

Psychodynamic - Ordinary People

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Introduction

The psychodynamic model is a group of theories created by Sigmund Freud with focus on how human beings function subconsciously, and how they are viewed. He viewed human beings as deterministic, and motivated by irrational forces whether it is consciously, or unconsciously through the psychosexual stages of development from the first six weeks of life to mature/old age, and at time driven by the death instincts where an aggression can be developed to hurt themselves, or others.

The psychoanalysis is an example of one of his models which involves the free association, and psychodynamic theory. Freud believe that human beings should have the freedom to speak what is on their minds. Freud went on to tackle the id, which is believed to be the original system of personality. The ego, which is the external world of reality, and the super-ego, which is the judicial branch of personality. Freud elaborated on the ego defense mechanism with focus on repression, denial, reaction formation, projection, displacement, rationalism, sublimation, regression, introjection, identification, and compensation.

In dream analysis, he also believed that when things are not dealt with in the conscious, it manifested itself in the unconscious or the deep sleep which Conrad experienced. Conrad had nightmares after nightmares regarding the day he was unable to save his brother. He felt so responsibility for what happened to Buck, that he attempted suicide, spent four months in the hospital, and never really dealt with it the way it was really was supposed to be dealt with until during one of his sessions with Dr. Berger. Dr. Berger helped Conrad to realized that perhaps due to his strength, he was able to hold on to Buck as long as he did, but perhaps Buck was not strong enough to hold on, so he let go. He help him to see that the sail gotten stuck was not his

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fault, and he accepted. Conrad believed his mother hated him, and would never forgive him due to his brother's death. Dr. Berger was able to help him to understand that people can only love to the extent to which they can help themselves.

Free association really came into play eventually during the sessions Conrad had with Dr. Berger. Conrad got to the point where he discovered that he could relax; that Dr. Berger was not judging him, but rather the complete opposite. He really wanted to help him to help himself to become free from all the things he was carrying. The love of his mother, or the lack of it, the genuine attention and love of his father, and the death of the brother, and then Karen. Once Conrad realized that he could speak with him freely, that he was down to earth, he had breakthroughs, after breakthroughs. It empowered him to quit the swim team. It empowered him to speak up to his mother. It empowered him to speak about what really happened to him and why he attempted suicide. He was able to forgive himself, hug his mother despite her resentment and coldness towards him. As a result of the ability to release what was on his mind, he was able to create new friendships and move forward. His father saw the change in him, and as a result, he had the guts to speak up to his wife and expressed his feelings regarding her behavior toward Conrad since Buck died.

Conclusion

There is absolutely no doubt that Conrad's mother loves him. However, it seems like she was in denial about what she was experiencing as a result of Buck's death, and Conrad's attempted suicide. She did everything to deviate from what happened. It was apparent that she was really a shame of him, and what he was experiencing. She was dismissive of him, impatient,

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judgmental, and really cold towards him. She behave as though she was done trying, and has completely given up on her son. The father on the other hand was the complete opposite of his mother who was willing to see him through all the way, until he made progress. He was able to shine light on some of the things Conrad discussed with Dr. Berger, which really helped Dr. Berger to fully understand Conrad and his true reasons for being there.

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Reference

Ordinary People, released September 19th, 1980 (USA)

Directed: Robert Redford

Award: Academy Award for Best Picture, Academy Award for Directing, More

Language: English

Music composed by: Marvin Hamlisch

Watched on Pluto

Theory and Practice and Practice of Counseling and Psychotherapy, Tenth Edition

Gerald Corey