

# THE FACILITATION OF PSYCHOLOGICALLY HEALTHY FUNCTIONING OF A PERSON

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**Abstract:** *The intent of this paper is to point out the wide range of applications that a human-oriented approach, or applied positive psychology, provides to explore and promote psychologically healthy functioning in people. Within the psychology of health, positive psychology offers applications beneficial to human health and well-being. According to one modern definition (Linley, Joseph, 2004), the applied positive psychology is also concerned with helping people attain optimum functionality. In terms of positive psychology, this means to transcend the realm of psychopathology in pursuit of an optimally functional (healthy) personality. It is in the sense of such “positive health” (Seligman, 2008), that we introduced the concept of an optimally functioning individual as conceived by humanistic psychology, particularly by the human-centered approach evident in the contributions of Rogers and Seeman. We further presented the applications of their concepts and research into the structure of an optimally functional person within a non-therapeutic context (Sollárová, Sollár, 2010), as well the possibilities in optimizing man’s functionality in that context, especially in adult education and in (people-focused) coaching.*

**Key words:** *client oriented psychological approach, humanistic psychology, positive psychology, facilitation of development of optimum functioning personality, positive health, extra-therapeutic relationships*

## **1. The concept of psychologically healthy person in positive psychology vs. optimum functioning person in the person centred approach**

Martin Seligman (2008) as one of the founders of positive psychology movement criticized traditional applied psychology in its basic focus on the treatment of deficiencies or psychopathology. Since 2000 the interest in positive psychology, as the psychology focused on the development of strengths and competencies of an individual and the psychology that reinforces health, wellbeing and achievement of optimum functioning of the individual, has increased.

Linley a Joseph (2006, p. 7, 8) in their new definition of positive psychology, on the pragmatic level view specify the processes of interest to positive psychology as those psychological ingredients that lead to the good life. According to them „positive

psychology should seek to understand the factors that facilitate optimal functioning as much as those that prevent it“. They then define positive psychology as „the scientific study of optimal human functioning...“ Among important historical antecedents of positive psychology we would like to revisit earlier humanistic ideas related to optimal functioning.

Humanistic psychology, specifically a client oriented therapy and person centred approach, is an inspiration to understand the optimum functioning of a person in the perspective how the concept has been defined as well as how such level of personality development can be achieved.

Client-centred therapy and later person centred approach accentuates the focus on the whole personality and therefore has been shaped as the exploration of the optimum functioning of a personality. This interest corresponds with the more general interest in human potential and with a positive view of a person’s character. The focus on positive qualities outshined the focus on dysfunctionality and psychopathology and it is represented by Roger’s description of the “fully functioning person” (Rogers, 1961) and Seeman’s research of positive health (Seeman, 1983, 2008), while the above mentioned sources illustrate consistently the sustained **focus on the optimum functioning of a personality**.

Synonyms of an optimum psychological adjustment or optimum psychological maturity and full congruence, optimum functioning of a person, and the ultimate goal of the actualization of a human organism is for Carl Rogers the concept of “**fully functioning person**” and for Julius Seeman “**psychologically integrated person.**”

The idea of the fully functioning person by Carl Rogers (1959, 1962, 1997) represents the most complex description of the optimum personal organization and bridges his theory of personality and the theory of psychotherapy. It represents personal qualities of an individual, who went through theoretically ideal process of psychotherapy, which is at the same time [the concept of] the ultimate goal of the actualization of a human organism. Dominant, mutually linked qualities, according to Rogers, are: openness to one’s own experience, living in an existential way and understanding of one’s own organism as a trustworthy source of experience to achieve satisfactory decisions and performance. The person with the above mentioned characteristics is according to Rogers a person functioning in a richer way. Several implications follow, he stresses integration, creativity and trustworthiness of the nature of human being.

Rogers understands the *integrated* person as unified within the Self on all levels as if of “one piece”, he diminishes the difference between a “role Self” and a “real Self”, between defensive façade and real feelings. The experience of one’s own organism is more and more accessible to the conscious Self.

These concepts are a synonym of psychological adjustment, optimum psychological maturity and complete congruence, optimum functioning of a person, the ultimate goal of the actualization of a human organism.

