

## THE JOURNEY OF PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

Ancuta Bangal<sup>1</sup>, Ileana-Loredana Vitalia<sup>2\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> University of Pitesti, Master of Clinical Psychology: evaluation and intervention, Pitesti, Romania

<sup>2</sup>Ph.D. Associate Professor, University of Pitesti, Department of Psychology,  
Communication Sciences and Social Assistance, Pitesti, Romania



### Abstract

*This study aims to explore the effects of a personal development program based on the technique of therapeutic metaphor on adolescent anxiety.*

*The unique experiences that fill the adolescent period produce sudden changes in emotions and give rise to emotional patterns that can deeply affect the personality that begins to take shape, mainly due to anxiety.*

*The applicative objective of this paper is to implement a personal development program, based on the technique of therapeutic metaphor, to help the adolescent to access emotions in an empathic way, to know his own self, to discover resources, in order to reduce anxiety.*

*The personal development program includes techniques such as creative meditation, role play, art therapy, drama therapy, Dixit cards and storytelling, applied to an experiential group of 12 teenagers and the psychological effects of this program will be evaluated both quantitatively and qualitatively.*

*Keywords: psychological interventions, anxiety, mental health*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The therapeutic metaphor has the role of sowing a seed that may not bear fruit immediately but has the advantage of working over time in a direct and discreet manner, producing deep and lasting changes (Constantin, 2016; Santagostino, 2008).

Working with metaphor, in psychology can have the role of both symbol and sign, if we look at the definitions that Jung gives to these concepts (Jung, Psychological Types). Very many authors, starting with Freud and Jung have tried to theomatize metaphor but its originator is considered Milton Erickson who was of the opinion that communication itself is a metaphor that holds an important role in the experiences of each of us (Burns, 2011). He also developed the Milton model of communication, which uses metaphors as a technique to distract the conscious mind so that it can access the unconscious.

A personal development approach addressed to young people and adolescents should aim at harmonizing the self-self, self-awareness, psychological and spiritual maturation, learning assertiveness in interpersonal communication and creative adaptation to everyday problems, a clear and real perception of self and others, increasing self-esteem and improving self-image, (Constantin, 2016; Cucu-Ciuhan, 2006, Filipoi, 1998) resolving inner conflicts and finding solutions, resemnification of personal history through deep understanding of life experiences,

Group work, leads to awareness to improvement of human interactions to cognitive and emotional maturity and also to achieving alliance and support among group members.

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study aims to capitalize both quantitatively and qualitatively on techniques for using therapeutic metaphor in working with children and adolescents.

The applicative objective of the work is to create a personal development program dedicated to children and adolescents to help them in their own growth and evolution but also in self-knowledge. Thus, we have designed a personal development plan for adolescents aged 15 to 18 years, to help them better structure their ideas, to become aware of how they work, and to help them develop their own ideas. or how the environment shapes them and in turn shapes the environment in which they live.

The proposed objectives were: the study of literature, the operationalization of the concept of therapeutic metaphor, the identification of valid psychological tools, by which to assess the dimension of self-esteem, the level of anxiety and irrational beliefs. (SERS questionnaire, CASI children and adolescents irrationality scale and STAT – State-lived anxiety Inventory form for children, Tree test); selecting a sample of 19 adolescents aged 16 to 18; drawing up a personal development plan focused on the needs of the group and its application; Retesting the group in order to assess any changes in the dimensions concerned.

Assumptions made: There are significant differences between the values obtained in the two tests in terms of self-esteem; there are significant differences between the values obtained initially and those obtained after the implementation of the Development Plan in terms of irrational beliefs; There are significant differences between the values obtained initially and those obtained after the implementation of the Development Plan, in terms of the level of anxiety of the group, And working hypotheses for each measured dimension (self-esteem, anxiety level, and irrational beliefs) with the help of the psychological tools listed above

The statistical data processing was done with the help of SPSS Statistics 25.

This type of research compared the degree of change caused by a therapeutic intervention with the degree of change produced when no intervention takes place, the condition being that participants are tested at the beginning and end of the therapy, and the control group does not benefit from any intervention until the end of the research.

The variables in the research were self-esteem, anxiety and irrational beliefs (VD) levels, and the personal Development Plan applied to adolescents (VI.).

**Participants:** The study involved 19 adolescents aged 16 to 18 years. Participation in the study was made on a voluntary basis, among the active members of the local Center Dacia Felix Mioveni, divided into two equal groups in number: Group A (experimental group) that received the personal Development Plan and Group B (non-treatment group) to which the personal Development Plan was applied at the end of the research (after the post-test phase of the first group). Because this approach is addressed to the Scout, we have created a symbolic framework of the personal Development Plan. It was presented under the name of “the Fortress of Explorers” and provided in the form of workshops. These workshops, 4 in number, were done intensively, over three weekend days totaling 12 hours, each workshop selling 2 activities; the therapeutic approach is centered on improving self-image, non-violent communication, developing empathy and recognizing your own emotions.

