

PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSISTANCE OF THE PERSONALITY IN THE PERIOD OF MID-AGE CRISIS BY MEANS OF PSYCHODRAMA

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Annotation

The article deals with the problem of psychological assistance of the personality who deals with the mid-age crisis. Creative abilities of the personality are distinguished in their close relation to reflection. It is meant that high level of reflection relates to the high level of creativity that explains the interest to the use of psychodrama not only as a therapeutic method, but as a method by means of which it becomes possible to influence the process of psychological assistance of the personality in the period of mid-age crisis. The process of self-criticism was analysed in its relation to the notion of 'internal critic'. It is this 'internal critic' phenomenon that is understood as the one that causes internal discomfort, resulting in the appearance of the negative emotions. Internal critic is considered as the process of self-cognition that is stimulated by the necessity of making choices of means by which the individual potential is realized. This occasionally results in the appearance of internal harmony and freedom, however, being mainly associated with the occurrence of destructive emotions. Internal critic is viewed as the one that is closely connected to the notion of introact, which is understood as an experience that was formed in one's childhood but relates mainly to an adult life, being excessively actualized in the period of mid-age crisis. The use of psychodrama is aimed at those personalities who are characterized by the loss of spontaneity, the decrease in the level of their adaptability to reality, rigidity of the reactions on the new life conditions, the loss of interest in novelty and full or partial loss of desires. It was theoretically proved that psychodrama is the means that helps to renew one's individual position in the respect to their lives. It was defined that the use of psychodrama results in clear distinction between destructive and supportive or constructive critic, formation of self evaluation in protagonist by means of parental figures that further develops into the integration of supportive parts of parental introacts.

Keywords: psychological assistance, introact, personality, reflection, creativity, internal critic, parental introacts, psychodrama.

ПСИХОЛОГИЧЕСКАЯ ПОДДЕРЖКА ЛИЧНОСТИ В ПЕРИОД КРИЗИСА СЕРЕДИНЫ ЖИЗНИ МЕТОДОМ ПСИХОДРАМЫ

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Анотация

Статья посвящена изучению проблемы психологического сопровождения личности, которая проживает период кризиса средних лет. Креативные возможности личности рассматриваются в контексте их тесной взаимосвязи с рефлексией -- высокий уровень рефлексии соответствует высокому уровню креативности, что объясняет большой интерес к психодраме не только как к терапевтическому методу, но и как к методу, с помощью которого можно влиять на процесс психологического сопровождения личности в период кризиса средних лет. Было исследовано процесс самокритики личности, что в контексте исследования рассматривается как понятие внутреннего критика. Именно внутренний критик понимается как феномен внутреннего дискомфорта, что всегда сопровождается возникновением негативных эмоций. Внутренний критик является процессом самопознания, который стимулируется необходимостью выбора возможных путей реализации личностью своего потенциала, что иногда сопровождается возникновением внутренней гармонии и свободы, но чаще ассоциируется с возникновением деструктивных эмоций. Понятие внутреннего критика исследуется с учетом понятия интроэкта, как опыта, формирование которого осуществлялось в детстве, а реализация происходит во взрослой жизни, становясь наиболее актуальной в период кризиса средних лет. Использование психодраматического метода ориентировано на работу с личностями, которые характеризуются утратой спонтанности, снижением адаптивности к реальности, ригидностью в реакциях на новые жизненные условия, утрата интереса к новизне и полное или частичное отсутствие желаний. На теоретическом уровне было доказано, что именно психодрама является тем методом работы, который сопровождается восстановлением личностной позиции по отношению к собственной жизни. Было определено, что использование психодрамы включает четкое разграничение деструктивной и поддерживающей (конструктивной) критики, формированием у протагониста самооценности в родительских фигурах, что сопровождается дальнейшей интеграцией поддерживающей части родительских интроэктв.