The theory of fully functioning person, the concept developed by Carl Rogers (1959, 1962) represents the most complex description of the optimum personal organization. It bridges Roger’s theory of personality and theory of psychotherapy. It represents the characteristics of the individual who went through theoretically ideal process of psychotherapy and is at the same time the ultimate goal to actualize human organism.

Dominant mutually linked characteristics of a fully functioning person:

1. *the growing openness to the experience*

Every impulse from the organism or environment is freely and without distortion, open to full awareness; free experience is not blocked by any barriers

2. *the road to a process, how to become a process*

It is a movement of the individual to the process, fluidity, change, to a more existential way of life, full experience of every moment. It is derived from the openness to live, which enables the perception of every moment as a new one. Such experience represents the adaptability, the discovery of the structure in experience, fluid, changeable organization of the Self and personality.

3. *the growing trust to one's own organism*

The individual regulates his/her behaviour on the basis of meanings which he/she discover in the actual experience happening right now.

Julius Seeman (2008) when constructing his model of effective functioning of a person defines the concept of „**organismic integration**“. The human model he perceives as a structure of behavioral subsystems (biochemical, physiological, perceptual, cognitive and interpersonal). These subsystems function in mutual harmony at a psychologically integrated person. Within individual subsystems as well as on the contact boundary between a person and the environment there exists a free flow of information.

This model of psychological integration leads to some specific consequences: free flowing system of communication will be more open to experiencing. As a result, a person will gain more data from reality through sensoric and perceptual processes. The amount of data that a person is able to generate is in direct relation to the effectiveness of his/her reaction. The more data as a basis for evaluation and decision-making will a person generate, the more effective his/her reaction will be.

The elements of personal effectiveness as specified by Seeman are as follows:

### **1. The ability to experience and perceive the Self**

The ability to experience as a process is linked to such important and derived qualities as active awareness of the environment, high ability to accept and develop new information, the ability to deal with the complexity and ambiguity, adaptability to direct the stress and conflict. The parallel block of qualities included self-regarding attitudes while the self-confidence, the clarity to define the Self and the feeling of identity, coherent self-definition and the feeling of autonomy derived from the trust in oneself and the differentiation of relations between the Self and others are the qualities high personal integration. Regarding the relations between the Self and others the topical themes are the ability to overcome one's Self, awareness of others and interest in others. Intimacy, devoutness and empathy are accompanying elements of this type of relations. Energy, vitality and good physical health are consistent with the described characteristics.

On the basis of research findings of his team Seeman (2008) synthesizes the portrait of a psychologically integrated person as such who accepts the Self has the vision of his/her Self, which he/she likes, respects and believes in. The ability of integrated person to accept and develop the data of his/her actual experience leads to optimum quantitative but also qualitative reception of information – quantitative in the

way that he/she is able to accept more information thanks to the open communication system without conflicts and such a quality that he/she is able to develop and integrate this information more fully because his/her behavioral systems function in a congruent way, harmonically and without misrepresentations/distortions.

To accept and assert the Self, the willingness to trust in and use one's own organism, consequently the accessibility of data from the experience – all this makes the man fully functioning. Such person on the physiological level regulates his/her level of excitability relevantly to a situation. His/her openness to impulses animalizes his ability to use the signals from the environment to improve his/her own physiological functioning.

Integrated person on a level of perception and cognition shows flexibility and productivity. He/she use the sources in a broad way so that he/she function in an effective way. His/her self-trust is transformed into the internal centre of control, the feeling that he/she participates in and creates his/her own destiny. Similarly the internal centre of evaluation is typical for him, the feeling that he has the central role to develop the values which govern his behaviour.

On the interpersonal level, the acceptance and self-trust allows for the relationships which are accepting, equal, and not oriented on status or hierarchy. Because interpersonal relations lack the element of self-threat and danger, the intimacy and lasting relationships are more possible. From the perspective of other people the integrated person is more visible, he/she is accepted in a more positive way and is more evaluated.

Seeman evaluates the above stated picture as the beginning to set empirically defined integrated person.

Seeman (2008) understands the communication as a consistent and decisive element in the description of Roger's fully functioning person or his own organismic integrated person as a healthy organism. He accentuated the key role of an open, fluid, and non-threatening communication system while the effective functioning of a person is maximized.

