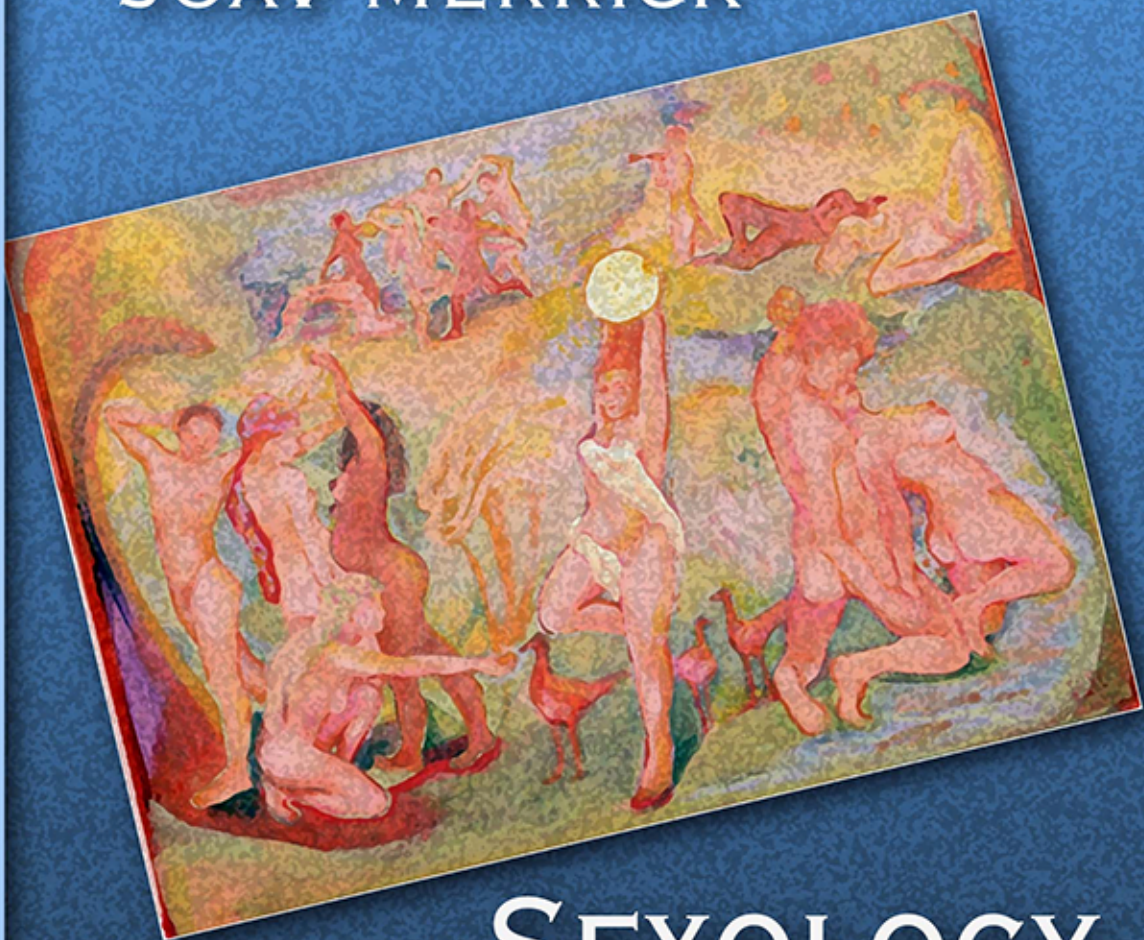




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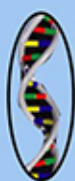
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A TEXTBOOK OF CLASSIC
AND MODERN SEXOLOGY

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HEALTH AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

SEXOLOGY FROM A HOLISTIC POINT OF VIEW

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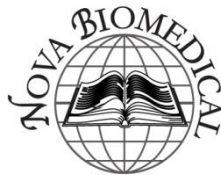
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SEXOLOGY FROM A HOLISTIC POINT OF VIEW

SØREN VENTEGODT
AND
JOAV MERRICK



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Contents

Introduction		1
	<i>Holistic sexology. All you need to know to help heal your patient</i>	
Section One: Theoretical Sexology		7
Chapter I	Sex and Viagra	9
Chapter II	The Holistic Theory of Healing	23
Chapter III	The Life Mission Theory and Understanding Existential Healing	33
Chapter IV	The Anti-Self (The Shadow) or the Evil Side of Man	37
Section 2: Scientific Sexology		51
Chapter V	Sexuality and Quality of Life in Denmark	53
Chapter VI	Life Events and Later Quality of Life	65
Section 3: Clinical Sexological Studies		79
Chapter VII	Female Quality of Life	81
Chapter VIII	Effect of Vaginal Acupressure (Hippocratic Pelvic Massage)	93
Chapter IX	Teaching Orgasm for Females with Chronic Anorgasmia using the Betty Dodson Method	113
Chapter X	Impaired Self-Rated Ability of Functioning Sexually Improved by Psychodynamic Short-Term Therapy Complemented with Bodywork	129
Section 4: Adolescence and Adolescence and Adulthood		137
Chapter XI	Problems with Sex and Living Together	139
Chapter XII	Every Contact should be Therapeutic	149
Chapter XIII	The Holistic View of the Adolescent	153
Chapter XIV	Chronic Pain	159

Chapter XV	Eating Disorders	167
Chapter XVI	How to Counsel and Treat Young People to Alleviate and Prevent Sexual Problems	187
Section 5: Psychodynamic Holistic Therapy		197
Chapter XVII	Factors Influencing the Therapeutic Decision-Making	199
Chapter XVIII	How to Recover Memory without “Implanting” Memories	223
Chapter XIX	How to Avoid the Freudian Trap of Sexual Transference and Counter Transference	237
Chapter XX	How to Use Implanted Memories of Incest as a Tool for Dissolving a Strong Female Oedipus Complex	253
Chapter XXI	The Use of Hippocrates’ Healing Principle of Similarity in Classical Sexology and Traditional, Holistic Medicine	259
Section 6: Sexual Trauma		271
Chapter XXII	Holistic Approach to Rape and Incest Trauma	273
Chapter XXIII	Long Term Effect of Child Sexual Abuse and Incest with a Treatment Approach	285
Chapter XXIV	Patient Diary as a Tool in the Treatment	299
Chapter XXV	Rehabilitation of Philosophy of Life during Holistic Existential Therapy for Childhood Sexual Abuse	337
Chapter XXVI	Advanced Tools for Holistic Medicine and Sexology	351
Section 7: Practical Sexology		373
Chapter XXVII	Five Tools for Manual Sexological Examination	375
Chapter XXVIII	Holistic Pelvic Examination	387
Chapter XXIX	Existential Therapy and Acceptance through Touch	399
Chapter XXX	Acupressure through the Vagina (Hippocratic Pelvic Massage)	415
Section 8: Medical Sexology and Sexual Pain		433
Chapter XXXI	Psychosomatic Reasons for Chronic Pain	435
Chapter XXXII	Pain and Pleasure in Sexuality	439
Section 9: Ethical Aspects		463
Chapter XXXIII	Genital, Sexual and Non-Sexual Pain and other Health Problems related to the Female Gender	465
Chapter XXXIV	Ethics and Holistic Healthcare Practice	487

Chapter XXXV	Lesson to Learn about the Pelvic Examination and its Sexually Suppressive Procedure	495
Chapter XXXVI	Medical Ethics and Therapeutic Dilemmas in the Sexology Clinic	503
Chapter XXXVII	Integrative Ethical Theory	527
Section 10: Acknowledgment		541
Chapter XXXVIII	Acknowledgments	543
Chapter XXXIX	About the Authors	545
Chapter XL	About the Quality of Life Research Center in Copenhagen, Denmark	547
Chapter XLI	About the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development in Israel	551
Chapter XLII	About the Book Series “Health and Human Development”	555
Index		557

Introduction

Holistic sexology. All you need to know to help heal your patient

*Søren Ventegodt, MD, MMedSci, EU-MSc-CAM¹
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Sexology, the art and science of helping other people with their sexual problems, has been an integrated part of every culture as long as we have recordings. In India, China, Japan, Tibet and most other Buddhist countries we have the tradition of tantra working directly for sexual healing (1,2). In Europe we have the Hippocratic tradition of sexology, used for healing sexual problems and also for treating hysteria and other female, mental illnesses, which in old Greece was understood as disorders so closely related to sexuality that only a sexological treatment could cure them (3). We have sources of sufficient quality to know for sure that the old Hippocratic sexological manual procedures have been in intensive use by the physicians for more than 2000 years (4-10).

After 1850, when today's medical science based on natural science was developed, a significant interest among physicians also lead to the development of a scientific sexology; Kinsey used to praise the sexologists of the 18th century for their almost perfect physiological description of the human coitus (11) and he claimed that only little was added to this basic understanding during the next century.

The original, holistic, sexological therapy, which uses both talking and touching for healing, developed further into either talk therapy or touch therapy. During the first decades

of the 20th century, Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) and the psychoanalytic tradition used physical massage of the patients legs (12), but this use of healing touch honouring the holistic tradition of medicine was later abandoned, presumably to be more acceptable in society (13).

Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957) found around 1928 that this development seriously failed the patients, as fewer patients were helped, and returned to sexological bodywork, but suffered from all the political problems Freud managed to avoid (14,15). Hoch, Fithian, Pomeroy, Brown, Graber, Kline-Graber, Kegel, Grafenberg and many more sexological researchers (16-27) used the original manual sexological procedures from the Hippocratic tradition, but adjusted them to the needs of the modern patient and developed around 1950 the educational “sexological examination”.

Since then physical therapy for the pelvic floor has been shown to be efficient for a long number of female disorders in about 50 randomised clinical trials and many more clinical interventions without control (28-45). The sexological procedures have been used to cure many different clinical problems, like urine and faecal incontinence, lack of sexual desire and orgasm, vulval pain i.e. vulvodynia, and infertility (28,46).

Holistic sexology is aiming to integrate all the knowledge and tools of the different traditions, like Reichian therapy, classical sexology and pelvic physiotherapy. The psychodynamic aspects of psychoanalysis and modern existential psychotherapy can be very helpful for the sexological patient (47-51) and so can the energetic techniques and spiritual wisdom from Tantra and the oriental traditions (1).

The practice of holistic sexology consist of therapeutic conversation and manual sexological therapy, often called “vaginal massage”, “vaginal acupressure”, “pelvic floor physical therapy”, “tantric massage” and similar names are. The idea is that you talk with the patient first, to try to help (13,50-52), and first when you know that this does not solve the problem, you proceed to therapeutic touch (14-46).

We consider holistic sexology to be a subspecialty of scientific holistic medicine (including clinical holistic medicine (52)) that deals with problems arising from the patient’s repressed feelings. In principle sexual feelings are not different from other feelings, but they are often stronger and more difficult to integrate, since shame, disgust, repulsion, hopelessness, valueless and despair are normal feelings in this field. Ethics is extremely important in the field of sexology (53).

Sexuality is not the most important dimension of human life as we see it; love and consciousness are much more important for happiness than sexuality and many people like monks and nuns live perfectly well without an active sex-life.

But if you have a sex life and fail to find sexual happiness, this can be extremely frustrating or even painful. Physical pain from genitals during intercourse and chronically for no known medical reason continues to torments about 10% of young women in the western world (28). Anorgasmia is very common, and most women in the Western world are not able to get orgasm during sexual intercourse. The explosive success of Viagra, in spite of this drug’s many adverse effects and other problems connected to its use (see chapter 1), shows us that sexual insecurity and erectile impotency is a huge problem for a large fraction of men; as we shall see the use of such drugs instead of solving the emotional problems might be problematic for the female partner (54).

Finally, many studies have found sexual health closely related to mental and physical health (13-15,35,47-51). All this makes sexology important. We need an integral science of sexology with good theories of sexuality and efficient therapy for the patients that need it.

We have tried to go through the literature to find the classical methods, and we have combined them to efficient cures for sexual dysfunctions. We do not believe that we today are more efficient than Reich or Masters and Johnson was 50 years ago to cure these disorders, but we hope that we can do it in a more direct, simple and rational way. As sexual problems are so common and important and so easy to solve we want to inspire many more physicians and therapists to also work with sexological problems when they are presented in the clinic.

Working with sexuality is interesting and will often inspire the therapists own personal development, which is strongly needed not to burn out in a busy daily practice with little variation. But more importantly, when a chronic patients do not show any progress for an extended amount of time, working directly with sexuality can often get things going and give the patient access to the personal resources needed for further physical, mental and existential healing (49).

We have written this book to show you that sexology is a big and complicated thing, but also great fun and a very useful tool in the medical clinic.

May our work benefit all living beings.

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Section One: Theoretical Sexology

Sex and Viagra

Males tend to go for genital potency, while women tend to go for deeper emotional and spiritual experiences in sexuality. Men often live in practical, simplistic, mechanical paradigms, while women live in complex, social, emotional, and spiritual paradigms. Male sexual dysfunction indicates fundamental problems in the couple's sexual interaction; the solution to male sexual erectile dysfunction is therefore not a drug increasing genital hardness, but rather sexological couple therapy, developing the couple's sexual consciousness and the understanding of the genders different characters. The conflict between mechanical and holistic worldviews is classical in sexology.

Kegel found that sexual dysfunctions including dyspareunia, lack of desire and orgasm was caused by weakness in the pubococcygeus muscle, while Reich believed that low orgasmic potency was caused by a blockage in the life-energies that should flow through the whole body and be fully integrated in the human character. Freud believed sexual dysfunctions to be caused by the repression of sexuality into the unconscious. Jung believed that orgasmic potency came from our ability to accept and meet out inner anima/animus – the opposite gender in our sexual shadow. In the tradition of erotic tantra the sexual energies are cultivated and circulated through body, mind, spirit, and heart.

The optimal sexological treatment is multi-paradigmatic and allows the couple to analyze their sexual paradigms to come to an understanding of self and the partner's physical, emotional, and spiritual needs in sexuality. Viagra® does not always solve the psychosexual problems related to erectile dysfunction and is likely to increase female dyspareunia.

Introduction

Sexuality was an object for intensive research in the first half of the 20th century, with great discoveries that lead to establishment of the medical science of sexology around 1960. Since then thousands of sexologist, some of them physicians and other therapists, have helped millions of patients with sexual dysfunctions. Recently the pharmaceutical industry has contributed to sexology with the development of sildenafil citrate (Viagra ®) for male erectile dysfunction. In spite of the understandable popularity of this drug among impotent men, the effect on their female partner has not really been discussed. Tiefer (1) has reflected

on the fact that the pharmaceutical industry has systematically withheld the data from the partner-survey from publication. This is likely to indicate lack of a positive effect on the female partner's sexual satisfaction, or even worse that the female partner is experiencing more problems and sexual pain because of the drug.

In our sexological clinical practice we often heard female partners express their disappointment with Viagra®, as it has not improved her sex-life. The real need of a female, she will say, is not "hard sex" but a relationship that is playful, experimental, deeply emotionally involving, and even spiritually enlightening. These concepts are often fundamentally lacking in the male universe, making the women feel his male energy somewhat hard, mechanical, simplistic and alien – sometimes even described as an emotionally and spiritually wasteland. Insensitive penetration causes often pain, which is the most common female complain in the sexological clinic, and it is insensitive penetration that makes her reject him sexually giving him problems with his sexual self-confidence and these emotional problems rare the true cause of his erectile dysfunction. The couple's sexual problems are thus going deeper than just being an evil circle that can be broken with Viagra®.

To rehabilitate female orgasmic potency, with all its elements of desire, excitement, enjoyment and lack of pain – it is often necessary not only to work mechanically on strengthening her pelvic floor musculature, but also to help her develop self-confidence, acceptance and even to heal emotional wound from her youth- and childhood sexual traumas. It often takes a great existential awakening to help a woman back to full orgasmic potency (2,3).

Men's sexual problems are normally connected with lack of erectile potency and premature ejaculation; both these are well known from sexological research (2) to be strongly connected with psychological factors. It is worth remembering the fact that Masters and Johnson were able to cure almost all impotent men in just 14 days using a competent female substitute partner, documenting the psychological dimensions in erectile dysfunction. Confidence, self-insight, acceptance of own body and sexuality, and a deep understanding of the differences in men's and women's sexuality seems to be what is needed to be a sexually able man. This is also what a woman needs to open up emotionally and spiritually for the man, not just a hard member, as many men seemingly still believe.

Sexological paradigms

The word *paradigm* refers to Kuhn's famous work on scientific paradigms (4). In sexology the sexological inadequacies have been understood in very different ways.

The mechanical paradigm

Kegel (4,5) saw most sexual problems coming from the simple mechanical weakness of the pelvic floor muscles, primarily the pubococcygeus muscle around the vagina. In 1948 Kegel found that the ability to tighten the vagina around the male penis, an ability that he documented varies much from woman to woman, is essential for good sexual functioning; he therefore developed the famous "Kegel exercises" to strengthen the pelvic floor musculature

(4). In the second paper in 1952 Kegel wrote (6): "Summary. Findings in the present series indicate that sphincteric and sensory sexual function of the vagina is practically always potentially present, and can be developed through muscle education and resistance exercise. Every woman with sexual complaints should be investigated for possible dysfunction of the pubococcygeus muscle. In a large percentage of cases it will be found that "lack for vaginal feeling" and so-called frigidity can be traced to faulty development of function of the pubococcygeus muscle (6). Graber and Kline-Graber continued this research (7).

Hartman and Fithian wrote in 1972 (8): "It is important to determine whether there is any sensation or awareness in the vagina. Some women are unaware if the examining finger or if the speculum is in or out. What we attempt to do is to get her to focus on the feeling in the vagina, with an examining finger in the vagina. We found that often nothing has ever been in the vagina long enough for her to have developed any perception, and because of this, she may describe any movement as pain. This is easily determined if the pain is inconsistent in location." (8, page 81). "About one out of ten women that we see are not able to move their vaginal muscles at all. In these women the vagina is often gapping and open, and they usually have some problem with stress-incontinence. In such cases we have difficulty in getting them to move the muscle enough to identify it so that they can learn to do the vaginal exercises. However, if they can learn to do the exercises and will do them, remarkable changes can take place in the physiology of the vaginal barrel, even where here has been extensive trauma in childbirth" (8, page 82). "The woman has the organ of accommodation and can develop a tight vaginal vault where she can receive much more friction and feeling trough vaginal exercises. This is not only positive for her in the vagina, but also a tight vagina will cause more movement of the foreskin over the clitoral shaft which will increase her satisfaction and pleasure. We feel that it is to the advantage of both the female and male..." (8, page 89-90). "If there is a tear or lesion in the wall of the vagina and we insert a finger in that area or we flick the band where there is any fibrosity, this can often be painful and the woman frequently responds by saying, "What is that? That is exactly what happens in intercourse, but I have never been able to find out what it is." We can assure the woman that it is simply a fibrous band or a separation on the vaginal wall and can easily be filled in or corrected by her doing the suggested vaginal exercises (Kegel pelvic contractions)" (8, page 86).

"A well-conditioned vagina is long and narrow. It should be remembered that a vagina is not an actual space, but a potential. It is by inserting a finger and moving is against the wall we ascertain the contour, since the fleshy part of the vagina meets the resistance of the vaginal muscles when palpated with a finger. If you notice again our illustration, you will see that the bottom left-hand boxes, which are divided into thirds, identify the vaginal barrel right and left by lower, middle and upper third, which have different markings on them. The top third of than indicate no observable muscle. It is in poor condition with a lot of fibrosity indicated by the x. The lower third has a circle with an X, which indicates there is some muscle response there, but here is fibrosity or sessions in the muscle. The lower part indicates the muscle is in better shape having less fibrosity in the right side still not too good. If you look at the last set of boxes, you see that in a year's time the mobility has markedly changed" (8, page 92).

The mechanical logic is clear, and the text leaves no doubt that a woman, who is able to catch her partners member in a strong, dynamic grip will have her vagina and clitoris well stimulated this way, offering also the man the physical stimulation needed, thus bringing them both to full orgasm. You could say that this is the first, basic level of genital sexuality:

When there is a functioning intercourse the rest is just details so as a sexologist you would be wise to focus here. And if you believe that a harder member can compensate for a weaker vagina, Viagra® is a good solution to the problem of male erectile dysfunction. Clearly a man with an artificial erection can have intercourse, but this is not automatically giving the woman sexual pleasure; only the most chauvinistic of men believe today that a hard member is enough to satisfy a woman. The emotional contact is the most important thing for a woman and as the couple's emotional problems are also in most cases the true cause of the erectile dysfunction; therefore the emotional problems must be solved to increase sexual satisfaction for both the male and the female.

Holistic paradigms

The word "holistic" means "with regard to the wholeness". The first part of the 20th century gave birth to several holistic sexological paradigms.

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939)

The most influential has without doubt been the understanding of human sexual development by Sigmund Freud, from the oral to the anal and finally the genital sexuality (9). In spite of the simplicity of this idea it has led to highly complex intervention restoring the patient's sexual ability through regression all the way into early infancy, to rehabilitate sexuality at its very roots. Freud's early idea was that sexuality was repressed through childhood traumas, but later he believed that it was human nature to repress sexuality as we, the Ego, were destined to inner conflicts between our animalistic side, the Id, and our social consciousness, the Super-Ego. The conflict theory put sexual transference and counter-transference in the center of psychodynamic psychotherapy.

Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957)

The person who in reality created the science of sexology was Wilhelm Reich. Reich succeeded in mapping the sexual cycle in the curve of orgasm, which is the basis of all sexological understanding today. He understood the orgasm as the release of sexual energy, which had built up between the genitals and the rest of the body. The higher developed sexually a person was, the more sexual energy could be charged on this inner battery. Therefore the whole body was involved in sexuality, not only the genitals. The whole character of the person should integrate the genitals and the sexual energy and become what Reich called a *genital character* (3,10). Reich found that sexual bodywork combined with psychodynamic psychotherapy helped the patient to heal not only sexual dysfunctions, but also somatic and mental health, including in some cases schizophrenia and cancer. In the last half of the 20th century researchers like Searles (11) and Levenson (12) took these ideas to the next level and developed cures for schizophrenia and cancer that are still under scientific investigation with regard to their efficacy.

Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961)

Was strongly inspired by the Eastern concept of sexuality, where sexual energy is seen to circulate through the whole human being and thus energizing and integrating body, mind and

spirit into the abstract human “heart” (13). Jung saw sexual tension as a building up between the person's own gender, which is expressed outwardly, and an inner core of opposite sexuality, which Jung called the anima/animus. The Eastern idea that we are total, all-inclusive beings found its expression in human sexuality. According to this model all sex is masturbatory; when we engage in sexuality we only project our inner male or female part into our partner. The more sexually healthy we are, the more can we accept our anima/animus, and the more sexual energy can we accumulate in our system, and the stronger can we project sexual attractiveness into our sexual partner. The whole tradition of erotic tantra is close to this understanding (14).

Sexological treatments according to paradigms

The treatment of sexual dysfunction is strongly depending on how the patient and the sexologist understand sexuality. In a mechanical paradigm the goal will basically be to get the intercourse going. The man can be helped with Viagra, and the women with pelvic floor exercises (“Kegel’s”).

The sexological examination

A more integrative approach has been the sexological examination developed by several clinicians (8,15-20). The sexological examination is actually a series of interventions that are both explorative and therapeutic-educational at the same time (a medical concept often called “clinical medicine”); the four steps are described by Hoch in 1986 (16, p. 768):

- *Gynecological examination:* The gyneco-sexologist first proceeds with the gynecological examination. Inspection and palpation of the external genitalia may reveal involuntary contractions of the pubococcygeal muscle, in which case it is advisable to ask the patient to contract and relax the anal sphincter, thus teaching her how to control the perivaginal musculature. In order to familiarize the patient with her own body, she is instructed to introduce first her own fingers and then the examiners fingers into the vagina.
- *Vaginal acupressure:* The examiners fingers are moved to and fro, starting on the posterior vaginal wall and then slowly proceeding toward the lateral and anterior aspects of the vaginal canal. Touching and light pressure are alternatively used on every part. Proper lubrication of the fingers is necessary during this part of the examination. The patient is asked to concentrate and to indicate her sensory feelings during stimulation of the different vaginal regions. Her reactions are recorded.
- *Vaginal sexological examination:* If she indicates discomfort, pain, or no special sensation, the fingers are slowly moved on, until an erotically reactive area is identified. Stimulation is then continued on the area for a while, but never longer than required for reaching the excitement phase of beginning plateau phase of her sexual cycle. When stimulating the anterior vaginal wall, pressure applied to the

second hand on the suprapubic region proved to be very helpful in enhancing the patient's sensation. This bimanual stimulation is performed in a steady circular fashion, almost bringing the two examining hands together. The external hand of the examiner is then replaced by the patient's hand, teaching her how to locate, through her abdominal wall, the intravaginal examining fingers.

- *Partner exercise:* The last step is giving the couple sexological exercises for home practice.

There are today several types of sexological examinations, the "Hoch" type is very medical and oriented towards pathology and dysfunctions, although it clearly includes the emotional aspect of sexology, while the "Pomeroy-Brown" type is much more holistic. Pomeroy and Brown rebelled against Hoch (15) in 1982: "This difference between a sexological exam, as advocated by Hoch and our own system emphasizes the fundamental difference between a medical (i.e. a pathological) approach and a pleasure approach to sexuality. The former focuses on illness, deviance, and pathology and is the most common approach used in Europe and elsewhere outside the US. Fortunately, in the US we have finally realized that the medical model is inappropriate and are now concerned with health, pleasure, communication, sensitivity, and awareness which allows for change and growth far beyond that conceptually possible, employing the medicinal model" (17, page 73). "For a non-medically oriented type of sexological examination, since the focus is on gathering and imparting information on anatomy, physiology, arousal patterns, response cycles, and pleasure zones, any knowledgeable and sensitive sex therapist should be able to conduct the procedure skillfully. Medical training is not necessary for this nor is it necessary in order to know how to insert a speculum. This skill can be gained rapidly – evidence by the many women's self-help groups that have sprung up throughout the country. The women in these groups learn to insert specula both in themselves and other women and learn to examine the cervixes, vaginal walls, etc. Furthermore, Hoch's manner of examining the female appears to be too medically focused and lacking in relaxation, since the woman is on an examining table with her feet in stirrups, as in a regular gynecological exam. In our sexological exams, we try to have the woman reclining on large, overstuffed pillows in order to eliminate the elements of fear and tension that are often present in a medical atmosphere" (17, page 74).

Hoch is also insisting on not involving the patients whole body, while Pomeroy and Brown insist that: "A sexological examination that does not include at least total body mapping, i.e. rating on a scale of -3 to +3 where and how a person enjoys being touched, is not a true indicator of a person's sexual responses" (17, page 75). This must be understood as a clear indication of Pomeroy and Brown "going holistic".

Vaginal acupressure/ vaginal massage/ Hippocratic pelvic massage

The vaginal acupressure part of the sexological examination have always been an integral part of bodywork, physical therapy and physiotherapy and was practiced by the European doctors all the way back to Hippocrates and his students, where it is described in the Corpus Hippocraticum (21). Many medieval sources describe interventions almost identical to the sexological examination, including the provocative element of direct sexual stimulation (22-28). Vaginal acupressure/pelvic massage have in a number of studies been found highly

efficient for sexual dysfunctions including pelvic pain (29-37). In spite of the common use of this kind of therapy, it must be realized that “there are no standard treatment protocols guiding the manual therapy” (37, page 518). There seems to be a general agreement among researchers that every therapist must find his own way here and include the elements that he or she finds most usable.

The technique of pelvic and genital bodywork has therefore also been described and practiced in many different ways. We saw Hoch’s description of vaginal massage in step two above; a more contemporary description of pelvic physical therapy was given by Rosenbaum in 2005, who concluded that: “Physicians recognizing and treating women presenting with vaginismus and dyspareunia should consider physiotherapists as vital members of the interdisciplinary team” (39, page 337). “The physiotherapist’s assessment of the vulva differs from the gynecological examination. Both the external and internal exam focus on the mobility and integrity of the muscular, fascial and connective tissue components. The vulvar and pelvic floor exam consists of the following: a) Observation of the vulva, perineum, and anus to note areas of redness, raised areas, scar tissue or edema; b) palpation to note tenderness to touch; c) internal exam to assess pelvic floor muscle tension and tightness to touch; c) internal exam to assess pelvic floor muscle tension and tightness, tone, range of motion, and hymeneal presence and thickness; d) assessment of internal muscle trigger points; e) determination of the integrity of the pelvis organs and possible presence of prolapse of the bladder, uterus, or rectocele and f) anorectal internal exam” (39, page 335). “Conclusion: Physical therapy treatment of pelvic pain is an integral component of the multidisciplinary approach to CCP (chronic pelvic pain) and associated sexual dysfunctions. (38, page 513). “Manual techniques including massage, stretching, and soft tissue and bony mobilizations, are important components of treatment...” (38, page 517). “In assessing the pelvic floor muscle tone, important markers include muscle length, muscle tension, muscle stiffness, presence of trigger point, and pelvic floor synergy or presence of dysenergia” (38, page 517).

Weiss described in 2001 pelvic physiotherapy this way: “In contrast to external muscle group that physiotherapists treat manually with 1 or 2 hands, internal muscle groups limit the practitioners to 1-finger treatment via the rectum or vagina. Tenderness, tightness or taut bands are located. They are then treated with compression, stretching, strumming at right angles to the affected muscle bundles or allowing the finger to glide between fibres to seek toe direction of least resistances, termed following the well” (33, page 2227). “Any tender points are then eradicated by compression and stretching” (33, page 2228). “Treatment should continue until tenderness and tightness have dissipated, which requires 1 to 2 visits weekly for 8 to 12 weeks depending on the duration and severity of symptoms. (33, page 2228).

Bergeron et al (31) treated 35 women with vulvar vestibulitis: “Physical therapy yielded a complete or great improvement for 51.4% of the participants, a moderate improvement for 20.0% of participants, and little to no improvement for the other 28.6%. Treatment resulted in a significant decrease in pain experienced both during intercourse and gynecological examinations; it also resulted in a significant increase in intercourse frequency and levels of sexual desire and arousal. ... Finds demonstrate that physical therapy is a promising treatment modality for dyspareunia associated with vulvar vestibulitis” (31, page 183-184). They concluded: “Physical therapy is one of the few treatment for vulvar vestibulitis that is non-invasive and has no known negative side effects. (31, page 184-185). They described their method as “physical therapy sessions”: “Manual techniques used for proprioception,

normalization of muscle tone, pain modification, and mobilization were applied on the surface of the perineum and internally by vaginal and sometimes anal palpation. These techniques included, among others, myofascial release, trigger-point pressure, and massage” (31, page 185).

Vaginal acupressure is different from the sexological examination. Hoch wrote (15): “Stimulation then proceeds [in the sexological examination] to the external genitalia involving the vestibule, urethral region, labia minora, and clitoris. There are no standard techniques for successful clitoral stimulation. Different patients react differently to various sites, pressures, pace, and form of clitoral stimulation, but it will generally be successful if one common condition is met: The moment we have located what is best for our patient, stimulation should be continuous and uninterrupted until a beginning plateau level is reached. Here again it is the patient’s responsibility to provide the examiner with exact instructions for the achievement of successful stimulation” (15, page 61).

To us vaginal acupressure is a most simple procedure that is already an integral part of the standard pelvic examination: “It is important to understand that the procedure of acupressure through the vagina, is the same exploration part of the standard pelvic examination by a gynaecologist, but in this case done so slowly that the woman can feel the emotions held by the different tissues contacted by the finger of the physician. It can be used in combination with the pelvic examination and as the woman always will contact some feelings while examined in her vagina, the situation is really that every pelvic examination contains an element of acupressure through the vagina. Often the awakening of unpleasant feelings is very emotionally painful for the woman and if not taken care of by the physician/gynaecologist it will make the standard pelvic examination difficult for the woman, as many women actually experience. Just ignoring the fact that the woman is a living human being reacting emotionally to the pelvic examination is not going to help the woman not to feel” (40).

All the researchers seems to agree that there are no side effects of the manual sexological treatments, but there is some warning that most of patients with pelvic and genital pain has psychiatric co-morbidity (41). This does not at all mean that one should not help sexually dysfunctional mentally ill patients, but that the therapist needs to work with special attention to the patient’s emotional problems as well as their mental, spiritual, and existential problems.

Even in the most mechanical and physical therapy, only rational approach when it comes to the sexological patient is holistic. Just taking care of the body is not an option. Most interestingly it has so often been found that therapeutic work in the pelvic and sexological area can cure not only pain and sexual dysfunction, but also cure the patient’s seemingly unrelated mental and somatic illness (42). This strongly indicates that unsolved psychosexual developmental problems are causing severe and chronic somatic and psychological imbalance, distress, illness and disease.

Ethical considerations

Hoch (15) wrote: “The sexological examination of the female patient, as performed in our Center, has proved to be an essential and almost indispensable diagnostic and therapeutic tool for the treatment of female sexual dysfunction” (15, page 58). Hoch did not, in the light of the patient’s obvious need of cure find any ethical problems in the procedure, but admitted that

there was a problems in taking a female patient all the way to orgasm during the sexological examination: "Special care is taken to avoid high preorgasmic levels of sexual response, or orgasmic release, which might often evoke in the partner unnecessary fears of having "to compete" with the more knowledgeable (and often male) physician (15, page 62).

Alzate and Londoño (43) described the ethical problems in a research project with sexological examination, where the patients were taken all the way to orgasm: "Some comments on the ethical implications of this research are in order here, since in absence of any practical alternative the subjects reached climax with the help of the male examiner. Although there seems to be a consensus among sexologists on the rules that should govern sex therapist/patient (client) interactions, and on the limitations of the sexological examination conducted in a therapeutic setting (but not on the professionals qualified to perform it), apart from the minimal requirements of professionalism, confidentiality, and consent, the ethics of sex research should be flexible enough not to hinder the advancement of knowledge, once the human subject's protection has reasonable been taken into account. Therefore, we believe that our examination procedure, which might be improper in a therapeutic setting, is ethically acceptable as long as the examiner keeps from being erotically involved with the subject, which was the case in this study (43).

The researchers seem all to agree about the Hippocratic ethical rule of not having sex with the patients, but it is highly doubtful that sexological work can be done without some sexual excitement of the therapist as both Freud and Searles have admitted (44,45). Yalom (46) also argued that this is absolutely normal and should not be considered a problem: "I have been sexually aroused by patients and so have every therapist I know". The therapist's sexual arousal, which is often higher in the beginning of his sexological carrier when everything is still new, is not a problem if the therapist knows how to control his behavior. In our experience the experienced sexologist easily controls the level of sexual arousal, sexual mentation and sexual behavior.

As manual sexological therapy has no side effects all researchers seems to agree that there is not ethical problems with manual sexological treatment, e.g. the sexological examination, if only the therapist respect the Hippocratic ethics. Recently the Hippocratic ethical rules have been re-formulated in a practical formulation useful for sexologist by the International Society of Holistic Health (47).

Discussion

Men and women are psychosexually very different in accordance with their historical sex-roles. In the modern uni-sex culture, where both genders are taking all kinds of jobs and social functions we forget that sex is about biology and biology does not change as fast as culture. We therefore need to acknowledge nature and respect the differences of male and female. One of the most important differences seems to be the female's need for respect, safety, security and care, to open up emotionally and sexually. Sexuality is often quite mechanical for a man; a tight vagina is to some extend what he always dreams about. The woman's sexual dreams are much more romantic, and sexuality is really rewarding without a deep feeling of love and devotion.

The sexologist must understand these differences, and train the two genders to understand and respect each other. Interestingly most male sexual dysfunctions, erectile impotency, and premature ejaculation, come directly from emotional problems in the relationship, the man feeling insecure and uneasy in the sexual situation. In the same way most female sexual dysfunction come from her partner not holding her emotionally and spiritually also; even the hardest and most persistent penetration is rarely enough to bring her to high levels of pleasure and orgasm; often insensitive penetration is actually the direct course of sexual pain, making about half of the world's women complain about dyspareunia. Therefore correction of penile hardness with a drug like Viagra ® is not the whole story.

Viagra® has become a money machine, because millions of impotent men desperately want to become sexually potent today. But keeping up appearances is not solving the sexual problems, which are not really inside the man, but lies in the interaction between the partners. The physician having the patient's confidence for a moment before prescribing Viagra can therefore help the male, who is in deep trouble by pinpointing the real problems. We all know that it takes one minute to prescribe a drug, but many hours to help a man solve his real problems. So the next time you think of prescribing Viagra® to a patient please consider the true needs of this man and his female partner.

