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PSYCHOENERGETIC DRAWING™: A PSYCHOTHERAPIC PROPOSAL COMBINING ANALYSIS OF THE DEPTH, IMAGINARY AND DRAWING

INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

The problem in the therapy of the trauma is complex because we have to approach a psychic situation, where are present excessive and inadequate defences, together with pathological compensatory schemes of behaviour, that the patient has unconsciously structured for getting away from the comparison with the nucleus of overwhelming and negative emotions connected to the traumatic experience.

We have to deal with a patient asking for help, a request coming from his conscious that wants to be healthy and, more, we have to face with the strong resistance of the whole psychic system that fears the comparison with the traumatic complex. The therapist has to work on different levels: (the aware level and the unconscious one), and must take in charge the dynamics of the personal history of the patient, the traumatic event and the consequences that it has brought to all of his psychic structure; moreover the therapist has always to keep in mind the big difficulties or temporary impossibility of the patient to confront himself with all that is connected to the traumatic event: as we know from neuroscience this difficulty also has a neurological base, as our memory depends from a good connection between amygdala and hippocampus, connection that is altered by the traumatic event

Psychoenergetic Drawing deals with all these difficulties that are in the therapy of trauma.

METHODOLOGY

Psychoenergetic Drawing balances the analytical formulation and the work with image, drawing and body as seen as energy.. .

The concepts of energy, of energetic signal and of resonance are fundamental : in fact the flow of energy pervades the psyche, it can be stopped in the psychic complexes, causing symptoms and pathology.

. A complex is a whole of images and ideas, gathered around a nucleus deriving from one or more archetypes and characterized by a common affective tonality. When the complexes become active, they influence the behaviour. Moreover, according to Jung, they are rooted in the body and they are somatically expressed. They are anchored to the past, but they contain also the future possibilities to overcome the same complex.

Using all the bodily manifestations (hand drawing, attitudes, words, images), Psychoenergetic Drawing helps the patient to express the psychic energy in him. The role of the therapist, who is in every moment in resonance with the patient's affections, is to stand near him in the elaboration of the complex that conditions him: nothing is anticipated, he does not stay tied up to his past, but therapist and patient ' walk' together in resonance with the patient's whole emotional world, without anticipating what cannot be anticipated.

The patient's going on, accompanied by the therapist, is articulated by the 'energetic signals', that are emotional pregnant moments in which the flow of energy is stopped, anchored to the dynamics of the past, but that contains also the resolution projected to future .

It is important therefore that the therapist has the sensibility to " to feel" and recognize the energetic signals in the expressive flow of the patient, attitude that needs a long and complex training of personal sensitisation and technical maturation.

The analytical interpretation happens only in a second time, in order to avoid a precocious mentalization that would hampers the process of emotional development.

All these theoretical presuppositions belongs to Psychoenergetic Drawing, which contacts the patient's emotional whole world, in the moment that he uses words, pictures and drawing (in fact drawing involves the body).

When the therapist recognizes an energetic signal in the communication of the patient, he invites the patient to assemble on the predominant emotion and to let it flow on the paper sheet, through the unconscious movements of his hand, the colour or the colours that he feels proper at that time, in an almost sub-vigilant state. It is important the means that the patient chooses for expressing himself, as wax crayons, pencils or finger paint.

Subsequently the patient is invited to express the feelings that the drawing arouses in him, with the observation of its spatial components (up and down, left and right).

The interventions of the therapist are very important, they accompany the flow of the emotions and the memories, interacting with the patient as ' companion', always staying in resonance with the emotions that pervades him.

A greater involvement of the body is possible, bringing the emergent emotions to the various parts of the body with self touching. It is very important to inform the patient before about the modalities of Psychoenergetic Drawing.

It is possible also to bring back to the sensations of the body the feelings that emerge from the elaboration of colours and drawing. The following session serves for the analytical elaboration of the emerged material: the emotional experience integrates with the self.

This therapeutic method doesn't force the patient to precocious insights, and is very useful for the elaboration of traumas, where very strong emotional positions are present.

This method is also useful with frail patients, because it is constant the contact between patient and therapist during the whole process, so that it's possible to elaborate very strong psychic contents.

RESULTS

Psychoenergetic Drawing integrates the analytical depth intervention with the bodily and emotional experience of the patient.

It is also very suitable in the elaboration of trauma, where the direct bodily approach often evokes, in sudden way, all feelings and emotions tied up to the trauma. In fact in the elaboration of the traumatic complex, where the emotional load is strong, the reactivation of the experience connected to it can afflict the patient again, if it is evoked in a hasty way.

The patient draws on the space delimited of the sheet of paper, and so he is contained in the contact with his emotions.

Psychoenergetic Drawing can be propaedeutical for the confront therapy with the trauma, furnishing a sort of "soft approach " to the elaboration of the nucleus of the traumatic material, that will subsequently be elaborated with the confront therapy.

Since in Psychoenergetic Drawing the patient may keep the eyes open during the elaboration of the imaginary, the therapist is constantly in contact with the patient. The therapist can gradually solicit the vigilance in the patient, according to the intensity of the emerging emotional contents. In that way the therapist is able to keep in contact with the patient, and to intervene every moment in the management of the emotions tied up to the imaginary.

The intervention through Psychoenergetic Drawing, that follows the flow of energetic signals, can be integrated with guided interventions on the imaginary, as example when it's necessary to introduce a specific elaboration of determined symbols, according to encoded specific images. (meadow, sea, mountain, flower, and so on). It is so possible to establish a fruitful connection between emotional contents that spring from personal experiences with contents coming from archetypical images.

As Psychoenergetic Drawing can be connected to the elaboration of bodily contents through self touching, in this way our body, which carries the emotion of all of our passed experiences, directly comes connected with the emotional experience of the image.

CONCLUSIONS

Psychoenergetic Drawing is a very useful tool for the elaboration of traumatic contents, also in the context of the confront therapy.

It is also applicable to very frail patients, as the presence and the support of the therapist is constant and it allows the gradual elaboration of psychic contents.

It is extremely flexible and therefore it can be integrated with other methodologies, without requiring particular instruments or specific logistic structures.

It allows to calibrate the interventions on the imaginary, in the respect of the process and the personal transformation times of every patient, according to the analytical elaboration.

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