The techniques used were inspired by experiential therapy and emotion-focused therapy, but to be as familiar as possible with the non-formal scout pedagogy, they were delivered in the form of workshops and challenges, some of them organized outside in nature in a hike and included drawing, drawing, drawing, drawing, drawing, drawing, drawing, and drawing. guided imagery, storytelling, role playing and debate within the forum theater.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The test-retest data was analyzed from the point of view of descriptive and inferential statistics, observing significant differences in the sense of decreasing the values of the measured factors after the application of psychological intervention.

Effective intervention on the experiential group was analyzed by applying the t test for independent samples. The results provided by the program showed that there are no significant differences between the psychological factors analyzed. In the chosen design -prepost I used in the statistical analysis of the mediums t test on the paired samples to highlight the differences between the values obtained in the experiential group before and after the application of the psychological intervention and the results provided by the program showed differences in the decrease of anxiety as a state, The increase in self-esteem factor and the decrease in intensity on all dimensions measured with the help of the CASI questionnaire.

**Table 1. Descriptive statistics – T test results on paired samples – pretest/posttest**

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
SERS	Equal variances assumed	.172	.683	-.064	18	.950	-.700	10.923	-.24	22.249
	Equal variances not assumed			-.064	17.56	.950	-.700	10.923	-.24	22.290
STAIS	Equal variances assumed	.037	.850	1.439	18	.167	3.100	2.154	-1.4	7.626
	Equal variances not assumed			1.439	17.70	.168	3.100	2.154	-1.4	7.632
STAIT	Equal variances assumed	.011	.917	.160	18	.875	.600	3.747	-7.3	8.472
	Equal variances not assumed			.160	17.91	.875	.600	3.747	-7.3	8.474
CASI	Equal variances assumed	.075	.787	.156	18	.878	.700	4.492	-8.7	10.138
	Equal variances not assumed			.156	17.97	.878	.700	4.492	-8.7	10.139
EVALUARE GLOBALA	Equal variances assumed	.727	.405	.133	18	.896	.300	2.259	-4.4	5.046
	Equal variances not assumed			.133	17.49	.896	.300	2.259	-4.5	5.056
CERINTAD REPTATE	Equal variances assumed	.261	.616	.708	18	.488	.800	1.130	-1.6	3.175
	Equal variances not assumed			.708	17.94	.488	.800	1.130	-1.6	3.175
INTOLERANTA REGULI	Equal variances assumed	.250	.623	-.462	18	.649	-1.400	3.028	-7.8	4.961
	Equal variances not assumed			-.462	17.96	.649	-1.400	3.028	-7.8	4.962
INTOLERANTA MUNCA	Equal variances assumed	.148	.705	-.330	18	.745	-.500	1.515	-3.7	2.682
	Equal variances not assumed			-.330	17.91	.745	-.500	1.515	-3.7	2.683

The qualitative analysis part of this study involved the content analysis of the data collected from the psychological interpretation of the projective test – the tree test, starting from the interpretation of each drawing, following the following dimensions: The size of the drawing, the line of the drawing, the placement on the page, the organization of the drawing, the root; The contour of the trunk, the shape of the crown, the shape of the branches, the leaves. The analysis of the differences shows a reduction in anxiety but also aggression, which is more visible in the participants in which the evaluation of the drawing showed a high intensity of this feature, the line of the page is no

longer exceeded, the drawn or misunderstood root appears, the lines become continuous and the drawing becomes central, teenagers are more receptive to the demands.

## Discussions

Workshops are intended to be an opportunity for adolescents involved in this research. The exercises and methods of exploration will allow them to better analyze themselves, to come into contact with parts of their personality that they do not yet realize, to understand the implications of their behaviors on those with whom they interact, to practice and develop various personal skills, to be able to express feelings and thoughts that they do not usually express, to desensitize themselves to certain situations, or to be able to talk about certain experiences or events that they could not talk about, to be able to overcome certain personal blockages encountered in everyday life, to improve certain problem behaviors, to identify certain strategies that could help them solve personal problems.

The techniques used were inspired by experiential therapy and emotion-focused therapy, but to be as familiar as possible with the non-formal scout pedagogy, they were delivered in the form of workshops and challenges, some of them organized outside in nature.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS

The results of the study show that working with therapeutic metaphor has effects on measured psychological dimensions, in the sense of increasing self-esteem and alleviating anxiety and irrational beliefs. It is necessary, however, to bring into discussion the limits of this research, which consisted of the small number of participants and the measured variables, and also during the reduced time in which the personal development plan was applied.

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