Personal Philosophy and Theory of Change

There are a multitude of philosophies about human nature and the nature of change. To examine yours, consider.

1. **What is the nature of human existence?**
   - Are we born into a world that is largely predetermined?
   - Are we born into a world of endless possibilities?
   - Are we born with predispositions to behave in certain ways?
   - Are we completely products of our environment, acting only on cues provided by the physical and social realities outside of ourselves?

2. **What is the nature of psychopathology?**
   - How do people develop psychological problems?
   - What are the cognitive forces within the individual that contribute to the development of psychological problems?
   - What are the emotional forces within the individual that contribute to the development of psychological problems?
   - What are the social forces within the individual that contribute to the development of psychological problems?
   - What are the physical forces within the individual's external environment that contribute to the development of psychological problems?

3. **What is the nature of human change?**
   - How does change occur in human beings?
   - What factors contribute to an individual's ability to change?
   - What factors might inhibit an individual's ability to change?
   - What periods in a person's development are most permeable to the processes of change and which are the most rigid against it?
   - How often do people normally undergo significant change during their lifetime?
   - Once an individual has a well-established personality, are they capable of change. If so, to what degree?

4. **What contributes to the existence of individual differences human beings?**
   - To what degree do people act according to global rules which direct behavior?
   - To what degree do people act independently of global rules which direct behavior?
   - Does free will exist? If so, does it have any limitations?
   - What are some examples of differences between individuals and groups of people on social, cultural, religious, political, etc. levels which may enhance or impede progress in a helping relationship?

5. **What are some characteristics of an effective helper which may facilitate change processes in others?**

6. **How do you think your beliefs about human nature and the nature of human change impact your own mental health? How do they impact your effectiveness as a helper?**