

emotionSync®: Solving Dysfunctional Cognitions by Reversing Pavlovian Conditioning

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Abstract

Introduction: Pavlovian conditioning establishes stimulus-response connections. The neural basis is provided by Hebbian learning; an almost forgotten dispute in psychology asks whether this is a gradual build-up of the strength of a connection of an all-or none-learning.

Objectives: This article focuses on dysfunctional cognitions which are stimulus-response connections often learned with one-shot conditioning and investigates the option of reversing this learning within one session, by using a type of Anti-Pavlovian conditioning.

Methods: First a relatively new method, emotionSync®, is introduced and described. It is neurophysiologically based and founded on overexciting existing dysfunctional connections. emotionSync® can involve different representational systems. Here the auditory system is investigated, as lots of dysfunctional cognitions rely on auditory representations. I present two studies with different methods to evaluate the emotional state of the subjects before and after the intervention with emotionSync®.

Results: The data provide evidence for the effectiveness of emotionSync®. Pre-post comparisons show an improvement of the emotional state of the clients regardless of measurement scale. The effect was still stable after three months. Further studies even showed lasting stability.

Conclusions: I suggest that learning can be both – gradual and all-or-one. I further suggest that for effective de-learning single sessions overexciting neural connections through emotionSync® may be more effective than slow gradual replacement of existing connection with new connections, without deleting old memory traces.

Keywords: learning, psychotherapy, neuropsychology, exposure, conditioning, dysfunctional cognitions, beliefs, emotionSync®

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Therapeutic Letters within an Unifying Experiential Intervention – a Way of Healing Through Creative Writing. Case study

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Abstract

Introduction: *Therapeutic Letter Writing is a largely used technique within psychotherapeutic processes, helping the client to know oneself better, but also to overcome some existential jams, to integrate some problems or even to work with trauma.*

Objectives: *The aim of this paper is to harness the way of intervention with therapeutic letters, a technique adapted to the specific of Unifying Experiential Psychotherapy (PEU), by presenting the case study of a participant within a therapeutic process in which we used, among others, the technique mentioned above.*

Methods: *In this case study, we used therapeutic letters, applied in an experiential way, but also combined with other creative-expressive and experiential techniques, in order to help the client overcome her traumas.*

Results: *One of the results we have seen is the fact that the participant from the case study made some important changes in her life as a sign that the intervention was successful. Thus, by using the therapeutic letters, the client became able to solve the problems she had in relation with her mother, and also helped her become more independent and improve the self-esteem.*

Conclusions: *Given the positive results of the therapeutic letters, we propose to continue the study, by using it in the Unifying Personal Development groups and highlighting its positive results both by means of qualitative and quantitative measures.*

Keywords: *psychotherapy, creative-expressive techniques, therapeutic stories, letters*

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The Relationship between Parental Styles, Anger Management, and Cognitive-Emotional Coping Mechanisms in Adolescents

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Abstract

Introduction: Adolescents experience stronger and more frequent emotional states than people of other ages, with anger reflecting both the struggle for independence and a need for improving emotion regulation abilities, in order to achieve personal purposes and to adapt to the social context. In this respect, cognitive-emotional coping strategies such as acceptance, positive reappraisal, refocus on planning, or positive refocusing play a significant role. On the other hand, negative parenting, that includes strong psychological control, seems to negatively affect emotion regulation in children and adolescents. Baumrind's parental styles typology (1966, apud Hedstrom, 2016) identifies the following parental styles: authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative, which seem to be relevant to the way adolescents manage their emotional and social life (Stănciulescu, 2002).

Objectives: a) to identify the relationship between parental styles, anger expression and internal and external anger control in adolescents; b) to highlight associations between parenting styles and cognitive-emotional coping strategies used by adolescents; c) to analyze the correlations between these coping mechanisms and the management of anger as discrete emotion.

Methods: The considered sample consisted in 85 adolescents aged 16 to 17 years (71.3% girls, 28.7% boys). The following instruments were used: State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory (STAXI 2), Perceived Parental Style Questionnaire, and Cognitive Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (CERQ).

Results: The elevated scores obtained for the authoritarian parenting style are associated with high scores for the STAXI 2 scale, measuring internal anger expression, while authoritative and permissive styles are related to high levels of internal and external anger control. The authoritarian parenting style significantly correlates with maladaptive coping mechanisms: self-blame, rumination, catastrophizing, and other-blame. The permissive style is positively associated with acceptance and catastrophizing, while the authoritative style correlated with acceptance, refocus on planning, positive reevaluation, putting into perspective, and catastrophizing.

Conclusions: Perceived parental style is relevant for the way adolescents handle their anger. If parents use an authoritative parenting style by showing attention and support for the adolescent's emotional state, it is more likely for their teenagers to be able to regulate the felt anger. By the contrary, it seems that an authoritarian parenting style, characterized by lack of care for the child's affective life, is associated with irritable adolescents who feel anger, but don't express it, and who tend to use maladaptive emotion regulation strategies. Thus, it is recommended that the parents adopt an authoritative style so that the children and adolescents could have more chances to adequately manage their anger.

