



Review: Mäder, Maya (2017): Selbsterfahrung in der Psychotherapie (Self experience in Psychotherapy), Die Bedeutung für den Kompetenzerwerb in der Aus- und Weiterbildung zum transaktionsanalytischen Psychotherapeuten (The significance for getting competence in training of transactional psychotherapy) Münster: Waxmann.

Reviewed By Günther Mohr

In her doctoral thesis at the Sigmund Freud University, Vienna, Maya Mäder has researched the question of which areas have to be covered by self experience exercises and training if one is aiming at being a psychotherapist, and whether competences in psychotherapy based on transactional analysis increase by self experience.

In the beginning she focuses on the term of the 'self' and discusses self experience in different psychotherapeutic schools. She looks at psychoanalysis, behavioural therapy and TA with TA representing a humanistic concept, and states the differences in the approaches. Psychoanalytic training very much focusses on self experience (Kahl-Popp, 2004). On the other hand behavioural therapy (BT) (Grawe, et al. 1994) first did not apply self experience (p. 35), although in further developed modern branches of BT - Mäder names schema therapy (Roediger, 2011) - there is much appreciation of self experience. In TA, self experience - particularly regarding life script - is seen as absolutely important to know about.

Then she looks at the benefits of self experience competencies for the client in terms of protection, for the psychotherapist in terms of professionalism and for the economy and the health system in terms of reducing costs of psychic disorders.

Competence models with personal, relational and conceptual competencies continue the theoretical part of the dissertation. In TA she quotes the three sided 'Toblerone model' of Schmid (1990) for the development of professional competencies with professional context, practice and conceptualisation.

Self experience is viewed as a kind of training instrument as well as a competence that is to be achieved. To display the different self experience competencies Mäder uses the Wilber (1996) model with the four quadrants including dimensions of internal and external psychological view as well as individual and collective perspectives.

The research part is focused on transactional analysis in the German speaking part of Switzerland. Mäder asked Training & Supervising Transactional Analysts and those learning to train and supervise. She used the method of group discussion and an open guided interview according to Przyborski/Wohlrab-Sahr (2010). With qualitative content analysis following Mayring and Gläser-Zikuda (2008) she elaborated the categorisation of the items.

The result includes 15 competencies gained by self experience, which with the initial letters form the German word for self experience 'Selbsterfahrung'. This ranges from self caring to the knowledge of group processes. In detail (p. 183):

Selbstfürsorge (self care)

Echtheit/Authentizität (authenticity)

Loslassen von Sicherheiten zur Intuitionsförderung (Intuition support)

Bewältigungsstrategien kennen und adäquater Umgang mit eigenen Gefühlen (coping strategies)

Sorgfältiger Umgang mit Macht und Einfluss (dealing with power and influence)

Therapeutische Beziehung, Beziehungsbedürfnisse (therapeutic relationship)

Ekennen und Einschätzen von Skriptthemen (noticing script)

Respektvolle therapeutische Haltung (respect in relationship)

Fähigkeit, Atmosphäre zu schaffen, um Empathie entstehen zu lassen (creating empathy)

Autonomie fördern und selbst anstreben: Bewusstheit, Spontaneität, Intimität (autonomy)

Hier und Jetzt nutzen (using here and now)

Reflektieren auf verschiedenen Ebenen (reflection)

Uebertragung - Gegenübertragung erkennen und therapeutisch nutzen (using transference)

Nahebringen der eigenen Personals vertrauensvolles Gegenüber (creating trust)

Gruppendynamik und Gruppenprozesse kennen (knowing group dynamics)

The dissertation focusses on a very important point of modern psychotherapy, counselling and coaching competencies. The theoretical part covers the terms and the approaches of the schools.

Also interesting aspects like 'intuition' and 'the here and now', are considered, which are often excluded in research. The use of Ken Wilber's model seems to be an ambitious approach. The definition of the collective internal perspective as the relational habits does not seem to be that sharply differentiated from the individual internal part.

In general Mäder collects a lot of results that can be used in TA and other psychotherapy, counselling and coaching training. 15 competencies that are to be developed is a lot. With this differentiated sum of results training, professionals receive a guideline for developing self experience.

References (quoted by Mäder, p. 213ff):

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