Ключевые слова: психологическое сопровождение, интроэкт, личность, рефлексия, креативность, внутренний критик, родительские интроэкты, психодрама.

1. Introduction

Even though the issue of psychological assistance of the individuals who deal with the period of mid-age crisis attracts the attention of numerous scholars, it requires further examination given the period of maturation is still not clearly researched. During the life period one encounters critical situations that result from the usual human existence. The nature of critical situations influences the actions, patterns of behavior, and the whole person's experience. Eventually critical situations give a person ability to adapt to the situation of life, negatively influencing their general well-being. Theoretical analysis of the literature makes it possible to state the fact that the problem of personal development is much researched. However, the period of one's real potential realization or the mid-age crisis, which is said to be the most difficult to deal with, requires further examination. It is because of this limited understanding of the matter that we became concerned with the problem of psychological assistance of an individual in the period of mid-age crisis and

decided upon psychodrama as an efficient method of dealing with it.

Thus, the aim of the research is to provide a theoretical overview of the use of psychodrama in psychological assistance of the individual who goes through the period of mid-age crisis. The aim of the research is to investigate the specific individual features of the person in the period of mid-age crisis and to specify the ways how to use psychodrama in the light of introduced matter.

2. The analysis of the previous researches

General understanding of the matter is possible if one considers the list of the researches that deal with the peculiarities of this age period (L. Antsyferova), the ways one deals with mid-age crisis (T. Tytarenko), creativity (P. Hornostai). Moreover, the legacy of Ia. Moreno, the founder of psychodrama, and reviews of the theoretical and practical psycho dramatic activity of G. Leuts are of a great importance for this research.

The last decade is remarkable for an extensive use of psychodrama as one of the means of group therapy that is oriented on the individual problem examination. It is worth mentioning that all forms of this method are centered on the individual's deep understanding of oneself. Considering the current researches of T. Bohdan, O. Nechyporenko, A. Zabolotna, N. Maksutova, etc. we believe psychodrama is an efficient method to be used in education and general development.

3. Theoretical study of the problem

One of the key words that are under consideration in this research is psychological assistance. A number of researchers understand it as the process that presupposes the support of natural reactions, processes and states of an individual. It is not typical psychological correction as socio-psychological assistance means "not the revelation of drawbacks and the changes of them" but the process of searching for hidden resources of human development [7]. Iu. Sliusarev agrees on this definition, using the term "assistance" in relation to non-directive form of giving psychological help for healthy people, which is oriented on the development and self-development of individual self-consciousness. It is mainly about mechanisms of self-development that are pushed, meaning activation of personality's resources [10]. The researcher understands psychological assistance as a complex psychological influence on the individual, the maximal aim of which is to activate individual's self-development. The main peculiarity of psychological assistance is the formation of the conditions for the successful transformation of an individual and his/her family to self-help.

In the process of psychological assistance the professional assistant helps to create the suitable conditions that are rather sufficient and necessary, but not excessive. It is an assistance that results in one's transformation from the position of "I can't" to the one of "I can deal with my life challenges myself". Another researcher O. Kazakova understands psychological assistance as the complex method that is based on the unity of four functions, including the diagnostics of the problematic matter, information about the problem and possible ways of dealing with it, consultation on the stage of decision making, initial help in the process of problem solution [6].

P. Hornostai in his numerous researches claims that creativity helps individuals to cope with the consequences that appear as a result of their life crises. Thus, in the conditions of mid-age crisis individuals encounter the necessity of creativity development that presupposes their deliberate concentration on the abovementioned phenomenon. It by itself leads to the formation of creativity. Moreover, the age period that is meant in the research is the one of excessive sensitivity to one's creativity. According to T. Tytarenko, "it is an age of creativity, effectiveness, ability to generate, time of interest in younger generation education and their lives' optimization" [11, p. 257]. Moreover, "the mid-age crisis is remarkable for the appearance of one's stable creative attitude towards oneself and the world around" [11, p. 149]. The researcher further says that "when crisis is dealt with in less constructive way, it leads to regression in the preliminary age stages. In this case the feelings of stagnation and individual life poverty are encountered" [11, p. 257]. In this particular aspect, as far as we are concerned, therapeutic method of psychodrama appeals the most as it is methodologically oriented on the creativity and spontaneity of Ia. Moreno.