## **2a) The development of optimum functioning personality in the context of psychotherapy**

Rogers and Maslow can be linked together with the idea that the main moving force of human personality and life is the tendency to actualize the Self, i.e. the accomplishment of oneself, of one's possibilities and abilities, the accomplishment of one's Self. The Self-actualization is not necessarily the result of the optimum functioning of a person because his/her development is accomplished in a limiting environment. The Self is developed through the integration with the environment mainly other important people, with who we need to form relationships. Because the Self is fluid and open to change through the experience, there is a possibility to achieve the change of the Self under certain conditions. Rogers on the basis of specific results from his work with his clients found out that if he gives people the freedom to develop in any direction they will move in a positive way.

The answer to the question what the conditions are when the person can become fully functioning or if there are negative types of relationships what deform the process of actualization, and what types of relationships can serve to repair the consequences of negative conditioning, is expressed in the central hypothesis of client oriented therapy

according to which the person has enormous potential inside himself/herself to understand oneself or for the change of the self-image of one's attitudes and self-managing behavior and that it is possible to get to these sources only when a certain definable atmosphere is provided to facilitate psychological attitudes or qualities – emphatic understanding, congruence and unconditional positive acceptance (Rogers, 1951). These conditions are applicable not only for the relationship between therapist and a client but according to Rogers (1997) between a parent and a child, a leader and a group, a teacher and a pupil or the superior and the subordinate. These conditions are applicable for every situation where the development of personality is involved. The characteristics valid for the psychotherapy according to Rogers are applicable also for the all above mentioned relationships.

The relationship belongs to key aspects of humanistic psychotherapy because through the relationship the therapist is connected to the process of the whole personality in a way as it is disclosed by the client. The therapist pays attention to manifold ways in which the client communicates his/her Self to the therapist (not only in verbal communication but also in nonverbal).

The key element of the relationship between the client and the therapist and the communication of the whole personality is the therapist's focus on the immediacy, actuality of the relationship in every moment therefore the therapy is referred to as experiential. The focus on the experiencing in the client oriented therapy consists of an element of content and a process, where the content is defined through the topic of narration and the process is related to the way of interaction. The humanistic psychotherapies stress the importance of the process, the interactive actual experiencing. Therefore it is possible to perceive the humanistic psychotherapy as a therapy focused on the process, because it is exactly the process that facilitates the personal development of the client.

Seeman (2008) characterizes the therapeutic process by significant sequential elements in the direction towards the client's integration:

1. *the capacity/ability to explore own feelings even though the client faces anxiety:*  
The reorganization of the Self includes the exploration of feelings which are often unknown to the client and threatening in their essence. The tendency of a person is to avoid the pain and therefore to avoid the confrontation with threatening feelings. The clients in therapy learn to explore their feelings in the state of anxiety because they also learn that the self-exploration can be freeing and rewarding.
2. *the capacity/ability to experience fully the whole range of attitudes*  
This ability is linked to the ability mentioned above and it is its development. The client allows himself/herself to experience their own feelings connected with himself or herself fully. The opposite tendency, the denial, is disturbing and is linked with tension.
3. *the capacity/ability to symbolize one's own actual experience correctly*  
It is the process when an individual gives meaning to the experience in words or behavior. It is the process of "labeling", it is naming what the client has realized, so called "ha" experience.
4. *the ability to assimilate the new experience of the Self*  
The individuals who are able to experience and symbolize their own attitudes and not to suppress them are also able to evaluate their meaning. They can evaluate

and revise their own self-image on the basis of new experience. It implies that a certain degree of flexibility or fluidity in self-organisation of the individual belongs to an integrated person.

5. *the ability to develop internal center for evaluation*

It is the ability of the individual to use his/her own experience as the basis of Self-evaluation and the development of the Self-image. The clients then move from the initial distrust in their own internal centre of evaluation as a consequence of denial/suppression or distrust in their own experience as a source of evaluation because they had used the evaluation of others, i.e. the external centre of evaluation.