When it comes to sexual dysfunctions talking is not enough, reviews have shown that bodywork is actually needed (48). Meston and Bradford (49) concluded recently that "medical treatments for women's sexual dysfunctions have largely failed to outperform placebo treatments but may be useful in specific clinical subgroups" and "despite widespread clinical acceptance in many cases, few psychosocial treatments for women's sexual dysfunction are empirically supported. Little is known about which treatment components are most effective" (49).

Marinoff and Turner (50) concluded already in 1991 that "too often patients with vulvar symptoms are shunted from one gynaecologist to another and finally told they should seek psychiatric help." Another thing that clearly does not help much in dyspareunia is antibiotic drugs, which are also often prescribed; the reason for this is simple: "Although some authors have proposed that the vulvar vestibulitis syndrome may reflect an infection agent such as *Candida albicans*, our results showed little evidence of an infections etiology, even after multiple samplings at various sites... We found that dyspareunia was present at first intercourse in 44% of the patients, suggesting a primary form of this syndrome in a relatively large proportion of affected woman (51).

The more "sterile" and orderly, mechanical type sexological treatment is also inefficient: "Approximately 15% of women has chronic dyspareunia that is poorly understood, infrequently cured, often highly problematic and distressing. Chronic dyspareunia is an urgent health issue...the traditional treatment of vaginismus with vaginal "dilatation" plus psycho education, desensitisation, and so forth is not evidence-based... Pelvic floor therapies for dyspareunia may be effective" (52). Schultz's group (52) were very positive to the "educational gynaecological sexological examination": "When conducted correctly, it can be highly therapeutic." "Through this examination, the foundation is laid for a meaningful discussion afterwards, in which all the findings are explained and at which time further sexual complaints may come to light..." (52).

Schultz et al (52) concluded: "Ideally a multidimensional, multidisciplinary approach for sexual pain is recommended, with attention to the following areas: the experience of pain, the emotional/psychological profile, any context of past mutilations or sexual abuse; the genital

mucose membrane; the pelvic floor; and sex and partner therapy...Psychological issues (as well as interpersonal issues) should be addressed early on with psychotherapy” (52).

Rosenbaum and Owens (38) concluded: “Physical therapy treatment of pelvic pain is an integral component of the multidisciplinary approach to chronic pelvic pain and associated sexual dysfunctions (38). There thus seem to be an agreement among the researchers that manual sexological treatment is needed for curing sexual dysfunctions. Conversation therapy cannot do this alone. Pharmacological treatment is also not always helpful and neither is psychiatric treatment. And very few believe surgery to be the answer to genital pain.

Conclusions

Researchers seem to agree that manual sexological procedures combined with conversation therapy is the cure of choice in most sexual dysfunctions. Couple therapy is often recommended. Erective dysfunction can be symptomatically treated with Viagra®, but we do not believe this to be a good solution for the female partner, and therefore not for the couple.

We do not believe it to be helpful at all in the long run. The reason is erectile impotency mostly is caused by emotional problems and lack of emotional contact with the female partner and that mechanical penetration without emotional contact is the primary cause of female dyspareunia. Sexual intercourse is a mutual thing; only when the sexual interaction is emotionally and spiritually deep and energetically dynamic can both participants reach optimal sexual pleasure and full orgasm.

The sexologist must have more than a mechanical approach to sexology; it takes a fully developed holistic approach to give the necessary attention to all relevant aspects of the human being - body, mind and spirit - to help a couple reach the highest levels of sexual pleasure. Very often both somatic and psychiatric problems are solved in this process of sexual healing. The patient’s psychosexual development and the whole field of sexology therefore seem to be of utmost importance in medicine.

Sexual problems are almost always caused by emotional problems, which cannot be solved with a drug. Sexology must focus not only on the genitals, but also on the whole person. Developing on the patient’s understanding of the different natures of male and female and involving the partner in the solution of sexual problems are indispensable steps in the healing of sexual dysfunctions.

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The Holistic Theory of Healing

Sexology is about sexual and existential healing. The basic idea of healing is that the patient's sexuality is damaged, disturbed, closed down, repressed, or in some other way destroyed and compromised. To function well again the patient will need to heal. The sexual and existential wounds are often gained early in life; either in the womb or in the first three years of life, during the establishment of the personality. Healing sexuality is not different from healing mind, body, emotions or other aspects of the human being. To be able to heal, the sexologist must understand the basic principles of healing.

It is possible to understand the process of healing from a holistic perspective. According to the life mission theory that we have developed (see chapter 3), we can stretch our existence and lower our quality of life when we are in crisis, to survive and adapt, and we can relax to increase our quality of life when we later have resources for healing.

The holistic process theory explains how this healing comes about: Healing happens in a state of consciousness exactly opposite to the state of crises. The patient enters the "holistic state of healing" when the 1) patient and 2) the physician have a perspective in accordance with life, 3) a safe environment, 4) personal resources, 5) the patient has the will to live, 6) the patient and 7) the physician have the intention of healing, 8) the trust of the patient in the physician, and 9) sufficient holding.

The holding must be fivefold, giving the patient 1) acknowledgment, 2) awareness, 3) respect, 4) care and 5) acceptance.

The holistic process has three obligatory steps: to feel, to understand and to let go of negative decisions. This chapter presents a theory for the holistic process of healing, and lists the necessities for holistic therapy restoring the quality of life, health and ability to function.

Introduction

The process of healing seemingly takes place on two different levels in the organism. Though not completely understood, medical science has a good understanding of the local process of healing that takes place when a specific tissue or organ gets a wound. Healing can also take place on the level of the whole organism, and this is far more mysterious.

Biomedical science has been successful in explaining processes on the level of the molecule and the cell, but often unsuccessful in explaining the processes at the level of the organism. It has accordingly not yet been able to explain what happens when patients spontaneously recover or heal completely even from a severe mental or somatic illness, like cancer or schizophrenia. To explain what happens on the level of the whole organism is the objective of holistic medicine (1).

The holistic process of healing seemed to be a complete mystery for medical science, but in the second half of the 20th century, several scientists succeeded in explaining important aspects of this complicated phenomenon. One of the most brilliant was Aaron Antonovsky (1923–94) from the Ben Gurion University in Beer-Sheva, Israel with his model for holistic healing using the famous concept of “salutogenesis” (2,3). Antonovsky’s idea was to help the patient to create a “sense of coherence”, an experience in the depth of life, strongly related to the concepts of meaning, understanding, and action. In recovering the sense of coherence, the patient accesses his or her hidden resources and improves quality of life, health, and ability to function at the same time.

Pioneers in the field of holistic medicine have developed different holistic approaches, some fairly successful. Experiments done primarily in the United States through the last decades call on a revisited and more concise explanation (4-6), a contribution to which we hope to give in this chapter.

The explanation presented below accentuates the subjective and global level of the human being. It is holistic and will therefore not deal either with the biology of single cells or with molecules. We are working on explaining the biological mechanisms behind the holistic process of healing. We hope that the scientific community will accept the model in spite of its abstract character, where we take our journey through the life mission theory (7) and not in molecular biology. However strange, the model presented in this paper seems to be of great utility in the daily clinical practice of the family physician, where patients with chronic diseases often need the holistic approach if they are to become better. This model is to be understood as a practical help or tool for the physician, not the final explanation, as we also need the mechanistic explanation at the level of the cells, but that is not given here.

Three stages of holistic healing

Working directly with the consciousness of the patient is possible because the level of meaning and purpose can be acknowledged by both the patient and the physician in order to work with it and develop (7-10). This is often called personal development and is now an increasingly popular trend in our western society. Personal development and holistic healing is also the aim of much alternative, complementary, and holistic therapy.

The human existence can be interpreted as extending from the most abstract level of existence (the consciousness, the spirit, and the soul) to the most concrete level of cells, molecules, and atoms — the physical matter. Taking this as our frame of reference, we can place the phenomena body, feelings, and mind in between the abstract and the concrete level, as shown in figure 1 (8). The cells can be found between the level of matter and the level of the body. When these cells are disturbed because of “blockages”, illness and suffering arises.

When man experiences unbearable emotional difficulties, these can be solved by repressing emotional pain from the surface of consciousness. This happens by making a negative decision that denies the original constructive intention, which causes the suffering (8). The existential pain is, together with the whole perception, turned into what is known as a gestalt (a “frozen now”), which is from that moment found as a chronic tension in some part of the mind or the body.

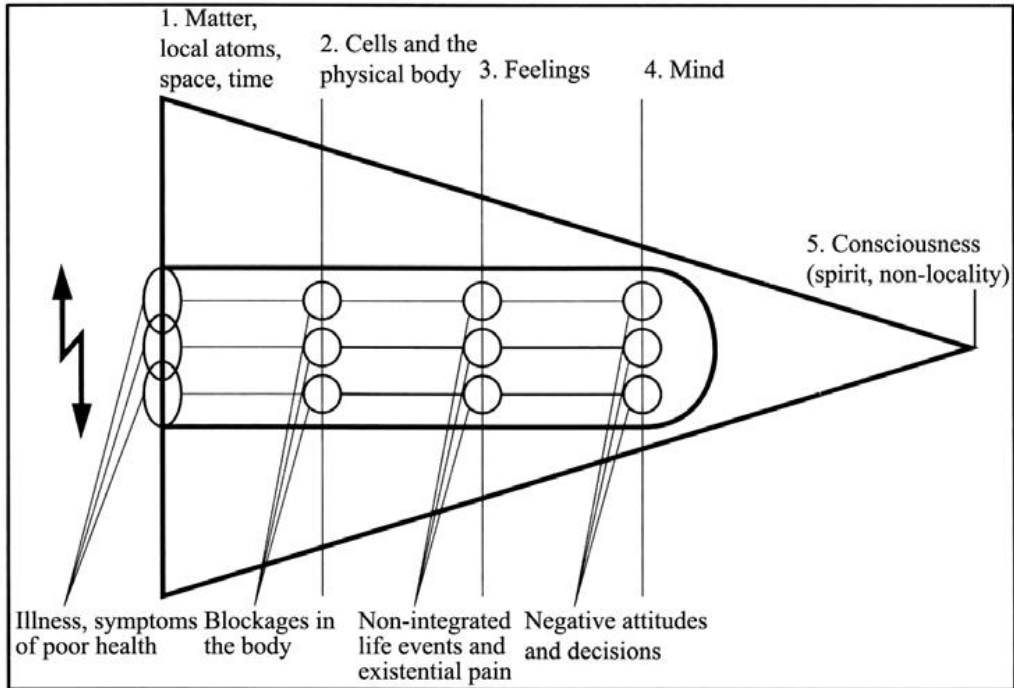


Figure 1. The holistic process theory of healing can be divided in three steps: “to feel, to understand, and to let go”. “To feel” is to set feelings on the body, “to understand” is to set words on the feelings, and “to let go” is to set consciousness on the words. During these three steps, the illness and suffering is treated causally, as the etiology seen from the holistic perspective is the “blockages” in mind and body. The blockages are caused by feelings, suppressed by negative decisions into the tissues of the body. In the optimal process of holistic healing, the three above-mentioned steps occur at the same time.

Working with our patients in holistic therapy, we typically discover these tensions as chronic tightening in the skeletal muscles, but the smooth musculature (such as muscles in the intestines or the uterus) can also hold tensions. Principally, any tissue can hold any kind of tension. The symptoms of these tensions are known as health problems like chronic back pain, chronic stomach pain, and bleeding disturbances without any identified physical cause, or psychosomatic origin. According to this theory, sickness often occurs because emotional pain is suppressed and placed in different tissues in the body, which thereby hold the painful occurrence, the gestalt, until this is processed and reintegrated.

The holistic process of healing is exactly the opposite process of a crisis, creating the problem in the first place; we can identify the same three stages as are found in a crisis, just in the reverse order:

- The patient initially opens himself up for repressed feelings, feeling them again. Getting rid of the emotional pain is the last step in the crisis.
- The patient deals with the occurrence in his consciousness and understands his own responsibility about what has happened. Denying the responsibility and escaping the conscious scenario and the painful perception is the intermediate phase of a crisis.
- The patient perceives the decision that once was made, and understands the inappropriateness of maintaining it. This causes him to let go of it, and heal. Taking this negative perspective or decision is what initially brought the patient into the crisis; of course, this is usually provoked by some unfortunate condition of life.

This three-step model was developed after years of studying the best and most successful kinds of alternative treatment. These were intervening on the levels: body (bodyworks like Rosen therapy), feelings (gestalt psychotherapy), and mind and soul (philosophy of life). The intention was always to help the patient be himself, understand, and take responsibility for his own life. Step 1 was facilitated by body massage and other kinds of physical contact and care, step 2 by psychotherapy and conversations, and step 3 by life philosophical training and reading of insightful books.

For a long time, the three-step model seemed sufficient as these steps really seemed to be what was needed for holistic healing. For several years, we combined bodywork and psychotherapy with philosophical training at the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine in Copenhagen. The approach worked well for some patients, but most patients were unable to achieve complete recovery and reach the level of full self-expression that was the ultimate goal in the holistic treatment.

Realizing that the alternative therapy gave the patient an experience of getting help without a full recovery made us re-evaluate our approach. We learned that the recovery was sometimes only temporary and that observation forced us to develop the model further, into the holistic theory of healing, presented below. For example: Could a patient with low back pain, treated by holistic bodywork, after a period of feeling better for one month, come back and need a new treatment, and so forth, year after year? Just moving the problem out of the body and into the domain of the patient's feelings did not help the patient, because it was not sufficiently integrated emotionally.

Another example was the common experience among psychotherapists, that in spite of rapid and visible progress in the beginning of the therapy, incest victims very seldom got back their normal ability to feel; in spite of many years of therapy their feelings did not heal. Only by making sure that the patient gets through all three stages — in the same therapeutic session or series of sessions — the problem is conclusively solved. When the patient has let go of his negative decisions by the end of therapy, the trauma is completely healed and the experience is like the traumatic event never took place.

To make sure the patient goes through all three steps and obtain real progress in the holistic therapy, it is of advantage that the therapist masters all three dimensions of the therapy. The therapist must be holistic in the broadest sense of the word. We learned that if the holistic therapist also is able to give acknowledgment of the soul and spiritual dimension of the patient, and acceptance of the body and sexuality of the patient, he can take the patient

into a state of being that we now call “being in the holistic process of healing” or “being in process” for short. When a holistic therapist is able to take his patient into this process, even the most severe traumas seem to go all the way to complete healing.

The entire and complete healing, where the problems are solved by the root of existence, is consequently the goal of holistic medicine. The model has been tested in a sequence of pilot studies (9,10) since 1998, as well as in clinical practice, and it is still being developed. From the clinic follows the example below.

Case story

As an example of such a patient from our own clinical practice, we can refer to a female patient in her twenties called Anna (11). The story of Anna is her own story, as she has recalled it in the therapy. As Anna decided not to confront her family with her memories, these recollections have not been confirmed nor dismissed by adult encounters with the people of her childhood reality. We therefore do not know for sure if her recollections are “implanted memories” or factual events (see chapters 18-21). From the dramatic positive effects on her mental health and general well-being from integrating these events we have reached the conclusion that these events most likely actually happened as she has recollected and described them. The way Anna recovered was so remarkable that she in many ways has served as our ideal model-case (see chapter 23-25).

Three different men, including her father, raped Anna around 100 times as a child with some of the abuse extremely violent. On arriving at the clinic, she appeared very confused, psychological disturbed, weeping labile, and with poor social functioning. She believed that she was on her way to a nervous breakdown, or maybe even a psychosis at the beginning of the therapy.

In the holistic therapy, she found approximately 200 negative decisions that she successfully let go of. She went through the process, which took two years and approximately 100 therapy sessions of one or two hours, besides thousands of hours of homework. Afterwards, she returned to a normal and healthy emotional state, and could begin to have a natural relationship with men and sex. The therapy occasionally required a substantial holding from several individuals, and during the process she continuously and spontaneously returned to her childhood, until there was no more traumatic material.

During some of the most intense trauma sessions, the patient was in a state of such profound regression that her condition could be described as psychotic. She passed these episodes unproblematically and without any kind of medication, and was capable of taking care of herself between the sessions.

After two years of therapy, she entered a calm and stable phase, and was able to make an appraisal of her situation. She gained confidence and self-esteem, and felt that she was in full control of her life. She realized that her intelligence had increased to such a degree that she successfully could study at the university. She started a new life of higher quality, taking into use her intellectual, social, sexual, and many other talents.

The holistic state of healing: being in process

“To be in holistic process” is our designation for the state of holistic healing, achieved by a patient, who is able to trust and receive the holding and processing offered by competent therapists. The patient needs to have the necessary personal resources, in a setting where the intention from both the patient and the physician is the healing of the patient. The process is a “high-energy state of consciousness” often with high arousal, since it has the same intensity as the trauma that originally caused the patient to escape from an overwhelming emotional pain. The result of this holistic process of healing is a spontaneous transfer back to one’s self from the position of the ego (12).

It can be extremely painful and almost unbearable to be in a holistic process, because existential life pains are coming back just as if they had never been deserted. An especially interesting recent finding from our laboratory is that the process does not have to be painful if the patient is supplied with all the necessary resources in the therapeutic session. If the patient is now receiving what historically was missing, the gestalt is not painful, but joyful to confront, as the pleasure of receiving in the present now is greater than the historic pain. We believe this to be an important discovery, since it means that even the most painful traumas can be integrated in a graceful and noble manner into the holistic therapy.

We have identified nine factors that facilitate the process of the patient entering into the holistic process of healing, and staying in it until the process of healing is completed:

- The physician has a perspective in accordance with life. This comes from a personal philosophy of life that holds life, existence, and every individual soul as sacred and of immense value.
- The patient has a perspective in accordance with life. The patient appreciates fully the value of his own life, even if this value is not experienced in present time.
- A safe environment, peace, calmness and time.
- Personal resources, rest, tasty food, no crises with family or friends.
- The patient has a will to live and to be happy.
- The physician has the intention that the patient will heal.
- The patient has the intention of healing himself.
- The patient has enough trust to receive the holding and processing.
- Substantial and competent holding from the physician, nurse, or other employees.

The five fundamental qualities of holding the patient to “go into process” are:

- Awareness
- Respect
- Care
- Acknowledgment
- Acceptance

These qualities correspond with the three existential dimensions of mankind (11):

- Purpose or love – axis: as whole persons we want to give to others. Here the essential is the relationship to other people and what we have to offer (our purpose in life) (11). The holding need is acknowledgment of our soul and talents.
- Power – axis: body, feelings, and mind. Here the essential is our consciousness and survival. The holding needs are awareness, respect, and care.
- Gender and sexuality – axis. Here the essential is pleasure and the ability to enjoy. The holding need is acceptance of body and sexuality.

The holistic process of healing the existence

If our life is viewed from the perspective of the life mission or purpose in life, the process of holistic healing can be understood in a very simple way. In our natural condition, we live in a balance between “to be” giving us happiness and “to do” giving us often severe emotional and existential pain. Being is in essence a wonderful thing, happiness is an intrinsic factor in life; doing is mostly connected with trouble, effort, failure, and learning. In our natural state of being, life is a dynamic condition in which our existence can be presented as an energy-filled and dancing spring (see figure 2), the energy of our life — of our being — coiled around our purpose of life, the source of our doing.

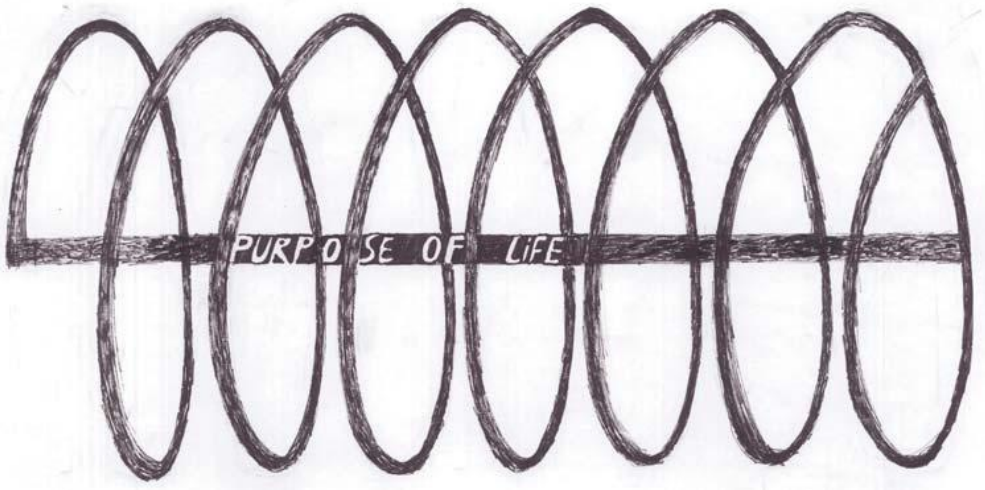


Figure 2. In our natural condition our existence can be compared with an energy-filled and dancing spring.

When our existential needs are not fulfilled, and especially when we feel that our survival is threatened, which gives us the highest intensity of pain, we may make one or several decisions that modifies our existence. This is done to get what we want, and to survive. Our decisions now stretch the spring, and bind the energy that previously was dancing freely around. As we make more and more negative, existential decisions through life, we move further and further away from our natural state of being (see figure 3). Psychologically we are

loosing the contact with our genuine selves. Mentally we might loose the ability to observe reality from different perspectives, or maybe even our psychological health. Emotionally we might loose the ability to feel. Bodily we might loose our physical health. Sexually we might loose our ability to engage, feel passion, and take pleasure. Spiritually we loose our sense of coherence and meaning. The holistic process of healing our existence brings all of this back, together with our quality of life, health, and functional ability in general.

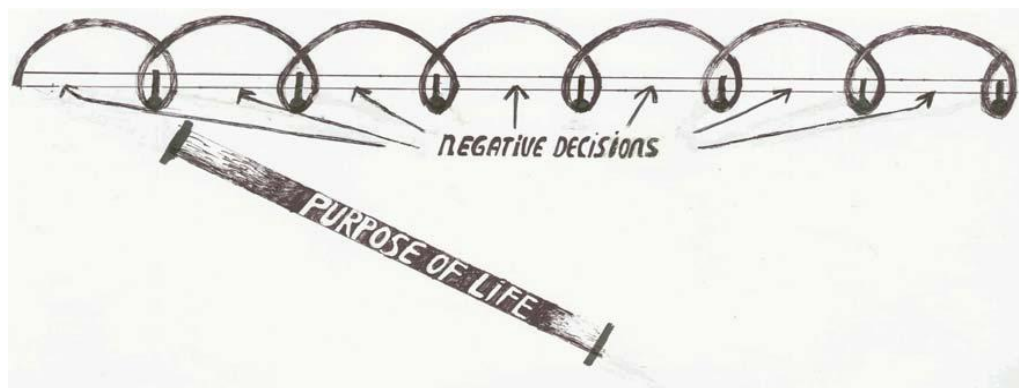


Figure 3. Low quality of life; poor health and poor functional ability in relation to social life, work life, and sexuality are derived from locking up your existence with negative decisions. The condition is rigid and undynamical and can be illustrated by a stretched spring that lost its ability to dance and vibrate freely.

When considering children, it is a little more complicated because children usually still have parents that are not completely competent holders. When parents solve their existential problems in their own lives, which often prevent them from giving the child the necessary holding, the children will normally get back their quality of life, health, and functional ability. Often it is much more efficient to help parents be better parents, than to work directly with the children. Often, one hour of competent holding of the child by the doctor demonstrates what is needed sufficiently to give the parents a better idea of competent parenthood, and this alone can solve many of the problems for the child.

Conclusions

If the physician adapts the necessary skills in holding — acknowledgement, awareness, respect, care, and acceptance — meeting the trusting patient is often enough to make the patient spontaneously go into the holistic process of healing. This process is characterized by a certain feeling of “existential movement” also known from a crisis (a feeling much like if the ground — the basis of the whole patients life — is moving). The existential movement of healing is just the opposite of the movement of crisis and adaptation for survival. In principle any problem caused by disturbances of the cells and tissues by “blockages” can be healed.

From the most abstract, holistic perspective, every problem, illness, or suffering related to the wholeness of the person basically needs the same holistic treatment: The five-dimensional holding and intention of the physician that brings the patient into the state of existential

healing. This condition is often very intense because it has the same intensity as the original trauma that forced the patient into modifying himself using the immense power of decisions.

The state of healing is not painful if the holding supplies the patient with the necessary resources. Even with the most severe traumatic life events, the confrontation of the most severe emotional pain will often be over in a few seconds or minutes if all the patient's resources are fully engaged in the process of healing. Sometimes the holding process needs more persons than just the physician or therapist, and sometimes an expanded amount of time (days) is needed for the patient to initiate, go through, and conclude the process of returning to his more natural state of being.

If the intention by the patient or the physician is unclear or a lack of correct holding, the process of treatment can drag on for a long time or may even prevent the patient from recovering or getting healed. If the physician does not succeed to get the patient through the holistic process of healing, this is usually because the physician or patient needs a more positive philosophy of life, a more safe environment, more personal resources, clearer intentions, more trust, or a more substantial and competent holding from the physician, nurse, and other employees. If the problem is with the physician, this can often be rectified through the use of existentialistic, oriented therapy.

To the reader who finds our explanation complicated and difficult we want to say: You do not have to understand this in your head. If you dare to care for and unconditionally love your patient and give your gift honestly, in spite of all resistance and trouble this endeavor might help your patient to heal in the end. When this happens you will witness this divine process of healing yourself. First when you get this experience you will fully understand what healing is about and eventually you will find your own words to describe and explain the miracle of existential healing.

Just trust your instincts, give your love without doubting yourself, follow your intuition and inborn sense of wisdom and the miracle of healing will happen also to you and your patient.

It is not complicated; it's not a mind thing. It's all about meeting heart to heart, soul to soul, and human being to human being. Meeting from the bottom of your heart is really all it takes. As you practice you will be still more capable of doing it. Love is not a thing you can expect to be able to; for a loving heart in the end to be able to embrace and contain everybody it must be trained and developed every single day.

In many ways sexuality seems to be the antidote to love; the animalistic side seems to be the opposite of the spiritual. But this dichotomy is the illusion. Love and sexuality are in the end from the same divine energy within all living beings. Only love can heal sexuality. Only by being loved and accepted unconditionally, your patient can return to be the true version of him or her self. And this journey back to natural existence is what holistic, existential healing is all about.

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The Life Mission Theory and Understanding Existential Healing

Genetic factors, external stress and the human factor are influential in the health and well-being of every person. Several studies have shown that the human being have many internal powers that can promote health and increase quality of life. A theory on the human meaning of life is put forward and how it relates to health, disease and quality of life in the context of holistic medicine.

Introduction

The basic factors that influence health and disease can be divided into three categories: genetic factors, external stressors and traumas, as well as positive factors such as social network and medical treatment, and finally the purely “human” factor concerned with lifestyles, free will, philosophy of life and the quality of their lives. Studies of the role of this “human” factor (1,2) indicated that many patients have major and unexplained powers to promote their own health. This short communication sketches a possible explanation that draws on classical psychodynamic and psychosomatic theory.

The theory

The phases listed below chart the life and disease history of an individual (II-VII). At the outset, let us assume that a human being begins his or her existence with a plan or an ambition for a good and healthy life. We may put this assumption of a primordial plan in quite abstract terms:

- I. Life mission. Let us assume that at the moment of conception all the joy, energy and wisdom that our lives are capable of supporting are expressed in a “decision” as to the purpose of our lives. This first “decision” is quite abstract

and all-encompassing and holds the intentions of the entire life for that individual. It may be called the personal mission or the life mission. This mission is the meaning of life for that individual. It is always constructive and sides with life itself.

- II. Life pain. The greatest and most fundamental pain in our lives derives from the frustrations encountered, when we try to achieve our personal mission, be they frustrated attempts to satisfy basic needs or the failure to obtain desired psychological states.
- III. Denial. When the pain becomes intolerable we can deny our life mission by making a counter-decision, which is then lodged in the body and the mind, partially or entirely cancelling the life mission.
- IV. Repair. One or several new life intentions, more specific than the original life mission, may now be chosen relative to what is possible henceforth. They replace the original life mission and enable the person to move forward again. They can, in turn, be modified, when they encounter new pains experienced as unbearable. (Example: Mission #1: "I am good." Denial #1: "I am not good enough." Mission #2: "I will become good," which implies I am not).
- V. Repression and loss of responsibility. The new life intention, which corresponds to a new perspective on life at a lower level of responsibility, is based on an effective repression of both the old life mission and the counter-decision that antagonizes and denies it. Such a repression causes the person to split in a conscious and one or more unconscious/subconscious parts. The end result is that we deny and repress parts of ourselves. Our new life intention must always be consistent with what is left undenied.
- VI. Loss of physical health. Human consciousness is coupled to the wholeness of the organism through the information systems that bind all the cells of the body into a unity. Disturbances in consciousness may thus disturb the organism's information systems, resulting in the cells being less perfectly informed as to what they are to do where.

Disruptions in the necessary flow of information to the cells of the organism and tissues hamper the ability of the cells to function properly. Loss of cellular functionality may eventually result in disease and suffering.

- VII. Loss of quality of life and mental health. In psychological and spiritual terms, people who deny their personal mission gradually lose their fundamental sense that life has meaning, direction and coherence. They may find that their joy of life, energy to do important things and intuitive wisdom are slowly petering out. The quality of their lives is diminished and their mental health impaired.
- VIII. Loss of functionality. When we decide against our life mission we invalidate our very existence. This shows up as reduced self-worth and self-confidence. Thus, the counter-decisions compromise not only our health and quality of life, but also our basic powers to function physically, psychologically, socially, at work, sexually, etc.

Applying the theory

Spiegel et al (1) asked women with metastatic breast cancer to talk to each other in group sessions about their illness. As described in the article, the women made an effort to improve the quality of their lives. Survival improved radically, relative to a control group. This may be accounted for as follows. When people confront and deal with still more of their destructive cognitions or attitudes to life, then the counter-decisions recorded in their bodies and minds results in the repressed pain to resurface in consciousness to be dealt with and the fragmentation of the person slowly ceases. We heal and we become whole. Since the fragmentation is one of the causes of the disease resulting in decreased quality of life and ability to function, the internal repair will enable the person to become more healthy, happy and functional. The inner qualities of joy, energy and wisdom re-express themselves. Other things being equal, there will be prophylactic effects on new outbreaks of disease, accidents and loss of functionality.

Ornish et al (2) induced patients with coronary arteries severely constricted from atherosclerosis to adopt lifestyle changes and deal with the quality of their lives. This had beneficial effects on the arterial constrictions, as compared with a control group.

The life mission theory may explain this by reference to the systematic efforts exerted by the patients to modify their behaviors and the attitudes that go along with them. This means that people work to relinquish destructive attitudes to life that deny the life mission. As this denial recedes, the person more or less returns to his or her natural state of health, quality of life and ability to function.

The theory predicts that, for example, that when a person is helped along by a family physician conducting a conversation (clinical interview or consultation) about the quality of life of that person, she can reestablish her life mission. The person can then recognize it as the proper purpose in her life. She can rearrange her life accordingly and achieve her truest sense of humanity, a human being in full agreement with herself and life. This person can draw on her resources and potentials to the fullest degree. In her natural state, a human being is maximally valuable to herself and the world around her.

A consciousness-oriented (holistic) medicine based on this theory will help people become valuable not only to themselves, but also to each other.

References

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The Anti-Self (The Shadow) or the Evil Side of Man

Something that constantly follows the concept of sexuality is the concept of the animalistic self (Freud's Id) and the concept of the evil. As discussed by Katchadourian (see below) psychological analyses of sexual excitement have often revealed all kinds of evil feelings and intents, like hatred and revenge towards the woman (the mother), as the basis of sexual arousal in the most known human form. To understand all dominant and submissive, masochistic and sadistic elements of sexuality it is necessary to understand the human evilness in such depth as not to condemn it, but instead to accept it fully. The ideal sexologists (or doctor) can honestly say: "Nothing human is strange for me". First when we have integrated the evil are we able to penetrate into the remotest corner of the human sexuality with our consciousness and light of understanding we will be able to give our most constructive help to other people with sexual issues.

According to the life mission theory (see chapter 3), the essence of man is his purpose of life, which comes into existence at conception. This first purpose is always positive and in support of life. This is not in accordance with the everyday experience that man also engages in evil enterprises born out of destructive intensions. This chapter presents a theory of the evil side of man, called "anti-self" (the shadow), because it mirrors the self and its purpose of life. The core of the anti-self is an evil and destructive intention just opposite the intention behind the life-mission.

The evil side of man arises when, as the life mission theory proclaims, man is denying his good, basic intention to avoid existential pain. The present theory of the anti-self claims that all the negative decision accumulated throughout the personal story, sums up to a negative or dark anti-self, as complex, multifaceted and complete as the self.

All the negative decisions taken through personal history builds this solid, negative, existential structure. The anti-self, or shadow as Carl Gustav Jung used to call it, is a precise reflection of man's basically good and constructive nature. When mapped it seems that for most or even for all the many fine talents of man, there is a corresponding evil intention and talent in the person's anti-self. As man is as evil as he is good, he can only realize his good nature and constructive talents through making ethical choices. Ethics therefore seems to be of major importance to every patient or person engaged in the noble project of personal growth.

Understanding the nature and structure of the evil side of man seems mandatory to every physician or therapist offering existential therapy to his patient. The theory of anti-self makes it possible to treat patients with destructive behavioral patterns, who deep in their heart want to be good, by helping them let go of their evil intentions. The anti-self seems also to explain the enigma of why the human being often commits suicide.

Integrating the shadow lead to often dramatic, subjective experiences, of ubiquitous light in an impersonal form, of enlightenment, or of meeting light and consciousness in a personal, universal form, known as G-d.

Introduction

Man has a free will, acknowledged by philosophers of all times, and by using this will man can either do good or become engaged in evil intentions and by doing so, assumes often grotesque and inhuman forms. Numerous are the examples of such demonic beings, like Lord Dracula, Hannibal the Cannibal or Jack the Ripper. What seems to be even more scary is that we daily are facing seemingly normal men and woman being caught as child molesters, criminals of war, rapists, and the like in the media. Everybody seems to have the potential of being evil, and it seems as easy to be evil as it is to be good; hence the existential choice and the free will.

History is packed with examples of people abusing their power to live out their dark side. During the Inquisition it is estimated, that between five and ten million innocent people was burned alive as witches in the name of Jesus by the ministers of Europe (1,2) and six million Jews (one million children) killed by the Germans during the Holocaust. Thus, even religious ministers, who should be the representatives of G-d, the most devoted guards of the good, cannot reproach themselves from the shadow, the dark side of man, or the evil side.

The yoke of heaven, or the abstract guiding principle of mankind, must be for everyone to know what his task is in this world and to understand the principles of the universe, or the ways of G-d, the Divine ideas and the way mankind should choose in order to achieve his purpose in life (3-6). There has been a lot of research in the nature and source of the evil motives of man. Sigmund Freud (1856-1939) explained the evil side of man as a natural force: a basic urge or instinct of moving towards death. Along with the sexual instinct this constitutes the two essential urges in man, the two only real motivators (4). Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961), the grand student of Freud, studied the shadow intensely and he has described it maybe better than anyone (5). Jung had a complicated relationship to the shadow, since he apparently on the one hand thought that the shadow, the dark side of man, contains a substantial developing potential that is set free, when we attempt to integrate the shadow, but on the other hand believed that the shadow never can be completely eliminated or defeated.

Studies of the dynamics of therapeutic interventions with existential therapy based on the life mission theory (6-9) shows, that the dark side of man has a relatively simple structure. When the structure of the shadow is worked out and eventually mapped during therapy, it can be integrated, if the patient chooses to let go of it (8). The understanding of the general nature and structure of the dark side of man is important in this work with the patient.

If a person succeeds to re-intend his true life-mission, he will often be almost ecstatically happy in his sensation of having found himself and his inner truth. Soon after he will often

feel in pain, because he reaches contact with the original situation, where he was unable to make a difference. The strong intensity of the positive emotions that is found around the purpose of life can be explained in terms of all the good that is repressed in man. The often overwhelming intensity of the life-pain explains why the mission of life is often repressed throughout life and why the evil side is often preferred for the good.

