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Open Dialogue, Psychoanalysis, Institutional Psychotherapy: three ways to heaven for psychosis?

Learning Goal

Exploring resemblances and differences in three therapeutic approaches (Open Dialogue, Psychoanalysis and Institutional Psychotherapy) for the treatment of psychosis reveals the importance to fight the social and existential alienation of the psychotic person and his significant others. Stranger in the city indeed.

Abstract Text

The founders of Open Dialogue (OD) are very respectful to their family therapy ancestors, yet holding different views in some respects though. This is partly due to the philosophical inspiration by Bahktin, social construction theory and systemic epistemology. On the other hand, the psychoanalytic premises and psychoanalysis in general are not expressed quite clearly enough in the writings by OD authors. The Need Adapted Treatment developed by psychoanalyst Alanen is recognised as an important forerunner of OD and the influence of Jukka Aaltonen, nowadays an emeritus psychiatrist psychoanalyst from Finland, cannot be underestimated either.

Lesser known is the movement of Institutional Psychotherapy (IP). It was developed in France from the 1950's onwards focusing on working through and preventing psychotic alienation (cf. infra). Because of the lack of acquaintance with I.P. this symposium sheds a light – not exhaustive - on its history, core concepts, resemblances and differences from O.D.

Psychosis is the 'via regia' to explore the similarities and differences between OD, PA and IP. 'Je est un Autre' (Arthur Rimbaud) is a metaphor for the understanding of psychosis as the psychopathology 'par excellence' of (not) being me. Josef Parnas coins this as the existential problem of 'ipseity'.

By exploring the 'ipseity' of OD (e.g. the polyphony of voices), PA (e.g. psychic reality and free association) and IP (e.g. restoring and preserving the particularity of the individual in the collective) in this workshop, the common ground of working against social and psychopathological alienation, not only in the city, is made clear.

OD, PA and IP are brothers in arms and sisters of mercy.

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**ON THE HEALING POWER
OF HUMAN RECONNECTION**