appropriated by Heidegger (1927/1996) to replace words like *self*, is powerful in describing human existence. Daseinsanalysis is phenomenological because psychotherapists attend to the world of the client as the client perceives it (Boss, 1963). Primary attention is given to the sensations, perceptions, and ideations that appear in consciousness when a client focuses attention on his or her lived experience (Husserl, 1931). Additionally, daseinsanalysis is based on theoretical underpinnings that include existentials, anxiety, guilt, freedom, and possibilities, and are used by the therapist to conceptualize clients. These ideas will be more fully elucidated in the following paragraphs.

The beliefs of daseinsanalysis support the goal of liberating individuals from constriction and suffering. The relationship between *Being* and Dasein creates a therapeutic milieu wherein psychotherapists avoid making inferences, which creates an opening allowing for what is seen and heard to present itself on its own terms. Through this relationship, a psychotherapist is able to respond to the appeal of the client to "be" himself or herself (Boss, 1988/2000). Being is difficult to operationally define because of Heidegger's (1927/1996) belief that words close-down meaning. However, one way to look at Being is to view it as the source of all meaning – the mere wonder that there is anything at all. The fact there that is something at all, something is always revealing itself to us (Boss, 1988/2000). Daseinsanalysis can be viewed as an approach to therapy concerned with freeing individuals from a linear way of seeing choices (Boss, 1988/2000). Healthy individuals are able to enact and carry out their authentic possibilities; in other words, unhealthy individuals are blind to their potentials and bound by societal expectations and cultural norms.

Humanistic psychology would generally advocate for the same position as the aforementioned, especially in terms of the need for the therapist to be present during the therapeutic encounter, as well as taking the standard of health to be the

degree to which the client has actualized his or her potentials. However, the notion of Being for humanistic psychology is left implicit. Daseinsanalysis can provide humanistic therapy a structure so that such "existential themes as meaning, mortality, freedom, limitation, values, creativity, and spirituality" (Schneider & Längle, 2012a, p. 428) are made philosophically explicit to the psychotherapist. This may help the therapist conceptualize clients.

**Being-There and The Clearing**

The term Dasein describes human existence as being-there (Boss, 1979). This term makes it clear that humans are not objects that stand alongside other objects. In other words, humans are different from inanimate objects, like hammers, and are different from animals. Heidegger (1987/2001b) believed that it is helpful to think about the kind of existence of human beings (i.e., Dasein) as a clearing (*Lichtung*) or a realm of openness. He used the metaphor of a clearing in the forest as a way to illustrate the nature of human existence. The darkness of the forest gives way to the openness and light of the clearing. The clearing (i.e., consciousness or awareness) provides a space where objects show themselves without preconceptions.

For Boss (1963), in contrast to a scientific approach where the self is confined within the epidermis of the body, Dasein is not necessarily confined to the body in any particular moment. Dasein stands out into the world beyond the body, extending to even the most remote thing that can be recalled, perceived, or imagined (Boss, 1988/2000). Humanistic psychology echoes the uniqueness and exceptional capacities of human beings. It also rejects the scientific reductionist view of the self while abstaining from making a claim regarding the self's location in space and time at any particular moment (Bugental, 1964). For daseinsanalysis, the self can be anywhere, at any time, depending on the intent of the client and the parameters of his or her imagination.

**Phenomenological Approach**

A therapist subscribing to the approach of daseinsanalysis is first and foremost a phenomenologist (Hall, 1968). In the spirit of Heideggerian phenomenology, the psychotherapist respects and appreciates the beings that present themselves during the therapy session – especially those that remain obscure or covered-over. Careful phenomenological attention must be given in order for beings to reveal themselves to us. This kind of phenomenology views the self as always in flux – continually recreating itself. The therapist does not try to interpret what arises during psychotherapy against a preconceived theory; nor does the therapist make mental conclusions or judgments about the client (Boss, 1963). Psychotherapy facilitates Dasein's perpetual rebirth and becoming.

The phenomenological method of daseinsanalysis requires a therapist's personal and theoretical assumptions to be called into question through the process of bracketing (Husserl, 1931; Scott, 1975). Instead of relying on their own assumptions, by bracketing, psychotherapists are able to return to the things themselves, to the way beings present themselves, again and again in order to grasp what is happening in the session. Because there is no hidden agenda or causal explanation for what arises during a therapy session, a psychotherapist does not look for anything in particular (Boss, 1963). Instead, the primary task of a therapy is to affirm the clearing or openness of the client in order to allow hidden phenomena to come to light. As a result, anything that comes into being during therapy is given the right to speak. In this way, daseinsanalysis is adamantly anti-theoretical in its approach to psychotherapy (Boss, 1963).