Self and anti-self, life purpose and anti-purpose

According to the life mission theory (6), the life purpose is so painful in the beginning of our life that we end up denying and repressing it. We repress it by intending the opposite of the original positive intention behind our purpose of life. This very negative intention is also repressed as we assume another constructive purpose of life. Soon after, this new positive purpose is also denied by a negative intention and so forth. So during our upbringing both the positive and the negative intentions of man are repressed from the surface of consciousness, and forced into the famous, but mysterious un-consciousness.

When carefully sought for, the repressed intentions can be found as “gestalts” carrying both cognitive and emotional data, in split up parts or “pockets” of our biological existence. In body therapy these pockets are known as “blockages”: tissue areas with a strange tense quality to them. The blockages release the gestalts to the consciousness of the person, when competently contacted in the therapy. It seems that these gestalts, even after many years, still are potentially very active, and they surface as soon as the person calls upon the destructive intentions, as it can happen in a headless moment of fury or anger. The dark side then takes over and the person is for a period of time out of conscious control. He or she seems to be very present and awake, but is not really, as the gestalts has taken the person and drawn him back in time.

The philosophical question is here if the person could have acted otherwise with a higher ethical standard. This is a very difficult issue giving birth to the discussion of insanity in the moment of crime, which in many countries releases the person for responsibility according to the law.

Most normal persons of our time have most of their good as well as most of their evil intentions suppressed. All the repressed, positive intentions in a person are basically pulling the same way, and are summed up to our unconscious, good side. In the same way all our repressed, negative intentions are summed up to our unconscious, evil side. In the normal person, who does not know himself very well, the good and the evil forces are mostly unconscious and of almost same size, since they quite accurately equilibrate each other (10). The unconscious man functions opportunistic, since he is shifting between the good and the evil intentions, from situation to situation, according to what is most suitable in the given situation in relation to survival and satisfaction of needs. Such a person does not take conscious ownership of his own intentions; therefore he projects both the good and the evil to the surrounding world and its people, and therefore he cannot live his life with much strength. He is not in control of his own existence (11).

When man becomes more conscious, he acknowledges that he has to choose between the good and the evil. As he grows he must confront the basic ethical choice in life. Since the two sides, good and evil, are balancing each other, man is free to choose between the good and the

evil; the choice decides which side that will consciously be lived out. The side that is not chosen by the half-conscious man, will however not disappear, but is projected to the surrounding world. A person, who chooses to be good, is in this phase of his personal growth denying his own hidden evilness, and can now only indirectly observe this denied black side, which appears as evilness and darkness around him. Unfortunately the repressed evil intensions are still highly active in man and more so if he consciously chooses the good as he unconsciously still balance the good and the evil to avoid the severe existential pain that according to the life mission theory is inevitably linked to the un-denied life purpose. Very often the “ethical person” ends up in a colorful and dramatic battle with his own shadow, unwillingly and unconsciously causing harm to self and others (12).

The conclusion is that evilness is difficult to get rid of. Even the person, who consciously chooses to be good, will often unconsciously be evil, but still this person is likely to be far less evil than the opportunist, who lives completely without ethics. The person, who on the contrary chooses the evil and denies the good, will in spite of this be unconsciously good, but still worse than the opportunistic. The hidden goodness and the internal battle between the good and the evil in man explains why the person, who in his madness chooses the evil path to solve his problems, is often not succeeding in living out his evilness, but ends up stuck in his own existential problems (13).

The person, who admits to contain positive as well as negative intensions in his unconsciousness, and strive to embrace both with his existence, can by time observe and acknowledge both sides in himself and can thereby gradually take responsibility for all aspects of his existence. This person develops and grows, and will gradually be able to let go of the negative decisions that sums up to be his dark side, his anti-self, or the shadow-side that prevents him to live out his mission in life and express his true self. Existential therapy, which makes use of this knowledge about self and anti-self, can therefore help people to integrate their dark, negative side, and express themselves fully (14).

The creation of the anti-self (“the shadow”)

In our true and natural state of being, all our intentions and talents are centered round our life mission. This set of intentions is how we express our true self, but very often only a fraction of our natural power and potential is lived as we live through our ego (15-17). Our ego appears as we deny our purpose of life and our secondary purposes, one by one, with a row of negative decisions. This is continuing until only a small part of our inherent nature and talents is left operational.

Most people over 20 years of age actively deny all, or almost all, of the central aspects in their true self. This happens as a consequence of adaptation. This way everybody ends up having a white aspect of the self for every talent and good intention in life, and a corresponding black aspect for every evil intention and destructive talent. The evil outbalances the good. Man is at peace, but often bored with life, and many people of our time experience their existence as almost meaningless.

As man develops his consciousness about himself, he moves from being chaotic to being polarized, as he obtains the ability to discriminate between the good and the evil within himself. Now he sees that all the negative, black intentions are basically turned towards life,

while all the positive, white intensions are supporting life. Black and white are outbalancing each other, and the dark side has annulated the purpose of life.

In other words, our black, or self-destructive, side is appearing as our dark shadow, which precisely is covering our positive self (the “life mission flower”, except the little place that is left back without denial and which gives rise to our ego (see figure 1 and 2 in 15)). The shadow is accordingly, technically seen, the difference between our true self and our ego.

The anatomy of the shadow

The shadow hence is a set of destructive intentions, which is organized in exactly the same way as our true self, where the set of good intentions are assembled in the life mission flower round the purpose of life (15). The centre of shadow is the intention destroying the purpose of life most directly, called the anti-life-mission or anti-life-purpose. The shadow therefore appears as a negative copy of the personality, as its black parallel (see figure 1). The purpose of establishing the shadow during our personal history was to weaken the good intentions, that couldn’t be realized in early childhood and therefore became too painful.

Because the shadow has developed into a copy of the true self, it looks as if the whole shadow can be given life, if man using the power of his free will choose to adopt the negative perspective, which lies in the denial of his life mission. The new mission of life for this person is the evil anti-life-mission. Now, in the worst-case scenario, we have the serial killer in action.

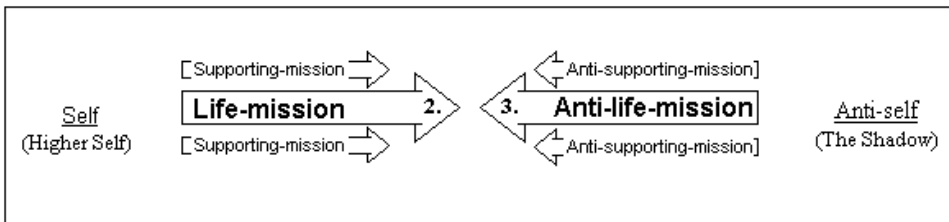


Figure 1. The life-mission as well as all the supporting missions is repressed, and man does not know himself. The repression has happened through negative anti-decisions, which outbalance the positive missions. The negative decisions are hence anti-self intentions that are organized around the most basic self-denial - the negative decisions that are here called anti-life-missions. All of these anti-self intentions exist in the parts of us that are still active, even though they are repressed; they sum up to be one self-destructive intentional structure in us, here called the anti-self.

An example: from “I am good” to “I am evil”

An easy understandable example is the following: This person had as life mission the sentence “I am good”. The anti-life-purpose was the complete opposite: “I am evil”. This person used one of the two in an opportunistic way. If he chooses to be good he would repress his evil side. If he chooses to be evil, he would repress his good side. The original purpose of this destructive intention was to outbalance the intention about being good, so that the pain of not being able to do any good was eliminated early in life.

What makes man choose evil?

There seems to be huge emotional advantages for the person being evil, since this identity is often far less existential painful, because you inflict somebody else the pain. This is opposite to being good, where it is often yourself, who suffers. If a person chooses consciously to be evil, all of the black shadow-flower will be this new person's personality, to a high degree free of emotional pain (6).

A feeling of enormous power is set free in man, when the anti-mission is re-intended and all of the repressed, negative supporting-missions and destructive talents that are organized around the anti-mission are activated. This is typically experienced as a wild roar, even ecstasy, of raw power and animalistic strength (19). Most people have a sense of reason, which makes them live in the head preventing both the extremely constructive as well as the extremely destructive perspective of life to manifest itself.

The experience of intensity and energy without any life-pain can peak in a sheer delight of domination; "Satanic pleasure" seems to be the most appropriate designation for this intense joy of the dark side.

The dynamic of the shadow

All the good in man comes from his purpose of life, which expresses the essence of our true self. According to the life mission theory the mission is always good, and it is stable throughout life. It is often so repressed and suppressed in man, that it cannot be known, expressed, and lived out. The evil exists correspondingly as an anti-mission that expresses the opposite of our profound self. The anti-self is as stable as the self, but has a destructive nature and intention.

The intentions of average people from the western world of today are not focused towards either the positive or the negative. Life is not guided neither by the mission or the anti-mission. Rather the intention is presented as an in-between of these two. This means that the ordinary, unconscious person does not have much drive, energy, and enthusiasm. His direction in life is confused. Both the good and the evil is seen as non-self, and projected on the outside world. Thus man is usually not ascribing himself any special strengths or talents, or any specific significance.

Many people of our time do see themselves as having a great potential and working in order to express this potential through personal development. Re-intending the original mission of life and developing a more conscious relationship to existence and a clearer recognition of which one is, raises the experience of joy of life and the level of personal energy. But personal growth will also reawaken the original life pain.

A lot of people who search for themselves are therefore experiencing great difficulties. At some time everybody seemingly have to face their dark side – their own shadow. Christianity tells us the story about how Jesus got tempted in the desert by the devil promises of immense power and sovereignty, but finally chose love and the good (20,21).

When it comes to patients that are working with themselves, but seriously ill, it is especially important for the physician to know the mechanisms that are prevailing in such a situation. Supporting the patient so that he can develop himself, might lead to the patient

entering the troublesome existential phase. The optimal approach for the patient is to take responsibility for his whole being including both the light and the shadow, and at the same time strive to express his white essence, the meaning and purpose of his life. To do so he has to constantly reflect upon his own participation in all aspects of reality. As he acknowledges that he contains both good as well as evil, he must carefully scrutinize all of his intentions to see if they are constructive or destructive.

The learning position is difficult, because we are fragmented in a number of parts with almost their own life, until we have confronted and integrated our historical life pains. The fragmentation happens, because of our contradictory consciousness.

Everyone owns a huge number of black and white intentions, and we all live the black as much as the white, even though we are not aware of it. The conscious, integrated and transcendent position is a tough and challenging position that brings up as much historical life pain to the surface as we have the resources to handle. Without supply of external resources such as holding (7), the development will be slow and painful. Interestingly enough, excess of resources means that a person can move quickly forward and integrate considerable parts of repressed life pain. Hereby he will let go of a lot of negative decisions, and the shadow will become gradually smaller.

Jung did not believe that the shadow could be integrated to a situation where it disappeared, but this is exactly the classical ideal of enlightenment (5,19-21). From a theoretical point of view all life pains can be integrated until the anti-mission is gone and the fragments that are carrying the anti-mission have melted together with unity. Hence, in our sphere we still do not have the competence to process the shadow out of the world, but this is the goal that we are pursuing.

The four existential positions

Because the good and the evil are balancing inside us, before we have become conscious and have developed personally, we are from the starting point absolutely free to choose our existential position. We have identified four such positions (see figure 2). The first position is indifferent in respect to our purpose of life. The second position is on the side of the purpose. The third is on the anti-purpose side. The fourth is a balanced position, which considers both the good and the evil, and integrates both, which is the fruitful path of personal development.

1. The unconscious, opportunistic position

This position is the most common. It is not associated with the integration of the shadow and gives consequently no personal development. We live the purposes that occur to us, but there is no connection with the (personal) purpose of life. Therefore, the position is neither along with nor against the life purpose, but is being regulated by the sum of the good and the evil in the person itself. So the whole lives its own life without any particular vigor, and the fragments carrying both the good and the evil intentions are active at a low stage and result in both good and evil things that are outside control of the person. Typically, this person will, without taking notice of it, alter between the positions good, evil, and indifferent, depending

upon what best serves survival and needs fulfillment. The opportunist position means that the person cannot be trusted or counted on. He/she is subject to outer circumstances, without observing own intentions or the behavior resulting from these intentions. When that person wakes up and realizes that he/she has to choose between the good and the evil, he/she enters into one of the positions of the half-conscious human being (23).

2. The half-conscious, ethical (or good) position

This position is not unusual. The person knows itself well enough to be aware of what life is and places itself on the side of the life. The difficulty of boosting its own life purpose without assuming the responsibility for the shadow is that the shadow is projected outwards so that others become evil, destructive, unsympathetic or unkind. Consequently, this position gives a polarization that pushes the evil out to the world so that the partner, the colleague or the children are now the negative ones, whereas the person itself is perpetually positive. Interestingly enough, it seems that the account of this position is not particularly positive as the shadow is somehow invited inside in a projective manner, and it is very hard for this person to get any love affair, working relations and other relations to function.

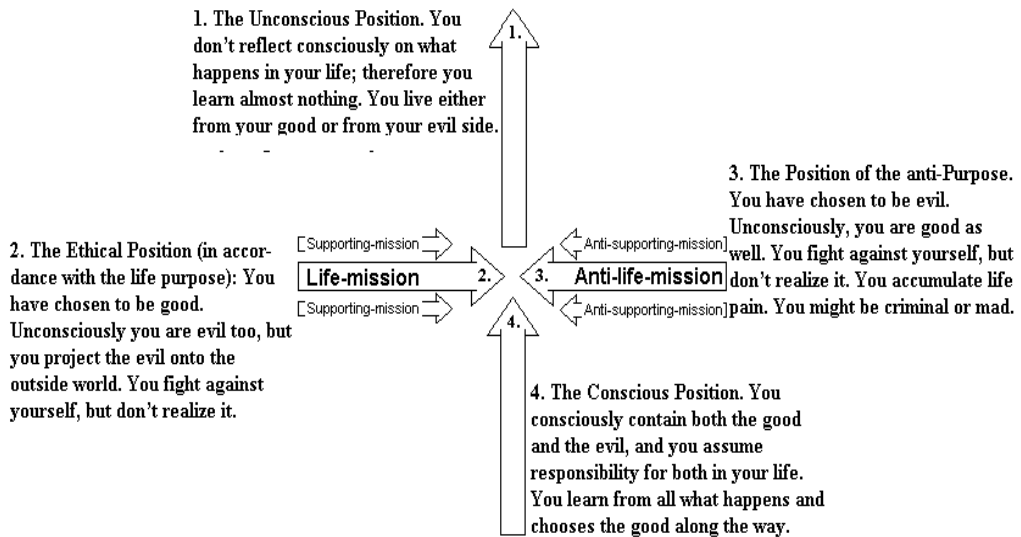


Figure 2. The human being can be unconscious and opportunistic. It can be half-conscious and choose either to be good or bad, or it can be conscious and admit both the good and the evil in itself, attempt to be good in spite of everything and learn from anything that happens.

Typically, this person is accused of being dominating, manipulating or egocentric. There is much more development in the good position than in the unconscious one, where the perpetual striving for the good fails again and again due to the inevitably accompanying shadow, which on the whole spoils any aims. However, this gives dynamics and movement, which at last leads to the person taking responsibility for the shadow, resulting in the conscious transcendent position (described below). People who choose the good are in danger of having to fight with their own shadow side (sort of shadow boxing), and sometimes they

might justify their malice from a consideration of "to return evil for evil". The shift to the half-conscious, evil position often takes place without the person actually noticing it. From this point one might return to the resigned, unconscious starting position (24).

3. The half-conscious, evil position

This position is rare and it has terrible consequences. It is the position of the evil father, evil mother, Satanist or deliberate criminal. When we perceive our true nature as our anti-purpose and choose to comply with it, we become completely evil persons. The good is projected onto the outside world and becomes the issue to be fought or spoiled. If we do not know ourselves extremely well, i.e. both our good and evil sides, it can be very difficult to understand the person, who chooses the evil. However, the evil has many existential advantages. To begin with we intended the anti-purpose in order to survive and get out of excruciating life pain, and actually we survived; so as a start the evil has allowed us to keep life. Later on in life, choosing the evil means that we do not suffer like when choosing our good, true life purpose, which is so infinitely hard to carry into effect. In fact, the person proves a delight by choosing the evil corresponding to the pain by choosing the good. So choosing the evil is rewarded by delight in the same way like choosing the good is punished by existential pain.

Obviously, this is only at the beginning as long as we are not whole. When we heal we realize that the pain that prevented us from carrying out the life purpose will be balanced by the joy of living. The pleasure of revenge is then caught up by a dreadful sorrow about hurting others, because this is in fact the opposite of what we really want, since we want to make ourselves useful to the world. Our life purpose is always good. Choosing the evil is not a solution at sight, but can be experienced as joyful and releasing at the very moment, where we break through to the lowest existential layer. The difficulty of choosing the evil is that we create even more pain for ourselves than we already had. This makes it still more difficult to awaken to a conscious position. Usually, people sink to a resigned, unconscious position at a lower existential stage than before choosing the evil. However, it is possible to help this person along to reach the conscious, transcendent position provided the person itself wants to be helped to understand what the whole life scene is about. A positive attitude and unconditional love can sometimes help the bad person on to the position of the conscious human being (25).

4. The conscious learning position

When we clearly see that we are basically good, but unable to live our life purpose due to an awful lot of repressed life pain, we have to assume the transcendent position. We are not able to be good; we are not able to be bad. We are not able to be, but we can be conscious and learn. Right now we are not able to know ourselves. We cannot understand ourselves, but we are able to express ourselves and be alert (awake). We live consciously, but we have still no control of life. We can do our utmost well knowing that at this stage it is not good enough. The consciousness is painful and sweet at the same time. Meaningfulness is the finest sweetness, but being conscious of the powerlessness is painful. The understanding that the

way forward is the way back to life, through confrontation of the historic sufferings is animating. This is possible as an adult, but not as a child. The conscious position implies that the old life pains break out to the surface and are gradually admitted. When the comprehension is clear, a chaotic historic life scene is crystallized into one single or a few negative resolutions that can be let off now. So this life is in motion onward, is cleared, and the true life is returning slowly, without any inhibition, without any inner contrast or reluctance. So the consciously transcendent position, essentially to certify our own life, is a deep reflection of our soul, regardless of how painful it is to see the truth. This is what makes life evolve optimally (26).

One of the most difficult questions is why so few people reach the conscious learning position. The main obstacles seem to fall into two categories: inner and outer. The inner obstacle seems to be existential pain, as discussed above. The outer obstacles seem to be the need for social acceptance. A person who is learning must be honest himself, which can be hard sometimes in an environment where other people are "playing games" and not willing to make a learning effort. This means that a person in the process about learning about him/herself is also a source for learning in his or her environment. But learning goes together with existential pain, so this person actually often involuntarily inflicts pain on the people near and dear to him. So it seems that people in the conscious, learning position need people of their own kind to socialize with. This is maybe the most severe obstacle facing the patient entering holistic existential therapy. You are entering a world of learning, of joys, meaning and suffering, where most people do not go. So you will have to face loneliness and you will have to seek new friends. It is important for the holistic physician or therapist to build networks of patients and clients in personal growth, to avoid the feeling of being completely alone and to avoid the patient to be drawn into milieus and religious sects. This would not help the person in growth and possibly also hinder the person's self-actualization in the long run.

It is also very important to understand that the loneliness experienced when entering the learning process is often overwhelming, tempting the patient to choose position three (the half-conscious, evil position) instead, or even in the extreme tempting the patient to consider suicide. Often the suicidal patient is caught in between the positions two and four, two or three, or three and four. If the holistic physician can help the patient to understand the situation from an existential and developmental perspective, the patient will realize that entering position four is to prefer to suicide, even if this position is emotionally very difficult. To die is really not the problem; the problem is to live, and to live a full and conscious life. As the Russian saying goes: "Death is easy, life is difficult".

Relevance of the existential therapy

The classical Greek virtues: beauty, goodness and truth, reflect three levels of the existence, which Kierkegaard called the esthetical, the ethical and the religious layers in man (27). Søren Aabye Kierkegaard (1813-1855) was a prolific writer in the period called the "golden age" in Denmark of intellectual and artistic activity with work in the fields of philosophy, theology, psychology, literary criticism and fiction. He was a social critique and wanted to renew Christian faith within Christendom. He is known as the "father of

existentialism", but also for his critiques of Hegel and the German romantics, his contributions to the development of modernism, his literary experimentation and talents to analyze and revitalize Christian faith. He burned with the passion of a religious poet, was armed with extraordinary dialectical talent, and drew on vast resources of erudition.

In the integrative quality of life theory (28), the dimension of beauty is reflected by man's superficial layer connected with well-being and satisfaction, needs fulfillment and ability to function. The ethical layer deals with life expansion, whereas the religious layer concerns the meaning of life and a deep inner balance.

Through the theory of the anti-self, the ethical layer becomes accessible for the existential therapy. The good and the evil manifest themselves in the patient as well as in the consciousness of the therapist and the patient is temporarily able to enter into the evil valence in order to confront it, mirrored from the outside by the therapist, and from the inside by its own good side. Through this double reflection, the light of the consciousness is thrown onto the patient's dark side, which brings the historic conglomerate of negative experiences and decisions amounting to man's dark side, the anti-self or shadow, to collapse in a series of painful memory pictures, which can be belabored subsequently and integrated one at the time, e.g. by group therapy. By this process, the patient goes from the surface, the esthetical, first to the ethical layer and then, simultaneously with the inner contrasts being admitted and transcended, onto the deepest existential layer, which Kierkegaard called the religious (27).

Discussion

In connection with severe illness it is often relevant to look at the unconscious evil. When for instance one partner in a relationship is severely ill and the other is completely healthy, fit, extremely good and considerate, this couple may have an unconscious agreement that one of them carries the darkness for them both, whereas the other partner carries the light. The bright, healthy party often appears full of energy, most considerate and thoroughly devoted. At a closer analysis, the good party will at first appear dominating and later actually condemning and dissociating towards to the "evil" and ill party. Additionally, it often turns out that the apparently good has not in fact good intentions or love towards its ill partner. The bad side has been projected forth and over to the partner, who is now the intolerable and negative partner. The ill partner is not seen and met, and feels typically lonesome and unloved in spite of the healthy partner's apparent goodness and helpfulness. This loneliness and lack of mental meeting and understanding is typical of a relationship, which is dominated by shadow projections. If the ill partner becomes healthy it is necessary that both of them again assume the responsibility for both the bright and the dark sides. The process helping the patient to become healthy results preliminarily in the healthy partner getting more "ill". The responsibility for the dark side is being divided, and the poor fellow who carried all their common darkness can now be helped to confront and integrate its own darkness (29).

When the life purpose is clearly admitted and the negative decisions, which deny it, are found and let gone, the disorder often heals up even when this should not occur according to statistics. By means of the existential therapy which manages the shadow and brings the human being to its deepest existential layer it seems thus possible to induce the spiritual

arousal, which is so typical indeed in connection with the “spontaneous remissions” of, as an example cancer (30).

Confronting and integrating the human being’s dark side make it also possible for people who are persuaded to be evil, to change into seeing themselves as basically good. This change implies that their evil side has no longer free occasion to expand. The justification of the negative living, by describing the human nature as basically evil, is thus dissolved and not longer possible. The noble art of life called no-mind in the eastern traditions seems to be about suspending reason but to remain good. The famous and rare state of enlightenment seems to follow total integration of the shadow.

Conclusions

Everybody have a dark side, an evil shadow that mirrors all the beautiful and lovely aspect of their soul. Knowing this and taking responsibility for both good and evil allows the person to take the learning position and little by little develop their consciousness and transcend their "shadow". In doing this they integrate all their inner conflicts and let go of all their self-destructive decisions and attitudes, and so they become beautiful, good, and true.

Scientifically speaking, the "shadow" can only be examined by qualitative methods, where you apply your own consciousness to explore the consciousness of yourself and others. As it seems infinitely much easier to examine the shadow of the other person, friend, partner, client or patient, so everybody who wants to learn about his or her shadow is obliged to listen to the other, to know and understand himself. A fine way to see if what is learned in general is true is to make models and theories of the shadow and test these theories against reality. If a model or theory makes therapy easier and more successful this is a good indicator that the theory in some way or another is true. But qualitative science is as tricky as consciousness itself; in the end what makes us choose a theory and call it valid is our personal liking and ability to understand life, ourself, and our patient better from it.

As everybody seemingly owns a dark side, which makes big problems for us if not realized and integrated, we suggest that the shadow should be a theme in every course of holistic treatment. We suppose that many of the hidden resources needed to be well again are actually bound by the patents unconscious struggle with the shadow. It might be that understanding and integrating the shadow, confronting the evil, walking awake into the darkness to win over it, is the straight way to light, joy, love, self-exploration and in the end healing. Only the one, who carries the light of consciousness and conquer the darkness of lies and unconsciousness will reach the state of transcendence described by Maslow, or the state of coherence described by Antonovsky, or the state of meaning described by Frankl (6,9,16,17). People who engage fully in the battle against the darkness often come to experience the whole universe as basically made of light. This light is often ascribed as brilliantly white and divine, or even as a unity, or a person, making it possible “to meet with G-d himself”.

As this last perspective is what motivates us in our work and our lives, and what urges us to develop our precious medical science in the service of mankind, we would like, in the end of these five scientific papers on existential theory, to devote our final lines wholeheartedly to the divine being, or G-d. Rabbi Eleazar Ha-Kappar used to say (31): “Those who are born are

destined to die; those who are dead are destined to be brought to life again, and the living are destined to be judged. It is for you to know, proclaim and be sure that he is G-d. It is said: "These words which I command you today shall be on your heart" (Deut. 6:6). This statement to keep "these words" or G-d's commandments above our heart, mean that they supersede our own wishes and if you follow that path it should be the beginning of the redemption of mankind from bestiality and the breaking down of his egotism, the root of evil in this world (3).

He is the Maker, he is the Creator, he is the Discerner, he is the Judge, he the Witness, he the Complainant and it is he who will judge. Blessed be he in whose presence there is no wrongdoing, not forgetting, nor partiality, nor taking bribes. Know that all is according to reckoning and let not your imagination persuade you that the grave is a place of refuge for you. Perforce you were formed and perforce you were born. Perforce you live, perforce you shall die and perforce you shall have to give a strict account before the Supreme King of kings, the Holy One, blessed be He".

So whoever believes and accept the yoke of heaven will understand the transience and unimportance of this world, as well as the eternity and infinity of the world to come, where the soul will find its permanent place. This person will also understand that the eradication of evil from this world is only a hairsbreadth of difference between his dying now and dying naturally according to his normal life span (32). Rabbi Jacob made a more simple conclusion (33): "This world is like a vestibule before the world to come. Prepare yourself that you may enter into the banquet hall".

If you are not a religious person, you still need to deal with the good and the evil, as these poles are often highly visible in sexuality. Something that constantly follows the concept of sexuality is the concept of the animalistic self (Freud's Id) and the concept of the evil. As discussed by Katchadourian (34) psychological analyses of sexual excitement have often revealed all kinds of evil feelings and intents, like hatred and revenge towards the woman (the mother), as the basis of sexual arousal in the most known human form. To understand all dominant and submissive, masochistic and sadistic elements of sexuality it is necessary to understand the human evilness in such depth as not to condemn it, but instead to accept it fully.

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Section 2: Scientific Sexology

Sexuality and Quality of Life in Denmark

In a large representative sample of 2,460 Danish citizens aged 18 to 88 years anonymous answers were obtained to a 317-item quality of life (QOL) questionnaire, which included five questions on sexuality. Among the respondents in the sample, 1.2% reported they were bisexual and 0.9% homosexual. Although sexual problems were found in all age groups, lack of a suitable sex partner and inability to achieve orgasm were more common among the young and erectile dysfunction more common among the old. Most frequent problems among the women were reduced sexual desire (11.2%) and the lack of a suitable sex partner (4.9%), and among the men, the lack of a suitable sex partner (7.3%) and erectile dysfunction (5.4%). The QOL of persons with sexual problems was from 1.2 to 19.1 % lower than the population mean (as expressed in terms of this mean). The intermediate sized covariation between sexual problems and the QOL suggested that such problems can be symptoms of a reduced QOL rather than medical problems to be tackled through medical intervention or sex therapy proper. Implications for a quality-of-life-sensitive clinical practice are discussed.

Introduction

Sexual problems are common in most populations and depending on cultural norms they surface intermittently in the family practice setting (1). Nevertheless, population surveys examining the incidence of sexual problems are comparatively rare and studies of their relation to the quality of life (QOL) of those experiencing the problems are virtually nonexistent.

Research examining the occurrence of sexual problems in nonclinical populations tends to be restricted to highly select populations (2), such as healthy women in an outpatient gynecological clinic (3), normal married couples (4,5), young married couples with children (6), sexual dysfunction in middle-aged men (7) and women (8), with samples of 38-439. A review of 23 "community samples" reported a frequency of 4-10% (Male, Female) for difficulty in achieving orgasm, 4-9% for erectile problems (M), and 36-38% for premature ejaculation (M).

It is difficult to obtain an overview of the prevalence of sexual dysfunction from the international literature. Only somatic dysfunctions are well defined, while predominantly psychologically conditioned dysfunctions appear under a multiplicity of labels in the various investigations. Overall, it appears that between a fifth and half of the respondents experience minor sexual dysfunctions, such as lack of sexual interest or difficulty achieving orgasm, whereas less than 10% of the population suffer from major dysfunctions, such as vaginismus or erectile problems.

Sexual problems often coexist with other problems, such as depression, lack of self-esteem, problems with relationships, or just inadequate sexual experience. Nevertheless, very little is known about the relationship between sexual problems and the QL.

In connection with a follow-up study of the Copenhagen Perinatal Birth Cohort 1959-61 we contacted 7,222 men and women, 31-33 years old born at the Copenhagen University Hospital during 1959-1961 (9) and identified a representative sample of 2,460 Danes ages 18-88 years for comparative purposes (10) that will be presented in this chapter.

Our population survey

A representative sample of the Danish population was taken from the CPR Register (the Danish government agency registering all Danish citizens) by selecting a particular date in the year and then selecting all persons born on that date from 1904 and every fifth year thereafter until 1974 (the year 1961 was also included to obtain a group of 31-year-olds for comparative purposes). In all, 2,460 persons were sent an anonymous questionnaire. A reminder was mailed a month later and 1,494 usable responses were obtained (male = 741, female = 753), corresponding to a response rate of 60.7%. The response rate for each individual question was typically a few percent lower.

The questionnaire designed for this research contained 317 questions grouped into sections entitled social data, lifestyle, illness, sexuality, self-perception, view of life and values, as well as five series of questions measuring the QOL. The section on sexuality included the following questions (the response options given are stated in the parentheses):

- "Are you sexually active?" (yes, no).
- "How satisfied are you with your sex life now?" (very satisfied, satisfied, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, dissatisfied, very dissatisfied).
- "Sexual orientation" (heterosexual, bisexual, homosexual).
- "Do you have sexual problems?" (no; yes, but they are not associated with any prolonged illness or disability; yes, and they are associated with a prolonged illness or disability).
- "If yes, is your problem (circle a reply in each line): lack of a suitable sexual partner; reduced sexual desire; pain or discomfort during intercourse; unable to achieve orgasm; decreased ability to achieve erection (male); premature ejaculation (m); involuntary vaginal spasms severe enough to prevent intercourse (vaginismus) (female); other?" (yes, not sure, no).

The theoretical basis for the QOL measurement was an integrative QOL theory (11). It organizes eight individual theories of QOL into a spectrum ranging from subjective (self-evaluated) to objective (externally evaluated) QOL and spanning a core of theories that consider QOL as deriving from human nature or human existence itself (existential theories).

These eight theories or dimensions of the QOL were operationalized into eight QOL rating scales, which were grouped into three kinds:

- Subjective dimensions. (i) Immediate, self-experienced well-being; (ii) Satisfaction with life; (iii) Happiness.
- Existential dimensions. (iv) Needs fulfillment; (v) Subjective experience of objective temporal domains (family, work, leisure); (vi) Subjective experience of objective spatial domains (satisfaction with social relationships); (vii) Expression of life's potentials.
- Objective dimension. (viii) Objective factors (income, employment, education etc).

Eighty-five of the questions were used to measure the QOL along these eight dimensions. The measurement scale used a Likert scale with five response options symmetrically arranged around a neutral midpoint. As an example, well-being is measured by the question "How are you feeling now?", and the response options given are very good, good, neither good nor poor, poor, very poor. By using a central and precisely worded midpoint (neither good nor poor), the response options symmetrically aligned up and down the scale (good, poor) and the use of the same amplifier (very) we constructed a classical Likert-scale which we consider equidistant (11).

If an underlying scale is selected that ranges from 0 to 100%, from the worst imaginable to the best imaginable QL, the five response options may be reasonably positioned at 10, 30, 50, 70 and 90%. In other words, if a respondent checks good, his or her well-being is measured at 70%. In this manner, an approximated ratio scale was obtained (9), such that means could be computed and compared. A weighted mean for the eight QL dimensions was computed by way of means for the subjective and existential measures, respectively. The resulting overall measure is global (covers all aspects of life, not merely health-related aspects) and generic (not disease-related or intended for a specific category of patients).

Significance levels for the relationships between each variable and the measured QL were computed for the continuous variable using classical correlation and a modified regression described in Ventegodt (9), while in the case of the discrete variables every group (type of sexual problem, etc.) was tested, using the Wilcoxon test, individually against the rest of the sample $H_0: \mu_i = \mu_{\text{non-}i}$, i.e., the null hypothesis that the mean QL of a particular group (e.g., those with a reduced sexual desire) is significantly different from the mean QL for the rest of the population i.e., those that do not experience reduced sexual desire.

In the tables, information on QL and sexual satisfaction from these eight dimensions (rating scales) are given along with the total QL score.

The validity of the questionnaire has been examined (9), and the measurement instruments (the rating scales) proved valid and sensitive to a degree matching that of commonly recognized international instruments. A 1-month and a 3-month test-retest for reproducibility showed correlation coefficients for the eight instruments ranging from .6 to .9. A qualitative assessment of the validity of the questionnaire was performed, in which 80% of

the respondents indicated that the questionnaire items expressed all dimensions relating to their quality of life, 17% were in doubt, and 3% felt they did not-which was found acceptable.

What did we find?

We found that in Denmark 81% of the respondents were sexually active with a decrease to 63.7 % in the top age bracket. Persons without a sex life had a QOL considerably lower than persons with a sex life, the former had a QOL 13.8% below the population mean (see tables 1 and 2). On the whole, this value did not change with the age of the respondent. It should be noted that since two of the QOL dimensions (expression of life's potentials, and objective factors) presuppose the presence of a partner, the low QOL measured here may be attributable to the absence of a partner among the sexually inactive. However, the dimensions that did not presuppose a partner, such as well-being, satisfaction with life and happiness were similarly related to sexual activity, since persons without a sex life have a QOL 7.3, 7.4 and 9.3% respectively below the population mean in these three dimensions.

Table 1. Population frequency and overall quality of life among different groups (579 females; 605 males).

Population frequency % Overall QOL (weighted) p values							
Group		F	M	F	M	F	M
Heterosexual	98.1	97.7	69.7	69.5	-	0.0045	
Bisexual	1.0	1.3	75.2	62.1	-	0.0808	
Homosexual	0.9	1.0	67.2	55.5	-	0.0214	
Population Mean		69.7	69.3				

Altogether, the magnitude of the relationship between sexual activity and OL is classified as "intermediate."

Sexual orientation

Few bi- and homosexual persons were found in the sample: 1.2% reported they were bisexual and 0.9% homosexual. Similarly low numbers were found in the aforementioned cohort of 7,222 (11); among women were found 1.6% bisexual and 1.4% homosexual persons, and among men 1.3% bisexual and 1.1% homosexual persons. These remarkably low numbers contrast with traditional estimates, e.g., those of the Kinsey report and the often cited 10%, as well as results like 2-4% homosexuals among married men (12).

The question about sexual orientation was skipped by more respondents than most other questions, and these nonreporters may of course be bi- and homosexual. However, an analysis of the problem indicated that about 10% of the Danish population is unsure about the meaning of "heterosexual".

Table 2. Sexual orientation and quality of life as measured in each dimension.