6. *the ability to accept one's own Self and the Self of others*

The individuals who have the ability to experience their own feelings and use them to develop their own self-image are at the same time people who trust, feel self-confidence and accept themselves. It does not mean that the integrated person is fully satisfied with himself/herself or that he/she does not have conflicts. It means that Self-accepting person does not have to suppress his/her own feelings but that he/she can see them as a part of his/her own Self. Then only he/she can accept other people.

7. *to understand one's own limitations*

Therapy is not only the process of self-exploration but also of self-definition. People can learn not only what they are like but they also learn to identify more clearly their own limitations they learn to differentiate between themselves and others what markedly affects interpersonal relationships. If for example the client as a parent cannot differentiate between himself/herself as a parent and his/her child he/she can hardly enable the autonomous development of his/her child.

Seeman (2008) defines the result of therapy as a return to “the organic order” while he uses the concept “organic order” in two meanings: with the concept “organic” he wants to stress that the result of therapy deals with the individual’s personality as a whole and with the concept “order” he stresses that therapy strengthens integrative process of personality.

## **2b) The development of optimum functioning personality beyond the psychotherapeutic context**

Studying optimally functioning person was primarily focused on the context of therapeutic changes. Shifting the focus on nontherapeutic context in one of our studies (Sollárová, Sollár, 2010) we wanted to contribute to an increasing interest in positive psychology as represented by Seligman’s accent on developing strengths and competences of a person, on supporting well-being and reaching a high quality of functioning of a person (Seligman, Csikszentmihalyi, 2000; Seligman, 2008).

An integrated person is by Rogers defined as unified withing him/herslef on all levels and within whom the discrepancy between a present self and a desired self is decreased. Optimal functioning of a person occurs when various aspects of a person are integrated into a relatively harmonious organization. The paper presents a research study where relationships between the level of personality psychological integration and proactive coping, selfesteem, neurotism and openness to experience in nontherapeutic

settings (N = 55 social workers) were studied. We found that those high-integration persons are more proactive, have more positive self-esteem and are less neurotic. The relationship between psychological integration and openness was not confirmed.

The study presented the relationships between the integration of an individual understood as a level of congruence between the ideal self and the real self, and the specified parameters of optimal functioning – proactive coping, self-evaluation, neuroticism and openness to experience.

Proactive coping as defined by Greenglass stresses the aspect of future orientation in solving everyday situations. The result found supports Rogers' (1962) finding that a fully functioning person will make more satisfactory decisions and actions thanks to his/her trust in his/her own organism as the source of experiential data.

Higher and more positive self-esteem of high-integrated persons corresponds with those parts of changed self-concept that Rogers (1951) states as changes of an organised configuration of perceptions of a person's own characteristics and abilities and images of him/herself in relation to other people and the environment, as a consequence of increased self-acceptance as a valuable person.

The relationship between integration and neuroticism (in the direction of lower level of neuroticism at more integrated persons) corresponds with the character of changes in the basal structure of personality that Rogers (1951) states as characteristics of a changed personality as a consequence of a successful therapy – decreased neurotic tendency and decreased level of anxiety.

Rogers (1951) understands the openness to experience as the opposite to defensiveness, i.e. reaction of an organism to experience that is perceived or anticipated as incongruent with the structure of its own self. Openness to experience as a characteristic of a more fully functioning client after the effective therapy relates to the change of the localisation of the centre of evaluation that changes from the external to the internal one and derives from the experience of the client. Seaman (2008) understands an integrated client as such who is able to develop the internal centre of evaluation, i.e. who is able to use his/her own experience as a basis for self-evaluation and self-concept. Openness as a dimension of personality in the NEO FFI consists of various facets: fantasy, aesthetics, feelings, actions, ideas, values. Only one facet – openness to one's feelings, corresponds with Rogers' concept of the openness to experience. This fact might explain low correlation found in our research.

We based the study on the personality integration model that is based on theoretical perspectives of humanistic psychology. Potential of conceptions of the fully functioning person and integrated person in a nontherapeutic context was studied by verifying relationships between integration of an individual represented by the level of congruence between real self and ideal self and specified parameters of optimal functioning – proactive coping, self-evaluation, neuroticism and openness.

