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The Essence of the Process of Creative Therapy During Depersonalization Disorders

The subject of the present article is the practical application of V.Ye. ROZHNOV's concept of emotional and stress psychotherapy (1985) and the study of this practice.

The name of our concrete psychotherapeutical method - therapy by means of creative self-expression with an understanding of one's social usefulness and the development of an optimistic disposition on this basis (M.Ye. BURNO, 1983 - 1986), presupposes endless forms of moral self-expression, i.e. carrying out all kinds of socially useful pursuits in one's own way according to the specific features of one's spiritual individuality. This includes self-expression in the creation of works of literature and art, in contacts with nature, in the acquaintance with works of literature and art, self-expression by means of immersion in the past, by means of gathering collections, by corresponding with the physician and other people, in keeping diaries, in travelling and by means of searching for spiritually unusual things in everyday life. The treatment is given individually and to groups of patients in a cozy chamber atmosphere and includes home tasks.

While working with patients suffering from depersonalization (a feeling of one's own emotional change with a quite clear critical understanding of the fact) the following phenomena have been observed:

1. The feeling of the loss of one's emotional ego, in spite of the external preservation and smartness of such patients, is such a grave condition that quite often one loses the sense of living.
2. At present the most effective therapy of depersonalization

is therapy by means of creative work.

Creative work alone, using spiritual individuality as its chief instrument, sooner or later helps the patient considerably making him or her experience a feeling of personal change, inspiringlly recapture his own self and return to himself for a certain period of time at least.

Here ist what patient S., 48 years old (his detailed clinical and psychotherapeutic case history was published by M.Ye.BURNO in 1981)has recently told me on the subject.

"As a result of my illness and treatment I have come to an understanding that if emotions are removed from everything one does, the actions lose all meaning, the same as there is no meaning in playing hide-and-seek when it is done only rational-ly. When I feel no usual personal ground under my feet, i.e. am not myself emotionally and cannot understand my attitude to people and things, then I cannot "pin" my heart on anything and have no feeling of life. I understand everything in my mind, but find myself at a loss as I do not feel any emotions towards a favourite book or favourite things, while the people surrounding me, even my near ones, seem to me merely characters in a play. Thus, for instance, as an engineer I have to deal with lifte, but I am visited by thoughts why shouldn't I start working with cranes, or become an orderly in a hospital - such jobs are necessary too. At such times I cannot estimate emotional-ly what is going on arround me, or my attachment to someone or something. I lack emotional independence and therefore freedom. I do not know what to expect of myself any moment, and this frightens me. What if I have an obsession and throw my little nephew out of the window on the ninth floor as at the moment I may not have any attachment to him. When doctors used to say: "There is nothing to be worried about, it does not matter that you have no feelings, the main thing is that you have a head on your shoulders anda job", I thought sadly that they did not understand my suffering. I did not even believe that it could stop after my death - so painful it all was.

Now, owing to curative creative work, my condition cannot be compared with the previous one, the disorders have retreated in all respects, and I feel rather stable my own self again. When at times I am visited by my old disorders mentioned above, I already know how to deal with them in a special way. I try to write down in my own way, for instance, the events of the day, to look through my own slides, snapshots, postcards or postage stamps that I like. Now I have a feeling that I can rid myself of my disorders completely, while in the past everything seemed irreparable. This considerable improvement took place gradually, in the course of years and in the process of our work with the doctor, in our group where there was an opportunity to see and feel how each member expresses himself, both his peculiarities and the difference between what is his own and someone's else's. Thus, for instance, at painful moments my own poor grey slides bring back to me my own feeling of life. I look at one, then another, then a third - no effect, and then suddenly the fourth awakens something in me, and I experience my own familiar emotion. That is how it is".

It should be mentioned in conclusion that a psychotherapist receives quite a number of such "depersionalized" patients.

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Ein Konzept für die Erforschung des Prozesses in psycho- analytischen Fokaltherapien

I. Der diagnostische Prozeß

A. Einleitung

Es wird in folgenden ein analytisches Fokaltherapieprojekt und dessen wissenschaftliche Begleitforschung vorgestellt. Das Projekt entstand 1984 aus zurückliegenden Erfahrungen erfolgreicher Beratungskontakte und Kurztherapien mit Fokalcharakter. Die zunehmende Zahl derartiger Patienten, die mit abgegrenzten, aktuell schwierigen Konflikten kommen, motivierten uns, diesen Prozeß systematischer zu erforschen.

In der wissenschaftlichen Literatur gibt es seit je ausgesprochen divergierende Meinungen zur Begründbarkeit von Kurztherapieverfahren. Die unterschiedlichen Standpunkte lassen sich exemplarisch an zwei Zitaten verdeutlichen. FREUD schrieb in "Die endliche und die unendliche Analyse" über die Möglichkeit kürzere therapeutische Verfahren in der Auseinandersetzung mit RANK: "Wahrscheinlich (bewirkt RANK) nicht mehr als die Feuerwehr leisten würde, wenn sie im Falle eines Hausbrandes durch eine umgestürzte Petroleumlampe sich damit begnüge, die Lampe aus dem Zimmer zu entfernen, in dem der Brand entstanden war".

Von BALINT stammt das vielzitierte Bild der auf einem Strom abwärts treibenden Holzstämme, die durch einen Stamm, der sich quer gelegt hat, blockiert werden. Eine gezielte Maßnahme soll auf den blockierenden Stamm einwirken, so daß das Feld wieder in Bewegung kommen kann. Die Arbeit mit dem Fokus stellt in dem Gleichnis die gezielte Maßnahme dar: Sie soll die Aufhebung des Hindernisses bewirken.