Quality of life in eight dimensions ^a																
	1		2		3		4		5		6		7		8	
Group	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M
Heterosexual	71.9	72.5	69.2	69.5	66.1	65.3	69.2	68.6	75.7	75.9	69.3	68.6	62.1	61.8	70.9	70.8
Bisexual	76.7	65.0	73.3	60.0	63.3	60.0	76.7	63.9	77.8	73.8	69.3	67.3	67.9	53.0	81.4	60.2
Homosexual	82.0	56.7	78.0	53.3	70.0	50.0	74.0	56.0	79.3	62.2	66.4	60.7	56.4	49.1	56.0	56.1
Population	72.0	72.3	69.3	69.2	66.1	65.1	69.4	68.5	75.8	75.7	69.3	68.5	62.2	61.5	70.9	70.5

^a1. Immediate, self-experienced well-being; 2. Life satisfaction; 3. Happiness; 4. Fulfillment of needs; 5. Experience of objective, temporal domains (family, work, leisure); 6. Experience of objective, spatial domains (self, others, world); 7. Expression of life's potentials; 8. Objective factors.

Table 3. Population frequency (%) and stated satisfaction with sex life divided according to age^a.

Age group													
	18, 23		28, 31, 33		38, 43		48, 53		58, 63, 68, 73, 78, 83, 88		All		
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	
Very satisfied	28.0	22.7	26.6	19.3	27.0	19.9	24.0	25.7	27.8	16.9	26.4	20.6	
Satisfied	37.1	31.9	40.4	31.7	40.9	44.3	43.2	38.5	40.2	40.0	40.3	36.9	
Neither/nor	30.8	25.5	19.2	26.1	13.9	18.3	21.6	23.9	22.7	27.5	21.9	24.4	
Dissatisfied	4.2	12.8	10.8	16.2	13.9	10.7	9.6	11.0	7.2	12.5	9.1	12.9	
Very dissatisfied	0.0	7.1	3.0	6.8	4.4	6.9	1.6	0.9	2.1	3.1	2.2	5.1	

^aAges are those derived from the sample. Females = 702; males = 605

Table 4. Mean quality of life of respondents divided according to age and stated satisfaction with sex life^a.

	Age group													
	18, 23		28, 31, 33		38, 43		48, 53		58, 63, 68, 73, 78, 83, 88 83,	All		p values		
	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	M	F	M	F	M	
Very satisfied	719	72.3	77.0	77.2	800	79.0	778	77.4	78.2	74.3	75.1	0.0001	0.0001	
Satisfied	674	69.2	72.4	72.2	735	74.9	728	73.0	69.9	69.5	70.5	0.0001	0.0001	
Neither/nor	605	62.5	64.8	68.8	663	68.7	649	65.2	64.6	62.5	65.2	0.0001	0.0001	
Dissatisfied	611	57.3	62.0	58.4	614	62.0	647	63.5	64.3	61.6	59.9	0.0001	0.0001	
Very dissatisfied	0.0	54.0	69.5	48.7	525	56.1	600	66.83	67.7	59.5	54.4	0.0001	0.0001	
Population Mean										68.3	68.0			

^aFemales = 702; males = 653. Ages are those derived from the sample.

Satisfaction with sex life

Satisfaction with sex life varied a little according to gender, but showed no significant correlation with age: 66.7% of the women and 57.5% of the men indicated they were satisfied or very satisfied with their sex life, while 11.3% of the women and 18% of the men are dissatisfied or very dissatisfied (see table 3). The covariation between the degrees of satisfaction with one's sex life and the measured QOL was considerable (Women $r = .43$ $p < 0.0001$,

Female sexual problems

Sexual problems are distributed unevenly among the genders, reflecting the different anatomy and psychology. Among females, reduced sexual desire was the most common problem (11.2%) varying little with age (see table 5). These women experienced a subjective QOL somewhat lower (7%) than that of the population as a whole, but their overall QOL was only a few percent lower than the population mean. 4.9% indicated they lacked a suitable sexual partner and this figure hardly varied with age. These female's overall QOL was 17.2% below the population mean (9.9% when controlled for the two QOL dimensions that presuppose a partner).

Table 5. Percentage of sexual problems among females divided according to age (N = 686).

Age group (years)	18-23	28-33	38-43	48-53	58-88	All	p value
No problems	77.4	72.5	73.2	75.2	87.9	70.3	0.01600
Lack of partner	5.5	6.0	5.4	6.6	2.8	4.9	0.33710
Reduced desire	6.2	13.0	17.0	14.0	10.3	11.2	0.57130
Pain/discomfort	3.4	3.5	3.6	5.0	0.9	3.1	0.43000
during intercourse							
Lack of orgasm	11.0	8.5	7.1	5.8	2.8	6.8	0.00670
Vaginismus	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.5	0.64210
Other	2.7	6.5	3.6	4.1	0.9	3.6	0.19620
Total	106.2	111.5	109.8	111.6	105.6	100.0	

Males $r = .51$ $p < 0.0001$) (Table IV) and, in relation to other correlation coefficients found in the survey, classified as "large."

Inability to achieve orgasm was indicated by 6.8% of the females. It is slightly more frequent among the young and decrease somewhat with age. The QOL of these women was 4.4% below the population mean. Pain or discomfort during intercourse was reported by 3.1%, while vaginismus occurred in 0.5%. The QOL of these two groups was 5.9 and 8.6%, respectively, below the population mean. Summarizing, the females reported somewhat fewer sexual problems with age (see table 6).

Table 6. Mean quality of life of women divided according to sexual problem and age (N = 686).

Age group (years)	18-23	28-33	38-43	48-53	58-88	All	p value
No problems	66.7	72.9	75.2	73.0	67.0	71.2	0.0001
Lack of partner	55.3	63.6	46.3	58.8	53.3	57.3	0.0001
Reduced desire	71.5	66.4	66.9	69.2	62.4	67.5	0.0895
Pain/discomfort	62.7	63.2	69.8	66.8	47.6	65.0	0.0763
During intercourse							
Lack of orgasm	67.8	63.8	63.1	70.3	62.9	66.1	0.0222
Vaginismus	0.0	63.2	0.0	66.2	0.0	63.3	0.2189
Other	61.3	65.7	68.9	74.4	68.8	67.4	0.3190
Population mean	69.4						

Reduced sexual desire was by far the most prevalent sexual problem among the women. To identify the most serious problem, the difference in QOL between the population and each group of females with a particular problem may be used. Without venturing any causal claims, we thus conclude that among the sexual problems included here, the lack of a suitable sexual partner was the most important correlate of a poor QOL.

Male sexual problems

Among the males, the lack of suitable partner was the most frequently occurring problem, as reported by 7.3% (see table 7). This problem decreased with age. The QOL of this group was measured to be 20.2% below the population mean (13.2% if the figure is computed without the two QOL dimensions that presuppose a partner, as above).

The most frequent sexual problem was premature ejaculation (4.9%), a problem that seems unrelated to age. The QOL of this group was 1.8% below the population mean. Reduced sexual desire is reported by 3.2% of the men, and their mean QOL is 6.9% below the population mean. Decreased ability to achieve erection is found among 5.4% of the males and this group was 3% below the population mean in overall QOL. This problem increased with age. Discomfort or pain during intercourse was reported by 0.4% of the males. The QOL of this group was measured to be a considerable 6.7% below the population mean. Inability to achieve orgasm was rare among males (0.8%) and the mean QOL of this group was 5.2% below the population mean. Summarizing, the most prevalent and serious sexual problem for males was the lack of a sexual partner (see table 8).

Table 7. Percentage of sexual problems among males divided according to age (N = 626).

Years	Age group					All.	Correlation	p-values
	18- 28	31- 33	38-43	48-53	58-88			
No problems	81.4	75.7	89.3	83.0	76.6%	73.1	-0.37590	0.33090
Lacking suitable sexual partner	11.4	11.8	5.0	7.0	3.8	7.3	-0.11581	0.00270
Reduced sexual desire	1.4	4.6	3.3	0.0	7.0	3.2	0.06670	0.08300
Pain or discomfort during intercourse	0.7	0.0	0.0	2.0	0.0	0.4	-0.00549	0.88710
Unable to attain orgasm	0.7	0.7	0.0	1.0	1.9	0.8	0.04663	0.22770
Decreased ability to achieve erection	2.1	2.0	0.8	5.0	17.7	5.4	0.27868	0.00010
Premature ejaculation(m)	3.6	7.9	4.1	6.0	5.1	4.9	0.00322	0.93370
Other	2.9	3.9	2.5	4.0	1.3	2.6	-0.03937	0.30410
Total	104.3	106.6	105.0	108.0	113.3	98.0		

Table 8. Mean quality of life of males divided according to sexual problem and age (N = 626).

Years	Age group					All	p values
	18-28	31- 33	38, 43	48-53	66-78		
No problems	67.2	71.3	74.0	72.5	70.2	71.2	0.0001
Lacking suitable sexual partner	56.8	51.3	53.1	58.0	55.0	55.2	0.0001
Reduced sexual desire	60.1	62.7	62.5	-	63.7	64.3	0.0132
Pain or discomfort during intercourse	47.4	-	-	72.0	-	64.6	0.5722
Unable to attain orgasm	47.4	71.4	-	64.6	69.0	65.4	0.3610
Decreased ability to achieve erection	60.0	75.2	45.1	61.6	68.1	67.0	0.2751
Premature ejaculation(m)	69.2	66.1	65.4	72.3	62.5	67.8	0.4934
Other	65.9	61.5	59.1	66.0	68.5	63.8	0.0337
Population mean						69.1	

Discussion

We found that 29.7% of the women and 26.9% of the men reported sexual problems. These numbers did not seem inconsistent with the trend from the research cited in the introduction. Erectile dysfunction showed increasing prevalence with age, while lack of a suitable sexual partner and inability to achieve orgasm decreased with age. Decreased sexual desire, pain or discomfort during intercourse and premature ejaculation showed no covariation with age.

Only 2.4% of the affected group reported their problems to be associated with ill health. This means that sexual problems in the vast majority of cases occurred in persons otherwise healthy.

Over a quarter of the respondents in this representative sample of the Danish population reported sexual problems. Some problems varied with age and in most of these people, the sexual problems were not associated with any disease or condition, suggesting that the problems were likely to remain undiscovered during a regular consultation. Regarding their QOL, the group of persons with sexual problems scored about 10% below the population average. One implication of this finding could be that physicians seeing patients with indistinct complaints or general feelings of discomfort should be attentive to possible sexual problems. Of course, one cannot attribute a poor QOL to sexual problems. It is equally plausible that a low QOL is a harbinger of many problems, including sexual ones.

The found correlation between sexual problems and relationship to partner ($r = .3$, $p < .0001$) suggested that an approach focusing on the patient's relationship with his or her partner may be useful. Sexual problems that reveal themselves in the clinic may thus be taken as an opportunity to tackle relationship problems. In many cases, a better relationship with one's partner may lead directly to the solution of many sexual problems.

Sexual problems seem widespread in the population and they showed some measure of covariation with the quality of life. It is unclear whether sexual problems lead to a poor quality of life, or a poor quality of life leads to sexual problems. Thus, the safe course of action for the physician is to be attentive to sexual problems. It is noteworthy that some sexual problems abate somewhat with age, especially among women. This does not necessarily mean that their problems receive treatment or are otherwise solved, but they may be settled in such a way that each person finds a way to live with them. In the domain of sexual problems, the general practitioner may be well advised to proceed with caution and to take his or her starting point in the quality of the patient's life as a whole and the common problems that it presents.

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Life Events and Later Quality of Life

Sexual life events are known to be some of the most traumatic of all types of life events. To assess the size of the impact of sexual life events compared to all other life events we have screened a large group of 55-66 years old people for all kinds of traumatic life event and measured their subsequent self-assessed quality of life.

In the chapter we examine associations between global quality of life (QOL) and major life events in a retrospective study using the self-administrated expanded SEQOL questionnaire with questions on life events and connected emotions. 746 people, 55-66 years old from a representative sample of the Danish population were used. Global QOL, measured by SEQOL (self evaluation of quality of life), containing eight global QOL measures: Well-being, life-satisfaction, happiness, fulfillment of needs, experience of temporal and spatial domains, expression of life's potentials and objective factors were administered. We found that life events related to health such as restraints of movement or psychological illness showed a major association with the quality of life. Most other associations between quality of life and life events were intermediate or minor. Quality of life cannot simply be determined by life events. Actual quality of life is determined by how all the events of life have been processed and integrated in the consciousness. The results seem to support the idea that global QOL can be efficiently improved by integrating the painful events of the past. Since several studies have shown correlations between QOL and health, it is likely that such an improvement of QOL will also cause improved health and ability.

Introduction

Quality of life (QOL) has become an important topic in the public debate (1-3) and it is more and more considered to be important in treating and preventing illness and therefore been the subject of a number of philosophical and psychological studies (4-10). It is becoming increasingly apparent that illness is closely related to the concept of quality of life and therefore the exploration of indicators related to quality of life appears to be of broad importance for the prevention and treatment of diseases. Identifying which factors that constitute a good life may reveal an understanding about what areas in life that are to be

encouraged, in order to enhance the global quality of life. Following are the results from a study examining quality of life and major life events.

The hypothesis in our survey was that life is made up by our life events, or what happen to us during life and the situations we manage to create for ourselves. Behind this simple hypothesis lies the great philosophic dilemma that life does not consist of events, but of a continuum, a constant now. Philosophically, to delimit an event is therefore very difficult while, paradoxically, the mind has no problem with cutting the world to bits and identify events, when these are defined in a questionnaire as for instance divorce, death, accident etc. One problem with events is when do they start? An example is a dismissal, which has been expected. From a psychological point of view, the event may actually begin with the expectation of a dismissal and this expectation may in actual fact make the event happen.

We consider the continuity of life to contain some traits, which by their importance defeat the events. Our awareness is a flowing continuum and all events are more or less accidental and more or less successful attempts by our mind to create order out of the chaos of reality. However, it will be carrying it too far to probe the philosophical difficulties surrounding the definition and delimitation of life events in this chapter. For all practical purposes life events are just as operational dimensions as they are unwieldy, even intangible and incomprehensible, when viewed philosophically.

The objective of our study was to evaluate the associations between quality of life and major life events. We wanted to discover whether previous events in life have an influence on the present global quality of life, and the importance of the way in which the events are integrated in the mind. The study was a part of a larger investigation of life events influence on quality of life; hence, in another study we look into factors connected to early life factors (11-13).

Our study

This study was built on a retrospective study, consisting on answers from 746 people, 55-66 years old in Albertslund, Denmark, a Copenhagen suburb in many ways representative of the Danish population. Several measures have been constructed in order to measure people's quality of life, and these include many different approaches to the concept. To explore the association between quality of life and the major events in life, we created the comprehensive SEQOL questionnaire, which describes people's life, lifestyle, and quality of life (15-23). The SEQOL questionnaire is a self-administered questionnaire with items rated on a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire consists of 317 items based on an "integrative" theory of the quality of life meaning that it organizes a number of theories on the quality of life into a spectrum that spans the extremes of subjective and objective quality of life. These measures are showed below (sample questions from the questionnaire included). For further details concerning the questionnaire we refer to previous studies of the validity of SEQOL (15-23).

Subjective measures:

- 1) Immediate, self-experienced well-being ("How are you feeling?")
- 2) Life satisfaction ("How satisfying is your life?")
- 3) Happiness ("How happy are you at present?")

Existential measures:

- 4) Fulfillment of needs (e.g., "How well are your social needs fulfilled?")
- 5) Experience of life's temporal domains (e.g., "How do you feel when you are at home?")
- 6) Experience of life's spatial domains ("How satisfied are you with [each of five domains: self, partner, family, friends, community]"?)
- 7) Expression of life's potentials [some 30 questions on extent to which they are fulfilled]

Objective measure:

- 8) Objective factors [some 80 questions on income, status, work etc.]

Replies to each of the questions that constitute these measures were weighted and scored to yield computable numbers between a minimum of 0 and a maximum of 100. These numbers were then taken as representing the quality of life of the respondent, expressed in terms of the eight different ways the quality of life has been measured by the questionnaire. Suitably weighted and scored, replies to the first part of the questionnaire constitute variables, the co-variation of which the quality of life can be calculated.

Measuring quality of life has been the subject of disagreements through time. In our research, the global QOL - in the most broad and all-including sense - is the primary outcome measure (dependent variable). The integrative QOL theory made us include 113 items from the SEQOL questionnaire for the calculation of the global QOL [23].

In this study we had to deal with an essential problem: When the statistical connection between 113 life factors and the global QOL was measured, we often had a contribution to the statistical co-variation from the construction of the global QOL measure. This problem turned out to be of little significance, as even the most strongly "constructed" connections did not count for more than 1/15th of the total connection. Still this gave an error of up to 7% in co-variation. As the large connections in our study showed a co-variation of 20% global QOL or more, the error mentioned above introduced by the construction of the global all-including QOL measure was generally neglectable. It is important to notice that the way our QOL measure was constructed does not constitute a measuring problem; we will almost always find a high correlation when $N=5-10,000$ between QOL and the many factors constituting the global QOL or the factors related to them. However, we are not looking at the size of the correlation (the statistical significance), but at the size of the statistical co-variation (QOL difference in %) showing the clinical significance.

For validation SEQOL was sent together with the Nottingham Health profile (NHP) and Sickness Impact Factor (SIP), and the test-retest reliability correlation was > 0.8 , Cronbach's alpha was 0.75, correlation (r) to NHP was 0.49, to SIP 0.27 ($P < 0.05$). Adjustment for health status made the correlation to SIP stronger among the sick ($r=0.41$). For SEQOL 111 respondents were needed to detect 3% difference in QOL. SEQOL are thus valid as it showed a high level of reliability, sensitivity and consistency.

Table 1. Single events.

The connection between global QOL and 1000 different life events; only statistically ($p < 0.05$) and clinically significant factors listed. Difference in global QOL is measured according to the Integrated QOL theory ³⁶ and is measured with the validated SEQOL questionnaire ³¹ .	
*) Difference in percentage between the worst and the best off (single events), or calculated with the method of weight modified linear regression (impact of all events) ³⁵ .	
Life Event (impact of single event)	QOL-difference (%) *)
Conversion to a new religious belief	-21.7
Unable to walk	-21.1
Sexual assault by well-known offender	-20.8
Threatened with violence upon family	-18.6
Diagnosis: Lupus	-17.6
Psychotherapy in two periods	-16.4
Victim of rape	-15.7
Incest, without intercourse	-15.4
Invalidity pension	-15.3
Sexual assault: Pawing	-13.9
Paralysed, damaged or lack of body parts	-13.9
Catholicism	-13.0
Expulsed from a group	-12.9
Lack of care in childhood	-12.3
Attempt of rape, 1st time (women)	-12.1
Two psychiatric hospitalisations	-11.9
Registered in a credit-bureau	-11.9
Cannot run	-11.9
Venereal diseases	-11.6
Other serious physical disorders	-11.5
Unrealistic re-payment arrangement	-11.3
Peak experiences: Survival journey	11.3
Got kicked under attack	-11.2
Former an atheist, but now a believer	-11.0
Sex harassment	-10.8
Suddenly becoming abandoned by a close friend-	10.8
Fear of death	-10.8
Personal growth: fasting	10.5
Brain bleeding	-10.3
Debts to the public authorities	-10.3
Communism (political standpoint)	-10.3
Arthritis (diagnosis)	-10.3
Owing money, going to Bailiff's court	-9.8
1st. psychiatric hospitalisation	-9.5
Neurosis (diagnosis)	-9.3
Was adopted	-9.0
Peak experience: Out of your body/synchronicity/psycho kinesis	8.9
Use of drugs as a life event: Tranquillisers	-8.7
Cannot go up/down stairs	-8.7
Meeting with Bailiff	-8.3
3rd. medical hospitalisation	-8.3
Lack of psychological contact with parents	-8.1
Early retirement pension	-8.1
A [former] period with good friends	-8.1

Table 1. (Continued).

The connection between global QOL and 1000 different life events; only statistically ($p < 0.05$) and clinically significant factors listed. Difference in global QOL is measured according to the Integrated QOL theory ³⁶ and is measured with the validated SEQOL questionnaire ³¹ .	
*) Difference in percentage between the worst and the best off (single events), or calculated with the method of weight modified linear regression (impact of all events) ³⁵ .	
Life Event (impact of single event)	QOL-difference (%) *)
Use of drugs as a life event: Sleeping pills	-7.9
Social Security benefit	-7.8
Psychoactive drugs, 1st. period	-7.7
Lack of physical contact with parents	-7.7
Cannot lift heavy things	-7.7
Removal of birthmark	-7.7
Period with strong religious doubts	-7.6
Bad blood circulation	-7.5
2nd. medical hospitalisation	-7.4
Chronic bronchitis (diagnosis)	-7.4
Partner died	-7.2
Period of alcohol abuse	-7.2
Had a relationship with a much younger partner	-7.1
Money: Lost in properties	-7.0
Hobbies: Zoology	-7.0
Sexual assault: Obscene remarks	-6.9
Abdominal disorders	-6.9
Experienced a life crisis	-6.7
The partner left	-6.6
Perfectly tuned relationship with partner	6.5
Depression (diagnosis)	-6.3
Partner fails utterly	-6.2
Period with a great sense of loneliness	-6.2
Cheated (first time)	-6.1
Experience of the world falling apart	-6.1
Job offer/job training	-6.0
Illnesses of the back	-6.0
Serious crisis between oneself and mother/father	-5.9
Been officer in the army	5.8
Sexual assault: Exposed naked	-5.8
Unemployment in two periods	-5.8
To be let down by a close friend	-5.6
Experienced someone death by suicide	-5.5
Hypertension (diagnosis)	-5.5
Sports: Running, marathon or similar	5.4
Scold ones children often	-5.0
Likes: New Age (music)	-5.0
Father/mother moved away	-5.0
3rd. surgical hospitalisation	-4.9
Suffered from a serious physical illness	-4.5
Had a relationship with a much older partner	-4.3
Pneumonia (diagnosis)	-4.2
1 or more divorces	-4.1
State of perfect balance in your life	3.9
Human relations with complete openness	3.9
Partner was unfaithful more times	-3.9
An experience of sudden, deep insight	3.8

Table 1. (Continued).

The connection between global QOL and 1000 different life events; only statistically ($p < 0.05$) and clinically significant factors listed. Difference in global QOL is measured according to the Integrated QOL theory ³⁶ and is measured with the validated SEQOL questionnaire ³¹ .	
*) Difference in percentage between the worst and the best off (single events), or calculated with the method of weight modified linear regression (impact of all events) ³⁵ .	
Life Event (impact of single event)	QOL-difference (%) *)
Serious crisis with child	-3.7
1st. medical hospitalisation	-3.7
Perfect part of a community	3.5
Diminished acoustic capacities	-3.3
Using pain-killers (self-bought)	-3.1
Socialist People's Party (political standpoint)	-2.8
1 or more crisis in ones partner relationship	-2.8
Paralysed, damaged or lack of body parts	-2.8
Joined a political party	2.7
Incurable cancer (including skin cancer)	-2.6
Money: can afford to do what you want	2.5
Liberal (political standpoint)	2.5
2nd. surgical hospitalisation	-2.3
Always been a believer in good	2.1
Done military service	2.0
Sports: Swimming athletics, cycling or similar	1.9
Been in complete control of your economy	1.5
Interest: for food/wine	1.3
Sports: Trekking	1.2
Devoting yourself to your work completely	1.2
Very interested in theatre	1.1
Became a father/mother	1.1
First marriage	0.7

Our findings

As expected, life events related to both physical and psychological illness showed major associations with the quality of life; this was measured in terms of symptoms, hospitalizations and emotional thoughts. However most other isolated associations were intermediate or minor as seen in life events related to economy, employment, friends or relationships, experiments with personal development, military events, peak experiences, political affiliations etc. Table 1 shows the connection between single events and global QOL; a connection of 10% or more is considered to be clinically significant, while a connection smaller than 10% is considered "small", according to ordinary practice in the Danish Quality of Life Survey (11-14). The clinically significant connections can be organized in eight groups as follows:

- 1) Personal growth peak experiences: Survival journey (+11,3%), Personal growth: Fasting (+10,5%)
- 2) Religion conversion to a new religious belief (-21,7%), Catholicism (-13,0%), Former an atheist, but now a believer (-11,0%)

- 3) Sexual assaults: Sexual assault by well-known offender (-20,8%), victim of rape (-15,7%), incest, without intercourse (-15,4%). Sexual assault: Pawing (-13,9%); attempt of rape, 1st time (women) (-12,1%), sexual harassment (-10,8%)
- 4) Physical health: Unable to walk (-21,1%), lupous ulcer (-17,6%), paralyzed, damaged or lack of body parts (-13,9%), cannot run (-11,9%), venereal diseases (-11,6%), other serious physical disorders (-11,5%), brain bleeding (-10,3%), arthritis (diagnosis)(-10,3%)
- 5) Social problems: Threatened with violence upon family (-18,6%), disability pension (-15,3%), expelled from a group (-12,9%), got kicked under attack (-11,2%), suddenly becoming abandoned by a close friend (-10,8%), communism (political standpoint) (-10,3%)
- 6) Mental health psychotherapy in two periods (-16,4%), two psychiatric hospitalisations (-11,9%), fear of death (-10,8%)
- 7) Lack of care in childhood lack of care in childhood (-12,3%)
- 8) Financial problems registered in a credit-bureau (-11,9%), unrealistic re-payment arrangement (-11,3%), debts to the public authorities (-10,3%)

In the category “personal growth” we found experiences connected with improvement of QOL; in the category “religion” we found a strong negative connection between religious doubts and change of religion or change to religion from being an atheists; in the category “sexual assaults” we find a strong connection between these events and QOL; loss of physical health was also connected to significantly lower QOL; social problems (including communism which here was seen as dissatisfaction with society), mental health problems, lack of care in childhood and financial problems were also connected with lower QOL.

Table 2. High-level analysis of QOL and life events.

Analysis of the statistical connection between life events and QOL (impact of all events) (all $p < 0.01$)	
Most common emotion (on a positive-negative scale)	25.4
The average level of events not integrated	25.1
Level of integration of five-year-old life events	25.1
Number of essential physical health symptoms	-13.6
Very negative events arranged in order of time	12.2
Number of good events minus bad events	11.8
Number of life events not integrated	11.5
Number of very negative life events not integrated	10.7
The number of important, very negative events not integrated	9.9
Number of bad life events	8.8
Number of events containing good feelings	6.9
Number of life events	6.1

Strong connections with global QOL were generally not seen in the midst of single events; large associations in this study appeared when the events were analyzed collectively. In the high level analysis we found strong associations between global QOL and the most dominant feeling and the level of integration of events. In general, people feeling a specific

negative feeling often have a poor QOL (25,4 % below the people normally feeling of positive feeling) and bad integration of one's life events had a substantial, negative impact on the quality of life (25,1% below the people with the habit of integrating their life events). These constructs predict the quality of life of a person; interestingly the results showed (see table 2), that QOL was not to a high degree a product of the number of good and bad life events in life, but rather it seemed to be the way in which the events were integrated that determined the global QOL.

Discussion

To our knowledge, only very few studies have investigated the effects of major life events on the later quality of life. Conversely, it is more common to investigate the effects of life events on the later health status. In this study we found global quality of life (QOL) to be strongly associated with events related to both mental and physical health. As shown here, and in numerous other studies (24-36), health seemed to have considerable associations with the global quality of life. For example a British study of 300 persons showed, that quality of life in early old age appears to be influenced primarily by serious health problems (37), and another study of more than 9000 people showed that self reported health problems accounted for a considerable part of the quality of life (38).

Many people blame their past for their poor quality of life, but our findings do not support this idea. Our results seem to indicate, that it is not the actual events in our past that determine our quality of life, but rather the way in which the events were integrated in the mind. This gives us foundation to describe means to promote the global quality of life and hereby the overall health, or in other words to develop a more positive and responsible philosophy of life and integrating our past.

An interesting and highly relevant question is whether we can explain poor global QOL with single painful events or a chain of painful life events connected to a specific traumatic theme. If we look at the sexual assaults, we find that "sexual assault by well-known offender (-20,8%)" was more "damaging" than rape and incest ("victim of rape (-15,7%)", "incest, without intercourse (-15,4%)") and that fondling and attempt of rape and sexual harassment was almost as "damaging" as rape and incest ("sexual assault: pawing (-13,9%)"; "attempt of rape, 1st time (women) (-12,1%)", "sexual harassment (-10,8%)"). Deep reflections on these findings and many more results (11-14) have lead us to the conclusion that we cannot really explain the low QOL of the people of the category "victims of sexual assault" by the assaults themselves. In a previous study, we analyzed this problem in details as we interviewed a series of narcotics-prostitutes (14) and discovered that the girls assaulted and raped often were severely abused and neglected in their early childhood. Thus it it's much more likely that these painful events rise on the general background of vulnerability, inviting other people to disrespect their borders and integrity.

The causality of the results is in many cases unclear. Thus it is possible that the results of table 1 were only symptomatic; the more hurt and vulnerable you are, the more you will attract horrible events and the lower your QOL will be. Life events are thus consequences of your own negative attitude and belief, much more than it is an objective unlucky event hitting

you by some statistical rate. In accordance with this train of thought, it is known that girls who have been raped once have a much higher likelihood of being raped again (37).

The findings of the high level analysis of this study were in agreement with the life mission theory (10), which states that health, happiness and ability comes from living the purpose of your life, accepting full responsibility for the suffering of life, thus taking full learning and avoiding repression and eventually succeeding in expressing the talents in your life. To do this, it is important to develop as a person into what is known as the natural condition, a condition where the person knows himself and use all his efforts to achieve what is most important for him. Our concept of holistic medicine and the holistic process theory of healing (40-43) and the related quality of life theories (23,44,45) declare that the return to the natural state of being with optimal QOL is possible, whenever the person gets the resources needed for the existential healing. The philosophical change of the person healing is often a change towards preferring difficult problems and challenges, instead of avoiding difficulties in life. The person who becomes happier and more resourceful is often also becoming more healthy, more talented and able of functioning (24-36,43-46).

One limitation of this study is the retrospective design, which involves a possibility for recall bias. When people have to answer questions about their past, there is a possibility that they will not remember correctly or that they will for example understate unpleasant experiences. Therefore the results can be influenced by bias. In addition the statistical analyses are relatively simple, as no stratification was carried out. Therefore we cannot be sure of whether the results actually reflect other associations than the ones that appear in the tables. By use of stratification it would be possible to determine the true effect of each event, however we chose in this paper to give a general view of all the life events, instead of using complicated statistical methods on a few life events. The sample size in this study is indeed adequate and in addition it was previously shown that the SEQOL is a valid instrument (15-23).

We conclude from this study, and this seems to be backed up by our other studies (11-14), that it is our level of consciousness, responsibility and our general attitude to what happens to us, that determine our quality of life, rather than our luck or misfortune. It seems that the actual quality of life is determined by the diligence with which the events have been processed and integrated. The overall conclusions from the study were:

- Quality of life cannot be explained solely by the bad life events that contain negative feelings.
- People who are good at processing the events in their life statistically possess a high quality of life.
- Processing a bad event remove the negative importance to the quality of life.
- Time only heals life's wounds, if negative experiences are processed.
- Many, small life events mean more to the quality of life than few and bigger events.
- Quality of life is not determined by the life's event in itself, but the way we relate to life.

Interestingly, to our knowledge, this is the first time that we face massive quantitative documentation for the rationale of therapy and holistic healing. For future research we

suggest that prospective studies should be completed so that the respondents receive the same questionnaire every 10 years. This would allow the investigators to explore the associations over time and recall bias would be avoided.

Conclusions

Our results showed that we could explain about 25% of the global QOL from how effective the person in the daily practice integrate his or her life events. Learning from what happened and processing the emotions (so that no negative feeling is left behind), seems to be a precondition for a good and healthy life. It seems that we have given quantitative documentation for the effect and its use in therapy and existential healing.

The global quality of life is probably not a function of single events. Life events seem closely connected to QOL and health. Usually QOL and health are difficult to change, but this study showed that there are some factors related to QOL that actually seems changeable. A lot of people blame their past for their poor quality of life, but our findings did not support this notion. If you wish you can integrate your life events and get rid of the negative impact. QOL is created here and now by having a constructive and responsible attitude towards life, self and other. We can integrate our emotionally negative life-events and thus recover our character and natural state of being (existential healing). It seemed that QOL could be improved independent of any major life events. As we find a strong connection between QOL and health, we believe that QOL and existential healing can be used as medicine, improving self-evaluated mental and physical health and general ability of functioning.

If we look at the sexual assaults, we found that “sexual assault by well-known offender (-20,8%)” was more “damaging” than rape and incest (“victim of rape (-15,7%)”, “incest, without intercourse (-15,4%)”) and that fondling and attempt of rape and sexual harassment was almost as “damaging” as rape and incest (“sexual assault: pawing (-13,9%)”; “attempt of rape, 1st time (women) (-12,1%)”, “sexual harassment (-10,8%)”). Deep reflections on these findings and many more results (11-14) have lead us to the conclusion that we cannot really explain the low QOL of the people of the category “victims of sexual assault” by the assaults themselves. In a previous study, we analyzed this problem in details as we interviewed a series of narcotics-prostitutes (14) and discovered that the girls assaulted and raped often were severely abused and neglected in their early childhood. Thus it’s much more likely that these painful events rise on the general background of vulnerability, inviting other people to disrespect their borders and integrity.

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Section 3: Clinical Sexological Studies

Female Quality of Life

In a study we tested the quantitative effect of classical holistic sexology on global quality of life (QOL) in females, sexual functioning, health and ability. The patients had sexual problems related to desire, genital pain, and orgasmic dysfunction. We found that holistic sexology clinically significant helped the patients to improve self-rated quality of life, self-rated sexual function, self-rated mental health with self-rated physical health often also improved. Self-esteem, ego-strength and social ability were also often improved.

43 patients with lack of sexual desire, 16 patients with genital pain including primary vulvodynia and dyspareunia, and 24 patients with orgasmic dysfunction including anorgasmia was included in the protocol, together with 33 patients with a wide range of sexual problems like vaginismus, sexual arousal syndrome, and sexual aversion disorder. The patients were between 18 and 70 years old.

The different groups underwent 20 hours of holistic sexological therapy, which started with conversational therapy, and if this did not help was complemented with bodywork, and if this did not help, complemented with genital physiotherapy as modum Hippocrates (vaginal acupressure). All dimensions were improved 15-40% (0.75 to 2.0 steps) as measured on a five point Likert Scale with the validated questionnaires QOL1 and QOL5, complemented with questions on sexual, social and working ability and ego-strength.

The global simultaneous improvement of all dimensions related to health, quality of life and ability strongly indicated that the holistic sexological treatment induced not only sexual healing, but also Antonovsky-salutogenesis (existential healing).

Introduction

In sexology there are several concerns involving the female, such as lack of sexual desire, genital pain including dyspareunia and orgasmic dysfunction including anorgasmia (1). 56.6% of Danish women about 30 years old doubt that they are sexually attractive and only 27.4% of Danish women feel satisfied sexually (2), indicating that in spite of much more sexual freedom in that country, there is still much that could be better in the sexological area.

Classical holistic medicine goes all the way back to Hippocrates and his students (3). According to “Corpus Hippocraticum” (3) these early physicians cured psychosexual

developmental problems with a combination of conversational therapy, bodywork and when necessary also genital physiotherapy today often called “physical therapy for the pelvic floor” (4). The later treatment has been used today to a cure many female health problems including sexual dysfunctions, with about 50 RCTs to support its efficiency, although “the sexological examination” is recommended by Bø et al if the treatment of sexual dysfunctions with physiotherapy alone fails (4).

During the last ten years our international research team has made a number of theoretical and clinical sexological studies (5-16), including some studies complemented with genital physiotherapy (17,18) and clinical studies in the effect of holistic therapy complemented with bodywork in general (19-22). For ethical and political reasons we have not used sexual stimulation (the sexological examination) (23-29) in our studies, but we evaluated the patients of a sexologist using a similar method in Denmark for anorgasmic women (30).

There seem to be an emerging agreement about sexological researchers that sexual dysfunction often needs more than psychotherapy. A review concluded that manual sexology is superior to psychotherapy (31). We found that holistic sexology combining psychotherapy and bodywork could help 42% of patients, who experienced sexual dysfunction (16) and the ratio of patients helped went up to 56%, if genital physiotherapy ad modum Hippocrates was also given (18). If direct sexual stimulation was used, 93% of the patients were healed (30).