Rogers himself (1951, p. 50) understands the potential of the person-centred approach in "almost universal applications" and suggests it can be remodelled in the usage in "almost infinite range of human situations". We are interested in the application of the concept on a person in working relationships, in which we understand the portrait of an optimum functioning personality as a relevant picture of a psychologically healthy, mature person who is able to create and sustain effective working relationships in the view

of the above mentioned representatives of the person centred approach. The presented picture of the fully functioning person or psychologically integrated person provides us with a range of qualities which intertwine with the concept of social competence, whose elements (Vyrost, 2002) show marked connectedness with the presented qualities of the optimum functioning personality from the point of view of the person centred approach.

Research focused on the exploration of qualities of a fully functioning person document the relevancy for the optimum functioning personality also in the context of working relationships. For example the openness to experience as a quality of fully functioning person was supported by the research conducted by Chodorkoff as a quality of people who effectively manage their lives (in Rogers, 1962). In the above quoted work Rogers also mentions the research of Crutchfield who points out that the belief in one's experience as another of characteristics of fully functioning person is the attribute of a healthy personality. Seeman (1983), inspired by the concept of psychologically integrated person, accomplished with his colleagues a number of research activities out of which we mention e.g. results, according to which highly integrated people show higher cognitive effectiveness. They have more concepts to understand and describe their world as equally intelligent but less integrated people.

Seeman and his colleagues accentuated in their research (in Seeman, 2008) the focus on two processes, which form the essence of people's functioning. These processes are *connection* and *communication*, the processes which define our functioning on every level of our existence. When these two processes function fully and in a smooth harmony, when communication freely and smoothly flows and when the smooth connection is preserved then a person functions with the use of his/her total potential. He/she is in the closest connection with himself/herself and others. From a psychological point of view such processes feed fully our psychological being. Seeman compares that to the role of food for our biological being.

Following the results of his research aimed to describe interpersonal relationships of people with different level of integration Seeman concludes that more integrated people build up relationships which are with their character horizontal while less integrated people build up vertical, hierarchically oriented relationships.

We think that the layer of working relationships is exactly the space where a person in the context of work or organisation shows dominantly his/her degree of optimum functioning therefore we perceive the potential of the person centred approach as significant in particular for the working relationships realm.

There is a large applicability of findings about the way how one's own capacities can be released to change one's personality and the way how relationships (mainly) can reinforce such a Self-oriented change.

One of the applications is also **education**, which has been in a theoretical and practical ways dealt with by Rogers (e.g. Rogers, 1951, 1983). He promoted the shift in the focus in education from education to learning and from a teacher to a facilitator of learning including the whole personality. His approach is fully relevant for the many ways of effective education of adults. The role of a facilitator – trainer is not to decide what participants should learn but to identify and create main qualities of psychological climate, which can help the participants to feel freedom in learning and development.

The external conditions, which facilitate learning and development contain

- unconditional acceptance of a participant
- authentic presence and expression of a facilitator
- emphatic understanding
- a climate without critical judgment
- the support of psychological freedom

The process of learning in the group of encounter type but also during the training of PCA skills contains analogical elements to what Rogers and Seeman state as the elements in the process of therapy toward the integration of the client:

- *exploration of own feelings and experience in the state of anxiety*

When the participants select and deal with their authentic situations, which they perceive as problematic, stressful, conflicting, the reexperiencing them during their exploration is negatively charged, what is also typical for an explored situation in a real context; the facilitation of exploration, e.g. the support by emphatic understanding strengthens the ability of participants to explore this experience also in the state of anxiety;

- *the experience of the whole range of own attitudes*

In situations when role play participants play out their situations which are the causes of their discomfort they also experience attitudes to other participant of a situation as it is typical for the real situation

- *to symbolize one's own actual experience*

When a participant for example during the self-exploration supported by the emphatic understanding of a facilitator names what his/her experience is about (“...*I am angry and terrified, when I imagine that my clients will think about me that I am the same...*”)

- *the assimilation of the new experience into one's own Self-image*

To acknowledge and accept so far unacknowledged or unaccepted content of one's Self (“... *It is important for me to be perceived as a polite and competent social worker...*”)

- *the development of an internal centre of evaluation and the acceptance of the Self and others*

In situations when the participant is not able to accept that a person significant for him/her evaluates him/her negatively (“...*I know that my mother is not satisfied with what my husband is like; I feel that in spite of that I can be satisfied with my husband...*”)

In our view the general parameters of PCA skills in a group correspond with the characteristics of the development of the fully functioning person and come out of the persuasion that the PCA skills can be learnt and have their function to achieve competences in relationships, specifically in working relationships.