Daseinsanalysis emphasizes the quality of the therapeutic relationship in-and-of-itself and the therapist's capacity to authentically attend to the presence of the client (Scott, 1975). In a similar way, Carl Rogers (1957), a founding member of the Third Force of humanistic psychology, insisted that the therapeutic relationship in-and-of-itself is necessary and sufficient; the interventions and techniques of the therapist are always secondary to the relationship with the client.

Daseinsanalysis does not incorporate a body of novel techniques into the therapy process (Boss, 1988/2000). From the daseinsanalytic perspective, techniques are viewed as getting in the way of what makes therapy possible—the phenomenological-attentiveness of the therapist and the intimacy of the therapeutic relationship. Techniques are replaced by a philosophical understanding of the foundations of psychotherapy and the human way of being that supports the primacy of the therapeutic relationship. That relationship is based on eight areas of understanding regarding the human condition known as the existentials.

**The Existentials**

The existentials inform the therapist about the client's phenomenological awareness. Boss (1963) believed that everyone has all of the eight existentials in common, because they are universal aspects of human existence, regardless of one's cultural orientation. From the perspective of daseinsanalysis, a therapist uses the existentials as a guide to bring the diverse aspects of a client's worldview into awareness (Boss, 1963).

The authors believe that humanistic psychotherapy implicitly assumes the existentials as part of the therapy process.  Since all forms of psychotherapy are essentially humanistic (Wampold, 2012), it is helpful for any therapist to have a thorough understanding of the existentials – the fundamental building blocks of Dasein.  The following section illustrates how a therapist could integrate the existentials into the therapeutic process.

The first existential of *spatiality* was termed the-there of Dasein by Heidegger (1927/1996).  This means that closeness or remoteness is not viewed in terms of miles (Boss, 1963).  Instead, existential spatiality is defined by the degree of the client's concern for something.  In other words, clients can be closer to something that is across the universe from them and further away from something that brushes up against their body.  For example, an individual can be removed hundreds of miles from his or her family, yet remain existentially near to them.  As a result, a therapist using the approach of daseinsanalysis would be aware of and attend to the presence of an absent family since this is very much a part of the client's world.

An example of the existential of *temporality* can be illustrated through various cultures' time-orientation.  For instance, Heidegger (1927/1996) worried that some cultures understand time-orientation as clock-time.  He called this time the calculative, vulgar time of everyday life. He had concerns that this type of time-orientation contributed to meaninglessness.  Boss (1963) believed that therapists could help clients develop meaning and self-awareness by reflecting on the client's use of time and degree of fulfillment in life.  It is through this process that clients are able to make authentic choices for themselves, which are not based on clock-time.

The third existential is *openness* or, as Heidegger (1987/2001b) called it, the clearing. Spatiality and temporality, according to Boss (1963), come together to create a phenomenological awareness for the client.  The clearing permits clients to experience an openness where their possibilities and potentialities come to light.  Heidegger (1987/2001b) used the metaphor of coming upon the light of a clearing from the darkness of a forest to visualize the existential of openness.

*Being-with* (*Mitsein*) one another in a shared world is another existential.  It is the way the client relates to other people in the world (Heidegger, 1927/1996).  It is important for psychotherapists to pay attention to a client's perception of his or her place in the social world – the social context of his or her life.  For example, a client who describes his or her partner as cruel is making a statement about his or her perception of that person.  A daseinsanalytic therapist would help a client explore how this perception relates to his or her broader social world, as a result, facilitating greater self-awareness for the client (Heidegger, 1927/1996).

*Language*, another existential, greatly influences the world of the client.  The kind of language that a client uses reveals aspects of the client's world.  Heidegger (1927/1996) said that language has a bewitching power over Dasein. Idle talk leads Dasein down the path of falling prey to the-they (*das Man*) in which Dasein then loses itself; in other words, the kind of language the client uses shapes the world of the client.  Clients using depressive language actually depress their world.  Through the therapist and client dialogue, a psychotherapist would help a client to become aware of his or her use of words, as a result, shifting a client's perception of the world through the kind of language the client chooses to use.