A simple way to understand the increased effect with the more provocative therapeutic tools is to acknowledge Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957) and his brilliant insight, that the more directly the patients emotional resistance is addressed in therapy, the more efficient the therapy (32-34). Working directly on the genitals are provoking much more resistance than just talking and massaging the body; direct sexual stimulation is likely to be the most provocative procedure at all in the sexological field, going straight to the patients most intimate problems. From this perspective it is not at all surprising that vaginal physiotherapy and manual sexology is highly efficient in treating sexual dysfunctions.

The present study is testing a hypothesis that holistic sexology induce Antonovsky salutogenesis and thus improving not only sexual functioning, but also physical and mental health including quality of life in general.

Theory behind our study

The psychoanalytical and psychodynamic theories by Freud, Jung and Reich are the basis of modern sexological treatment with conversational therapy (33,35,36). Sexological research has pointed towards the musculature of the circumvaginal/pelvic floor musculature (37-40) as important for many different sexual problems. Modern vaginal physiotherapy for sexual dysfunctions concentrate often on the bulbospongiosus, ischiocavernosus and the most medical fibres for the levator ani muscles as stated in a textbook (4, page 310) with the following statement: “All these findings have interesting implications for physiotherapists giving pelvic floor re-education treatments; it could be that anorgasmic women would be helped by improving the strength of their pelvic floor muscles.” The lack of effect of conversational therapy alone has meant that vaginal massage and similar techniques are becoming more and more used by educated and modern female patients that insist on having a normal sex-life: “Increasingly physiotherapists are being asked to treat patients...

complaining of dyspareunia” (4, page 312). “Physiotherapists are finding that they are able to treat many such patients very successfully using a combination of “tender loving care”, listening, counseling, education, ultrasound to soften scar tissues and the teaching of self-massage and pelvic floor exercises. No scientific evaluation of these techniques has so far been undertaken, but the gratitude of patients and their partners is significant” (4, page 312). Confrontation of the genitals is often making miracles for the patients in this area, and Polden and Mantle found that techniques like “guidance to self-examination using a mirror is often all that is needed” (4, page 312).

So sexual problems seems often to be caused by emotional problems associated with the genitals and as soon as they are solved, the patient’s level of sexual ability is often normalized. The basic method of holistic sexological therapy is therefore to work with the patient’s resistance (32-34) until all negative feelings and emotions connected to gender, sexuality and sexual organs are integrated and the patient is sexually and existentially healed.

Psychodynamically the sexually dysfunctional patients very often have strong unresolved Oedipus complexes (41) and a pronounced level of sexual masochism (34). During the process of sexual healing the patient will often have sexual transference of masochistic quality that gradually transforms into sadism, before the patient is finally healed. The therapist is well advised to take all possible precautions as the patient’s often-unconscious, sexual sadism can take any form. If the issue of sexual sadism are addressed in the therapy, before it actually appears, many problems can be avoided. Sexual sadism might be too difficult for the patient to contain, forcing her to discontinue the therapy, if this is not done elegantly.

Our study

The present retrospective, clinical study presents the results of holistic sexology on sexual functioning, physical and mental health and quality of life of more than 100 self-referred patients treated in the period from 2003-2005 at the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine in Copenhagen. All patients presented, according to their medical record, with a sexual problem that clinically judged by the physician, who treated them related not to a physical problem like an infection, but to a psychosomatic problem. At the evaluation at our clinic the problem was hypothesised (in accordance with psychodynamic theory) to relate to a disturbance of their childhood psychosexual development.

The therapy was a combination of psychodynamically oriented clinical holistic short-term therapy and holistic sexology, given in such a way that problems that could be solved with conversational therapy alone were solved this way; then bodywork was added, and if the patients were not cured then vaginal physiotherapy added, in a project where the classical method of Hippocratic Pelvic Massage (also called “vaginal acupressure” or “genital physiotherapy” (4)) was used. Direct sexual stimulation and the “sexological examination” (21-23) were not used in this study.

The fundamental therapeutic work was character analysis (3,33,34) and self-exploration in accordance with the life-mission theory (42-49). The bodywork was inspired by Hippocrates, Reich, Lowen and Rosen (3,32-34,50,51). The patients were given 20 sessions (mean) during one year.

All patients were measured before and after the intervention with the validated questionnaires QOL1 and QOL5 (52) complemented with four questions on social, sexual and working ability and ego-strength (the battery of questions was all together called QOL10) (53). All data were collected using a five-point Likert Scale, which seems to be most efficient and reliable for psychometric testing (54).

The therapist were holistic therapists from the Nordic School of Holistic Medicine under supervision in order to understand and use the healing methods of Hippocrates (see (55-61)). The patients were diagnosed by a physician using a list of diagnoses and comparing these to the symptoms, which the patients described. The patient's global, self-assessed sexual ability was also measured as guidance for the therapist giving the diagnosis. Only chronic patients, who had had their problem for more than one year were included in the study.

Findings

43 patients entered the protocol with problems related to sexual desire, 16 patients had genital pain including primary vulvodynia and dyspareunia and 24 patients had orgasmic dysfunction including anorgasmia (see table 1). 33 patients had a wide range of other sexual problems like vaginismus, nymphomania, sexual aversion disorder, chronic arousal syndrome etc. As there were few of each type of patients these were analyzed statistically as one group.

We found that patients with problems related to sexual desire responded well to holistic sexology. The group increased 0.64 steps of four theoretically possible steps on the Likert scale, which is a remarkably large, significant improvement ($p=0.01$). This group also significantly improved their physical and mental health and global quality of life (0.37, 1.23 and 1.12 step respectively). The contemporary improvement both health, quality of life, and ability strongly indicates that Antonovsky-salutogenesis (62,63) – also called “existential healing” – is induced during the holistic treatment of lack of sexual desire.

We found that patients with problems related to genital pain also responded well to holistic sexological treatment; the group increased 0.94 steps of four theoretically possible steps on the Likert scale, which is a remarkably large, significant improvement ($p=0.01$). This group also significantly improved their mental health, and global quality of life (0.85 and 1.01 step respectively). The contemporary improvement both health, quality of life, and ability strongly indicates that Antonovsky-salutogenesis – also called “existential healing” – is induced during the holistic treatment of genital pain.

We found that patients with problems related to orgasmic dysfunction also responded less well to holistic sexological treatment; the group did not increase sexual ability significantly although the tendency was found and the result could be significant with more participants in the study (the increase was 0.43 step and $p=0.1$). In spite of this, this group did significantly improve their physical and mental health, and their global quality of life (0.40, 0.88 and 0.85 step respectively). The improvement both health and quality of life indicates that Antonovsky-salutogenesis is also induced during the holistic treatment of orgasmic dysfunction; but more modest compared to the two groups described above.

Table 1. The impact on health quality of life and ability of holistic sexology on patients with problems related to desire, genital pain, and orgasmic dysfunction.

		Physical health (self-rated)				Mental health (self-rated)				Self-esteem (self-rated)				Relation to friends (self-rated)			
		Before	After	Δ	p	Before	After	Δ	p	Before	After	Δ	p	Before	After	Δ	p
Desire	Score	2.7	2.33	0.37	.019	3.65	2.42	1.23	.000	3.28	2.41	0.87	.000	2.61	2.18	0.43	.011
	N	43	33	10	*	43	33	10	**	43	34	9	**	43	34	9	**
Genital pain	Score	3.0	2.4	0.6	.096	3.25	2.4	0.85	.054	3.19	2.2	0.99	.032	2.0	1.5	0.5	.269
	N	16	10	6		16	10	6	*	16	10	6	*	16	10	6	
Orgasmic dysfunction	Score	2.75	2.35	0.4	.016	3.17	2.29	0.88	.000	3.04	2.39	0.65	.006	2.0	1.89	0.11	.816
	N	24	17	7	*	24	17	7	**	24	18	6	**	24	18	6	
Other sexual problems	Score	2.76	2.21	0.55	.110	3.55	2.63	0.92	.002	3.24	2.36	0.88	.001	2.61	2.04	0.57	.012
	N	33	24	9		33	24	9	**	33	24	9	**	33	24	9	*

		Relation to partner (self-rated)				Ego strength (self-rated)				Sexual ability (self-rated)			
		Before	After	Δ	p	Before	After	Δ	p	Before	After	Δ	p
Desire	Score	5.0	3.88	1.12	.016	3.36	2.5	0.86	.001	3.35	2.71	0.64	.014
	N	43	34	9	*	42	34	8	**	43	34	9	*
Genital pain	Score	4.3	2.9	1.4	.146	3.31	1.9	1.41	.011	3.94	3	0.94	.004
	N	16	10	6		16	10	6	*	16	10	6	**
Orgasmic dysfunction	Score	4.0	3.11	0.89	.101	3.0	2.44	0.56	.083	3.21	2.78	0.43	.110
	N	24	18	6		24	18	6		24	18	6	
Other sexual problems	Score	4.72	3.46	1.26	.083	3.39	2.29	1.1	.002	3.46	2.67	0.79	.029
	N	32	24	8		33	24	9	**	33	24	9	*

Table 1. (Continued).

		Social ability (self-rated)				Working ability (self-rated)				Quality of life (QOL1) (self-rated)			
		Before	After	Δ	p	Before	After	Δ	p	Before	After	Δ	p
Desire	Score	2.79	2.18	0.61	.002	3.09	2.53	0.56	.025	3.44	2.32	1.12	.000
	N	43	34	9	**	43	34	9	*	43	34	9	**
Genital pain	Score	2.63	1.8	0.83	.025	3.38	2.4	0.98	.037	3.31	2.3	1.01	.029
	N	16	10	6	*	16	10	6	*	16	10	6	*
Orgasmic dysfunction	Score	2.42	2.17	0.25	.381	3.0	2.67	0.33	.427	3.46	2.61	0.85	.000
	N	24	18	6		24	18	6		24	18	6	**
Other sexual problems	Score	3.06	2.29	0.77	.001	3.06	2.46	0.6	.134	3.36	2.33	1.03	.001
	N	33	24	9	**	33	24	9		33	24	9	**

Scores are mean scores on the 5-step Likert scale. N the number of participants in the study presenting this problem. (* : improvement is significant, $p=0.05$; **: improvement is significant $p=0.01$).

For the last group of patients with miscellaneous sexual problems we found that this group responded well to holistic sexological treatment; the group increased its sexual ability significantly 0.79 step ($p=0.03$). This group did not significantly improve physical health, but mental health, and global quality of life was significantly improved (0.92 and 1.03 step respectively, with $p=0.01$ and 0.01). The improvement of sexual ability, health and quality of life indicates that Antonovsky-salutogenesis is also induced during the holistic treatment of this group. Self-rated self-esteem, ego-strength and social ability was also measured and the patients state where often improved in these important dimensions also (see table 1). We did not find any adverse effects and no serious negative events like suicide attempts, reactive psychosis or mental hospitalization during this study.

Ethical aspects

The most important ethical safeguards that were in place to protect the participants and therapist were the following:

- Full and complete written and oral information, including graphic illustration of the content of the therapy.
- Time to reflect about participation from informational session to the practical work.
- Everything was done under supervision; the therapists had individual supervision and they participated in a Balint group.
- The therapy followed the ethical guidelines of International Society for Holistic Health (ISHH) for holistic practitioners (64).
- Careful follow up with questionnaires about adverse effects and therapeutic outcome (qualitative and quantitative assessment and evaluation of the therapy).
- The research team has evaluated the process that is in place in the treatment organization to assure that the treatment was done according the described methods and ISHH ethical standards.

Manual sexological therapy must be performed according to the highest ethical standards (17,18). The holistic sexological procedures are derived from the holistic existential therapy, which involves re-parenting, massage and bodywork, conversational therapy, philosophical training, healing of existence during spontaneous regression to painful life events (gestalts) and close intimacy without any sexual involvement. In psychology, psychiatry and existential psychotherapy touch is often allowed, but a sufficient distance between therapist and client must always be kept, all clothes kept on and it is even recommended, that the first name is not taken into use to keep the relationship as formal and correct as possible. The reason for this distance is to create a safety zone that removes the danger of psychotherapy leading to sexual involvement.

The female patients in holistic existential therapy and holistic sexology with life-long anorgasmia often find their situation pretty hopeless; many of them have been dysfunctional and incurable for many years or they suffer from conditions for which there has been no efficient biomedical or psychotherapeutically cure. They suffer from a condition that is a

serious burden to their marital life, if they have a husband or often the problem makes them unable to find or keep a partner (65). Often the problem of anorgasmia is caused by traumas from earlier sexual abuse, which needs more effective and direct tools for the induction of healing (salutogenesis).

The primary purpose of the holistic existential therapy is to improve quality of life, secondary to improve health and ability. The severe conditions of the patients and the chronicity is what ethically justify the much more direct, intimate and intense method of holistic manual sexological therapy, which integrates many different therapeutic elements and works on many levels of the patient's body, mind, existence and personality at the same time. Holistic sexology is holistic existential therapy taken into the domain of sexology. The general ethical rule is that everything that does not harm and in the end will help the patient is allowed ("first, do no harm"), but we understand that this procedure is not accepted in many other countries due to sexual taboo and legal regulations.

It is though interesting that the sexological techniques have been used for centuries by physicians and for decades in Denmark also by alternative therapists outside the medical profession (17,18). An important aspect of the therapy is that the physician must be creative and in practice invent a new treatment for every patient. To use sexological techniques involving direct genital contact, the holistic sexologist must be able to control not only his/her behavior and most strictly avoid the danger of acting out the therapeutic session turning into mutual, sexual activity. The necessary level of mastery of this art can only be obtained through training, supervision and a third person present. The role of the sexologist is parentally accepting, generous and supporting, loving and therapeutic.

In this, study about 100 female patients with often-lifelong sexual problems received holistic sexological treatment and one in two of the patients solved their problem (16,18), but more importantly their whole life seemed to improve due to salutogenesis, or existential healing.

Discussion

Orgasmic dysfunction was the only sexual problem that holistic sexology did not significantly improve, in spite of the patients becoming better physically, mentally, and existentially. It might be that treating anorgasmia takes more than 20 sessions; it is also very likely that the larger sexological tools like direct sexual stimulation and the sexological examination (23-29) must be used to cure these patients, that seems to be more blocked and "neurotic" than the other groups of patients.

It is important to notice that sexological therapy always has been holistic; the development of holistic sexology and the manual sexological tools has seemingly improved the efficacy of the sexological treatment, but from the very beginning sexological treatment has been able to help at least one in two of the patients with problems related to desire, genital pain and orgasmic dysfunction, as the statistics of Masters and Johnson showed already in the 1960s (65).

The primary reason for the improvement of sexological therapy's impact on general health, quality of life, and ability seems to be the implementation of a better understanding of

the process of salutogenesis, or existential healing (62,63). The data presented here seems to support this hypothesis of “applied salutogenesis”.

All in all holistic sexology seems efficient for many types of sexual dysfunctions and genital pain. Not only sexuality, but also mental health and quality of life are also improved and often physical health also. This is a strong indication that holistic sexology can induce existential healing, or Antonovsky-salutogenesis. 20 sessions of therapy might be too little to help the female patients with the most severe sexual problems like anorgasmia.

Holistic sexology does not have any known side effects, and seems to be a fast and efficient way to help several kinds of sexually dysfunctional female patients.

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Effect of Vaginal Acupressure (Hippocratic Pelvic Massage)

We conducted a pilot study of 20 female patients with sexual problems, who received vaginal acupressure (VA) with a quantitatively and qualitatively evaluation. 50% (10 of 20) experienced to have their problem solved (NNT=2 for the outcome: “cured” (vs. “not cured”)) and none reported setbacks. 80% (16 of 20) rated the treatment of high quality and 80% rated it valuable (16 of 20) (NNT=1 for the outcome: helped (vs. “not helped”)).

Most reported their problems to be less serious and their general quality of life improved after the treatment. Only 17% (3 of 18) reported minor or temporary side effects and no significant side effects were found (NNH>18). VA was found statistically and clinically significant ($p<0.05$, improvement more than 0.5 step on a five point Likert scale) to help patients with chronic genital pains, pain or discomfort during sexual intercourse, lack of desire or orgasm, and subjective sexual insufficiency, and all patients taken as one group (about one step up a five point Likert scale).

Self-evaluated physical and mental health was significantly improved for the total group, the relationship with partner, the subjective sexual ability and the quality of life measured with QOL1 and QOL5 questionnaires. VA or Hippocratic pelvic massage is technically a simple procedure corresponding to the explorative phase of the standard pelvic examination, supplemented with the patient’s report on the feelings provoked followed by processing and integration of these feelings, but ethical aspects are complicated.

Acupressure through the vagina/pelvic massage must be done according to the highest ethical standard with great care, after content and obtaining the necessary trust of the patient within the framework of the local laws. It must be followed by conversational therapy and further holistic existential processing.

Introduction

Hippocrates (460-377 BCE), the “father of medicine” and the physicians at that time were aware of female sexual disease and his treatments included different physical procedures focused on the female pelvis, like smoking the vagina and massaging the pelvis (1). For

various reasons these treatments were later abandoned and some authors even found it a form of abuse by a medical profession with insufficient ethics (2). In holistic medicine the physician and his patients are almost always very “close” and ethics a subject of utmost importance. The practice of pelvic massage might even have been the cause and the need for medical ethics and the ability to make this procedure might be the very reason, why Hippocrates invented his strict medical ethics in the first place (3).

The technique of vaginal acupressure (VA) has been reviewed, developed and tested with a number of patients at the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine in Copenhagen (3). The purpose of the study was to evaluate the procedure on a larger number of patients and investigate the effects on their quality of life.

Acupressure through the vagina

Many women have problems related to their pelvis and its organs, dominated by sufferings of the sexual organs, problems of the urinary tract, the locomotor system, and the intestines (4). Another large group of patients have “non-anatomic” pelvic pains and discomforts of presumably psychosomatic nature, very difficult to treat with biomedicine, but seems to react better to psychosomatic treatments (5,6). The problems are from a holistic medical perspective often caused by unsolved emotional problems, which have been repressed into the pelvis and its organs (repressed memory or body memory). The emotional problems are related to negative beliefs about self, gender, body, organs and sexuality.

In our pilot study we included 20 women treated with acupressure through the vagina at the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine in Copenhagen. All patients presented with some problem(s) related to female sexuality. The study tested the hypothesis that holistic sexology with this procedure can heal old wounds on body and soul in order to improve the sexual ability, satisfaction and quality of life in general. The healing process has as in all other holistic therapy three obligatory steps, which we sum with the words: feel, understand, and let go (7-9).

First the emotions have to be felt again: we call this phase “putting feelings onto the body”. Then the patient has to find words, verbalize the emotions and understand where the problems are coming from: we call this “putting words on the feelings”. Finally the person healing has to let go of the negative attitudes and decisions that was made, when the trauma was caused: we call this “putting consciousness in the words”.

In the clinical work we use the therapeutic staircase, which give us the best insurance that we do not use a more invasive and potentially dangerous technique than necessary (10), or as Hippocrates said: “Declare the past, diagnose the present, foretell the future; practice these acts. As to diseases, make a habit of two things — to help, or at least to do no harm.” The Greek “First, do no harm” became “Primum non nocere” in Latin, a translation of the original perhaps, but some sources attribute “Primum non nocere” to the Roman physician, Claudius Galenus of Pergamum (131-201 AD), better known in English as Galen.

The procedure of acupressure through the vagina always builds on earlier sessions of acceptance through touch, which again come after sessions of emotional healing, trust, holding and to begin with always “love and care” for the patient.

This knowledge of healing life – improving health, quality of life and ability in one integrated movement - is well known and described in a number of books from the medical sciences cradle on the island of Cos around 300 BCE, known as *Corpus Hippocraticum*. Hippocrates was held to be the best physician of his time and father of the first scientific system of holistic healing. It is interesting that massaging the pelvis through its openings was an acknowledged method in ancient Greece (1) and was in normal use throughout Europe for centuries (2). This necessitated the very stringent medical ethics that was founded precisely by Hippocrates, probably as mentioned above with the purpose that he himself and his many pupils could give this kind of treatments.

Massage of the pelvic structures of a woman through the vagina and anus could among other things heal disturbances in the female energy system, known as a disease called “hysteria”, from the Greek word for uterus, *hysteria*. The treatment was in use in most of the western world until the industrial revolution, where it was condemned as pornographic and hence no longer an acceptable medical treatment.

Today after the sexual revolution in the 1960s and 1970s some therapists again work through the vagina and anus with this kind of therapy, either by using their hand to cure sexual and other problems (10), or by using a vibrant penis substitute (a “dildo”) to cure incontinence (11) or orgasmic problems (12). The Danish physiotherapist Birgitte Bonde reported that one to six sessions with the vibrator can help many incontinent women, who are not sufficiently helped by the standard program of training of the pelvic floor (11). The rationale for the use of the vibrator is that the woman cannot get in contact with their own pelvis, as they “cannot find their pelvic floor”, presumably because they have completely eradicated some of the pelvic structures from their inner description of their own body.

It is important to understand or realize that the procedure of acupressure through the vagina is the same exploration part of the standard pelvic examination by the physician or gynecologist, but in acupressure done so slowly that the woman can feel the emotions held by the different tissues contacted by the finger of the physician (13).

Our study

Twenty female patients received vaginal acupressure (VA) treatment for different sexual problems: chronic pain in the genitals (vulvodynia), pain or discomfort during sexual intercourse, problems with sexual desire, orgasmic malfunctioning, and other sexual inadequacy often combined with low self esteem and mental problems related to gender and sexuality.

It is important to notice that we introduced a slow pelvic examination with a therapeutic element, relevant for a wide range of psychosomatic disturbances related to gender and sexuality, from infertility to gynecological and sexual psychosomatic problems and the long-term consequences of child sexual abuse (13). On one hand this opens up for a clinical practice with many beneficial and healing qualities for the patient, because it allows a much closer and more intimate relationship between the patient and the physician that has been the traditional practice, but on the other hand this procedure has several disadvantages. In many cultures this cannot be practiced due to cultural or religious reasons and the sexual taboo being so strong, that the female will experience the process as overwhelming or even

insulting. In the United States it might be practically impossible to follow our recommendation in many cases, because of the time consumption, economics and reimbursement issues of this culture and the heavy “malpractice culture” in that country.

The most difficult problem of this procedure seems to be that it makes it very difficult to be sure that the procedure and all the involved steps are always necessary and rational. This procedure and the cultural issues involved means that it has a high potential for malpractice, but this can be minimized by the following steps: 1) Before the procedure is done, the patient must read about it with at least one case study to illustrate, to fully understand the emotional and existential implications of the procedure, so she has time to contemplate and make her decision of whether to accept or not; 2) The procedure is also orally presented by the physician to the patient before she signs the contract; 3) The physician must be in supervision to discuss the problems if any about borders, intimacy, emotional and sexual issues. Close supervision and full inter-collegial openness is the best prevention of malpractice, as malpractice often occur with physicians without a network and without openness about what is going on in their clinic (13) and 4) a third person present at the examination.

The participants completed the QOL5 and QOL1 questionnaires (14), before and after treatment. After the treatment they were interviewed about the side effects of the treatment, their experience of the treatment and the experienced quality and value of the treatment (see the questionnaire for the semistructured interview in appendix 1). The statistical method for estimating the level of significance was paired t-test in the SPSS statistical program. Informed consent was given before the procedure and the interview. The procedure was performed by a male physician and a female nurse present, except in a few cases where this was not possible.

Our study findings

18 out of 20 patients participated in the study. Of these six suffered from genital chronic pain or discomfort, 15 suffered from problems with sexual desire or orgasmic malfunctioning and 17 also had other sexual inadequacies (see table 1).

Ten patients felt they were helped by the VA treatment, while six patients did not feel any change in their symptoms. None of the patients felt any setbacks. Success rate evaluated on intention to treat basis was 50% (10 of 20).

The duration of the treatment was an average of eight weeks and four sessions, once every fortnight. Most patients rated their problem as serious before the treatment, and neither serious nor unserious after the treatment; the average improvement here was one step of a five point Likert scale independent of suffering. This is a positive and clinically significant improvement, as experienced by the patients. Most patients would choose the treatment again, if they needed it. Most patients had good expectations for their future sex life after the treatment. Most patients rated the quality of the treatment to be very high (10 cases), or high (6), and two rated it as average. Most patients rated the value of the treatment to be very high (13) or high (3), while one rated the value low and one as very low. Thus 80% (16 of 20 evaluated on intention to treat basis) of the patients found the treatment of high quality, and 80% (16 of 20 evaluated on intention to treat basis) of the patients found it valuable. Most patients had an understanding and supporting reaction from their surroundings (family, friends and partner), if they shared the information of receiving the treatment.

Table 1. The therapeutic effect of vaginal acupressure using QOL5+QOL1 before and after the VA treatment, and questions on quality, value and efficiency of the treatment after VA treatment. Please see appendix for the exact phrasing of the questions.

Question	2 Mean (How long did the patient have the problem/illness?) (Years)	3 Mean (How long did the VA treatment last?) (Weeks with one VA treatment every second week)	4 Mean (Was there an alternative medical treatment?) 1 Yes, 2 No	5 Mean (Has alternative treatment been tried?) 1 Yes, 2 No	6 Mean (How serious was the problems before the treatment?) Very serious (5) to not serious at all (1)	7 Mean (How serious was the problem to the patient after the treatment?) Very serious (5) to not serious at all (1)	Delta (7-6) Mean (p-value)
1 Chronic pain (N=2)	3.00	3.00	1.50	1.00	4.50	4.50	0.00 (0.50)
2 Pain/discomfort during sexual intercourse (N=6)	11.17	2.83	1.67	1.50	4.00	3.00	-1.00 (0.09)
3 Problems with sexual desire (N=12)	7.38	9.25	1.83	1.67	3.83	3.17	-0.66 (0.136)
4 Orgasmic dysfunction (N=12)	7.96	9.50	1.67	1.59	3.83	3.17	-0.66 (0.071)
5 Self-confidence/psychological problems related to gender and sexuality (N=17)	9.15	8.53	1.82	1.65	3.81	3.00	-0.81 (0.022)
6 Other subjects concerning sexual inadequacy (N=5)	9.40	13.80	1.40	1.60	3.60	2.20	-1.40 (0.005)
7 Other subjects (N=4)	13.25	5.25	1.50	1.50	4.25	3.00	-1.25 (0.80)
ALL (N=18)	8.92	8.11	1.78	1.61	3.82	3.06	-0.76 (0.023)
GroupA (1+2) Pain or discomfort (N=6)	11.17	2.83	1.67	1.50	4.00	3.00	-1.00 (0.089)
GroupB (3+4) Lack of desire or orgasm (N=15)	6.97	8.87	1.73	1.60	3.80	3.13	-0.67 (0.067)
GroupC (5+6) Subjective sexual inadequacy (N=17)	9.15	8.53	1.82	1.65	3.81	3.00	-0.81 (0.022)

Table 1. (Continued).

Groups/Question	11 Mean (Would you choose this treatment again if needed?) 1 Yes, 2 No	12 Mean How do you expect your sexuality to evolve in the future? Very good (1) to very bad (5)	13 Mean (Could your problems have been solved in any other way?) Yes (1), Maybe (2), No (3)	14 Mean (How would you grade the quality of the treatment?) Very high (1) to very low (5)	15 Mean (How would you grade the value of the treatment?) Very high (1) to very low (5)
1 (N=2)	1.00	2.50	2.50	2.00	3.00
2 (N=6)	1.17	1.67	2.67	1.50	1.83
3 (N=12)	1.00	1.58	2.58	1.67	1.75
4 (N=12)	1.00	1.58	2.58	1.59	1.75
5 (N=17)	1.06	1.53	2.59	1.59	1.65
6 (N=5)	1.00	1.20	2.40	1.40	1.80
7 (N=4)	1.00	1.75	2.75	2.00	2.00
ALL (N=18)	1.06	1.50	2.61	1.56	1.61
GroupA (1+2) (N=6)	1.67	1.67	2.67	1.50	1.83
GroupB (3+4) (N=15)	1.00	1.53	2.52	1.60	1.67
GroupC (5+6) (N=17)	1.06	1.53	2.59	1.59	1.65

The patients presented in the beginning of treatment a number of different symptoms categorized into the following seven subgroups:

- 1) Chronic genital pain
- 2) Pain/discomfort during sexual intercourse
- 3) Problems with sexual desire
- 4) Orgasmic malfunctioning
- 5) Self esteem/mental problems related to gender and sexuality
- 6) Other gender or sexual inadequacy
- 7) Other problems: _____

Because of the limited number of respondents the patients were also grouped according to their problems in general: Group A (1+2) was the patients, who suffered from chronic genital pains or discomforts, group B (3+4) was the patients that suffered from lack of disire or orgasm, while group C (5+6) suffered from other forms of sexual problems.

The following symptom groups were found to be helped statistically and clinically significant ($p < 0.05$, improvement more than 0.5 step on a five point Likert scale to the question "How serious was the problems before contra after?"):

- Group (2) "Pain/discomfort during sexual intercourse",
- Group A (1+2) "Genital pain or discomfort";
- Group B (3+4) "Lack of desire or orgasm", and
- Group C (5+6) "Subjective sexual insufficiency",
- All the patients taken as one group.

The treatment of all groups A-C had a good and remarkable effect on the specific problems (about one step up the Likert scale). Self-evaluated physical and mental health was also significantly and clinically improved for the total group of patients, also the relationship with partner, the subjective sexual ability and the quality of life measured with QOL1 and QOL5 questionnaires (see tables 1-3). It is important to notice the very large improvements in most of the dimensions.

Of the 18 patients only three (17%) reported side effects:

- Feelings of shame and guilt, a tear caused by an old scar being worked on, 4-5 days of bleeding and a little tenderness in an area known to the patient as a sore spot since childhood
- Genital soreness and a disturbed feeling in the body for 14 days
- "For some time I felt the pain I normally feel during intercourse: a soreness and an intense feeling of shame, and a strange feeling of weakness in the pelvic floor".

All side effects were temporarily, and none could be considered harmful. Acupressure through the vagina therefore seems to be practically without side effects or at least at the same level as the standard normal gynecological examination.

Below we present the experiences of the treatment and its results from nine patients that gave detailed information on question 10 in the questionnaire (see Appendix 1).

Female, aged 23 years, with psychological problems related to gender, sexuality and orgasmic dysfunction

The patient experienced that suppressed and unconscious material surfacing during the sessions. In therapy she got feelings like "everything is wrong", and at the same time she saw and felt how her problem changed and brought her further towards her personal development; she fluctuated between joy and "darkness" in the sessions.

Table 2. Clinical Effect of Vaginal Acupressure. Subjective physical and mental health, quality of relationship with partner, subjective sexual ability, and QOL (quality of life) before and after VA treatment.

Groups/Question	QOL5- ¹ before Subjective physical health Very good (1) to very bad (5) Mean	QOL5- ¹ after Subjective physical health Very good (1) to very bad (5) Mean	Delta QOL5-1 Mean (P-value)	QOL5- ² before Subjective mental health Very good (1) to very bad (5) Mean	QOL5- ² after Subjective mental health Very good (1) to very bad (5) Mean	Delta QOL5-2 Mean (P-value)	QOL5- ⁵ before Relationship with partner Very good (1) to very bad (5) Mean	QOL5- ⁵ after Relationship with partner Very good (1) to very bad (5) Mean	Delta QOL5- 5 Mean (P-value)
1 (N=2)	5.00	4.50	-0.50 (0.50)	3.00 (0.00)	3.50 (0.71)	-0.50 (0.50)	3.50 (0.00)	3.42 (0.12)	-0.08 (0.50)
2 (N=6)	3.17	2.50	-0.67 (0.102)	3.50	2.83	-0.67 (0.328)	3.67	2.97	-0.70 (0.058)
3 (N=12)	3.00	2.41	-0.58 (0.012)	3.17	2.58	-0.58 (0.152)	3.47	2.71	-0.76 (0.011)
4 (N=12)	3.17	2.41	-0.75 (0.002)	3.17	2.75	-0.42 (0.241)	3.42	2.94	-0.47 (0.071)
5 (N=17)	2.71	2.29	-0.41 (0.069)	3.35	2.47	-0.88 (0.011)	3.44	2.68	-0.76 (0.002)
6 (N=5)	2.60	2.00	-0.60 (0.070)	3.00	2.60	-0.40 (0.477)	3.23	2.90	-0.33 (0.408)
7 (N=4)	3.00	2.75	-0.25 (0.391)	3.00	2.50	-0.50 (0.495)	3.13	2.42	-0.71 (0.276)
ALL (N=18)	2.83	2.38	-0.44 (0.042)	3.33	2.50	-0.83 (0.012)	3.44	2.72	-0.72 (0.003)
GroupA (1+2) (N=6)	3.17	2.50	-0.67 (0.102)	3.50	2.83	-0.67 (0.328)	3.67	2.97	-0.70 (0.058)
GroupB (3+4) (N=15)	3.07	2.40	-0.67 (0.001)	3.20	2.60	-0.60 (0.082)	3.41	2.81	-0.60 (0.021)
GroupC (5+6) (N=17)	2.71	2.29	-0.41 (0.069)	3.35	2.47	-0.88 (0.011)	3.44	2.68	-0.76 (0.002)

Table 2. (Continued).

Groups/Question	A before Subjective sexual ability Very good (1) to very bad (5) Mean	A after Subjective sexual ability Very good (1) to very bad (5) Mean	Delta A (before, after) Mean (P-value)	QOL 5before Quality of life Very good (1) to very bad (5) Mean	QOL5after Quality of life Very good (1) to very bad (5) Mean	Delta QOL5 Mean (P-value)
1 (N=2)	5.00	4.00	-1.00 (0.50)	5.00	4.50	-0.50 (0.50)
2 (N=6)	4.17	3.17	-1.00 (0.041)	4.33	3.00	-1.33 (0.010)
3 (N=12)	4.08	3.00	-1.08 (0.012)	3.70	2.83	-0.87 (0.064)
4 (N=12)	4.00	3.25	-0.75 (0.082)	3.92	3.17	-0.75 (0.069)
5 (N=17)	3.88	3.00	-0.88 (0.014)	3.76	2.76	-1.00 (0.005)
6 (N=5)	3.40	3.20	-0.20 (0.799)	3.80	3.00	-0.80 (0.099)
7 (N=4)	3.50	2.25	-1.25 (0.080)	3.25	3.00	-0.25 (0.789)
ALL (N=18)	3.94	3.00	-0.94 (0.007)	3.83	2.83	-1.00 (0.003)
GroupA (1+2) (N=6)	4.17	3.17	-1.00 (0.041)	4.33	3.00	-1.33 (0.010)
GroupB (3+4) (N=15)	4.00	3.07	-0.93 (0.021)	3.80	2.93	-0.87 (0.022)
GroupC (5+6) (N=17)	3.88	3.00	-0.88 (0.014)	3.76	2.76	-1 (0.011)

Table 3. The Clinical Effect of Vaginal Acupressure. Paired sample T-test for the whole group (N=18).

		Mean difference	SD	t	df	Sig.
Pair 1	Self evaluated physical health QOL5-1 (before,after)	0.44	0.86	2.20	17	.042
Pair 2	Self evaluated mental health QOL5-2 (before,after)	0.83	1.25	2.83	17	.012
Pair 3	Self-assessed sexual ability A (befor,after)	1.00	1.24	3.43	17	.003
Pair 4	QOL 1 (before,after)	0.72	0.87	3.53	17	.003
Pair 5	QOL 5 (before,after)	0.94	1.30	3.07	17	.007
Pair 6	Improvement related to original problem Q6,Q7 (before,after))	0.76	1.25	2.52	17	.023

Female, aged 27 years, with psychological problems related to gender, sexuality, orgasmic dysfunction and lack of sexual desire

In the beginning of the therapy the patient found it very difficult to be touched on her body. Gradually as she progressed that became much easier. "I had problems letting him [the therapist] through my façade and let him touch me. I expected and hoped for a miracle to occur without my participation, since that would be far too embarrassing. I expressed my will to solve my problems by showing up in therapy, but I never took an active part in the process. I did not have the courage".

