

„Film as a psychotherapeutic tool”

Summary

The dissertation is devoted to the subject of cinema as a psychotherapeutic tool. The problems and directions of contemporary psychotherapy have been presented, describing the purpose of psychotherapeutic intervention and the most important schools of psychotherapy. Anxiety disorders were characterised as problems of psychological functioning classified in detail in scientific research. Anxiety as a psychopathological symptom and as an element of particular diagnostic units was described. An analysis of cinema therapy as a method and psychotherapeutic trend was conducted, describing movies as a therapeutic intervention tool. The subject and aim, research subject and hypotheses, variables and indicators, methods, techniques and research tools were presented. The author has also described the organisation of the research and obtained results. A discussion of the results was carried out and summary conclusions presented.

It has been shown that current psychotherapy is a vast field of knowledge. This field is actually interdisciplinary with representatives of various sciences working in the area, including above all medicine and psychology but also pedagogy, sociology, philosophy and many other disciplines. Thanks to their research and practical experience, psychotherapy has a substantial body of knowledge at its disposal today. There are numerous, quite diverse psychotherapeutic schools, although it can be said that their mutual relations are rather complementary than competitive. Also, there are various forms of therapy, and how the psychotherapeutic process is carried out largely depends on the particular specialist's theoretical orientation. It has been noted that the current orientations of psychotherapy originate from particular, widely recognised, major schools of psychotherapy. Furthermore, the integration of particular psychotherapeutic approaches and models is also a clear trend that opens the way to applying a wide range of methods and techniques according to specific case requirements.

It has also been shown that each of the most popular psychotherapeutic trends contributes valuable content and achievements to the analysed field of knowledge. Psychotherapists receive appropriate training and preparing future psychotherapists for the profession is an issue receiving increasing attention.

Anxiety disorders are one of the most widespread mental and emotional problems. They occur in many different varieties and forms but anxiety, and its associated dysfunctions, are extremely common in modern societies. The omnipresent stress and high pressure on the individual exerted by

the current civilization environment certainly contributes to this high incidence. Numerous anxiety disorders are distinguished in the latest psychiatric classifications and, although they have a similar basis, they differ in terms of their clinical character and require different forms of intervention. Traditionally, there are three main groups of anxiety disorder symptoms: psychological, vegetative-somatic and behavioural symptoms. Anxiety is also subject to certain transformation processes like, for example, generalisation and somatisation.

The specifics of anxiety problems form a broad clinical issue, and modern psychotherapy makes use of diverse therapeutic approaches. In the case of anxiety disorders, a combined pharmacological and psychotherapeutic approach is applied. Depending on the individual case, either medication or psychotherapy techniques predominate. However, it is generally agreed that anxiety disorders should be treated with psychotherapy in the long term. This is a prerequisite for a satisfactory and long-lasting improvement in the patient's mental state.

Cinema is a prevalent and widely used medium nowadays. The popularity of film images can be successfully applied in the psychotherapeutic process. This is why a trend called cinema therapy has now been developing for several decades though so far it has been rather poorly described, which is noticeable especially in Polish conditions. However, cinema therapy is gaining more and more supporters all over the world. It is indicated that thanks to the use of films, positive changes in the patient's condition can be achieved in many cases. This is mainly due to the possibilities that film images create in the area of the patient's identification with the film character.

A very important feature of a therapeutic process of this kind is the possibility of a certain transfer of the patient's own experiences to the film character. From the conducted review of available research results, it was concluded that cinema therapy opens up a wide range of possibilities and constitutes a promising tool for therapeutic work. It has been pointed out that, among other things, the popularity of film makes it a very familiar medium that is constantly present in our lives. It is not difficult to demonstrate that film images exert a strong influence on many people's consciousness and emotional world. Therefore, the use of films in psychotherapy is actually a creative application of completely obvious content familiar to most people.

Cinema therapy can above all be a valuable complement to other psychotherapeutic techniques. Today there is no clear consensus on whether the use of films can be a stand-alone method or if their application should always be treated as a complementary element. Certainly, gaining an answer to this question requires much more research.

Our research has revealed that cinema therapy is a very valuable technique for therapeutic influence in the long-term psychotherapeutic process. Most probably, the use of films delivers the best effects when applied over a long period of time. Cinema therapy techniques have an impact on raising the level of self-esteem and on increasing the sense of quality of life. Patients undergoing film

therapy have a better opinion of their own psychological and somatic health. Psychotherapy with the use of film increases the sense of quality of life in social and environmental domains and reduces anxiety understood as a state and as a characteristic.

The main thesis of this study was that cinema therapy is a valuable, modern and promising psychotherapeutic trend. It was demonstrated that, thanks to film therapy, it is possible to achieve a significant improvement in patients' mental state. It has been found that cinema therapy delivers the best results in a longer therapeutic process, improving self-esteem and the subjectively perceived quality of life. It results in increased good mood and life satisfaction in various areas, making it possible to reduce anxiety as a technique that can be applied to very different people.