

Panel 35, SPR Roma

A Comparison between Different Definitions of Psychotherapy

Michael J. Lambert (USA)

Horst U. Kaechele (Germany)

Girolamo Lo Verso (Italy)

David E. Orlinsky (USA)

Definition

Psychotherapy is a deliberate and planned interactional process
to influence behavioral disturbances and states of suffering,
that in agreement among patient, therapist and society are
looked at as in need for treatment
with psychological means mostly verbal, also non-verbal,
in direction of a defined, shared goal (like symptom
reduction or personality change)
for which teachable techniques are available
based on a theory of normal and pathological behavior
(Strotzka 1975).

Definition

Psychotherapy is a deliberate and planned interactional process

This feature is not unique to psychotherapy; many professions deliver this good (architects, lawyers etc)

However friendships, marriages, work relationships are not covered

Definition

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to influence behavioral disturbances and states of suffering,

There are two equivalent targets, objective and subjective states;

sometimes treatments tends to focus on one or the other

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that in agreement among patient, therapist and society are looked at as in need for treatment

Agreement among the parties involved is crucial, not always are the three in resonance, f.e. with children, geriatric patients, forensic patients etc

CAVE: here ethical issues are involved, e.g. the society's interest in responsible resource allocation, maximum benefit, harm avoidance

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Talking is the essential element, but protected space and time likewise are essential features

„Psychological means“ cover a vast array of interventions varying in different treatments

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The notion of a „shared goal“ is not always clear at the beginning - goals are discovered and altered during the process of treatment

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Usually, Gurus do not provide manuals, textbooks, video recordings

Adherence rating scales seem to prosper these days

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**based on a theory of normal and
pathological behavior**

*Do we have good theories ? Psychoanalytic theories of
development and symptom formation , learning theories,
humanistic theories ? Socio-ecological theories?*

What are they?