Female, aged 22 years, with psychological problems related to gender, sexuality, orgasmic dysfunction and lack of sexual desire

The patient felt safe with the therapy and able to let out all the feelings surfacing during the sessions. She experienced different states of her development, like at first being very small, and later the wish to be sexual and feel desire. She went through a lot of inner resistance. Later she realized that she was full of hate and disgust, which stopped her from giving in to her vulnerability and open up to her sexuality. “I was so full of hate. My pelvis was shaking, but it felt so good and relieving. Afterwards I felt incredibly wonderful”. The patient experienced that she, due to the acceptance of her by the physician (SV), managed to accept her own gender. She went through a lot of shame, sadness, anger and feelings of forced penetration and got all the way through to a point, where she could enjoy and express her sexual desire and achieve fantastic orgasms with her partner.

Female, aged 23 years, with orgasmic dysfunction and lack of sexual desire

The patient experienced the treatment as very painful emotionally, as a result of psychological traumas caused by sexual abuse in her childhood. She also described the relief in confronting the old pain with the support, acceptance and “love” or care of her therapist and holders. She processed a lot of shame and guilt. “I now have a more natural and accepting relation to my own sexuality. I no longer have the tensions connected to having sex with a boyfriend. I now feel the desire to have sex and I do not want to hold myself back the way I used to. Now I am able to accept male sexuality, which used to be a big problem for me. I realize that you get ill, if you do not accept your own nature”.

Female, aged 29 years, with huge discomfort, when touched directly on her genitals (primary vulvodynia)

VA was a highly painful procedure for the patient, who at first thought of her therapist as being evil. A nurse was present at the sessions to support the patient in processing her old pains of humiliation and embarrassment with her own sexuality – and as she slowly got through the old traumas during this therapy, the “genitals changed into a natural appearance. I have accepted my sexuality. It feels good to have sex with my boyfriend and the pain is gone. My labia changed shape – like withdrawing into my body like it accepted them as a part of me. The psychological and the physical part of me blended together and now I feel like a whole person”.

Female, aged 22 years, virgin with chronic pain (primary vulvodynia)

In the beginning of the therapy she thought of the treatment as barrier breaking. But as she also felt great trust in the methods and in her therapist she was able to give herself in to the process. She felt how she immediately began to blossom, and how sexuality became a natural part of her existence. After the treatment she was able to have sex with a partner and

enjoy it. About three months later new personal problems hit the surface. She felt reserved and unfeeling with the problems coming back.

Female, aged 27 years with orgasmic dysfunction and lack of sexual desire

She described how VA has helped her attain great sexual liberation, the ability to feel sexual desire and to let go of all her inhibitions. She now sees herself as a sexual being. She is orgasmic functional and values sex as highly important for the quality of life.

Female, aged 27 years with psychological problems related to gender, sexuality and lack of sexual desire

She hated life and hated herself. She was never able to find love anywhere. As a result of this she became numb and let herself get sexually abused by men she did not love or desire in any way. In therapy she needed to confront her old traumatic pain. At first she found it difficult to re-establish contact with her own body and had become very emotionally controlled. Letting go of this control was connected with great fear. During sessions she felt nervous and insecure, because the physician (SV) “looked at her” and she tried to escape her emotions. But as she realized that she was completely safe, she decided to let go of her control and she opened up to the experience of shame, humiliation and the huge pain in her self-abuse. She remembered how she hated herself even as a child for growing faster than her friends and being ashamed of her breasts, which made her withdraw from the world. Gradually as she went through the process and felt the acceptance from her therapist, she also began to get in touch with her self-acceptance and get a whole new experience from the treatment: “It’s extremely difficult, but after a while I feel that it’s really wonderful, I’m not ashamed and I just let the enjoyment spread all the way from vulva to my uterus and my whole body. It created a fantastic wild feeling, a healing energy and warmth going into my body. It felt like my heart, my breasts and my throat melted and opened up. The feeling was beyond words”.

Female, aged 30 years with no contact to feelings and sexuality (anorgasmic)

In therapy she worked with the condemnations that she experienced as a child regarding her sexuality. She found it extremely difficult being on the couch and was very tense. She was switching between the feeling of her borders being trespassed and the pure trust in her therapist to realize that this treatment would be of great help. She got focused on how she suppressed her sexual desire. During the session she experienced a warm feeling of desire, but condemned it herself. She was hugely embarrassed and would not allow the sensation to be present. She got the insight that she actually did have a lot of sexual feelings, but had denied them mentally. All she had to do was to awaken them in order to get back in contact with her

body. After a while the tensions disappeared. As the process proceeded she got deeper and deeper into her pain and the idea that other people would think of this as being morally reprehensible and scandalous. She started to feel great fear of condemnation and realized how she was always pre-occupied with doing “the right thing”. In spite of her fear she decided to let go of this need and stop holding back: “I feel the most wonderful desire...strange, I can’t explain it. I think I’m just experiencing all the desire that has been repressed during many years...It’s still hard, when I realize how excited I am, but I can’t fight it anymore...I hear myself breathing heavily and I feel the ecstatic sensations of orgasm waving through my body...I get the most wonderful feeling in my body and I am completely relaxed”.

In conclusion it seemed evident from the qualitative study of the patient that the majority felt helped by the VA treatment. Most patients found it valuable, also when the problem they originally presented has not disappeared. In general the patients were satisfied with the VA treatment.

Discussion

Acupressure through the vagina (VA) must be performed according to the highest ethical standards. The holistic sexological procedures are derived from the holistic existential therapy, which involves re-parenting, massage and bodywork, conversational therapy, philosophical training, healing of existence during spontaneous regression to painful life events (gestalts) and close intimacy without any sexual involvement (15). In psychology, psychiatry and existential psychotherapy (16,17), touch is often allowed, but a sufficient distance between therapist and client must always be kept, all clothes kept on and it is even recommended, that the first name is not taken into use to keep the relationship as formal and correct as possible (18). The reason for this distance is to create a safety zone that removes the danger of psychotherapy leading to sexual involvement.

The patients in holistic existential therapy and holistic sexology are often chronically sick, and their situation often pretty hopeless, as many of them have been dysfunctional and incurable for many years or they are suffering from conditions for which there are no efficient biomedical cure. Many are also unaware of body memory or repressed memory due to earlier traumatic stress (19-21) and some only open up for their earlier sexual abuse through this examination, because the touch becomes the trigger between body and soul.

The primary purpose of the holistic existential therapy is to improve quality of life, secondary to improve health and ability. The severe conditions of the patients and the chronicity is what ethically justify the much more direct, intimate and intense method of holistic existential therapy, which integrates many different therapeutic elements and works on many levels of the patient’s existence and personality at the same time. Holistic sexology is holistic existential therapy taken into the domain of sexology. The general ethical rule is that everything that does not harm and in the end will help the patient is allowed (“first do no harm”), but we understand that this procedure is not accepted in many other countries due to sexual taboo. It is though interesting that this or similar techniques have been used by many physicians (22-26) and in particular alternative therapists outside the medical profession (27-39). An important aspect of the therapy is that the physician must be creative and in practice invent a new treatment for every patient, as Yalom has suggested (40,41). To perform the

sexological technique of acupressure through the vagina the holistic sexologist must be able to control not only his/her behavior, but also his sexual excitement to avoid any danger of the therapeutic session turning into sexual activity. The necessary level of mastery of this art can only be obtained through training, supervision and a third person present. The role of the physician is asexual and therapeutic.

In our pilot study 20 female patients with sexual problems received acupressure through the vagina and evaluated both quantitatively and qualitatively with 50% (10 of 20) of the patients experienced that the procedure helped with their problem, 80% (16 of 20) of the patients rated the treatment as of high quality and 80% (16 of 20) rated it as valuable. Most reported their problems to be less serious and their general quality of life improved after the treatment. Acupressure through the vagina seemed to have no serious side effects and self-evaluated physical and mental health was significantly and clinically improved for the total group of patients. These results were in accordance with other researchers findings in studies of “physical therapy for the pelvic floor” (42), which basically is vaginal acupressure without the element of psychodynamic talk therapy.

We therefore conclude that acupressure through the vagina can help many women with chronic genital pains, coital discomfort, problems with sexual desire and orgasmic malfunctioning, and other problems of female sexuality. Acupressure through the vagina thus seems to be a safe and efficient procedure and important tool in the holistic medical toolbox. We recommend a full-scale clinical study of acupressure through the vagina. We also recommend that the patient treated with acupressure be contacted after 1-5 years, to prevent and handle any potential long-term negative effects of the treatment.

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Appendix 1

Scientific examination of the effect of vaginal acupressure at the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine, Copenhagen 2005

Patient's name _____

Date _____

Written accept of the treatment and the use of the data for scientific purpose.

I hereby accept, by my signature, to be part of the experiment of vaginal acupressure and that my data will be used for research in anonymized form. I have received the written patient formula and the article in Danish about vaginal acupressure (from Ny Medicin II (New Medicine newspaper))

Signature of the patient

Responsible for data collection: Herluf Riddersholm

Responsible for treatment: Søren Ventegodt

The following questions shall be written in words or as numbers in the questionnaire below

1) What was the problem/illness?

2) How long did the patient have the problem/illness? _____

3) For how long did the treatment last? _____

Define the problem using the possibilities below (more answers are allowed)

Chronic genital pain

Pain / Discomfort during sexual intercourse

Problems with sexual desire

Orgasmic malfunctioning

Self esteem / mental problems related to gender and sexuality

Other gender or sexual inadequacy

Other problems: _____

4) Was there an alternative medical treatment? 1 Yes, 2 No

5) Had the alternative treatment been tried? 1 Yes, 2 No

6) How serious was the problem to the patient before the treatment? Very serious (5) to not serious at all (1)? 5 4 3 2 1

7) How serious was the problem to the patient after the treatment? Very serious (5) to not serious at all (1)? 5 4 3 2 1

8) Describe the treatments. How was it to receive vaginal acupressure (or physical acceptance at the vulva/vagina?

Was there any side effects? 1 Yes, 2 No.

If yes, which occurred and for how long did they last?

10) Which problem/problems were solved through the treatment?

11) Would you choose this treatment again if needed? 1 Yes 2 No

12) How do you expect your sexuality to evolve in the future? (expectations to sexual capability and functioning)? Very good (1) to very bad (5). 1 2 3 4 5

13) Could your problems regarding /related to this treatment have been solved another way? Yes (1), Maybe (2) No (3). 1 2 3

14) How would you rate the quality of the treatment? Very high (1) to very low (5). 1 2 3 4 5

15) How would you rate the value of the treatment? Very high (1) to very low (5). 1 2 3 4 5

16) How was the reaction of your surroundings (family, friends, partner)?

QOL1: How would you assess the quality of your life now?

Answer: I: very high, II: high, III: neither high nor low, IV: low, V: very low

The QOL5 questionnaire for Clinical Databases:

Dear Mr/Mrs/Miss

In order to evaluate the benefits of appointments and treatments in the health services, we would like you to answer a few questions concerning your quality of life.

Please consider the questions carefully before answering. Then draw a circle around the most suitable answer.

QOL5-1. How do you consider your physical health at the moment ?

1 Very good

2 Good

3 Neither good or bad

- 4 Bad
- 5 Very bad

QOL5-2. How do you consider your mental health at the moment?

- 1 Very good
- 2 Good
- 3 Neither good or bad
- 4 Bad
- 5 Very bad

QOL5-3. How is your relationship with your partner at the moment ?

- 1 Very good
- 2 Good
- 3 Neither good or bad
- 4 Bad
- 5 Very bad /I do not have one

QOL5-4. How are your relationships with your friends at the moment ?

- 1 Very good
- 2 Good
- 3 Neither good or bad
- 4 Bad
- 5 Very bad

QOL5-5. How do you feel about yourself at the moment ?

- 1 Very good
- 2 Good
- 3 Neither good or bad
- 4 Bad
- 5 Very bad

Please make certain that you have answered all the questions. Thank you for your help.

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QOL5 + QOL1 were applied before and after the treatment. If the QOL5 + QOL1 data before treatment was not obtained initially as intended, the patient answered it in the end

twice, with both the actual and the initial values (retrospectively). In this case “retrospective” is noted in the questionnaire. Added to the QOL5+QOL1 questionnaire was also:

A) How would you rate your sexual ability these days? Very high (1) to very low (5). 1 2
3 4 5

Teaching Orgasm for Females with Chronic Anorgasmia using the Betty Dodson Method

Our objective in this study conducted together with Pia Struck from the European Orgasm Academy in Copenhagen was to test the Betty Dodson method of breaking the female orgasm-barrier in chronic anorgasmic women. The aim was sexual and existential healing (salutogenesis) through direct confrontation and integration of both the repressed shame, guilt and other negative feelings associated with body, genitals and sexuality, and of the repressed sexual pleasure and desire. We used a retrospective analysis of clinic data from holistic, sexological, manual therapeutic intervention, an intensive subtype of clinical holistic medicine (CHM). The patients received by Pia Struck 3x5 hours of group therapy (CHM) integrating short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy (STPP) and complementary medicine (CAM-bodywork, manual sexology similar to the “sexological examination”). The therapy used the advanced tools re-parenting, genital acceptance, acceptance through touch, and direct, sexual, clitoral stimulation. The clitoral vibrator was used. 500 female patients between 18 and 88 years old (mean of 35 years) with chronic anorgasmia (for 12 years on average) participated in the “orgasm course for anorgasmic women”. 25% of patients had never experienced an orgasm before. Results: 465 patients (93% of the patients) had an orgasm during therapy witnessed by the therapist and 35 patients (7%) did not. Postmenopausal women were as able to get orgasm as fertile women and so were women who never had an orgasm. No patients had detectable negative side effects or adverse effects. $NNT: 1.04 < NNT < 1.12$, $NNH > 500$. Therapeutic value: $TV = NNT / NNH > 446$. Conclusions: Holistic, sexological, manual therapy may be rational, safe, ethical and efficient.

Introduction

The female orgasm is a variable, transient peak sensation of intense pleasure, creating an altered state of consciousness, usually with an initiation accompanied by involuntary, rhythmic contractions of the pelvic striated circumvaginal musculature, often with

concomitant uterine and anal contractions, that resolves the sexually induced vasocongestion and myotonia, generally with an induction of well-being and contentment (1). Findings from surveys and clinical reports suggest that orgasm problems are the first or second most frequently reported sexual problems in women (1-4). Between 11% and 60% of adult women are suffering from lack of orgasm (2-4), depending on factors like culture and religion. On an individual level self-insight and a positive attitude towards own genitals and sexuality is important.

Female anorgasmia is a significant sexual problem; the woman who lacks orgasm often also lacks desire and joy of sexuality, has low self-esteem, often feels like a sexual failure, feels sexually wrong and ashamed of herself not being the “woman she was meant to be”. Perceptions of not being fully able to sexually satisfy her partner are normal, and quality of life is often low (3). The problem of female anorgasmia is from a psychodynamic perspective often going back to the parental lack of acceptance of the patient’s genitals, body and sexuality, often leading to intense feelings of shame and guilt, which seems to be repressed by a denial of physical and sexual needs, and accumulated in the pelvic and genital area (5,6). Sexual abuse and sexual traumas from rape and incest often cause lack of orgasm (7-11). If self-esteem is low, it is our clinical observation that there can be lack of orgasm from the simple psychological reason that the patient has not deserved such pleasure, or do not know how to get it. It is very likely that anorgasmia is a socially inherited sexual dysfunction, but this has never been investigated scientifically. It is generally believed that anorgasmia as most other sexual dysfunctions are caused by a disturbed, psychosexual development.

Holistic medicine has cared about female sexual problems from its very beginning (12), using among other methods the famous method of Hippocratic pelvic massage, often called “vaginal acupressure” or “vaginal massage” in the Nordic countries (13,14).

Holistic sexological manual therapy is a new and developing field integrating efficient methods from standard medical sexology, Hippocratic medicine, and CAM (complementary and alternative medicine). There are many ways of working manually with the female sexual dysfunctions in the sexological clinic; from simple therapeutic touch, and acceptance through touch (6,15), to vaginal acupressure (12-14) and manipulation and stretching the pelvic muscles through the vagina. Direct sexual stimulation in the holistic medical clinic i.e. with clitoral vibrator is a new, radical and efficient approach, where the barrier created by accumulated and repressed shame, guilt, and lack of acceptance is taken down by direct and confrontational sexological work, taking the woman all the way to orgasm in the clinical setting (16). Whenever there is a physical contact with the female genitals there is a possibility for de-charging of emotions repressed to the tissues that can be used therapeutically (17).

The method can also be used for treatment of genital and pelvic pain (6,18-20), but we have not been collecting the data to document this in the present study. We believe the method used in this study helped the patients to heal not only sexually but also existentially (21); the group setting and the therapist’s unusual willingness to use herself and her own sexuality as a tool in the therapy seemingly accelerated the process of healing (22) and caused no adverse effects. The many qualitative interviews with the patients indicated that the intervention also often alleviated mental, social, existential and other problems (23-27), but this has not been quantitatively documented in this study.

A retrospective look at work with females

The clinical holistic therapy used short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy (STPP) in combination with the advanced holistic tools of re-parenting, genital acceptance, acceptance through touch, and direct, sexual, clitoral stimulation. The aim was sexual and existential healing (salutogenesis) through direct confrontation and integration of both the repressed shame, guilt and other negative feelings associated with body, genitals and sexuality, and of the repressed sexual pleasure and desire. The CAM-bodywork included use of clitoral vibrator.

When discussing the CAM-bodywork use of clitoral vibrators, it must be presented in a manner that communicates the scientific nature of the process. In the USA, the use of vibrators in funded research might in some States be considered unethical or even illegal. We understand that it might be difficult to get this presented research accepted in these States; but Betty Dodson PhD has been doing this work in 1973-1995 in New York City, and her method is now being used and further developed by many complementary therapists in USA and Europe. We therefore find that it is time to address this kind of work scientifically, and we hope that we will be able to present it carefully, that this quite radical work in holistic sexuality can be understood and appreciated.

The clitoral vibrator chosen for the treatment was Hitachi Magic Wand, which has a very large head designed for efficient transference of vibrations to the vulva and clitoral region without causing soreness or irritation of the tissue. It can be used for an extended length of time compared to other vibrators, which is important when treating an-orgasmic women with delayed orgasmic response. From a psychodynamic perspective we find it interesting to notice that bodily pleasure seems to be even stronger repressed than emotional pain, and many layers of shame and unpleasant feelings must often be confronted before the female patient reaches the plateau of orgasm; this process needs prolonged sexual stimulation combined with therapeutic processing of emerging negative feelings and emotions, which is made possible by the specific design of this vibrator. Of course this could also be done manually (compare the historical discussion below).

The therapeutic intervention: We used the confrontational method developed by Betty Dodson. Dodson has for 40 years been known in USA as “the mother of female masturbation”, and she has spent her life teaching women to accept their own body and sexuality and allowing themselves the pleasure of genital satisfaction, alone and with a partner. Her motto is known from her many books and videos as “transforming masturbation to self-love”. To our knowledge this is the first time her method has been tested scientifically. The program has been adjusted to the Danish culture and changed according to our understanding of holistic therapy. Pia Struck has developed a program of anatomical and physiological teachings including Betty Dodson’s films, followed by intensive, existential, group therapy with very strong elements of sexual confrontation – a concept that can be boiled down to “encountering and accepting your own body and sexuality, and your genitals in structure and functioning” as well as applying all of the means of the body in order to be able to encompass higher levels of sexual excitement. An important aspect of the therapy is the therapeutic energy work (level 7 in (16)), involving the patient’s pelvic floor muscles, hip movements, making her pushing the pubic bone forward while tensing and releasing the musculature of the whole body, adding sound, complimented with different kinds of breath

work including holotropic breath work. Sexual fantasies are encouraged, while she is stimulating all her erotic zones, including breast and nipple stimulation, and clitoral, vaginal and anal stimulation. A key tool is thus the prolonged masturbation with variety and diversity. Every possible thing is done to make the female patient confront her emotional resistance related to her sexuality and to support her experience of a full body orgasm.

During therapy the therapist will give the patient a nurturing attention together with direct accepting digital contact of the vulva (level 8 in (16)). The sessions in nude is started with group psychodrama where every female patient takes the role as copulating male standing in the intercourse position of taking the female from behind; this allows for a deep emotional confrontation of the penetrating male energy, and prepare the female patient to accept being the feminine pole. This is followed by a visual confrontation of own genitals, in a room where everybody is nude, including the female therapist. In a later session the clitoral vibrator (Hitachi Magic Wand) is used by everybody present in the room to induce orgasm. In this phase the patient learns to engage her whole body in sexuality, and letting it free (freeing the Freudian “Id”, or animal aspect of the human being).

Before the intervention (3x5 hours of group therapy), written information on the intervention was given, and before giving consent to the actual therapeutic procedure, a video-introduction was given to the patients, demonstrating the procedures. After the course the patients were instructed to masturbate according to a schedule for further improvement.

The patients were not told that they were participating in a study, as the project was planned to take place in two phases; a test phase not planned for publication, in which only the patients age, number of recent, an-orgasmic years, actual presence or lack of patient’s ability to achieve orgasm on the course, and adverse effects, were registered, and a second phase now being planned, collecting much more detailed information. As we have found the already collected data of significant, scientific value we have been including them in our database for quality of life research, and presented them in the present paper; the protocol making the use of the data possible has been approved by the local Scientific Ethical Committee of Copenhagen, Denmark. The combination of short-term psychodynamic therapy and CAM has lead to holistic, sexological, manual therapy; the method used in this study is a highly confrontational style of clinical holistic medicine, where the therapy jumps right to the rehabilitation of genital sexuality; it is known from other similar studies that this kinds of therapy is efficient in curing sexual and other health problems (28-33).

The therapist in this retrospective study was Pia Struck, who is co-chairman of the Danish Association for Sexology, who has been trained in psychodynamic psychotherapy during 1988-1991 and she had at the beginning of the study 10 years of professional experience with the treatment of sexual dysfunctions, supplemented in 2001 with personal sexological training by Betty Dodson.

We used retrospective analysis of clinic data from holistic, sexological, manual therapeutic intervention, an intensive subtype of clinical holistic medicine (CHM). The patients received 3x5 hours of group therapy (CHM) integrating short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy (STPP) and complementary medicine (CAM-bodywork, manual sexology similar to the “sexological examination” (see below)) and each paid 500 EURO for participation in the treatment program. Data were collected before, during visitation and after the last session using interviews.

500 chronically anorgasmic female patients between 18 and 88 years old (35 years in average) participated in the “orgasm course for an-orgasmic women”. On average the patients

had not had an orgasm for 12 years in average, and one in four had never experienced an orgasm before. 50 of these patients were treated individually (one-on-one), because they felt uncomfortable with participating in the group.

The visitation procedure ensured that the therapist knew when participants had histories of childhood sexual abuse and she made sure that they actually engaged in search for healing, not in an activity that allowed them to recreate their past histories of abuse. 17% of participants claimed sexual abuse in childhood; eight patients reported that they had been diagnosed as being mentally ill, six with major depression, and these six patients all reported a significant improvement following therapy. Three patients dropped out during treatment. The patients that dropped out had no adverse effects like reactive psychosis or re-traumatization from the therapy, and no serious events like mental hospitalization or suicide attempts happened to the patients during therapy. The patients were interviewed for about one hour after the therapy, to be sure that the patients showed no signs of psychosis and had no significant side effects from the course at this time, and no patients reported side effects or experiences likely to be caused by re-traumatization. There were no follow up procedures, but everybody was encouraged to return for a free session if they had problems from the therapy later; no patients used this offer.

Subjective experience of having an orgasm in combination with therapist direct observation of the patient having orgasm judged from “objective orgasmic behavior”: impression of altered state of consciousness, involuntary, rhythmic contractions of the pelvic and other musculature, vaginal and anal contractions, in combination with induction of well-being and contentment. The therapist was visually monitoring the vaginal and anal contractions. Every patient was interviewed qualitatively in the end of therapy to assess whether or not they had experienced orgasm, and the patient’s experience was compared to the therapist’s objective observations. Based on these data it was concluded if the therapy had been successful in this regard or not.

What did we find in this evaluation study?

Over 110 courses held during 2001-2007 in Copenhagen and Aarhus in Denmark with 3-6 participants in each period and 500 patients in total, only one course in three had a patient that did not get orgasm (a total of 35 patient, or 7%). 93% of the patients had orgasm on during the course witnessed by the therapist. 50 patients needed individual therapy instead of group therapy; this was done successfully and gave no problems with transference and counter transference in spite of female therapist and patient being alone in the session. The problems arising from sexual transference and counter transference (34-37) can be hard to identify as such by the therapist, but are normally quite obvious for a supervisor; the therapist was in supervision during the whole period of treatment, but the supervisor did not at any time notice any problems related to sexual transference or counter transference in the therapy.

Some of the 35 patients that did not obtain orgasm reported to have an orgasm after the course, but this was not systematically registered due to limited resources for research and no follow up-procedure in this study. Many positive effects of therapy were reported, like markedly increase in self-esteem and quality of life, but these effects were not systematically investigated.

Postmenopausal women were as able to get orgasm as fertile women and so were woman who never had an orgasm, but they more often became sore from using a vibrator. The results indicated that the aetiology of orgasmic dysfunction is a disturbance of the female psychosexual development. NNT (number needed to treat): As 93% of 500 patients (95% CI: 89%-96%) were cured from anorgasmia, then NNT (number needed to treat to benefit) is calculated to be $1.04 < \text{NNT} < 1.12$.

In this study all participants were specifically interviewed about any negative side effects of the treatment, and we very carefully evaluated if there had been any signs of sexual violation (i.e. signs of retraumatization) or complaints over experienced sexual violation (which most often is caused by transferences (34-37), but still must be thoroughly investigated), and we found none. Brief reactive psychoses and re-traumatization were specifically looked for but not found.

Being able to identify and address adverse reactions should include a process carefully documented with objective criteria that protects the researcher and the participant. In this CAM-study, this was simple, there were no reports at all of significant negative somatic or mental side effects, and thus no need of any objective evaluation of the side effects; the only adverse effect we found was soreness from the physical stimulation of the vulva, which always was temporary.

Patients who were severely sexually traumatized earlier in life often had some emotional difficulties, while their “old wounds” healed in the weeks after the therapy. Patients who were mentally ill (with diagnosed borderline condition or major depression, sometimes on antidepressants) were included in the study and all reported feeling mentally better after the intervention. No patients had severe, developmental crises or developed psychiatric disturbances, like depression or psychosis.

Many patients reported positive additional benefits such as increased desire and quality of life, higher self-esteem, better relation to partner etc. (see case reports at www.OrgasmAcademy.eu). The method of direct sexual stimulation in manual sexological therapy has no significant, negative side effects or adverse effects.

NNH (number needed to treat to harm): As none of the 500 patients reported significant side effects, in spite of extremely confrontational sexological therapy, it is safe to conclude that even the most intensive and provocative tools of the advanced toolbox of clinical holistic medicine (CHM, short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy combined with CAM/Bodywork) is safe for the patients, if used correctly. $\text{NNH} > 500$. If we include the 500 patients treated in other studies with CHM we find that $\text{NNH} > 1,000$ (28-32). Calculation of “therapeutic value” $\text{TV} = \text{NNH}/\text{NNT}$: Using the largest value of NNT, we find $\text{TV} = \text{NNH}/\text{NNT} > 500/1.12 = 446$.

Ethical aspects

The most important ethical safeguards that should be in place to protect the participants and therapist are the following:

- Full and complete information, including video demonstration of the content of the therapy.

- Time to reflect about participation from video demonstration to the practical work.
- Everything is done under supervision; the participants supervise every process in the group and supervisor carefully supervises the therapist. Supervision was done especially careful when it came to one-on-one therapy and the therapist was not naked in these sessions. One-on-one therapy was only done, because the patients did not want to be treated with other people in the room, as described above.
- The therapy follows the ethical guidelines of the International Society for Holistic Health (ISHH) for holistic practitioners.
- Careful follow up with interview about adverse effects and therapeutic outcome (qualitative assessment) and evaluation of the therapy.
- The research team has evaluated the process that is in place in the treatment organization to assure that the treatment was done according the described methods and ISHH ethical standards.

Manual sexological therapy with direct sexual stimulation must be performed according to the highest ethical standards. The holistic sexological procedures are derived from the holistic existential therapy, which involves re-parenting, massage and bodywork, conversational therapy, philosophical training, healing of existence during spontaneous regression to painful life events (gestalts) and close intimacy without any sexual involvement (13,14). In psychology, psychiatry and existential psychotherapy touch is often allowed, but a sufficient distance between therapist and client must always be kept, all clothes kept on and it is even recommended, that the first name is not taken into use to keep the relationship as formal and correct as possible. The reason for this distance is to create a safety zone that removes the danger of psychotherapy leading to sexual involvement.

The female patients in holistic existential therapy and holistic sexology with life-long anorgasmia often find their situation pretty hopeless; many of them have been dysfunctional and incurable for many years or they suffer from conditions for which there has been no efficient biomedical or psychotherapeutically cure. They suffer from a condition that is a serious burden to their marital life, if they have a husband; often the problem makes them unable to find or keep a partner. Often the problem of anorgasmia is caused by traumas from earlier sexual abuse, which needs more effective and direct tools for the induction of healing (salutogenesis).

The primary purpose of the holistic existential therapy is to improve quality of life, secondary to improve health and ability. The severe conditions of the patients and the chronicity is what ethically justify the much more direct, intimate and intense method of holistic manual sexological therapy, which integrates many different therapeutic elements and works on many levels of the patient's body, mind, existence and personality at the same time. Holistic sexology is holistic existential therapy taken into the domain of sexology. The general ethical rule is that everything that does not harm and in the end will help the patient is allowed ("first, do no harm"), but we understand that this procedure is not accepted in many other countries due to sexual taboo and legal regulations.

It is though interesting that this or similar techniques have been used for centuries by many physicians (13,14) and in particular alternative therapists outside the medical profession

(13,14). An important aspect of the therapy is that the physician must be creative and in practice invent a new treatment for every patient. To use a sexological technique involving direct sexual, clitoral stimulation the holistic sexologist must be able to control not only his/her behavior and most strictly avoid the danger of acting out the therapeutic session turning into mutual, sexual activity. The necessary level of mastery of this art can only be obtained through training, supervision and preferably a third person present, which is one of good reason for doing this in a group setting. Sometimes the patients are too shy to have more than the therapist present in the room; in this case the therapy can only be done one-on-one, and this has not caused problems. The role of the sexologist is parentally accepting, generous and supporting, loving and therapeutic.

The treatment included patient's masturbation under supervision and instruction. The client uses under therapist's instruction the clitoral vibrator after initial, digital stimulation. In this, study 500 female patients with often-lifelong anorgasmia received direct sexual stimulation of clitoris during the therapy and 93% of the patients experienced that the procedure solved their problem. The success of this study gives us one more very important tool for holistic medicine; together with the other tools of holistic manual therapy like acceptance through touch and acupressure through the vagina we now have tools for solving problems related to female sexual dysfunction. We therefore conclude that direct sexual stimulation can be a safe and efficient procedure and an important new tool in the holistic medical toolbox.

Discussion

The history of direct sexual stimulation as sexological therapy

Direct sexual stimulation of women has a long history; before the use in the sexological examination (see below) it was used in holistic medicine for millennia. In the Corpus Hippocratic, "hysteria" is described as a disease caused by the energies related to the womb, treatable with exercise and pelvic massage (12,38); Celcus and Soranus recommended in the first century AD genital massage for hysteria (39,40); Aretaeus Cappadox recommended the same in the third century AD based on Hippocrates (41); Galen (ca. A.D. 129-200) also understood "hysteria" as caused by lack of psychosexual development (42); he carefully describes, obviously based on Hippocrates, the procedure of genital massage therapy, resulting in the contractions and the release of fluid from the vagina, after which the patient was relieved of her symptoms. The great respect for Hippocrates and Galen made the procedure of genital massage a standard procedure until the end of the nineteenth century (43). Äetius of Amida (502-75) thus described in "Tetrabiblion" a uterine contraction, muscle spasm of the entire body, and discharge of fluid from the vagina (44); Muschion's Gynaecia describes the procedure a little differently as manual therapy of the vulva (45). Rhazes, an Arab physician described a similar procedure around 900 AD (43)]. It is not clear from most medieval sources whether the manipulation of the female genitals needed to go all the way to orgasm to be therapeutic (43), but many sources wrote that it is necessary to continue the massage treatment until the vagina discharges its fluid, indicating that the physicians massage must be sexually stimulating for the therapy to work (43) and the descriptions of universal

muscle contractions mentioned above leave little doubt that the treatment was taken all the way to orgasm. It is clear that many different styles of genital massage have been used, some concentrating on raising the energy of the uterus, like Hippocrates and others like Muschion and Rhazes focusing more on the sexual stimulation of the vulva. The many historical sources leave little doubt that physicians for millennia have successfully used this kind of massage therapy to heal the female patient and free her from severe physical, mental, existential and sexual problems. The rationale for such a therapy that seems strange and quite mysterious for most modern physicians is that there is a close statistical connection between sexual maturity and physical and mental health and general well-being, as recent research has documented (46-60).

Comparison with the traditional sexological examination

Reich, Hartman, Fithian, Morgan, Hoch and other researchers in sexology developed in the middle of the last century a sexological intervention they called “sexological examination” (61-68). With regard to the obvious, abovementioned, ethical problems in treating with direct sexual stimulation, we must emphasize that this “sexological examination” from the beginning included the method of direct sexual stimulation (65]. The method is in contemporary use by Hartman, Fithian and many others. Hartman and Fithian noted that they do not as a part of the examination intentionally stimulate the patient to “a high level of arousal”, but “some women do become aroused, and occasionally a sex flush will be observed in the process practice of the vaginal caresses”(68).

The sexological examination involves all parts of the genitals including vagina, the labia minores and majores, and the clitoris (62-68). It is noteworthy that the tradition of sexological examination seemingly has been without ethical difficulties; the reason for this is presumably that everything in the sexological clinic is taking place after consent and obviously justified by the severity of problems of sexual dysfunction often completely destroying the patient’s sexual and marital life. Some of the obligatory steps of the sexological examination are according to Hartman and Fithian (68):

- Acquainting the female with her own body to dispel some of the feeling that the genital area is a special place forbidden for all but physicians to see.
- Searching for areas where nerve endings come together in a systematic way, suggesting that this may develop positive feelings.
- Assisting women in determining areas of perception, feeling, and awareness in their vagina. Pointing out areas in the vagina that tend to be more sensitive and responsive for many women (i.e., 12 o'clock, 4 o'clock, and 8 o'clock positions).
- Determining a woman's response and arousal patterns. Indicating to her whether or not she lubricates well and vasocongests when she does.
- Locating areas digitally that may be producing pain, discomfort, or problems with sexual arousal or intercourse—such as separation of muscle in the vaginal wall; long labia minora; scarring, which may be tender or fibrous—and to pinpoint the source of "pain" when present.

- More important than the stimulation of the clitoris in the female sexological examination is the determination of whether or not clitoral adhesions are present. This is a condition where the prepuce is stuck or adhered to the glans clitoris. For preorgasmic women, the inability of the clitoris to withdraw as part of sexual arousal may prevent particular women from full response. Even though some women are orgasmic with clitoral adhesions, freeing them usually results in easier, quicker orgasms and less discomfort due to calcified, trapped smegma.
- Identifying, where present, reasons for vaginismus, which are not only physiological but psychological.

The sexological examination was called an examination, not a treatment, presumably to make it more acceptable to the public, but it has always been as much a treatment as an examination (61-68). When we consider this, we must conclude that the method of direct sexual stimulation in itself is not remarkable or problematic; it is a traditional sexological tool for treating sexual dysfunction. What is different with the Betty Dodson method is the obligatory step of supporting the patient in going all the way to experiencing a full orgasm during the therapy.

Discussion

The holistic, manual, sexological therapy used in this study was performed in the feminist tradition of nudity, expressive sexuality, genital self-exploration with mirrors, and common masturbation in a group of females. It also build on the 40-year long process of sexual liberation in the western societies, making it little problematic for Danish women of all ages to participate in the group and share their sexual problems. The efficient elements of the highly confrontational method for breaking the female orgasm-barrier in patients with anorgasmia seems to be re-parenting, genital self-touch, acceptance through touch, and the direct, sexual, clitoral stimulation in therapy, allowing all the difficult feelings associated to genitals, the pelvis and body, and sexually to emerge for be processed in therapy. The clitoral vibrator was used.