The *attunement* or mood (*Befindlichkeit*) existential colors the client's awareness (Heidegger, 1927/1996).  The mood of a client determines, in advance, how he or she will encounter the world (Boss, 1963).  From this perspective, a client in love will perceive the world differently than a depressed client; a depressed client might miss the smile on someone's face, whereas a client in love would be more likely to recognize a smile in passing.  Through the process of helping a client become aware of his or her mood, a therapist and client can work together to develop an alternative perception of the client's world.

According to the existential of *historicity*, clients are bound, to an extent, by historical conditions (Heidegger, 1927/1996).  Clients do not always have absolute freedom to make choices because time and place dictate an embeddedness in an historical context.  For example, a client dealing with an issue of spirituality must take into account that Western culture has been predominated by Christian ideology.  Once clients recognize the influence that their background has on their choices, they are able to reevaluate decisions and commitments, which then contributes to a deeper sense of authenticity.

The final existential is *mortality*.  Everybody dies (Heidegger, 1927/1996). Heidegger believed that because meaning is deferred until death, life is an unfinished and an incomplete project. As a result, death is threatening to clients and is a source for anxiety because there is always unfinished business.  Psychotherapists' help clients come to peace and acceptance regarding their mortality.  From this perspective, only when clients have an authentic relationship to death are they able to live authentic lives.

All eight of these existentials, in their own way, elucidate the themes of embeddedness, potentiality, and meaning-making, which are so much a part of humanistic psychotherapy. Consequently, practitioners may find the above helpful for making explicit the structures of the client's world.

**Existential Anxiety or *Angst***

Existential anxiety or *Angst* is the foundation upon which all of the existentials lie. Essentially, anxiety is about human existence itself. This kind of anxiety is called *Angst* (Heidegger, 1927/1996). When clients are in Angst, they take on a mood of uncanniness and not-being-at-home; in other words, they do not feel like themselves (Heidegger, 1927/1996). From this perspective, clients are struggling with anxiety about their existence itself – the way their life is. Angst drives clients to become who they were meant to be. Existential anxiety and guilt shed light on the possibilities for health and sickness.

Boss (1962) believed that when existential anxiety and guilt are properly understood, they have the ability to transform Dasein. Psychotherapy can transform anxiety and guilt into a form of mature openness:

> The highest aim of all psychotherapy is and remains the opening up of our patients to an ability-to-love-and-trust which permits all oppression by anxiety and guilt to be surmounted as mere misunderstandings. Such trust can and may be fitly called the most mature form of human openness. (Boss, 1962, p. 191)

It is the job of the therapist to help the client discover the transformative power of Angst; and in doing so, clients are able to live more meaningful lives. When clients discover that they have misunderstood their anxiety and guilt, they experience heightened levels of connectedness. As such, it is the therapist's responsibility to help the clients become open to and understand their existential condition, which will lead clients to a more authentic relationship to themselves, revealing themselves to be one with their worlds and carrying-out their own potentialities for being whole, unified, and complete (Craig, 1988).

Daseinsanalysis' emphasis on Angst as an important mode of disclosedness provides a supplement to the postulates of humanistic psychology. Existentialism, one of the traditions daseinsanalysis incorporates, tends to recognize both the negative and the positive aspects of existence (e.g., anxiety and authenticity; Wong, 2004), while humanism pays more attention to the human potential for growth (Bugental, 1964). Certainly, human flourishing is an important goal for clients. However, the daseinsanalytic approach places in the same esteem equally esteems the positive as well as the shadow sides of life and, therefore, describes a more holistic picture of human existence, which gives clients more insight in the hope of leading to greater authenticity.

**Implications for Psychotherapy and Research**

Over the last century, critiques on modernity have opened up innovative horizons, leading to greater acceptance of alternative views on the world and the self (Hansen, 2004). The revival of the humanistic perspective provides a balance to the scientific-reductive approaches to therapy (e.g., psychoanalysis, behaviorism, cognitive-behavioral therapy; Fishman, 1999). Daseinsanalysis is one way for humanistic psychology and psychotherapy to revisit its philosophical roots.

Therapists and researchers interested in a method similar to the approach in this article may find the following implications helpful:

1. The relationship between the therapist and the client is most important. Techniques are viewed as getting in the way of what makes psychotherapy possible (Boss, 1988/2000). Drawing upon Heidegger's (1987/2001b) sense of the clearing, the therapist's job is not to create or promote direction but to foster a state of open-mindedness where a client's authentic choice can occur. This primarily happens through a trusting relationship where clients can freely verbalize their perceptions that allow them to experience a heightened awareness.
2. The therapeutic relationship is a holistic perspective made up of eight areas of understanding regarding the human condition known as the existentials (Boss, 1963). They can be viewed as pieces of a puzzle that come together to create a picture of the client's phenomenological world.

