

Ordinary People

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Abstract

Counseling is the process by which individuals receive guided support. This entails the employment of systematic, psychological structures carried out in individualized interviews. This format further requires the gathering of historical information, and aptitude assessment, done on the premise of formal theories. This paper reports the assessment of a cinematic psychiatric case, and how a clinical worker utilizes principles of twelve major theories to provide therapeutic support to the end of a cliental self-discovered solution.

Introduction

The motion picture, ordinary people, features six scenes that entailed therapeutic sessions for a boy who meets professionally with his counselor to seek psychological and emotional healing, as he grapples with the catastrophic loss of his brother. The film also highlights a myriad of issues surrounding ways the tragedy extensively affects the boy's family and introduces relationship strains in multiple directions which include that of the boy towards his parents, his parents towards him, and his parents among themselves.

The movie highlights many therapeutic and psychological themes and proves to be a great source of learning for clinical workers and students in the field. These themes include separation, divorce, relationship disrepair, anger, rage, guilt, death, grief, mental instability, and peer pressure. During the succeeding paragraphs, the writer of this paper will further elaborate on these themes as he interacts with the case of the film, twelve clinical theories.

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Discussion

Psychoanalytic Therapy

Developed by Sigmund Freud, psychoanalytical therapy is a philosophical system that focuses primarily on the unconscious mind as opposed to mindful cognizance. Clinical professionals who utilize this theory believe in its foundational ideas that one's actions or conduct are byproducts of past experiences, wedged in the unconscious mind. Applying this principle in the therapeutic setting helps a clinician to comprehend the factors surrounding clients who suppress adverse abusive, or hostile childhood experiences in fear that surfacing such occurrences will be seriously threatening to their own well-being and to others (Tan, 2011, p. 39). Berger, the counselor in the film, used this theory in his first session with his client, Conrad, while posing the open-ended statement, "people are treating you like a dangerous character." Conrad's repressed experience with his brother's death posed hostility to his friends and a disconnected relationship with his mother.

Conrad, the client was helped by his therapist, as he reacted to the theory's defense mechanism. Sublimation was identified through the client's expression of indulgence in masturbation. With such a declaration, the counselor provided a follow-up response by asking Conrad if that helps. The defense mechanism of realization was also observed. Conrad's counselor helped him to understand that the cause of his brother's death was not his fault. The rewriter of this paper in utilizing the psychoanalytical principles, would, as the counselor of the cinematic feature, employ the use of classical psychoanalysis, by insisting that Conrad the client stays with the process of long-term counseling. The severity of his therapeutic matter regarded longevity in the helping approach. The counselor of the film also helped in this regard, by encouraging Conrad to discontinue swimming classes to focus on his therapeutic treatment.

Jungian Therapy

Deriving from the work of Carl Jung, the Jungian theory helps clients to deeply analyze their psychological and emotional well-being within the professional environment, guided by the clinical worker. The Jungian theory in its application assists the client to correlate both the conscience and the unconscious state of mind, to heal into an individual who perceives life and situations from a balanced perspective (Tan, 2011, pp. 90-91).

The film introduced Conrad, as one who grapples with the unconscious spaces of his past, nightmares, and feelings of guilt. The major theoretic ideals of Jungian therapy highlight the perspective of human nature, which focuses on one's latent abilities and creativity; personality theory which explains the functionality of one's attitude; and levels of consciousness, which explain the accessibility of one's hidden thoughts and feeling (Tan, 2011, pp. 85-86). Conrad's counselor forges him in the direction of positive thinking. This was seen in his sixth therapeutic session, as the therapist eludes to the fact that bad things happen to good people. This expression aids the client to unveil himself from the unconscious, suppressive mindset to begin to see his life from a positive standpoint. The significance of the session entailed a moment of emotional breakthrough. Conrad the client cried.

The writer of this paper, as the clinician in the film, would utilize various aspects of the stages within the Jungian theory. The factor of listening would be employed, creating space for the client to be relaxed and open share from his emotional space. Educating clients is critical. Details of the therapeutic model must be explained. Leading clients to build meaningful relationships outside the therapy room is also understood to be a valuable part of the Jungian therapeutic experience. The film also outlined this factor when the counselor asked Conrad to whom he relates outside the sessions.

Adlerian Therapy

A great source of conducting social justice work, the Adlerian therapy which was developed by Carl and Alfred Adler, was identified in the film *Ordinary People* (1980). Although the theory has much to do with addressing the needs of people of various ethnic backgrounds, and the stresses of a wide span of cultures, the context of its address to Western models appeals to the film. Conrad's mother was seen to be overly conservative and was embarrassed by the fact that her son Conrad needed and utilized therapeutic help. This led to the self-pursuit of the client to regroup himself in treatment after an extensive time of hospitalization. It was meaningless of the counseling experience from the perspective of Conrad's dad was also observed in the application of the theory to film (Corey 70).

It is important to note, that description of the inferior feeling is the most integral aspect of the Adlerian philosophical framework of thinking (Tan, 2011, p. 65). Conrad in the film was observed as one who viewed himself as one inferior to his mother, father, and deceased brother. Defying this inferior complex. Conrad's counselor in session five, induces positive thinking in Conrad's mind, assuring him that his mother loves him.

The writer of this paper, in his future therapeutic practice, will utilize this theory through the process of motivating clients to strive for levels of excellence. The acts of affirmations will also be critical, as clients must understand the importance of competence and the need to be optimistic in all spheres of life and situation. Conrad was affirmed by his counselor on various levels, to produce a high thinking pattern. The counselor's remark in session two, asserting that Conrad needs a tranquilizer typifies his call for him to have upward thinking which will also reflect on his exterior.

Conclusion

One is able to learn from various sources of knowledge. A cinematic film though fictional has proven to precisely encapsulate theoretical and practical concepts of the clinical field. Reading is critical to learning, however, it is important to note that another visual – a dramatic source has contributed much to the elucidation of the concepts learned in the course theories of counseling.

References

<This is where you should identify in alphabetical order, by author's/producer's last name, any reference sources that you cited in this paper. For example, if you cited information from any of the text books used this semester and/or from the movie, you should include those reference sources as listed below.>

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