The author of the article together with her team has carried out developmental programmes and trainings with the person-centred approach with two general types of adult participants – people working as professionals who help and who are in managerial positions, with two main types of training programmes – mainly experience oriented with the respect of encounter groups guidelines and experience-oriented training with cognitive elements focused on the training of PCA skills to create and manage

working relations. The direct results when participants acquire PCA skills in working interpersonal interactions are mainly

- skills of clear and congruent communication
- skills to understand communication of the other person in interaction
- skills to facilitate the clarity of communication with a man with different standpoints
- skills to improve team communication when its members differ in their understanding and experience
- skills to understand the other
- skills to manage stressful, conflicting and emotionally charged situations.

The verification of change in personal variables, interpersonal variables in behavior through the research (e.g. Sollarova, Sollar, 2007) can be evaluated as compatible with changes which research of changes as a part of client oriented therapy state in the direction to reinforce optimum functioning of personality. For the author and her team it is the justification of the relevancy and effectiveness to use the principles of the person-centred approach in education of adults, in developmental programmes and training programmes focused to make the functioning of the individual more effective, in particular in working relations.

Another area of facilitating the development of healthy functioning of a person beyond the psychotherapeutic context is represented by **coaching**.

The person-centred coaching psychology is according to Joseph and Bryant-Jefferies (2009) and Stober (2006) the way of work with people based on a metatheoretical supposition that people have a potential to develop and grow and that when the internal potential is released they can move and become more autonomous, socially constructive and optimally functioning. It does not happen automatically. Without proper social environment the internal motivation toward optimum functioning leads to distress and dysfunctionality. Therefore it is the role of a person-centred coaching psychologist to provide a client with the social environment, where the internal motivation of the client will be facilitated. The person-centred coaching psychologist is persuaded that the client is the best expert for himself/herself and if the therapist is able to provide him/her with an accepting and authentic relationship where he/she does not feel to be judged, and pressed. Then the client will be determined by his/her Self and motivated toward the optimum functioning. According to Joseph (2009) the essence of the person-centred psychologist regardless the fact where the client is situated from a perspective of psychological functioning, is to facilitate the self-determination of the client in such a way so that he/she would move toward a more optimum functioning. The person-centred approach is a metatheoretical approach of work with people and the application of the person-centred approach is not only therapy but also the education, education of children, group learning, solution of conflicts and peace processes; all these applications have the same philosophical standpoint (more in Sollarova, 2005).

Necessary and adequate conditions presented by Rogers (1957) describe the attitude qualities of a person-centred therapist and describe his/her practice as an effort to be congruent and emphatic and experience unconditional positive acceptance towards the client. The basic idea of the person-centred therapy is that these central attitude

qualities are such a social environment that facilitates constructive experience of the actualized tendency. It is exactly this aspect of theory, which makes sense of the theory of central conditions. In the environment where a person does not feel to be judged and pressed, he/she does not feel the need to defend oneself and a congruent self-actualization can happen. The application of above mentioned attitude qualities in the coaching work represents according to Stober (2006) key conditions for the effective coaching practice. The recognition of key conditions as necessary for a change of the person coached is applicable for the coaching similarly to psychotherapy. In the author's view the main difference how these two qualities are demonstrated by the coach (in comparison with the psychotherapy) is that the coach applies them with the aim to build up a rapport in such a way that clients are able to be engaged actively in the selection of their behaviour in the process of their development.

