

Ego Development as Experiential Framework in Psychotherapy

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Abstract

Introduction: *This paper offers a summary of research on ego development and psychotherapy and ego development and psychopathology. While there has been a great deal written on Loevinger's (1976) theory of ego development, very little of it focuses on the relation of ego identity and psychotherapy or ego development and psychopathology. The research that has been done is not systemic and covers a wide range of areas.*

Objectives: *The objectives of this paper are to review the available literature, seeking for patterns in both the relationship of ego development to psychotherapy and ego development to psychopathology. Secondly, we explore the relationship of a client's level of ego development to their experience in therapy and their ability to benefit from therapy.*

Methods: *The paper reviews Swensen's two-transition model of ego development for psychotherapy and illustrates how this may work, in two case summaries. The first case summary is of a person who transitioned from a pre-conventional stage to a conventional stage. The second case summary is of a person who transitioned from a conventional to post-conventional stage.*

Results: *While the two-transition model of ego development in psychotherapy is a start, our results suggest that we need a more systematic approach to researching the relationship of ego development to psychotherapy as well as psychopathology.*

Conclusions: *Our conclusions suggest future research projects and training in ego development for practicing therapists. While there is a great deal of promise in using ego development theory to increase the efficiency of psychotherapy interventions, there must be a more general, accessible training for therapists regarding how people at each stage see themselves and the world.*

Keywords: *ego development theory, psychotherapy, psychopathology*

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The Risk of Ambiguity in Metaphors

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Abstract

Introduction: *The use of metaphors is a valuable technique in therapy, as they do entail an element of ambiguity. On the other hand, it is precisely the possibility of ambiguity in interpretation that may entail an element of risk.*

Objectives: *The purpose is to explore other settings where metaphors have been used precisely because they do entail an element of ambiguity.*

Methods: *Qualitative analysis and literature review.*

Results: *The possibility of ambiguity in interpretation has made metaphors the favorite tool of language artists throughout the ages. Sometimes the transformative power of metaphor opens the way to the solution of a client's problem, a lasting development called "change", while in other cases the cause of misunderstanding lies in the specter of perception.*

Conclusions: *The literature review provides evidence for the use of ambiguity in Delphic oracles and the necessity for further exploration of the ambiguity interpretation factors that might influence the conditions to an ecologic outcome.*

Keywords: *perception, interpretation, semantics, ecology context, neurolinguistics, NLP*



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mBIT as an Experiential Coaching and Therapeutic Approach in Stress Management and Resilience Building – a series of case studies

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Abstract

Introduction: *This paper discusses using an mBraining approach in the management of stress, including building longer term resilience in order to avoid ongoing problems and recurrence of prior symptoms. By the provision of several case studies, we propose the effectiveness of this approach in practice and outline the opportunity to utilize mBIT alongside other existing and established therapeutic approaches.*

Objectives: *This paper aims to discuss the perceived value of the mBIT (multiple Brain Integration Techniques) approach as a complementary technique in the applications of psychotherapy, counseling, coaching and overall personal optimization and development, with specific focus on reducing unwanted stress and building resilience over time.*

Methods: *mBIT approach methodology and brief literature review.*

Results: *The discussed case studies suggest a demonstrable value in introducing mBIT into the optimal management of stress and building of personal resilience.*

Conclusions: *We advocate that mBIT can be successfully used as a complementary approach to reduce the day to day experience of stress and to change the way clients process stressors in the longer term.*

Keywords: *neuroscience, coaching, multiple brain integration, embodied cognition, stress, resilience*

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The Relation between Anxiety, Automatic Thoughts Adjustment and Emotional Control

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Abstract

Introduction: Iancu et al. (2015) conducted a study on the relation between positive and negative thoughts and social anxiety. They underlined the fact that people suffering from social anxiety experienced the environment as threatening and dangerous. Mustafaraj (2015) guided a research on the importance of automatic thoughts upon generalised anxiety. The results indicated that, after interpreting the role-playing games, patients were able to assess themselves and to change dysfunctional thoughts, emotions and behaviours.

Objectives: The objective of this research is to highlight the relation between anxiety (its perceived level), automatic thoughts adjustment and emotional control.