G. Leuts, a German psychotherapist and the author of the book 'Psychodrama: theory and practice. Classic psychodrama of Ia. L. Moreno' stresses that action is an act of human behavior that is older than language [8]. In fact, the term 'psychodrama' consists of two words 'psyche' and 'drama' that in practice means the action of psyche. The aim

of psychodrama is to release spontaneity and to integrate it into one's general structure of life and activity. Using the works of Moreno, G. Leuts states that blocks of spontaneity "leads to neurotic incidences of creativity that results in passiveness. Such human being, no matter how intellectual and skilled he/she is, is able to neither reveal, nor activate them. Releasing and incidentally integrating spontaneity one enables the development of creativity. In relation to humans, creative activity is meant" [8, p. 128-129]. This proves the efficiency of the use of psychodrama.

While investigating the mid-age crisis, it is necessary to underline the fact that in unbearable situations "people intensively accuse themselves, then start to partially justify and finally sentence themselves, deciding about how to continue their lives" [11, p. 245-246]. Moreover, F. Vasyliuk says that "amid the possible translations of the term 'crisis' there is one that means judgment, which is semantically close to the word 'criticism'" [11, p. 245-246]. According to T. Tytarenko, the researcher who investigated the period of the middle age, human being is able and emotionally strong to conscientiously evaluate the achievements [11, p. 50]. She further states that the level of individual responsibility for whatever happens in their life is extremely high [11, p. 151]. What is more, the mid-age crisis is commonly believed to be "existential crisis" (V. Frankl), which limits spiritual development of the personality (U. Andrushko).

O. Purylo emphasizes that the major characteristics of existential crisis is the feeling of loneliness, lack of confidence, despair, aggression in relation to the outer world, the feeling of hostility from their side, actualization of the basic existential problems, the change in the system of values, subjective experiencing of life injustice, the fear of death. According to the scientist, the efficiency of passing existential crisis means the choice of further strategy whether to return to the previous way of living or to review the values and senses [9].

Another aspect under the consideration is a reflective period of life. On the basis of empirical research of N. Markina, who dealt with reflexive conditioning of creative abilities of personality, the close interconnection between the creativity and reflection become obvious. Thus, according to the researcher, the respondents who are characterized by developed reflection are said to be highly creative. She emphasizes the existence of interrelation between the researched phenomena, positive and negative impact of reflectivity on the creative abilities of individuals. By this it is meant that, on the one hand, the crisis can lead to the increase in the individual's resources, enabling one's psychological healing and deep positive changes. On the other hand, the consequences can be negative as it can lead to danger and would possibly require psychotherapy.

One of the constructive ways of dealing with crisis, according to O. Purylo, is setting the authoritative position in relation to one's personal life. So far, the importance of the psychotherapeutic assistance in the period of mid-age crisis appears to be extremely suitable.

Having considered everything meant above, we decided upon psychodrama as the effective means of dealing with mid-age crisis, especially in the context of individual excessive self-criticism. In most cases, this issue means the notion of 'internal critic' which is widely associated with the problem of mid-age crisis. D. Huliaev, the researcher who investigated this phenomenon, understands it as a metaphor that is used in relation to the controlling part of psyche which is responsible for the adequacy of one's deeds to the criteria and purposes. Destructive function of the process makes it necessary to choose this phenomenon as a kind of internal discomfort that causes negative emotions. The author uses the term introact meaning so-called internal 'tutoring' that helps to form the principles that are further demonstrated in the

adult life, being formed in the childhood. As far as he is concerned, 'external control' is interiorized and becomes one's internal function. It is necessary to mention that a child develops emotions and acquires criteria for his/her deeds together with the algorithm of a particular activity [5]. Thus, the acquired critics in most cases leads to internal personal conflict. We have spent some time in the attempts to find the explanation for the term 'internal critic' and in our previous work we defined it as the process of self understanding, which is based on the reflexive process and is motivated by one's desire to select the way to realize him/herself [2]. This process presupposes the assessment which is realized by means of feelings that in some cases are associated with internal harmony and freedom and in others are about destructive emotions.