3. The therapist is a phenomenologist and does not try to interpret what arises during therapy against a preconceived theory (Boss, 1963). The therapist does not make mental conclusions or judgments about the client and, as a result, is required to bracket his or her worldview in order to enter the world of the client.

4. Since the existentials are the same for both therapist and client, it follows that the language used by the therapist and by the client profoundly influences the outcome of psychotherapy. For instance, if a therapist uses negatively tinged words to talk about the client (e.g., depressed, anxious), those words color the therapist's and the client's world (Heidegger, 1927/1996). As a result, psychotherapists are encouraged to be intentional in the language they use. Since a client's language reflects his or her relationship in the world, therapists attend to the ways clients engage in their surroundings and recognize how language reflects the perception of those surroundings.

5. The client comes to therapy with a contextual background – both historically and socially (Heidegger, 1927/1996). From the standpoint of daseinsanalysis, a client does not exist in a vacuum. As a result, it is important for therapists to help clients explore their cultural-historical context and identity as well as their social connectedness or disconnectedness to other people.

6. Anxiety about death is considered to be a form of Angst (Heidegger, 1927/1996). According to daseinsanalysis, most clients struggle with death anxiety, which is about existence itself – the way life is. Angst drives clients to become who they were meant to be. It is the job of the therapist to help the client discover the transformative power of Angst, and in doing so, clients are able to live more meaningful lives.

7. While Heidegger did not talk specifically about particular contexts such as ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, or socioeconomic class, his phenomenological view incorporated a foundation in which to look at clients from a holistic perspective that emphasizes historical and cultural embeddedness (Heidegger, 1987/2001b). As a result, cultural considerations are at the forefront of this approach, in terms of the importance of the contextual aspects of all eight existentials, including being-with, historicity, and language.

8. Daseinsanalysis can ground humanistic psychotherapy in a philosophical structure that describes the most basic elements (e.g., the existentials) of Dasein, that appear as humanistic and existential themes in therapy. By making the structures of Dasein explicit, daseinsanalysis may help a psychotherapist be better able to conceptualize clients.

## Limitations

While daseinsanalysis' primary contribution lies in helping clients to live more authentically through heightened awareness, it is important to recognize its limitations. A potential limitation of daseinsanalysis is its phenomenological approach (Boss, 1963); it might be viewed by practitioners and programs interested in evidenced-based outcomes as lacking in measurable quantitative data. A similar limitation of daseinsanalysis is that it does not lend itself to diagnosis because of the focus on individual fulfillment as opposed to normative adjustment.

A challenge for therapists-in-training is to not oversimplify the philosophical underpinnings of daseinsanalysis. To adequately apply this theory, therapists need to have a solid grasp of the basic postulates of phenomenology, existentialism, and humanism. While seemingly simple, Heidegger's thought is intricate and complex (Heidegger, 1927/1996). Keeping this in mind, it is important to underscore the key role of language in paving the path towards client authenticity.

Another challenge that confronts practitioners using daseinsanalysis is the degree to which they are able to abandon their own presuppositions about the world and enter the world of the client (Scott, 1975). The process of self-reflecting in this manner is never really complete. As a result, therapists need to be mindful of their own biases and have the ability to self-monitor continually. Being attentive to these limitations will allow therapists to avoid the pitfalls of oversimplification and inspire them to seek additional preparation.

## Conclusion

A renewed flourishing of humanistic thought is underway (Elkins, 2009). One of the benefits of this renewal, as Hansen (2004, 2005) suggested, is that an integration of humanistic perspectives can counterbalance the dominance of medicalization in contemporary mental health care. Examining daseinsanalysis is one way to offset medicalization and to contribute to the reintroduced humanistic dialogue. What's more, researchers or practitioners may find daseinsanalysis helpful since it grounds the basic postulates of humanistic psychology (Bugental, 1964; Greening, 2007) in the philosophical structure of Dasein.

In daseinsanalysis, focus is given to understanding the theoretical underpinnings of the existentials, anxiety, guilt, freedom, and possibilities (Boss, 1963; Heidegger, 1987/2001b). The ultimate aim is to help clients maximize their fulfillment in life by liberating them from constriction and suffering, by helping them realize what brings them to life. As Heidegger's metaphor illustrates, therapists act as a guide by leading clients out of the darkness of the forest and into the light of the clearing.

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