Methods: Three psychometric instruments were used for evaluation, namely, Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale (Taylor, 1953), Automatic Thoughts Questionnaire – ATQ (Hollon and Kendall, 1980), State Emotion-Regulation Questionnaire (Kashdan and Steger, 2006), which were applied to a number of 25 people (31-60 years old, 19 women and 6 men), participants in the personal development groups. The questionnaires were filled in between 14:00 and 20:00, a timeframe when a personal development group or another course did not take place.

The dependent variables were: emotion suppression, cognitive reappraisal, desire for change, negative self-concepts and negative expectations, low self-esteem, helplessness, and perceived anxiety.

Results: The research hypotheses (the assumption that there is a statistically significant correlation between the level of perceived anxiety and automatic thoughts adjustment, between the level of perceived anxiety and emotional control, and respectively, between automatic thoughts adjustment and emotional control) were partially confirmed to a threshold of significance $p < 0.05$.

Conclusions: Hypothesis confirmation has the support of literature approaching the relationship between variables: emotion suppression, cognitive reappraisal, desire for change, negative self-concepts and negative expectations, low self-esteem, helplessness, and perceived anxiety. Research findings represent starting points for further research on regulating negative emotions through automatic thoughts and anxiety.

Keywords: automatic thoughts, emotions control, self-esteem, personal maladjustment

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The Feminine Identarian Archetype – a Symbolic-Experiential Perspective Revealed within the Creative Improvisation through Literature

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Abstract

Introduction: *Creative improvisation through literature is an experiential-unifying work technique in personal development and optimisation.*

Objectives: *The present study aims to explore the relationship between the connected symbols of the feminine identarian role and anxiety, from an experiential-unifying perspective.*

Methods: *Through the analysis of 400 stories, created by personal development groups participants, analysis devised to validate the above-mentioned technique, it becomes apparent that the anxiety symptomatology is closely connected to the high rate of feminine Ego symbols in these stories.*

Results: *Understanding symbols and their conscious integration has led to a decreased level of anxiety.*

Conclusions: *Through symbol analysis in an experiential-unifying group, participants gained the capacity to adjust in a creative-adaptive manner.*

Keywords: *personal development, metaphor, therapeutic stories, unifying therapy*

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Understanding the Repetitive Transgenerational Life Scenarios in the Case of Professional Foster Parents

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Abstract

Introduction: *Foster care assistance is a profession many persons, especially women, choose in a conscious way, having different declared motivations, such as: the existence of a profound feeling of love towards children, the compassion towards the children without family, etc. The conscious intentions list may continue, but what lies underneath is a fascinating unconscious world, harbouring repetitions, mainly out of loyalty towards the predecessors.*

Objectives: *1) Developing the understanding of the fact that a significant contribution to the reasons for choosing the foster parent profession, apart from the psychotraumatic situations experienced during childhood and/ or the adult age, is also based in the life experiences of the predecessors. 2) The analysis of the intercorrelation between the inter- and transgenerational losses, the motivation for choosing the profession and the core themes in the life scenarios of the foster parents.*

Methods: *The methods used in the research have been selected in conformity with the objectives: the psychodiagnostic and the qualitative analysis methods.*

Results: *The results of the study confirm a psychodiagnostic value for the formative group program, focussed on the self-development of professional foster parents which leads to significant psycho-emotional and behavioural changes. A result of the research, relevant in improving the manner in which foster care parents interact with children under placement, resides in understanding that the experiences of the predecessors have a significant contribution (see the first objective).*

Another important result of our research is represented by the outlining of the relationships between the trauma generated by the inter and the transgenerational losses experienced by the foster parents and the motivation for choosing this profession, together with the core themes exerted through repetitive life scenarios.

Conclusions: *The research has a psychodiagnostic value, and, at the same time, can find its usefulness in the actual improvement of the relationship between foster parents and the children they are caring for, by helping the first become more present in their role in the lives of the children and to gain more self-awareness and insight in the life scenarios they were playing. Such aspects are also important for the development of a more sanogenous behaviour towards the others, through self-understanding.*

Keywords: *life scenarios, psychotraumatic family history, core themes, loss, abandonment*

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