

Towards Deep Emotions in Psychotherapy – Tailored Approaches to the Client’s Attachment Strategy

Mădălina Voicuⁱ, Roxana-Alina Olaruⁱⁱ

SPER Institute, Romania

Abstract

Introduction: Often, during psychotherapy there are moments of blockages in the straightforward course of the therapeutic work and regarding the processing of emotions. Beyond many other possible causes, one of them can be a difference between people – each of us developed, since childhood, a certain type of basic attachment.

Objectives: The nuanced description of the attachment styles and, in particular, of the different, adapted way in which the psychotherapist must accomplish the emotional processing with particular individuals.

Methods: Synthetic analysis of scientific studies, case studies.

Results: The present paper illustrates and supports the imperative need for a personalized approach, appropriate for the way of being and the ‘place’ where our client is, in order to obtain optimum psychotherapeutic results, in an efficient and profoundly humanistic manner, regardless of conducting an individual, couple or family session.

Conclusions: The attachment style that the person has chiseled for themselves is not an obstacle to their personal development; it is upon the psychotherapist to recognize it and be capable of acting with flexibility in their intervention, which could also lead to security and a modified style.

Keywords: avoidant, anxious, body language, Arnold’s theory, threat

*

*

*

ⁱ Corresponding author: psychotherapist Mădălina Voicu, PhD, SPER Institute, Splaiul Independenței nr. 17, bl. 101, sc. 2, etaj 4, ap. 29, sector 5, Bucharest, Romania, email: voicu.madalina@gmail.com.

ⁱⁱ Corresponding author: psychotherapist Roxana-Alina Olaru, Șos. Ștefan cel Mare nr. 228, bl. 45, sc. B, et. 3, ap. 42, sector 2, Bucharest, Romania, email: contact@consiliere-psiologica.ro.

A Baby for My Dad (Case Study of a Mother Giving Birth to a Stillborn Baby)

Silvia-Carmen Mikulovićⁱ

Hyperion University, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Department
of Psychology, Bucharest

Craiova County Emergency Clinical Hospital, Romania

Abstract

Introduction: *About 1% of normal, uncomplicated pregnancies end with an intrauterine death. The causes are not well known, but the emotional implications can be devastating. The suffering, generated by the death of the child before or after birth, alters the behavior of women, produces changes in their existence. As a result of this situation, many of them become depressed or suffer post-traumatic stress disorder.*

Objectives: *This case study aimed at processing the loss experience of a patient who gave birth to a dead child, by means of emotional deblocking, increasing awareness and expression of emotions, understanding of experienced scenarios and events, gaining insight into the mother's needs and management of the losses lived throughout her life.*

The goal of the therapeutic approach was to clarify the various events in the patient's life, that caused her suffering, blocked her resources and her understanding, losing contact with herself and her needs, which influenced her decisions, in agreement with the scenarios and misperceptions she had developed, while stiffening and devitalizing her.

Methods: *The methods used were the Draw-a-Person Test, the Tree-Drawing Test (Koch's Baum Test), the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT test), expressive-creative techniques of experiential nature.*

Results: *The following results were obtained: expression and understanding of emotions, increased self-confidence, better contact with oneself, better understanding of one's needs, diminished guilt, understanding of inner conflicts following experienced events, an increased sense of identity.*

Conclusions: *The psychological assistance of maternity patients is a protective psychological intervention because many of the mothers do not receive emotional support from family members and face difficulties in developing adaptive capacities and in reactivating inner resources.*

Keywords: *suffering, stillbirth, post-traumatic stress, resources*

ⁱ Corresponding author: Silvia-Carmen Mikulović, PhD, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Hyperion University, Calea Călărășilor 169, Sector 3, 030615, Bucharest, Romania, email: psiho_rot@yahoo.com.