The person-centred approach provides genuinely positive psychological perspective on mental health because it is holistically focused on both negative as well as positive aspects of one's functioning. The psychology of coaching is the same activity requiring the same theoretical background and the same practical skills as the work with people, who are in distress and are dysfunctional, requires. The person-centred coaching psychology understands the understanding and improvement of the optimum functioning and relieving the maladaptive distress and dysfunctionality as one role. The person-centred approach is not about the relief of distress and dysfunctionality per se, it is about facilitation of ease and optimum functioning. It holds for truth that in a person-centred perspective it is in practice unified and identical role not two different separable roles. Therefore within a person-centred perspective there is no theoretical difference between consultancy and coaching. It is not important where one starts. Joseph and Bryatt-Jefferies quote the interview with John Schlien, one of the founders of the person-centred approach from 1956:

If skills developed in psychological consultancy are able to release constructive capacity of malfunctioning people so that they become healthier the same assistance should be accessible to healthy people who are less than fully functioning. Whenever we focus on positive aims of health we will be less focused on where one started and more on how to achieve the desired ultimate goal of positive aims.

In practice of the person-centred psychology of coaching the role of a coach is to "feed" the social relationship which is experienced by the coached person as authentic and where he/she feels to be accepted and understood. The understanding of the psychotherapy/consultancy focused on a client is that consultancy is about the view of life from the perspective of the past, what failed while coaching is about the vision to the future of what can be accomplished. If we offer consultancy we get clients who want to look back and if we offer coaching we have clients what want to see to the future. The role of person-centred therapist or a coach is the same in both cases, to stay with the client and facilitate his/her self-determination. Therefore on the theoretical level of the process the role of the person-centred psychologist is always the same although he/she works as a coach or a consultant or clinical psychologist but on the practical level the content of sessions will be different because clients usually bring different material to consultancy than to coaching (more in Sollárová, 2011).

## Conclusion

Positive psychology offers applications for health psychology that is interested in supporting health and well-being of a person. According to one of contemporary definitions (Linley, Joseph, 2004) it is also an issue how to facilitate optimum functioning of a person while in the context of positive psychology it exceeds the territory of psychopathology and seeks ways of supporting and developing optimum functioning of a (healthy) person. In the meaning of the concept of “positive health” (Seligman, 2008) we presented the concept of optimum functioning of a person as it was specified by humanistic psychology, especially the person-centred approach in the work of Rogers and Seeman. Then we introduced the application of the concepts and research of the structure of optimum functioning of a person beyond the psychotherapeutic context (Sollarova, Sollar, 2010) as well as ways of facilitating optimum functioning of a person beyond psychotherapeutic context, especially in adult education and (person-centred) coaching. The aim of the paper was to show wide application potential of the person-centred approach and applied positive psychology for studying and supporting psychologically healthy functioning of a person.

## FACILITOVANIE PSYCHOLOGICKY ZDRAVÉHO FUNGOVANIA OSOBNOSTI

**Abstrakt:** Zámerom príspevku je poukázať na široké aplikačné možnosti prístupu zameraného na človeka, resp. aplikačnej pozitívnej psychológie pre skúmanie a podporu psychologicky zdravého fungovania človeka. Pozitívna psychológia ponúka aplikácie pre psychológiu zdravia, ktorá sa zaoberá o podporu zdravia a pohody človeka. Podľa jednej zo súčasných definícií (Linley, Joseph, 2004) je v záujme aplikovanej pozitívnej psychológie aj téma facilitovania optimálneho fungovania osobnosti, pričom v rámci pozitívnej psychológie ide o prekročenie teritória psychopatológie a ide o podporu rozvoja optimálneho fungovania (zdravej) osobnosti. V zmysle takto koncipovaného „pozitívneho zdravia“ (Seligman, 2008) sme predstavili pojem optimálne fungujúceho človeka tak, ako ho koncipovala humanistická psychológia, osobitne prístup zameraný na človeka v príspevkoch Rogersa a Seemana, ďalej sme predstavili aplikáciu ich konceptov a výskumu štruktúry optimálne fungujúceho človeka v mimoterapeutickom kontexte (Sollárová, Sollár, 2010), ako aj možnosti facilitovania optimálneho fungovania človeka v mimoterapeutickom kontexte, konkrétne vo vzdelávaní dospelých a koučingu (zameranom na človeka).

**Kľúčové slová:** psychologický prístup zameraný na klienta, humanistická psychológia, pozitívna psychológia, facilitácia optimálneho rozvoja osobnosti, pozitívne zdravie, mimoterapeutický vzťah