In the traditional sexological examination the therapist is not naked, the therapist is often male, and therapy happens without the common masturbation that seems to be an important aspect of Dodson's treatment, presumably because of the emotional resistance provoked by this radical procedure. The patients are normally not taken all the way to orgasm, although this occasionally happens, without this becoming a problem or in conflict with the ethical rules. On the other hand Betty Dodson sometimes avoids the digital stimulation of her female patients genitals that is obligatory in the sexological examination, by using the mechanical stimulator. The specific features of masturbation and nudity that makes Betty Dodson's method spectacular and somewhat alienating, controversial and strange to normal therapists, especially if they are trained as physicians or nurses, seems to be there to enhance the therapeutic resistance work; other elements like direct sexual stimulation are, in spite of their radical nature, traditional elements of the "sexological examination", and also of the Hippocratic tradition of psycho-sexual healing and salutogenesis. All this indicates that the

tool of direct sexual stimulation of the patient should be accepted as a usable therapeutic tool, and added to the advanced holistic medical toolbox.

We know for sure that not too many therapists would like to masturbate naked with their patients in the future. We also know now that direct sexual stimulation is one of the most powerful tools of holistic, sexological, manual therapy, and has been so for millennia. As 11-60% of all women on the planet seems to be struggling with anorgasmia and problems related to sexual pleasure and desire often destroying their sexual life or hindering them in having a happy and successful marital life, we cannot afford to be “tight” and moral in our attitude towards this powerful, medical tool, and let the patients down that so desperately need it.

Manual sexological work taking the female patient to orgasm is creating a huge arousal in the patient, and can obviously also be sexually gratifying for the therapist, also without the therapist acting out. Sexuality is pleasurable, this is how we are made as human being, and there is nothing we as sexually normal therapists can do about it. But we can be extremely certain that we have the training needed and the ethics needed to prevent us from acting out sexually towards our patients during the therapy. In this study we very carefully evaluated if there had been any signs of sexual violation or complains over experienced violation (which most often is caused by transferences but still must be thoroughly investigated) and we found none.

The correct indication for direct sexual stimulation needs some reflection. The Hippocratic physicians used hysteria and poor psychosexual development as sufficient indication; in our study the indication was anorgasmia. As it is well known from recent research (46-60) psychosexual development and mental illness seems to be very closely related, as Hippocrates, Galen, Freud, Jung, Reich and many more physicians has realized.

Direct sexual stimulation can obviously be used to facilitate the sexual development of the an-orgasmic woman (often describes as caught in infantile autoerotism); the next important research question is if the much more subtle shift from immature clitoral sexuality, closely correlated to neurotism and immature psychological defenses (46), to mature vaginal sexuality can also be facilitated by the tool of direct sexual stimulation. Our own findings here and in other studies (13,14,28-33,37) and the above mentioned findings of Brody et al (46-60) of strong associations between genital maturity and a number of aspects of health justifies such a study. From a theoretical perspective it is highly likely that the resistance work done in this kind of therapy is quite unique, and therefore of great value when other methods fails.

It is not clear to us if there are ethical problems connected with using the diagnosis of immature sexuality as indication for the treatment with direct sexual stimulation; obviously there have been no ethical problems with this treating on such an indication during the history of the European physicians, so it is hard to see why there should be ethical problems today, as long as the intent is to help the patient, and as long as the treatment is documented to give this help.

It must be recalled that every procedure that allows the therapist to take the patient into her resistance will be therapeutic and helpful, so the wise answer might be to let the resistance of the patient guide the choice of the proper therapeutic tools of the holistic sexological treatment as recommended by Reich, the founder of sexology (61).

Conclusions

Lack of orgasm is a very serious sexual problem for countless millions of women of our time as 11%-60% or all women seem to suffer from lack of orgasm, without getting the help they need, neither from their physician, their gynecologist, psychotherapist, or their sexologist and they often live their whole life with anorgasmia and related problems. Most surprisingly almost all women can learn to have an orgasm in holistic therapy, with 93% of female patients experiencing orgasm after only 15 hours of holistic, sexological, manual therapy using the tool of direct, sexual stimulation (16), in spite of the patient never having had an orgasm. Postmenopausal women are just as able to get orgasm as fertile women in the therapy.

The female orgasm barrier seems to be caused primarily by the parental lack of acceptance of the girl's genitals and sexuality, and other sexual traumas leading to arrested psychosexual development. This theory seems to be in accordance with the presented results: that it can be healed simply by giving the acceptance to body, sexuality and genitals that the patients never received, and thereby rehabilitating the lost self-acceptance. A combination of parental acceptance, acceptance through touch, and direct sexual, clitoral stimulation allowed the patients to confront and let go of the shame, guilt and other negative feelings that during the patient's upbringing had been connected to genitals and sexuality. Holistic, sexological, manual therapy is extremely efficient, and sexologists who are trained in psychodynamic psychotherapy and ethics of therapy can use the tools of direct sexual, clitoral stimulation when psychodynamic psychotherapy and less sexually confrontational bodywork cannot solve the female patients' problems related to orgasm and sexual desire.

Manual sexological examination and treatment has been a practical tool in sexology for at least 50 years, and before that it was a part of the holistic medical tradition. Holistic, sexological, manual therapy is therefore likely to also be efficient with the other sexual dysfunctions like lack of sexual desire, vaginismus and genital pain/vulvodynia, low sexual self-esteem, and poor psychosexual development in general, but this needs further scientific investigation.

To prevent the huge problem of female anorgasmia in the future generations we need to work on a societal and cultural level, to develop parental positive attitudes towards the child's sexuality, body and genitals. Of course this will start with the parents themselves learning to accept their own bodies and sexuality, and especially with the mother learning to have orgasms herself, as it judged from the present findings is most likely that anorgasmia is a socially inherited, sexual dysfunction.

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Impaired Self-Rated Ability of Functioning Sexually Improved by Psychodynamic Short-Term Therapy Complemented with Bodywork

In this chapter we look at a clinical follow-up study conducted to examine the effect of clinical holistic medicine (psychodynamic short-term therapy complemented with bodywork) on patients with poor self-assessed sexual ability of functioning. We found that this problem could be solved in 41.67% of the patients ((95% CI: 27.61% - 56.7%; NNT=2,48 (1.75<NNT<3.62, p=0.05)). The bodywork was inspired by Marion Rosen's method and helped the patient to confront painful emotions from childhood trauma and thus accelerated and deepened the therapy. The goal of therapy was the healing of the patient's whole life through Antonovsky-salutogenesis. In this process, rehabilitation of the patient's character and purpose of life is essential, and assisting the patient recover his sense of coherence (existential coherence) is the primary intent. We conclude that clinical holistic medicine is the treatment of choice if the patient is ready to explore and assume responsibility for his existence (true self) and is willing to struggle emotionally in the therapy to reach this important goal. When the patient heals existentially, both quality of life, health and ability of functioning in general is improved in the same time.

Introduction

In some studies it has been shown that 25-50% of the western population complains about sexual issues (1). We measured sexual ability in 109 patients who entered the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine for the years 2004-2005 (2-4) and found that 48 of these patients complained about significant sexual issues regarding their self-assessed ability of sexual function. These patients entered a sexological study where their sexual ability could be addressed directly or (more often) indirectly through rehabilitation of their natural being and knowledge of self. The intention was healing their whole life, more precisely induction of

Antonovsky salutogenesis (5,6). A recent paper documented that this effort has generally achieved successful outcomes with patients diagnosed as having somatic, mental, existential, or sexual issues (7). In this study, we analyzed the effect that this treatment had on the patients with the most significant sexual problems.

Our experience

The patients were included in our study, if they assessed their sexual ability of functioning as impaired or very impaired before the treatment started. They received treatment with clinical holistic medicine (2-4), a kind of psychodynamic short-term therapy earlier found effective on a long range of health problems (9-13). The patients were also evaluated for sexual issues that existed along three axes: desire, orgasmic dysfunction and sexually related pain (mostly pain during intercourse, primary vulvodynia, or pelvic tension pain) (14). The body work was inspired by Marion Rosen and helped the patients to confront old emotional pain from childhood trauma repressed to the body-mind (3).

Forty-eight patients entered the study having self-assessed impaired ability of function sexually before treatment (self-assessed as being ‘impaired’ or ‘very impaired’. Twenty patients rated their sexual functioning as adequate after treatment: (self-assessed sexual ability of functioning: very good, good, or neither good nor bad): Of those 20 patients, eight of these completely resolved the issue (rating good or very good) and twelve were improving (rating: neither good nor bad). Eleven of the patients continued to self-assess their sexual issues as impaired after the treatment. (Self-assessed sexual ability of functioning: bad or very bad). The response rate of follow-up survey was 64.6%. Seventeen patients were classified as non-responders upon follow-up or withdrew during the study. After the treatment, 28 patients were either still poorly functioning sexually, or classified as non-responders upon follow-up, or withdrew from the study early.

The “rate of cure” of the treatment was $20/48 = 41.7\%$ (95%CI: 27.6% - 57.0%) (15). Number needed to treat (NNT) of clinical holistic medicine with sexually poorly functioning patients = 2.48 (1.75-3.62). Number needed to harm (NNH) is estimated from treating more than 500 patients in our clinic since year 2000 with this therapy (7,16) none of which had severe side effects or harmed themselves or other people during the therapy; NNH estimated >500.

Table 1. 48 patients with severe sexual problems of functioning entered the study; 20 = 41.67% (95% CI: 27.61% - 56.7%) of these was helped with clinical holistic medicine.

	Before treatment	After treatment
Low self-assessed sexual ability of functioning	48	11
High ability of sexual functioning	0	20 = 41.67% (95% CI: 27.61% - 56.7%)
Non-responders or dropouts	-	17
Low sexual ability of functioning, non-responder or dropout	-	28

Table 2. Summary of patient identified sexual issues

		Self evaluated Physical health				Self evaluated Mental health				Relation to myself				Relation to friends			
		Before	After	Δ	p	Before	After	Δ	p	Before	After	Δ	p	Before	After	Δ	p
Desire	Val	2.7	2.33	0.37	.019	3.65	2.42	1.23	.000	3.28	2.41	0.87	.000	2.61	2.18	0.43	.011
	N	43	33	10		43	33	10		43	34	9		43	34	9	
Pain	Val	3	2.4	0.6	NS	3.25	2.4	0.85	NS	3.19	2.2	0.99	.032	2	1.5	0.5	NS
	N	16	10	6		16	10	6		16	10	6		16	10	6	
Orgasmic dysfunction	Val	2.75	2.35	0.4	.016	3.17	2.29	0.88	.000	3.04	2.39	0.65	.006	2	1.89	0.11	NS
	N	24	17	7		24	17	7		24	18	6		24	18	6	
Other problems	Val	2.76	2.21	0.55	NS	3.55	2.63	0.92	.002	3.24	2.36	0.88	.001	2.61	2.04	NS	.012
	N	33	24	9		33	24	9		33	24	9		33	24	9	

		Relation to your partner				Self evaluated Ability to love				Self evaluated Sexual function			
		Before	After	Δ	p	Before	After	Δ	p	Before	After	Δ	p
Desire	Val	5	3.88	1.12	.016		2.5	0.86	.001	3.35	2.71	0.64	.014
	N	43	34	9		42	34	8		43	34	9	
Pain	Val	4.3	2.9	1.4	NS	3.31	1.9	1.41	.011	3.94	3	0.94	.004
	N	16	10	6		16	10	6		16	10	6	
Orgasmic dysfunction	Val	4	3.11	0.89	NS	3	2.44	0.56	NS	3.21	2.78	0.43	NS
	N	24	18	6		24	18	6		24	18	6	
Other problems	Val	4.72	3.46	1.26	NS	3.39	2.29	1.1	.002	3.46	2.67	0.79	.029
	N	32	24	8		33	24	9		33	24	9	

Table 2. (Continued).

		Self evaluated Social function				Self evaluated Working capacity				Self evaluated Quality of life (QOL1			
		Before	After	Δ	p	Before	After	Δ	p	Before	After	Δ	p
Desire	Val	2.79	2.18	0.61	.002	3.09	2.53	0.56	.025	3.44	2.32	1.12	.000
	N	43	34	9		43	34	9		43	34	9	
Pain	Val	2.63	1.8	0.83	.025	3.38	2.4	0.98	.037	3.31	2.3	1.01	.029
	N	16	10	6		16	10	6		16	10	6	
Orgasmic dysfunction	Val	2.42	2.17	0.25	NS	3	2.67	0.33	NS	3.46	2.61	0.85	.000
	N	24	18	6		24	18	6		24	18	6	
Other problems	Val	3.06	2.29	0.77	.001	3.06	2.46	0.6	NS	3.36	2.33	1.03	.001
	N	33	24	9		33	24	9		33	24	9	

The patients healed not only their sexuality, but also their whole being because of the induction of Antonovsky-salutogenesis. Both physical and mental health, relations to self, friends, partner and ability of function socially and to work was improved, as was the patient's self-assessed quality of life. Quality of life, health and relations were measure with QOL1 and QOL5 (7,17).

Table 2 shows that 43 of the 109 patients had sexual issues related to desire, 16 patients had problems related to sexually related pain; 24 patients suffered from orgasmic dysfunction and 33 patients had other sexual problems. One patient could have more than one issue. Interestingly, physical health, mental health, relation to self, friends and partner, ability to love, function socially, working ability [meaning ability to sustain a full time work], and self-evaluated quality of life (QOL1) (17) did also improve for many of the patients during the therapy. The general beneficial effect of the therapy is due to the induction of Antonovsky-salutogenesis (5,6).

Fifty-six percent of the clinics patients reported sexual issues, and received in average 14.8 session to a cost of 1,188.00 EURO. A later follow-up study documented the results of clinical holistic therapy were not temporary (7).

Tables 3-6 shows that when sexual ability is improved in therapy, physical health, mental health, relation self, relation to friends, relation to partner, ability of love, social ability and work ability, as well as quality of life are also radically improved. These results are highly significant.

Table 3. T-test (20 patients with sexual problems who succeeded in experiencing Antonovsky salutogenesis).

		Paired samples statistics.			
		Mean	N	Std.	Std. mean
Physical Health	Before	2.7368	19	.87191	-.20003
	After	2.2105	19	.85498	.19615
Mental health	Before	3.7000	20	.86450	.19331
	After	2.1000	20	-.85224	-.19057
Self esteem	Before	3.5000	20	.76089	.17014
	After	2.3500	20	-.98809	.22094
Relation to friends	Before	2.5500	20	.99868	.22331
	After	1.9500	20	.88704	.19835
Relation to partner	Before	4.2000	20	2.01573	.45073
	After	2.6500	20	2.05900	.46041
Ability to love	Before	3-6500	20	1.18210	.26433
	After	2.1500	20	1.26803	.28354
Sexual ability	Before	4.4000	20	.50262	.11239
	After	2-5000	20	.68825	.15390
Social ability	Before	3-0500	20	1.14593	.25624.
	After	2.0000	20	.79472	.17770
Work ability	Before	3.1053	19	.93659	.21487
	After	2.1579	19	1.06787	.24499
Quality of life	Before	3.6000	20	.99472	.22243
	After	2.2500	20	1.01955	.22798

Table 4. The patients who had sexological therapy significantly improved in all measured dimentions of health, quality of life, and ability.

	Paired samples test.							
	Paired Differences					t	df	Significance (2 – tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error mean	95% confidence interval of difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Physical health	.5263	.84119	.19298	.1209	.9318	2.727	8	.014
Mental health	1.6000	1.18766	.26557	1.0442	2.1558	6.025	19	.000
Self esteem	1.1500	1.18210	.26433	.5968	1.7032	4.351	19	.000
Relation to friends	.6000	1.18766	.26557	.0442	1.1558	2.259	19	.036
Relation to partner	1.5500	2.06410	.46155	.5840	2.5160	3.358	19	.003
Ability to love	1,5000	1.50438	.33639	.7959	2.2041	4.459	19	.000
Sexual ability	1.9000	.85224	.19057	1.5011	2.2989	9.970	19	.000
Social ability	1.0500	1.31689	.29447	.4337	1.6663	3.566	19	.002
Work ability	.9474	1.22355	.28070	.3576	1.5371	3.375	18	.003
Quality of life	1.3500	1.34849	.30153	.7189	1.9811	4.477	19	.000

Table 5. The patients who had sexological therapy significantly improved in all measured dimentions of health, quality of life, and ability. The improvement was about one step of a four point Likert scale, from 3.5 to 2.5 or about a 60% improvement in all dimensions.

Paired samples statistics.					
		Mean	N	Std. deviation	Std. error mean
Relations	Before	3.4167	20	.93580	.20925
	After	2.3167	20	.86839	.19418
Ability	Before	3.5395	19	.65226	.14964
	After	2.1842	19	.75389	.17295
QOL (QOL 5)	Before	3.3509	19	.64763	.14858
	After	2.2456	19	.68351	.15681
Health-QOL-Ability (QOL 10)	Before	3.3735	18	.59609	.14050
	After	2.1574	18	.58049	.13682

Tables 3-6 shows that when the patient with the experience of sexual inadequacy healed his life (entered the state of salutogenesis) the sexual issues were resolved and all other dimensions of existence were improved as well.

Table 6. The improvement was clinically highly significant: over one step of a four point Likert scale, from 3.5 to 2.5 or about a 60% improvement in all dimensions. This strongly indicates Antonovsky salutogenesis (existential healing).

Paired samples test.								
	Paired differences					t	df	Significance(2) – tailed)
	Mean	Std.	Std. Error mean	95% confidence interval of difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Relations	1.1000	.99766	.22308	.6331	1.5669	4.931	19	.000
Ability	1.3553	.89488	.20530	.9239	1.7866	6.601	18	.000
QOL (QOL 5)	1.1053	.76419	.17532	.7369	1.4736	6.304	18	.000
Health-QOL- Ability (QOL 10)	1.2160	.65814	.15512	.8888	1.5433	7.839	17	.000

Conclusions

Sexual issues are very common and a successful strategy to resolve them seems to be personal development of the sense of coherence, healing the whole being, not only of sexual life. The combination of psychodynamic therapy and bodywork seems efficient and creates fast, affordable and lasting results with no side effects. The patient must be willing to face deep existential problems and very unpleasant feelings when the old traumas are confronted and the old emotional charge re-integrated. The goal of the psychodynamic therapy is that the patients learn to know their true self. Not all patients are ready for that, so clinical holistic therapy is the therapy of choice when the patient is motivated for a deep inner exploration.

Clinical holistic medicine is our name for psychodynamic short-term therapy complemented with bodywork. The rehabilitation of character and purpose of life was essential, and assisting the patient recover his existential coherence was the primary intent of the therapy (5,6,18-21).

We found NNT=2 (cure) and NNH>500. The improvement of all patients was 60% (mean) in all measured dimensions of quality of life, physical and mental health, and ability, strongly indicating existential healing (Antonovsky salutogenesis).

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Section 4: Adolescence and Adolescence and Adulthood

Problems with Sex and Living Together

There is an intimate connection between the general quality of the relationship and the level of sexual satisfaction for both partners. Often a sexual problem can be addressed in a soft and less direct way by focusing on the emotional and psychological aspects of the relationship instead of focusing directly on the dysfunctional sexuality. The younger the patient is, the more important is the care for the whole person and his or her feelings and emotions, integrity, attitudes and philosophy of life instead of a direct genital approach. With this said the holistic approach will also often function very well with adult patients. The ethical principle of using the smallest tool that does the job will be discussed in chapter 34-37.

When the problems of sex and living together are understood as symptoms of underlying old existential wounds in need of healing and when the physician accepts the role as coach supporting the patient to confront these emotional pains, then the patient can heal existentially in order to obtain the wanted closeness and intimacy.

The change of perspective from: "He or she is not all right in..." to "I see that this is really about me, and what I have to learn is..." is where the patient assumes responsibility and this is often efficient in helping the patient with problems in his/her sex- and love life. Intimacy is the most difficult art, where sexuality cannot exist without trust, vulnerability and surrender. This is often only possible after the patient has found his or her true self, including the purpose of life.

The physician who will give "holding" (care) and processing to the patient with the intention of healing the "wounded child inside", who cannot love and open up, can often help the patient to improve self-insight and change the whole quality and atmosphere of the relationship. The healing will end a series of symptoms of poor thriving, physically, emotionally, and mentally, and make life worth living. Sometimes a few successful holistic sessions are enough to change the whole picture and solve an emotional "knot" that has the potential to destroy the relationship..

Introduction

Loving each other and living together is a great art, which Kahlil Gibran described beautifully in his book “The Prophet” (1):

When love beckons you, follow him
Though his ways are hard and steep...

He threshes you to make you naked,
He sifts you to free you from your husks,
He grinds you to whiteness,
He kneads you until you are compliant ...

All these things shall love do unto you
That you may know the secrets of your heart
And in that knowledge
Become a fragment of Life's heart

The incredible closeness we achieve with another person when we become lovers and partners will arouse the best and most sensitive, but also the most vulnerable, side of us - and almost always, at the same time, provokes our deepest sorrow, life pain, and anxiety.

Closeness means that we are invited to devote ourselves - to be completely devoted and utterly honest - and in this closeness we have to be totally honest with ourselves and with the other person. We are often unaccustomed to this honesty, so that when love seriously comes into our lives, we are often forced to get to know ourselves better. We are obliged to be more honest with ourselves. This means that love often causes problems.

We discover that we find it difficult to be as close to ourselves and to the other person, as honest and open as we can be and would like to be. To be able to love, we need to heal as persons, in other words...we need to heal our soul. Existential healing is not well understood, but it is the central theme for consciousness-based medicine, so let us give a brief review of our work in this field before we suggest what the physician can do to help the great many patients who appear in the practice with a wide range of symptoms of poor thriving in the one-to-one relationship, from headache, over depression to pain during intercourse.

Our base of clinical holistic medicine

The life mission theory (2-7) states that everybody has a purpose of life or huge talent. Interestingly, our purpose of life is also our source of love to a partner. Happiness in general comes from living this purpose and succeeding in expressing the core talent in one's life, which is also the case in the love relationship. To do this, it is important to develop as a person into what is known as the natural condition, a condition where the person knows him/herself and uses all his/her efforts to achieve what is most important and to give what is most important to another.

The holistic process theory of healing (8-11) and the related quality of life theories (12-14) state that the return to the natural state of being, where you can express yourself fully in

every way imaginable including the sexual, is possible whenever the person gets the resources needed for existential healing.

The resources needed are "holding" in the dimensions awareness, respect, care, acknowledgment, and acceptance with support and processing in the dimensions feeling, understanding, and letting go of negative attitudes and beliefs. The preconditions for holistic healing to take place are trust and the intention of the healing to take place. Existential healing is not a local healing of any tissue, but a healing of the wholeness of the person, making him/her much more resourceful, loving, and knowledgeable of him/herself, his/her own needs and wishes.

In letting go of negative attitudes and beliefs, the person returns to a more responsible existential position and an improved quality of life with an ability to relate to others. The philosophical change of the person in healing is often a change towards preferring difficult problems and challenges - and a partner can be a huge emotional challenge - instead of avoiding difficulties in life (15-22).

The person who becomes happier and more resourceful often also becomes healthier, more talented, and more able to function (23-25).

Taking responsibility for your own life pain

Since early times, people have been described as being in possession of both a false and a genuine self. At first glance, this view is strange and peculiar because it means that very often we are not ourselves and not the person we claim to be. There is a depth in us and at the bottom of this depth you will find the genuine self. On the surface, we have the more false side, the façade, which we show to other people. This way of thinking has given rise to a number of well-known sayings and expressions, the meaning of which most of us recognize from our own lives: "being in harmony with yourself", "getting away from yourself", "losing yourself", "loving yourself", "knowing yourself", and so on. How could we love or not love ourselves, if we did not have these two selves? The question that naturally arises for a thoughtful person is why we need two selves. What is the purpose of this?

One answer is so that we can become the one we are, as Marcus Aurelius (Rome 161-180, Emperor and philosopher) put it, or in other words to say that we have a personal development project. If we were our true selves from the start, we would not need any development. The purpose of the pain is to draw our attention to the fact that something has gone wrong in our attempt to realize our true self.

Another, perhaps deeper, answer to the question of the two selves is concerned with our early experience and with the life pain hidden away in us. Between the genuine selves, which deep down we are, and the more superficial façade we show to other people, there is a distance, an internal space, which is filled with old problems and painful life events that we were unable to overcome when we were small, and therefore have been swept under the carpet while we were growing up and to some extent repressed.

This causes us problems. One of the most serious is that the façade creates distance from other people and that our constant longing for love and closeness persistently enjoins us to drop the façade and be more honest, true, and more natural towards one another. At the same moment that there is intense and genuine meeting soul to soul, the façade comes down, and

those problems that have been hidden away below the façade re-emerge on the surface of consciousness. That is why it is painful and problematic for us to come close to other people.

Fortunately there is a simple solution to this problem, as we can project the pain. When we have a repressed problem - a human fault, a life lie - in particular one we share with the other person, instead of taking responsibility for our historical pain, we can project it onto the other person.

Now the other person becomes really bad! "You see the mote in your brother's eye, but you do not see the beam in your own eye," Jesus said about this problem. The great art of life is to take responsibility for our own pain, our own faults, and our own deficiencies and learn lessons from everything that happens, and in particular from everything that hurts us. We all have something to learn to become more complete people, to become more ourselves. We all have some black life lies that our quality of life could do well without.

Female, aged 25 years, used and discarded: Quality-of-life conversation: Would like to divorce her husband and return to Asia, where she originated from. Would also like to complete her education - there are two months to go. I (SV) advise her to stay for those two months and finish the relationship properly. Split what they have and return to her homeland in a calm and orderly manner, as a winner who has seen the world, and not as a young woman who has been poorly treated by her Danish husband. Further conversation in five weeks.

It was difficult to come to Denmark as a young woman, be used for sex, and then discarded. We believe there is an important lesson for the woman that love and mutual respect are more important than material wealth and one should not sell one's soul and body for economic prosperity. Retaining dignity and going home with both money and education provides a good basis for the future. Fleeing and leaving everything behind is not good. Our conversation was concerned with preserving values and we believe that the insight she gained improved her situation radically.

Female, aged 34 years, and divorce: Consultation 1: Comes to the clinic in desperation - everything is going off the rails - her husband wants a divorce, they have a 3-year-old child together and she herself has two children, a girl of 7 years and a boy of 9 years from a previous relationship. Is no longer able to remember things, cannot concentrate, cannot watch television, cannot find her way to places, and is completely out of it. Has considered taking her life, but no specific plans, thinks about the children. What is to happen on Sunday, when she is to due to meet her husband for the first time in a long while to make arrangements for a divorce and so on? Her husband says she is always morose and negative and critical, which is correct. We talk about it probably being best to divorce if it is simply not working, but that it is important to find an arrangement that works for the joint child - and for the others. The first husband must also come onto the scene to help her with these children. She has girlfriends to talk to. On examination: assessed as not seriously depressive, no reduction in speed of speech, no waking in the early morning, slight loss of appetite, very little lowering of mood. Says that things have been going better for her during our conversation. Has to compile a list of all her problems. We talk about being true to oneself and about emptying one's "internal waste bin" - but first looking at and accepting everything that is in it. Can return next week, when a plan will be made.

Consultation 2: Appears to be in less desperation. The situation is much more clarified. They have agreed to divorce. The patient is considering a reasonable settlement in the divorce, as they have been married for 3 years and moved into the husband's house. Perhaps she will only take what she herself has contributed to the house, out of consideration for their future in relation to their joint child. Has thought about her internal waste bin and brings along a list that reads: Jealousy, hatred-love, loneliness, uncertainty, money. EXERCISE 1: Sit in the internal waste bin - be there and be aware of everything you feel. Define the time with an egg timer: 5 minutes in the first week, rising by 5 minutes every week, until 20 minutes daily. Write down everything that happened to you while you were sitting there when the time is up - particularly negative things you felt and thought about, such as old unfinished events in life. WRITTEN EXERCISE 2: Write about the new life you would like to have: the values it is to be founded on, how you would like to be, etc. By all means make some specific plans to move on. Next appointment in 5 to 6 weeks (due to holidays).

Life crises and divorces are among the worst, particularly when children are involved. However, it is not as impossible as it may seem when one is in the midst of it. The children can cope with it well if the adults can. The difficult aspect is that one has put up with so much, that one has made so many compromises, and suddenly one is no longer able to. The internal waste bin is full to the brim, NOW it has to be cleared out. A calm, neutral person who can supply intelligence and an overview from outside can be very valuable. The family physician can be such a person.

Female, aged 49 years, male aged 55 years, problems with relationship: Quality-of-life conversation with the couple. He has problems with his partner who sometimes is very hurtful. Together with his partner, he is trained to say: "Ouch!" "Now you're being nasty to me." "Now you're hurting me."

They both understand the situation well and accepted that they can practice when they are together. She would like to go for a drink with him, which he routinely refused because many previous episodes of running away and drinking on his part made this a bad idea.

Love hurts

Perhaps we do not understand why love hurts. Love is one of the greatest passions in life, but also something that is hard to understand and comprehend. It is when it is not clear to us that we have a mass of wounds in our souls, as everyone does when they have passed their first childhood. When life has hurt us too much, we have fled from the pain by lying to ourselves and distancing ourselves from life. Perhaps we have decided that we are not worthy of being loved, that we are not really lovely or valuable, that we are not beautiful and attractive. All these decisions and negative attitudes towards life are suddenly in the way of love.

Most of us have forgotten that life has hurt us and we are therefore surprised that closeness brings out pain in us, when we expect joy. But it is common to all of us that we hold within us old pains, which means that we are cautious about ourselves - often so much so that we do not allow anyone to come really close to us and touch our innermost being. We

remain a little reserved towards each other. When problems unexpectedly arise, we are surprised and perhaps do not see that the pain comes from within ourselves.

From a reserved position, we look at the other person and often find a mass of faults, which worry us and perhaps make us unsure and afraid of the other person. Then we start to criticize the other person. We demand what we think we need and refuse to take what we would like to be free of. And soon afterwards we start controlling each other with all kinds of boring power games, which destroys for good the joy of being together.

Love life is the door to the divine

Sexuality will flourish when we let go, dare to be ourselves, natural, open, and living. Our sexuality can express itself freely and exuberantly when we are relaxed, confident, and natural together. We all have great gifts with regard to sex, even if we have more or less suppressed our sexuality.

Sexual problems are very common. We found in the Danish Quality of Life Survey (26) that one in four people have serious problems in functioning sexually and probably just as many have minor problems. The problems may be due to purely biological factors, but are far more often a symptom that something in us and in our relationship as a couple is not entirely the way it should be. The problems are often imbalances, which can easily be corrected by better understanding.

Female, aged 20 years, and nymphomania: We talk about sexuality: The patient has always experienced clitoral orgasms, never vaginal orgasms. We talk about her sexuality being masculine and outward, instead of feminine and inward. Her boyfriend is correspondingly feminine and sensitive. It is a great problem that she always desires sex, because this means that her boyfriend feels dominated to the point of not having desire. This pattern is natural, when the patient is never deeply satisfied sexually due to her masculine pattern. Her abdomen feels cold over her womb and I (SV) tell her that I am melting ice cubes in her stomach, which is a childish but symbolically true way of expressing it.

It is possible to make considerable progress by practicing being natural together and practicing enjoying each other in and out of bed without demands, control, and criticism. But if it is not appreciated that the underlying factors interfere, until they have been understood and processed, the sex life will never be optimal.

Our love life has enormous potential, it can become our opening to the divine. Our sexuality may be the door to the greatest and most delightful experiences in our lives. But all too often, people do not feel the great enjoyment in sex. It becomes a small, cold, and slightly laborious affair. Perhaps even a duty that has to be fulfilled quickly. And it need not be that. About one in two couples who marry and promise each other eternal fidelity end up in divorce. The first thing to go wrong is often the sex life. From a modern point of view, there is nothing wrong with growing apart. The problem is merely that the difficulties often persist with a new partner.

When we start working consciously and deliberately on love and sex, we are often presented with some fundamental and uniquely beautiful and joyous tools, which can take us

further in our personal development as people. As the patient develops self-respect, self-care, and focus on his or her own development and well-being, he or she steadily becomes better and more valuable to the partner as well and to children, friends, work colleagues, and everyone else who is encountered.

Female, aged 28 years, power-wielder who cannot function with boyfriend: First quality-of-life conversation: The patient suffers from lack of a boyfriend and a chronic feeling of being rejected. I would say that the feeling is: "He does not like me". Has been married, has two children, boy aged 8 and girl aged 5 years. The boyfriend for the second time has found someone else. She is "emotional", as though made for love, care, and sex, but she is blocked in this and is now unable to love. Her father regarded her as stupid and delightful. Her mother, whom the patient calls manipulative, found her irritating. The patient acted as a psychological mother for her own mother, and as a partner for her father. On examination: Many tensions in the back and particularly in the abdomen, around the pelvis and the insides of the thighs. Cries when these tensions are contacted. There is a "pit in her abdomen". Patient is not at home in the Hara centre.

- EXERCISE 1: Let go of negative decisions: "I'm no good" and "I'm irritating".
- EXERCISE 2: Patient is overweight, 10-20 kg, and eats in the evening in order not to feel. Therefore, sit for 10 minutes daily in your emotional space and feel your emotion of being let down and rejected, insulted, fed up, and so on.
- EXERCISE 3: Find more negative decisions in their precise formulation and let go of them.
- PLAN: Rosen sessions every 14 days, appointment with me (SV) in between if needed.

Second quality-of-life conversation: Was annoyed when I arrived late for the appointment. Put it off until the next day, as she was "full" from the Rosen session today. Her mother was always irritated by her. Since the patient was 3 years old, she has always been contrary, defiant, and stubborn. Did not want to show me her notes today. "I'm no good" is the basic problem, the patient says, and: "I'm not worth loving". She appears to be a typical power-wielder.

- EXERCISE 1. Describe all your advantages in wielding power.
- EXERCISE 2. Make lists of all your power games in relation to love, sex, and friendship, as well as work and motherhood.

Third quality-of-life conversation: The patient hands over a list of power games in relation to children and husband. It is clear that the patient wanted to be in charge and to control both her son and her ex-husband, when they were together. During the conversation, the understanding is crystallized in the sentence "I determine..." in the sense of....everything! Since she was 3 or 4, the patient has been "a sweet, warm-hearted, and fair tyrant" in relation to those around her.

- EXERCISE 1: Let go of the sentence "I am in charge".
- EXERCISE 2: Accommodate your anger and other emotions, and be a pressure cooker for next time. She is to go for a Rosen session tomorrow, which is

entirely right as she can feel her emotions there, supported by the loving hands of the Rosen practitioner.

This kind of "I am in charge" decision, which guides the patient in her subconsciousness is a very serious and destructive decision that has been made at a time of extreme distress during childhood. When the patient finds it and lets go of it, the whole of her energy, the whole quality of her personality will change radically. It is incomprehensible and quite alarming that our old decisions have such power over us, that they destroy our life all together throughout our lives. We create our life through our decisions. It is therefore vitally important to be clear about what decisions are at work here and now.

Sixth quality-of-life conversation: The feeling of being rejected has disappeared. The feeling of being irritating has disappeared. Power games have disappeared and the patient spends time with her children in a far more caring and loving way. Very few conflicts with the children. "Yesterday they sprayed water all over the bathroom, and I didn't even lose my temper. Previously I was not allowed to console my son or come close to him, now I can do that." Finished.

Discussion

This problem afflicts one in two modern people: we cannot make our life together work. The younger the patient the more likely this will be a problem. Attempts are often made to solve problems in relationships by power. That is not nice. Resignation or break-ups and divorces are normally the result: submit or disappear! But before love finally dies out, the energy left in the love is often channeled into long and painful power struggles. The power games are generally based on earlier patterns of survival from childhood. When patients let go of their decisions about having to be in control and determine everything, they can then enter into a warm and rewarding relationship of love. Power games are highly destructive for love; fortunately most patients are willing to let go of the dark power games when their attention is drawn to them.

When the problems of sex and living together are understood as symptoms of old existential wounds that need to heal, and when the physician accepts the role as coach supporting the patient to confront the underlying emotional pains, the patient can heal existentially and obtain the wanted closeness and intimacy. The bare change of perspective from: "He or she is not all right in..." to "I see that this is really about me, and what I have to learn is..." where the patient assumes responsibility, is often efficient in helping the patient with problems in his/her sex- and love life. Intimacy is the most difficult art and a free and sound sexuality cannot exist without trust, vulnerability, and surrender, often only possible after the patient has found his or her true self, including the purpose of life.