Development of Pre and Postnatal Attachment through Experiential Exercises

Oana Bunescuⁱ

BébéBienvenu Franco-Romanian Association, Bucharest, Romania

Abstract

Introduction: Attachment theory was introduced for the first time by John Bowlby in the 1960s, to describe the mother-child relationship. The concept of attachment was initially proposed to define the relationship created after birth, but attachment begins before, during pregnancy. However, we can talk about an already created bond during pregnancy, between the mother and fetus, a connection that will continue to develop in the postnatal period. Thus, it is not possible to talk about the attachment that activates for the first time after the birth of the child, the prenatal and postnatal dimensions of attachment being interconnected.

Objectives: The main objective of the case study was empowering the development of pre and postnatal attachment by using techniques specific to the experiential orientation.

Methods: The present article depicts a case study, of a 30-year-old expecting mother, later new mother, enrolled in a psychotherapeutic intervention program, conducted in the experiential humanistic approach, having as working methods those described below:

In the prenatal period: experiential moments to facilitate the possibility of exposure of the intra-psychic material and to enable the pregnant woman to more easily get in touch with the states and feelings experienced for the first time; relaxation exercises.

In the postnatal period: experiential techniques to help the new mother get into a deeper contact with the baby and to facilitate postnatal attachment, to create a healthy emotional bond positively perceived in the mother-child dyad.

Results: An increase in prenatal and postnatal attachment was observed following the use of experiential therapy techniques. There were noted: an increase of confidence in the personal resources, a decrease in negative thoughts and a decrease in anxiety.

Conclusions: Experiential therapy can help increase attachment before pregnancy and after birth. In addition, it can be seen that when prenatal attachment is good, it is also a predictor of good postnatal attachment, as they are interconnected.

Keywords: pregnancy, prenatal attachment, postnatal attachment, bond, mother-baby relationship

ⁱ Corresponding author: Oana Bunescu, psychologist, psychological counselor at BébéBienvenu Franco-Romanian Association, Bucharest, Romania, email: oanabunescu@yahoo.com.

The Identity Archetypes and Self-Esteem: a Symbolic Analysis of Therapeutic Stories within Creative Improvisation through Literature

Vasile Constantinⁱ, Alexandru-Filip Popoviciⁱⁱ

Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Psychology Department, University of Bucharest, Romania

Abstract

Introduction: *Creative improvisation through literature is an Experiential Unifying technique which fosters the client's personal development process and heals some of their emotional wounds, by analyzing the metaphors projected in the client's stories.*

Objectives: *The present study aims to explore the way metaphors revealed within the creative improvisation through literature intervention correlate and facilitate the integration of archetypal identity roles (feminine, masculine, maternal and paternal) and the increase of self-esteem level.*

Methods: *Through the content analysis of 400 stories created within the personal development groups, designed to validate the above-mentioned technique, we extracted metaphors connected with self-esteem, but also linked with the four archetypal roles, in order to observe if there is any correlation between the two features.*

Results: *We were able to see that self-esteem is closely connected to the increased frequency of archetypal roles revealed through metaphors from the therapeutic stories.*

Conclusions: *Through symbol analysis in an Experiential Unifying group, participants started to develop more creative-adaptive mechanisms to better cope with challenges.*

Keywords: *metaphor, Experiential Unifying psychotherapy, personal development, creative-expressive techniques, qualitative research*

*

* *

ⁱ Corresponding author: Vasile Constantin, PhD, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, University of Bucharest, Panduri 90, Sector 5, 050663, Bucharest, Romania, email: vasileconstantin87@gmail.com.

ⁱⁱ Corresponding author: Alexandru-Filip Popovici, PhD, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Psychology Department, University of Bucharest, Panduri 90, Sector 5, 050663, Bucharest, Romania, email: filip.popovici@unibuc.ro.