Keywords: anger expression and control, coping, authoritarian, permissive, and authoritative parenting styles

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Experiential Teaching Style

A Modern Approach to the Teacher-Student Interaction in the Instructional Process

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Abstract

Introduction: *The profound renewals in the field of learning have had considerable effects on educational sciences, implicitly the status and role of teachers. The didactic activity of the modern teacher goes beyond making use of one's personal qualities, appreciated in terms of vocation, talent and mastery; it also implies the acquisition of a complex system of theoretical knowledge, the formation of abilities, competences and qualities, and taking on particular roles, in a rigorous and controlled manner, all of which highlight one's wide range of skills and professionalism.*

Objectives: *The aim of this study was to explore the link between the Educator's Role Profile and the results obtained by fourth grade students in the state-standardized PIRLS test, in order to help teachers better understand their own approach to educating and identify ways of optimizing results.*

Methods: *The study, conducted in Romania, included as participants 35 primary school teachers, evaluated with D. Kolb's self-assessment instrument in order to identify their Educator Role Profiles, and 375 of their students, who underwent a standardized form of testing called PIRLS. The study sought to determine whether there was a statistically significant difference between the students' performances and ultimately raised the hypothesis that these differences could be due to the impact of their mentors' style of teaching, according to their Educator Role Profiles. This work also outlines the Experiential educator role profile as the one which unifies all four roles of the teacher, helping the learner go through the entire learning cycle.*

Results: *This study found that the most common Educator Role Profile in Romanian schools is the Evaluator role profile, followed by the Expert, the Facilitator and, finally, the Coach. Regarding the association between the teachers' role profiles and the results obtained by students in the PIRLS test, the study showed that the Facilitator role profile was associated with statistically significant greater mean scores in the students' overall performance, followed by the Coach, the Expert and lastly, the Evaluator.*

Conclusions: *This paper concludes that the Experiential teaching role profiles ought to be considered important additions to the school reform model, in order to increase students' performance on standardized examinations.*

Keywords: *Experiential Learning, Educator Role Profile, performance, teaching style*

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The Perception of Death and the Attachment Style Developed in Couple Relationship

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Abstract

Introduction: This research aims to present, explore and analyze the dynamics and interactions between the attachment style developed by the individual in the couple, death anxiety and separation anxiety. The focus on these three concepts can be justified by the fact that these are important processes that occur during the experiential journey of each individual, processes which significantly influence the quality of the relationship between the partners.

Objectives: Objectives and assumptions underlying the present study support the exploratory and investigative approaches, to identify the attachment styles developed, levels of death anxiety, but also the level of separation anxiety manifested in the erotic partnership in which the participant was a part of at the time of the data collection phase. Besides the exploratory aspects of the research, I inter-linked these concepts to capture the dynamic interaction and specific principles.

Methods: Three instruments were used in the present study: a questionnaire for investigating the attachment style (AAS), a questionnaire for investigating the level of separation anxiety (AS-FI), and a third one for investigating the level of death anxiety (TDAS).

Results: Regarding the specific assumptions, three research hypotheses were confirmed: H1, that there is a statistically significant positive correlation between separation anxiety in couples and ambivalent attachment style ($r = .45, p < .01$), showing that people who have a high level of attachment anxiety have reported a higher tendency to worry about separation than those who have a lower level of this dimension; H2, that there is no statistically significant correlation between separation anxiety in couples and secure attachment style ($r = -.07, p > .01$), as the dynamics of the relationship of those with a secure attachment style makes the separation anxiety appear unlikely; H5, that ambivalent attachment style predicts separation anxiety ($r^2 = .21$). The H3 hypothesis was partially confirmed, with ambivalent attachment style and avoidant attachment style correlating statistically significant with death anxiety ($r = .31, p = .001$, respectively $r = .29, p = .001$), while there is no statistically significant correlation between secure attachment style and death anxiety ($r = -.10, p > .001$), people with a secure attachment style defending themselves against the awareness of death in a different way than those with an ambivalent or avoidant attachment style. The H4 hypothesis has not been confirmed, as death anxiety does not modulate the relationship between secure attachment style and separation anxiety.

Conclusions: Individuals with an ambivalent or avoidant attachment style score higher on the scales that measure death and separation anxiety, while individuals with a secure attachment style register lower values on these scales.

Keywords: attachment style, death anxiety, separation anxiety, erotic partnership

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Parenting Mythology

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Abstract

Introduction: We make reference in this paper to those mythologies which affect the attitudes of parents towards their children, how they get involved in parental and children roles in their relationships. We hypothesized that implicit communication, from right brain to right brain, creates implicit expectations, implicit roles and implicit scenarios. The implicit mythological roles are transmitted by relational unconscious (Ginot, 2017) and are associated with implicit procedural memory.

Objectives: This research aims to identify those myths that shape child-parent relationship by generating implicit expectations, implicit roles and implicit scenarios.

Methods: For this research we used the interpretative phenomenological analysis (Glaser, Strauss, 1967; Mucchielli, 2002; Smith, 2008). In this context for collecting the data we used as methods semi-structured interviews (Mucchielli, 1995; Moscovici, Buschini, 2007), case study (Atkinson, 1998, 2006; Yin, 2005) and genogram (McGoldrick, Gerson, 1990).

Results: The qualitative analysis allowed the identification of specific mythologies associated with child-parent relationships and the clusters of specific implicit roles in these relationships.

Conclusions: We attempted to identify the way in which the mythology of parenting has an effect in shaping parent-child dynamics. In the case studies we showed how the mythology of parenting creates a way of being parents, conjugal partners, or children in a family. This kind of mythology generates implicit expectations, implicit roles, implicit needs, implicit emotions and implicit behavior in the child-parent relationship. So, child and parent could experience their relationship in an implicit mythological scenario, not being aware of their roles, needs and behavior. The myths about caregiving and parental roles are created and structured in concordance with the narcissistic needs of the members of the family. These myths represent the implicit interdiction to be and act in a different way.

Keywords: *implicit familial roles, implicit mythological scenario, projective identification, protoconversation, right brain, intergenerational and transgenerational transmission*

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