Metaphorically speaking, there are three integral parts of 'internal critic' that, in fact, define the directions of further consideration of the figure, including destructive and constructive introacts of parents, introacts of influential adults (teachers, trainers, coaches, etc), and individual experience. As it was already mentioned, the feelings of love to oneself, self value, self respect during the process of mid-age crisis are colossally changed. Considering the results of the previous period, an individual starts the process of reflection, often demonstrating toxic or destructive aspects of 'internal critic'. The key characteristics of the personality around who the work is concentrated is the loss of spontaneity, the decrease in the level of adaptability to reality, the rigidity in the spectrum of reactions on the new life conditions, the loss of interest to the novelty, the lack of desires [3]. One of the constructive means of dealing with the crisis is the formation of an individual position in relation to personal life. Thus, psychodrama should help to support an individual in his or her attempts to specify the personal needs and demands, to distinguish them from the parental introacts and to find the ways how to realize them. This, by no means, is the major aim of the research which is oriented on the development of self value of the individual who deals with the mid-age crisis.

As far as this particular assignment requires certain techniques to be used, we believe it is necessary to distinguish between destructive and constructive or supportive critic that takes an active part in the formation of self value of the protagonist, the member of the group on who the whole group works, in his/her parental figures, either father or mother. The further work presupposes the integration of the supportive parts of parental introacts. In this way the elimination of the role infection in protagonist's role clusters is realized. It is worth mentioning that internal fixation on the emotional level and the meeting with the critical part of it can be done by various means. Among the most efficient ways is the use of pictures to interiorize the feelings. In most cases it finds its further realization in discussions. Moreover, the exercises for small groups such as "The scenes of facing the critical and evaluative activities", for example the defense of thesis paper (doctor degree), where the roles include the one of defender, the supervisor, the representative of the committee, the opponent; the meeting of the beloved couple with the grandmothers who sit on the branches in the yard, where the role repertoire includes the role of a young man, young woman, and two senior woman who are fond of gossiping; the meeting of the teacher with the parents, etc. In most cases, these exercises lead to the formation and focusing of the client's request that is related to the interpersonal conflict, which in the further psychodramatic work develops into intrapersonal conflict.

The experience of the acceptance of oneself occurs in two stages, the one about 'then and there' which is about the renewal of the nuclear scene, which is characterized by the destructive change in the self representation of an individual. The other one is about 'here and now' that includes sharing

presented by the members of the group and the trainer. The final act of work with the new positive experience is strengthened by such techniques as 'projection of the future' and 'test on reality'. These psychodramatic techniques positively influence person's self attitude and self value.

4. Conclusions

So, self value of the individual, his/her understanding of oneself, the real and ideal I that deals with the mid-age crisis are possible to be altered by means of psychodramatic method. The figure for the extensive work is the phenomenon of 'internal critic'. It starts the process of reflection, provides the assessment of the situation that occurs both in internal world, which is about our reactions on the particular situations, on the ways in which individual relates to the world, on the choices that are made, on the ways individual relates to the world and other people. By means of psychodrama it is possible to distinguish and to delete destructive and to integrate the constructive part of parental introacts that positively influence the self value of personality.

5. Further prospects for the researches in the field

It appears to be logical to experimentally check the way psychodrama influences the self evaluation of the personality who deals with the mid-age crisis.

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