Health-Related Attitudes toward Vegetarians and Meat-Eaters

Lorena Antonoviciⁱ, Maria Nicoleta Turliuc

Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Psychology Department,
Alexandru I. Cuza University of Iași, Romania

Abstract

Introduction: *Vegetarianism still gets little attention in scientific papers. Although it is not surprising that attitudes toward vegetarians and meat-eaters differ considerably, certain levels of these differences have been poorly studied.*

Objectives: *This study aimed to explore the implications of vegetarianism and meat-eaters' behaviours on individuals' health-related attitudes, by exploring how deeply these differences run.*

Methods: *An exploratory study was conducted to examine more in-depth the implications of vegetarianism and meat-eaters behaviours on individuals' health-related attitudes (n=180, mean age=33.96). We constructed vignettes to describe the eating habits of omnivores and vegetarians targets. Each vignette varied only in the description of eating behaviors. The participants were randomly assigned to three conditions: vegetarianism (n=60), meat-eater (n=60), and control (n=60). We used a self-report questionnaire to collect health-related attitudes and demographic data.*

Results: *The results of the Chi-square crosstabs analysis revealed that attitudes related to health state, health difficulties and health procedures were significantly associated with vegetarians and meat-eaters. Also, type of diet and gender differences emerged as being significantly related to vegetarians and meat-eaters. The causality of possible health issues and future health prognostics were not significant when comparing vegetarian and meat-eater target participants. Vegetarians tend to be considered healthier than meat-eaters, but still, omnivore participants thought that they have to consult a doctor. According to participants in this study, meat-eaters might encounter more mental health difficulties as opposed to vegetarians and should keep a diet. There were more positive attitudes and beliefs regarding the participants own type of diet. Moreover, when compared to men, women rated omnivores as having better health prognostics.*

Conclusions: *These results might shape prospective eating behaviors. Future experimental and longitudinal studies should be conducted to verify these findings and provide effective eating programs.*

Keywords: *vegetarian diet, omnivores, eating behavior, health*

ⁱ Corresponding author: Lorena Antonovici, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iași, 3 Toma Cozma Street, Iași, Romania, email: antonovici_lorena@yahoo.com.

Psychological Aspects in Cardiovascular Patients

Andreea Elena Mustațăⁱ

Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Psychology Department, University
of Bucharest, Romania

“Prof. Dr. Agrippa Ionescu” Clinical Emergency Hospital

Abstract

Introduction: *Cardiovascular diseases are frequently associated with psychological difficulties, which often aggravate the somatic symptomatology. Broken heart syndrome is a type of cardiac disease with a strong psychosomatic component.*

Objectives: *1) The analysis of the effect of age and gender on the level of depression in cardiovascular patients. 2) The analysis of two case studies of patients with broken heart syndrome, with emphasis on the psychopathological tendencies and the stress factors (acute and chronic).*

Methods: *The paper has two components – a quantitative and a qualitative one. For the quantitative part, the study involved 160 cardiovascular patients, hospitalized at the time. The research design is a cross-sectional one, with two independent variables and one dependent variable, and the statistical procedures included descriptive statistics and factorial ANOVA analysis with two factors. The second part of the paper consists of two case studies, of patients with broken heart syndrome, who have been assessed by means of clinical observation, clinical interview and psychometric instruments.*

Results: *The multivariate statistical measurement revealed a significant effect on the depression level concerning gender, an insignificant effect concerning the age variable and a significant effect of both factors when they are included together in the analysis. The qualitative analysis of the case studies indicates the pre-existence of psychopathological tendencies, acute stress factors (recent significant losses) and chronic stress factors in the personal history of the patients.*

Conclusions: *Women suffering from cardiovascular diseases, especially those under the age of 65, are more prone to experience high depression levels and sometimes psychological factors can even enable a heart disease, as in broken heart syndrome, which sustains the need for psychological support in cardiovascular pathology.*

Keywords: *cardiac disease, psychopathology, stress factors, age, gender*

ⁱ Corresponding author: Andreea Elena Mustață, PhD candidate, Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, Psychology Department, University of Bucharest, Panduri 90, Sector 5, 050663, Bucharest, Romania, email: andreeamustata14@gmail.com.