The physician who gives holding and processing to the patient in the intention of healing the wounded child inside, which cannot love and open up, can often help the patient to - in a process of a few months or years of duration - improve self-insight and change the whole quality and atmosphere of the relationship, and often a series of symptoms of poor thriving (physically, emotionally, and mentally) will disappear in this process. Sometimes a few

successful holistic sessions are enough to change the whole picture and solve an emotional "knot" that has the potential to destroy the relationship.

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Every Contact should be Therapeutic

Repressed shame syndrome results in low self-esteem, low genital self esteem and sexual dysfunction often with pain. When it comes to gender and sexuality shame is undoubtedly the most destructive feeling. Even more destructive than open shame is the repressed shame that live its secret life in the tissues and inner space of the body, especially in the pelvic and genital area. The sign of repressed shame is the appearance of an unappealing bodily “energy”. If the genital tissue holds on to shame, the patient will feel her genitals somewhat “dark”, “dirty” or even “disgusting”, and the physician can often relate to this experience from the quality of the tissue – from completely healthy to somewhat disturbed and out of balance.

Introduction

The most common feeling connected to sexuality is without any doubt *shame*. Repressed shame is one of the primary causes of sexual dysfunction. We call this syndrome of intense shame, repressed, and general sexual dysfunction, for “repressed shame syndrome”.

Repressed shame syndrome results in low self-esteem, low genital self esteem and sexual dysfunction often with pain. When it comes to gender and sexuality shame is undoubtedly the most destructive feeling. Even more destructive than open shame is the repressed shame that live its secret life in the tissues and inner space of the body, especially in the pelvic and genital area. The sign of repressed shame is the appearance of an unappealing bodily “energy”. If the genital tissue holds on to shame, the patient will feel her genitals somewhat “dark”, “dirty” or even “disgusting”, and the physician can often relate to this experience from the quality of the tissue – from completely healthy to somewhat disturbed and out of balance. A low genital self-esteem is often connected with general sexual dysfunction like lack of desire, anorgasmia, or pain, either during intercourse or chronic, often in the form of primary vulvodynia (1,2).

Interestingly the “repressed shame syndrome” in our clinical experience can be cured by simply giving acceptance to the patient’s body, sexuality and genitals. Every contact with such a patient can and should be curative, as there are plenty of possibilities to give acceptance to the patient, both through conversation and physically. Orally the acceptance can

be the assurance that the genitals look completely normal and sound and physically the acceptance can be given in the way the genitals are touched during the pelvic exam (3). Not giving the acceptance needed by the patient can lead to very negative experiences of the pelvic examination, which seems to be directly traumatic to young woman in some cases (4).

In the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine and Sexology in Denmark we have made the simple experiment of giving such accepting psychological and physical contact to 20 woman with severe sexual dysfunction. We noticed that 56% of the woman experienced an immediate and radical improvement (5). We used the explorative phase of the pelvic examination as the occasion to give the acceptance that the woman needed. We experienced that when the issue of repressed shame was addressed in the session it seemed to be integrated right away. Just confronting the shame and understanding its irrationality is often enough to make it disappear. We noticed that the repressed shame resulted in what is now often called psychoform and somatoform dissociation, meaning that the patient has difficulties in connection through mind and body to another person, including the partner. By integrating the shame we can help the patient close this gap in contact, immediately improving self-esteem, genital self-esteem, and sexual function.

Interestingly, sexual problems like lack of desire, anorgasmia, chronic pelvic pain and primary vulvodynia is also often cured when the repressed shame is integrated, giving substance to the hypothesis that primary vulvodynia and the related pelvic-pain disorders are originally caused by repressed shame disturbing the tissue that is holding on to it. A tendency to chronic recidivant infection and reduced immune resistance in the genital area might also be related to repressed shame.

There is a severe problem in the traditional distinguishing between examining and treating a patient. Every contact with a physician can result in a major impact on the patient's understanding of life and disease – a fundamental philosophical impact that is very curative if positive. Every contact must be used to improve the patient's understanding of responsibility for health and quality of life. Every close contact to the patient physically or mentally must be used to close the gap of somatoform and psychoform dissociation. Every contact with the patient about gender or sexual issues must intent the processing of repressed shame and other emotions that are capable of giving the patient severe sexual problems. Only by using every opportunity can we improve the general state of sexual functioning. An area where about one in two or three have significant sexual problems (6).

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The Holistic View of the Adolescent

Effective caring for adolescents hinges on trust. Establishment of trusting relationships with health care providers opens the door for discussion of sensitive issues such as, sexuality and risk-taking behavior. Methods to gain trust on the part of the provider include: being relaxed, genuine, friendly, open, making eye contact. Additionally, being an authority not authoritarian, and understanding that development of full trust may take time. Adolescents view health care providers as an important source for information and education especially regarding healthy sexual development

Introduction

Understanding adolescent development and the psychosocial developmental stages of adolescence is helpful and necessary for anyone working with adolescents. Adolescents undergo three stages of development: early adolescence (ages 12-14 years), middle adolescence (15-17 years), and late adolescence (18-20 years) (1). Early adolescence is characterized by concrete thinking necessitating the importance of keeping explanations short and to the point. In contrast, middle adolescence is defined by the development of abstract thinking. Risk-taking behavior is mostly likely to occur within this age group and peer influence is significant (1). Older adolescence is the transition to adulthood. Adolescents in this age group have a clear understanding that their actions will result in consequences. Yet they still need support and encouragement to understand that they should make their own health care decisions.

Effective caring for adolescents hinges on trust. Establishment of trusting relationships with health care providers opens the door for discussion of sensitive issues such as, sexuality and risk-taking behavior (1). Methods to gain trust on the part of the provider include: being relaxed, genuine, friendly, open, making eye contact. Additionally, being an authority not authoritarian, and understanding that development of full trust may take time (1). Adolescents view health care providers as an important source for information and education especially regarding healthy sexual development (2).

Leading causes of mortality and morbidity in adolescents continue to be mainly preventable, such as: accidents, homicide, suicide, sexually transmitted infections, teen

pregnancy, eating disorders and drug abuse related consequences (3). All these factors in morbidity and mortality are directly related to risk-taking behaviors (3). The above factors were part of the development of adolescent medicine as a new subspecialty (4-6), while continuing to be an integral part of general practice. With the teenagers preventive medicine is extraordinarily important as so many problems are preventable in this age: pregnancy and contraception (7), HIV (8,9), substance use and abuse (10-12), ethics, law, sports (13), violence (14), prostitution and victimization (15). In adolescent medicine, knowledge of psychosomatics is very important as they are related to the 20-30% of the teenagers suffering from either chronic pains (16), psychiatric disturbances (17-19), eating disturbances (20-22), vulvodynia and other gynaecological problems (23-25). Many of the problems can be seen as disturbances in the teenagers psycho-social and sexual development, often with patterns going back to their childhood (26). As an example, fifty percent of both anorectic and bulimic patients reported a history of sexual abuse, while only 28% of a non-anorexic, non-bulimic control population reported similar problems (27) leading the authors to recommend that sexual issues be addressed early in the treatment of patients with eating disorders. In this article we will attempt to illustrate the need for more comprehensive and preventive approach to the adolescent in the clinical setting for a better outcome.

Case story 1

14 year old girl referred to our clinic for evaluation of recurrent pelvic pain. She was seen in the emergency department seven days ago, where she was diagnosed with pelvic inflammatory disease. Review of the emergency department physician records showed "Sexually active teen with multiple partners, diagnosis: pelvic inflammatory disease, standard treatment regimen prescribed".. During interview in our clinic, the patient appeared depressed, shy, not making eye contact and complained of recurrent abdominal and pelvic pain for the last six years. Once a rapport was established, the patient disclosed that she had been sexually abused by her biological father since age five, until she became pregnant at age 11 years. At that time the father was sent to prison, the patient underwent elective abortion and her parents divorced. A year later the mother remarried and the stepfather also started abusing the patient sexually. At that point both her mother and stepfather were imprisoned and the patient was taken into state custody, where she has been placed in 13 different foster homes over a two-year period. During that time, she has been occasionally seen by a psychologist and given antidepressant medication. Her main question in our clinic was "I am worthless, nobody likes or wants me, why would you be any different and can you change my life?"

Case story 2

14 year-old girl referred to our clinic for evaluation of "conduct problems".. According to her mother, during a church sponsored trip, the patient was caught having sex with a male of the same age in the back of the bus, she also had multiple school absences and possible drug use. She has been seen by a psychiatrist and placed on antidepressant medication. In our

clinic, the patient stated that “I am a worthless person, why should I go to school”.. Ultimately we found out that the father was from eastern Indian origin and the mother a religious fanatic. When the patient was born after unplanned pregnancy, the father refused to marry or to recognize the child until three years later, when he finally married the mother and had two further children. During the patient’s life however the father never treated her as his child and always put her down, while loving his other children and treating them well. The mother was always after her, because she is “Godless”. The patient said “I do not like or enjoy sex, I do it hoping to get someone to like me”. The patient is very intelligent and beautiful with very low self-esteem. She feels hopeless, ugly and unloved, but is not planning suicide, because “that is what everybody wants, to get rid of me”. She said: “At least boys care for me, if I have sex with them, but my parents do not no matter what I do”. In response to the question about taking her antidepressant, she says: “Yes, I am taking my medicine daily, but do you really believe that it will make my life better?”

Discussion

Adolescents are basically healthy in the physical sense and most of their morbidity and mortality are due to preventable causes that are the product of risk taking behavior. This is the result of either poor quality of life, problems in development or combination of multiple factors. Attempting to help these adolescents with a dogmatic, narrow-minded approach may frequently fail as illustrated by the cases above. Often adolescents present at the clinic with a host of complaints that have nothing to do with their actual problem with the hope of finding help from the physician, who may be able to figure out the real agenda behind their complaints. Over the past three years, a total of 132 adolescents were referred to one of our clinics for evaluation of long lasting recurrent abdominal pain and only three (2.34%) had an actual physical pathology.

The patients in the cases above cannot be helped with a simple approach: you are depressed, here is a prescription for antidepressant and you will attend weekly counseling. Their quality of life is very poor and until that changes, they will continue to have problems. The holistic approach to adolescents, helps define their quality of life, find out the underlying causes of their problem and if there is a good social system, that will help alleviate their suffering and provide them with a better quality of life. In a survey of adolescents in Europe, 10% reported having chronic illness and only 10-15% thought they were healthy (28).

Adolescent medicine specialists tend to be more active in screening adolescents for quality of life issues and risk taking behaviors. The initial visit by an adolescent to any clinic, especially to a reproductive health care provider may illicit fear and anxiety among adolescents, however simple guidelines outlined by Burgis and Bacon (1) can help set the ground work for a positive experience for patient and provider. Tips for an initial visit include, a) an interview that should be conducted with the teen fully clothed, b) an interview with limited interruptions, c) inquiry about and assessment of the home situation, d) learning about the adolescents relationship with parents, peers and school environment. Establishment and maintenance of confidentiality, as well as trust, cannot be over emphasized. A successful visit also encompasses the encouragement of forthright conversations with a parent or trusted adult regarding sexuality. Adolescents living in a perceived supportive environment report

more communication with sexual partners about sexual risks, close relationships with supportive parents seem to be related to later onset of sexual activity and improved contraceptive use. In contrast less frequent parent/adolescent communication is associated with less contraceptive use, lower self-efficacy to negotiate safe sex and less communication between adolescents and their sexual partners (1).

Conclusions

Adolescents are a vulnerable population, undergoing a complicated development. This development occurs in the context of external factors: peers, family, school and society as a whole. Interruption of the normal development process or changes in perceived quality of life may lead to risk taking behaviors above and beyond the usual experimentation by the adolescent and may lead to chronic morbidity or early mortality. A holistic approach to the adolescent that includes investigating quality of life issues and provides proper rapport and caring may help prevent significant mortality and morbidity in this population.

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Chronic Pain

Holistic medicine seems able to work in the treatment of chronic pain in the internal organs, including the genitals, especially when the pain has no known cause. It is quite surprising that while chronic pains can be one of the toughest challenges in the biomedical clinic, it is often possible to alleviate in the holistic clinic.

These pains are regarded as caused by repressed emotions and explained as a psychosomatic reaction. Using holistic medicine, the patient can often be cured of the sufferings, when he or she assumes responsibility for the repressed feelings. The holistic process theory of healing states that the return to the natural (pain free) state of being is possible, whenever the person obtains the resources needed for the existential healing. This shift is explained by the related quality of life and life mission theories.

The resources needed are “holding” or genuine care in the dimensions: awareness, respect, care, acknowledgment and acceptance with support and processing in the dimensions: feeling, understanding and letting go of negative attitudes and beliefs.

The preconditions for the holistic healing to take place are “love” and trust by obtaining full confidence of the patient, which seems to be the biggest challenge of holistic medicine, especially when dealing with a patient in pain.

For the sexologist the patients chronic sexual or genital pain (dyspareunia, vulvodynia etc) is often a challenge, and often patients have their genital pains almost unchanged for many years in spite of visiting physicians, gynecologists and sexologists, But genital pain follows the same basic pattern of establishment (pathogenesis) and healing (salutogenesis) as all other chronic pain syndromes caused by psychosocial, “non-organic” (“non-anatomic”) causes. Understanding the elementary dynamics regarding pain and healing empowers the sexologist to help the majority of patients with sexual and genital pain,

Introduction

About one in twenty Danes suffer from recurrent or chronic pain in their internal organs (1). If we use the example of chronic pelvic pain (2), it can result from a variety of abdominal and pelvic causes, including endometriosis, pelvic inflammatory disease, adhesions, urogenital causes and from bladder complaints, including overactive bladder, urinary tract

infection and interstitial cystitis (IC). Often, there seems to be no medical explanation for the pain – apparently there is no ill health that can be detected within the internal organs (i.e. the stomach, intestines, gall bladder, pancreas, liver, bladder, kidneys or reproductive organs). In spite of numerous in-depth medical examinations nothing is revealed. Nevertheless, the pain such as for example primary vulvodynia (3) continues even for years resulting in severe disability for the patient.

To our knowledge and experience, even analgesics such as morphine, have little effect on chronic pain. Many patients have surgery on the suspicion that the problems may have a hidden, structural cause, which sometimes turns out to be the case, especially in acute pain. However, the operation may also result in adhesions and other sequelae, which might even aggravate the patient's pain. Sometimes the patients are repeatedly operated upon. This may even take place at the patient's instigation in the hope of sudden freedom from pain.

If pain is of a chronic nature it is our impression that exploratory surgery rarely produces significant findings and that it has little effect on the pain. Often, no physical reason can be detected for chronic pain in internal organs, leading us to assume that the pain is psychosomatic. Psychosomatic pain is often randomly distributed in the body and cannot be located within specific physical structures, tissues or organs. You believe that you have located it when pressing on a certain point, but the next moment it is gone again. It is as if the obstruction behind the pain is living its own life in the body. The pain is a warning sign of something that has been repressed and something in the life of the patient is not as it ought to be. This type of pain does not go away until the patient understands what he or she needs to “learn from the pain”. The problems will persist until the patient takes up the challenge, begins investigating what is going on (or in popular terms the body is trying to tell you something), learns the lesson and take proper steps to amend it.

Part of the underlying, emotional pain that the patient is unwittingly trying to avoid by somatising the pain lies in the acknowledgement that he or she has a personality imbalance, due to personal flaws and weaknesses. Once patients reach this acknowledgement of their health status, they may soon achieve pain relief. When the patients understand the problem, they can also find a way to solve it. Then it is mostly just a question of time, before they can move on. As simple as it might seem when expressed in this way, the process of supporting the patient and helping him or her go through the emotional pain and “take learning”, is quite multidimensional. Let us take a brief look at some of the dimensions in the field of “quality of life as medicine”.

Clinical holistic medicine

The life mission theory (4-9) states that anyone has a purpose in life, or a huge talent. Happiness comes from living this purpose and success in expressing the core talent in your life. To do this, it is important to develop as a person into what is known as: “the natural condition”. The “natural condition” accrues when the person knows himself and uses all his efforts to achieve his most important personal goals. The holistic process theory of healing (10-13) and the related quality of life theories (14-16) states that the return to the natural state of being is possible, whenever the person gets the resources needed for the existential healing. The resources needed are “holding” in the dimensions such as: awareness, respect, care,

acknowledgment and acceptance with support and processing in dimensions such as: emotion, understanding and letting go of negative attitudes and beliefs. The precondition for the holistic healing to take place is trust and the intention for the healing to take place. Existential healing is not a local healing of any tissue, but a healing of the wholeness of the person, making him much more resourceful, loving, and knowledgeable of himself and of his own needs and wishes. In letting go of negative attitudes and beliefs the person returns to a more responsible existential position and thus achieves improved quality of life. The philosophical change of the person healing is often a change towards facing and struggling difficult problems and challenges, instead of avoiding difficulties in life (17-24). The person, who becomes happier and more resourceful often, becomes healthier, more talented and capable of better functioning (25-27).

Case stories

The treatment of pain in the internal organs begins with a comprehensive physical examination with the necessary tests to exclude somatic illness. According to the holistic process theory, the treatment involves a combination of body therapy, psychotherapy and life philosophy exercises, where the patients are first supported in achieving better understanding of their inner self by formulating a more positive attitude towards life and finally by living accordingly.

Female, aged 28 years with psychosomatic abdominal complaints

- First visit: Diarrhoea for ten days with nausea; vomits every morning, complete loss of appetite, but drinks plenty. She was admitted to hospital by an emergency physician and referred for colonoscopy, numerous faecal cultures all turned out negative [faeces are stools; they are tested for amoebic abscesses, and parasites such as worms]. Current medication: Losec [omeprazole], Alopam [oxazepam], nausea-relieving suppositories of unknown brand. Something is wrong. I (SV) cannot immediately diagnose the source of the patient complaints. A second appointment for in-depth assessment is scheduled.
- Second visit: Abdominal problems persist. I (SV) detect that the patient is anxious due to the death of her aunt at the age of 31 years by stomach cancer. In the aunts case her disease was wrongly diagnosed as gall-bladder stones. So far the patient has been to the emergency medical services, where she was given large numbers of pills, including Losec – which did not help. She is determined to be admitted to hospital immediately and regrets the fact that she did not accept the offer to remain in the hospital until her assessment was complete. My decision is to readmit the patient, since the thought of waiting for a distant appointment is greatly distressing the patient.
- Third visit: when arriving at our third meeting she feels much better, now that the physical examinations in the hospital have shown her to be in good health. I postulate that her basic problem might be fear of dying, which leads to muscle

tension, which causes abdominal and chest pain. We discuss her reasons for fear of dying, but the patient cannot concur. Further discussion into the matter unveils the amount of anxiety that disturbs the patient and she is advised to confront her fears instead of constantly avoiding it. At the end of the meeting the patient is diagnosed with anxiety neurosis. EXERCISE: She is then given an exercise to support her in confronting her anxiety and accommodating her feelings, when they overwhelm her.

The symptoms expressed by the patient looked like serious abdominal illness, but in fact diagnosed eventually as a simple somatisation of anxiety. As the patient will gather better control, she will understand the essence of her suffering and might be prepared to confront and process her anxiety. After such a process will take place the abdominal problems will disappear and replaced by the underlying problem of which they were symptomatic. Once the anxiety is integrated, she will have learnt something existential about life. This insight will strengthen her and will enable her to achieve a fuller life.

Female, aged 31 years with abdominal pain and pain during intercourse

The patient complains of continuous abdominal pain, which at times becomes severe. Pain is usually present during intercourse, especially during orgasm. The patient reveals that she suffered during previous relationship and suspects that the pain may be connected with her previous negative experience. Pelvic examination: normal. Smear taken. EXERCISE: The patient was instructed to write about her negative experiences during her previous relationships in as much detail as possible. When completing this task she was asked to read it aloud to a female friend or come for a second appointment to discuss her former experiences.

The patient showed many internal resources and needed little external help in order for her to solve her problems. The issue in this case was about getting the patient to change to a responsible and constructive perspective. Once the perspective is in place, the task is straightforward.

Female, aged 39 years with lower abdominal pain despite hysterectomy

Medical history: She had lower abdominal surgery with removal of uterus and ovaries. After surgery pain was reduced, but problems persisted. There are accompanying sleeping problems. She often stays at home sick and not attending work. Her family physician has prescribed Pantoloc [pantoprazole] for chronic gastritis. She is also taking antidepressants. "I have many skeletons in the cupboard that I can't or don't want to remember," she says, sadly, thinking of her childhood. Physical examination: Presents with chronic pain in the flanks that can be provoked by pressing on psoas muscles. Quality-of-life conversation: I (SV) explain the correlation between pain and a full "internal waste bin" and we agree to try gestalt therapy to go over the patient's difficult past. We can prepare a development plan, if the patient benefits from gestalt therapy. EXERCISE: Read books about topics resembling what you have experienced. PLAN: Trial gestalt session.

Patient history revealed that the patient had her uterus removed, which helped a little, but did not resolve the problem. At this stage it is more difficult to process the patient, due to the fact that the medical profession has burdened her with yet another trauma to process. Final developments of the patient will hopefully be gained during the gestalt therapy. Although the patient was found to have very little inner strengths and courage to clear up and thus eliminating the pain, we must not give up on her beforehand.

Discussion

According to the holistic medical theory (5,12) physical pains are often existential pains that the patient will not assume responsibility for. This perspective can be sometimes difficult to understand for a person, who has been educated within the biomedical paradigm, not acknowledging the depth of existence, the nature of the human wholeness and the causal nature of consciousness (17-24,28).

It is very important to rule out any serious and life-threatening diseases, when a patient presents with complains such as stomach pain, but when all medical enquiries and examinations have been exhausted without any results, treating the pain is often a simple procedure, using the holistic medical toolbox (3,29). In some cases, when the pain is in the region of the pelvis and a pelvic examination is to be carried out, we find it of value to use the holistic approach to the pelvic examination (30). This is extremely crucial in a case, where the patient is scared and sensitive. If the complaints of the patient are related to social problems (31) these must be resolved. If the patient is a child, the parents might be involved in the process of healing (32).

It is quite surprising, that what can be considered one of the toughest challenges in the biomedical clinic can sometimes be one of the simplest problems to deal with in the holistic clinic. In our experience pains in the internal organs of an unknown origin are almost always caused by repressed emotions, giving the psychosomatic reaction. Using holistic medical toolbox, the patient is motivated towards personal development and can often be cured of the pains, when he or she assumes responsibility for the repressed feelings. The holistic process theory of healing (10-13) and the related quality of life theories (14-16) states that the return to the natural and pain free state of being is possible, whenever the person gets the resources needed for the existential healing. We believe and our clinical experience has constantly verified that the resources needed are "holding" or genuine care in the dimensions: awareness, respect, care, acknowledgment and acceptance with emotional support and processing in the dimensions: emotion, understanding and abandoning negative attitudes and beliefs. The precondition for the holistic healing to take place is trust between the physician and the patient, which seems to be the biggest challenge of holistic medicine, especially when dealing with the patient in pain.

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Eating Disorders

Virtually all teenage girls and young women have to some extent an eating disorder, which research has shown to covariate with the intensity of psychosexual developmental disturbances and sexual problems.

We suggest simple psychosexual (psychodynamic) explanations for the most common eating disorders like anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, and binge eating disorder and propose the hypothesis that eating disorders can be easily understood as symptoms of the underlying psychosexual developmental disturbances.

We relate the symptoms of the eating disorders to three major strategies for repressing sexuality:

- 1) The dispersion of the flow of sexual energy - from the a) orgasmic potent, genitally mature ("vaginal") state via the b) more immature, masturbatory ("clitoral") state, and further into the c) state of infantile autoerotism ("asexual state").
- 2) The dislocation from the genitals to the other organs of the body, especially the digestive and urinary tract organs (the kidney-bladder-urethra) giving the situation where sexual energy is accumulated and subsequently released through the substituting organs.
- 3) The repression of a) free, natural and joyful sexuality into first b) sadism, and then further into c) masochism.

We conclude that the eating disorders easily can be understood as sexual energies living their own life in the non-genital body organs, and we present results from the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine and Sexology, Copenhagen, where eating disorders have been treated with accelerated psychosexual development.

We included the patients with eating disorders into the protocol for sexual disturbances and found half these patients to be cured in one year and with 20 sessions of clinical holistic therapy.

Introduction

Virtually every teenage girl on the western hemisphere – and most women between 12 and 35 years– has an eating disorder to some extends. Working as physicians in general practice we have observed not only a high prevalence of severe eating disorders like anorexia (the general loss of appetite or disinterest in food), anorexia nervosa (the intended weight loss by starvation, over-exercise, purging etc.) and bulimia nervosa (the cyclical, recurring pattern of binge eating often followed by guilt, self-recrimination and compensatory behavior such as dieting, over-exercising and purging) (see list of the eating disorders listed in ICD-10 in table 1) (1), but also a number of milder disorders that less often are put into diagnoses followed by medical treatment, like binge eating disorder (uncontrolled bursts of overeating followed by compulsive vomiting), extreme and obsessive weight control (often by patients with a normal weight) where the bathroom weight are used several times a day, and obsessive, neurotic attitudes to food i.e. a too large importance attributed to avoiding calories, or carbohydrates, or fat, or even the compulsive abandonment of a single food items like white sugar, white bread etc.

Other expressions of this are extreme exercise-programs sometimes even encouraged by the physician, and vanity that converts into a compulsive drive for being as slim as the commercial fashion-models. The girls often present severely disturbed body images in combination with either an antisocial behavioral pattern with withdrawal and social isolation (antisocial or severely disturbed personality), or a strong dependency on the confirmation of their value as a person from peers and parents (dependent personality type), or a need for constant appraisal of the bodies' sexual value from boys (hypersexual behavior). So the closer we look at the appetite dysregulations, the more they seem deeply connected to psychosexual factors.

Therapists who work with young female patients with eating disorders often notice that there seem to be both a mental (psychoform) and a bodily (somatoform) aspect of the problem. The patient's mind often carries a lot of thoughts and ideas about the vital importance of not getting too fat and ugly, combined with feelings of shame and guilt from not being able to control the eating habits, etc. The patient's body often seems to live its own life. Sometimes it is compensatory attracted to food, at other times strongly repelled by food, and at other times again not interested in food at all.

Often the phases vary in a cyclic, rather predictable way. In anorexia, food is simply not of any interest; in anorexia nervosa there is a battle in the patient not to eat in spite of an urge for eating; in bulimia we have the compensatory overeating and in bulimia nervosa we have the inner conflict between one part of the patient that want to eat and another that do not. In bingeing the striving is for simply filling the stomach and thereafter emptying it totally again, releasing all tension. The emotional character of the eating disorder has made them difficult to treat with behavioral therapy; it has not been able to treat them successfully with drugs either. So most patients suffer from their eating disorder the first 20 years after early puberty; after that is normally tend to burn out – as to the sexual urge.

There are many scientific speculations about biological reasons for the eating disorders - the same way psychiatrists for a hundred years now have speculated in possible biological reasons for mental illnesses; but neither has till this day showed genetic or any other clear scientific evidence for being "hardwired" in the human nature. It is often said that the eating

disorders disturb other aspects of the patient's life, including her sexual life, but this is most likely to be the other way round: the eating disorder is a symptom of a deeper psychosexual disturbance.

It is worth to speculate that the problems started with puberty and gradually goes down ("burns out") during the next 20 years until the 35-year old woman, who statistically have come to know her body and sexuality by getting rid of her eating disorder, or at least of its symptoms. The close association in time and intensity is a strong clue that eating disorders might be causally linked to sexuality.

Psychosomatic and psychosexual research has in accordance with this shown sexuality to be closely linked to the eating disorders. Morgan et al (2) found that anorexics were less likely than bulimics to have engaged in masturbation and also scored lower on a measure of sexual esteem, and both groups exhibited less sexual interest and more negative affect during sex than did a normative sample (2). Abraham et al (3) found that bulimic patients were more likely to experience orgasm with masturbation, were more likely to have experimented with anal intercourse, and were more likely to describe their libido as "above average", while their controls were more likely to experience orgasm during sexual intercourse (3). Raboch and Faltus (4) found that "primary or secondary insufficiencies of sexual life were found for 80% of the anorectic patients"(4), while Raboch (5) found that sexual development of patients with anorexia nervosa was accelerated in the initial stages.

Sarol-Kulka et al (6) found in a pilot study that the anorectic patients showed interest in the opposite sex at an earlier age than patients with bulimia; however, the anorectic females, more frequently than bulimic, reported that these interests were never realized. 36% of patients with anorexia and 29% of patients with bulimia had no sexual initiation. When evaluating the negative aspects of their own sexuality, 28% of patients with bulimia and 9% of patients with anorexia reported difficulties in achieving orgasm; 13% of bulimic and 9% of anorectic females reported difficulties in getting aroused, 22% of bulimic and 17% of anorectic females reported fearing the sexual initiation (6).

Handa et al (7) found that 16.3% of patient with eating disorders had been physically abused and Sanci (8) found that childhood sexual abuse happed 2.5 times as often as normal with patients that later developed bulimia; the patients who developed anorexia did not show this association. Although the picture is not at all clear, and even somewhat contradictory, research has shown a strong association between sexuality and eating disorders. In science we must agree that our present understanding of sexuality is messy and unclear in itself that this most likely is the reason for the messy conditions of the research; we actually believe that it is the incomplete understanding of sexuality itself in the mind of the researchers that is the major hindrance for shedding light into this.

As we aim to improve our present state of understanding we have incorporated into this chapter a number of classical and modern theories of sexuality and psychosexual development. We believe that this synthesis is of clinical value and have, after working 10 years with holistic sexology in the clinic setting (9-25) developed a holistic sexological cure for the eating disorders that we have tested with success on several patients. We therefore want to present our theoretical understanding to make a basis for further research in clinical holistic medicine both in Denmark and in other countries (this chapter is a part of the Open Source Protocol for Clinical Holistic Medicine, that includes all the published strategies for helping the patients with clinical holistic medicine (CHM) and the obtained results from the

clinical practice, to be found at www.pubmed.gov, search for papers with “clinical holistic medicine” in the title).

Oral sexuality, sexual repression and eating disorders

The Freudian concept of oral sexuality is little understood by contemporary physicians and psychiatrists (26), but Freud’s concept was acknowledged by the whole tradition of psychoanalysts and psychodynamic researchers and therapists from the last century including Jung (27) and Reich (28,29).

Case story

Female patient 36 years old. The patient tells her story about an eating disorder (bulimia nervosa) starting when she was 16 years, a little before she became sexually active. She had this condition until recently – first when she was 30 years old did she have spontaneous remission from it - in spite of many years of cognitive psychotherapy. She was first treated on an individual basis at the University Hospital Psychiatric Clinic; then she came in a bulimia psychotherapy group for 18 month, when she was 20-21 years old, followed by 6 years in individual psychotherapy with a female experienced psychologist. The focus of the therapy was getting control over the eating habits. She reported that she always had big problems with desire, getting sexually aroused, and getting satisfactory orgasm, and she complains about a life-long history of unsatisfactory sexual relationships. She explained that her bingeing was motivated primarily of the extremely relaxed and happy feelings she got after filling her stomach completely until it almost bursted, and then immediately after emptying again completely by vomiting. The process itself was not really emotionally rewarding, neither the eating part of it nor the vomiting part, but the total bodily relaxation was what she was really after. Only after she learned how to relax and go with “the flow in life”, letting go of controlling everything, did the eating disorder leave her. It seemed that the therapy was unproductive, because it aimed at helping the patient getting control, not at helping the patient to learn to let go of the control.

Freud believed that sexuality during the child’s psychosexual development traveled from the mouth to the anus (and bladder), until it reached its final destination in the genitals. Reich had a somewhat different understanding, as he believed that the sexually healthy little girl had genital sexuality, and only when she was denied her “genital rights” i.e. by being punished for masturbation, would she repress her sexuality away from the genitals and into the other organs. Freud also had the idea of sexual development from infantile autoerotism into the more mature masturbatory, clitoral sexual competency, before the girl finally reach genital maturity and able to have sexual intercourse. Reich believed that whenever sexuality became repressed is was kept by the body-amour and the muscles of the body. So when sexuality was repressed, it moved into the tensions of the body, and thus out of reach and use for the patient (28). Today we know in theory three ways for sexuality to become repressed – three neurotic

strategies for getting rid of a sexuality that cannot be contained in the patient's childhood environment:

- Repression of sexual energy by destroying the sexual ray of energy: from the genital state (orgasmic potency) to "infantile autoerotism" (lack of orgasmic potency).

The first is the repression of the sexual energy, from flowing freely through the genitals allowing the person so engage in sexual intercourse, to the more restricted masturbatory state, where the sexual energy still can be used for pleasure raising a sexual circle, but only within the person herself, into the still more futile and useless state of infantile autoerotism, where sexual energy cannot any longer form a beam of energy and flow, but only hang as a cloud of sexual energy (a sexual quality or "odor"), just barely allowing the observer to identify the gender of the person. The infantile autoerotism is the typical sexual state of the schizophrenic patient; in psychodynamic theory the lack of sexual interest in the world from this state is one of the suggested reason for autism.

- Repression of sexual energy by displacement from the genital to other organs – sexualisation of the digestive system.

When sexuality cannot be accepted by the girl's parents it can still survive by being transformed into emotional charge associated with eating, defecation and urination. The mouth, intestines, anus and bladder can, as observed already by Freud carry enormities of charge of sexual energy. The reader that doubts this might recall Gräfenberg study from 1950 where he quite surprisingly documented the very important role of the urethra in many women's sexuality (30). This means that the sexual energies in many ways can be preserved, but disguised, as sexual emotions connected to non-sexual organs; the joy associated with the later is obviously often much easier to accept for the parents: The little girls is cute when she eats; she is even cute when she goes to the bathroom, but she is definitely naughty and not-so-cute when she plays with her own genitals. So the displacement of sexual energies turns her, if she is raised in a sex-negative environment, into a socially acceptable person. If we compare the eating disorders with the sexual disorders, it is quite interesting to see how parallel these two lists are (see table 1). Of course this psychodynamic understanding of body and sexuality might seem rather incomprehensible, if you are unwilling to acknowledge sexual energies as the fundamental vital energies in the human being, as did Freud, Jung, Reich, and so many of the other great psychologists and physicians of the last century. But if you can follow this scheme of thinking, then you can also examine your female patient presenting an eating disorder for a deeper layer of psychosexual developmental disturbances, that could be corrected, and by doing so you can help the young woman not only to get rid of her eating disorder, but also of other more existentially important problems related to a poorly developed sexuality.

- Repression of sexual energy by degeneration into sadism and masochism

A third way sexuality could be repressed is as sadism and masochism. The idea that sexual repression leads to masochism, which is perhaps most strongly and clearly expressed by Reich in his book “Character analysis” (29), is that sexuality basically calls for meeting with the opposite sex, in an active, aggressive way. Sexual aggression is thus the most natural thing with both sexes, although the expression of male and female sexual aggression is very different, the male aggression often looking like sexual violation and harassment, while the female aggression often is looking more like seduction and “hooking”. When sexual aggression becomes blocked, i.e. when the girl is told not to be so sexually challenging to the boys in the way she dresses and acts, or when she is sexually neglected of the father and other boys and men who she is depending on interacting with for her psychosexual development, her sexuality first turns into evil sexual intent (i.e. sexually torturing the boys by rejecting them or slating or intimidating them); the logic in this is that sexuality still exists, because it breaks through the barrier using force (which is sadism). If sadism is also repressed, the flow of sexual energy is turned inwards, instead of outwards (which is masochism). So masochism is basically sadism turned inwards towards self. If the reader wonders how sadism is created from sexual energy turned evil, we refer to our explanation of evilness in general in the life mission theory (31-39). This theory explains how and why all intents seem to turn evil, when they cannot be realized by the little child (36).

Table 1. The 2007 ICD-10 list of eating disorders and sexual disorders. Notice the similarities.

(F50.) Eating disorders
(F50.0) Anorexia nervosa
(F50.1) Atypical anorexia nervosa
(F50.2) Bulimia nervosa
(F50.3) Atypical bulimia nervosa
(F50.4) Overeating associated with other psychological disturbances
(F50.5) Vomiting associated with other psychological disturbances
(F50.8) Other eating disorders
(F50.9) Eating disorder, unspecified
(F52.) Sexual dysfunction, not caused by organic disorder or disease
(F52.0) Lack or loss of sexual desire
(F52.1) Sexual aversion and lack of sexual enjoyment
(F52.2) Failure of genital response
(F52.3) Orgasmic dysfunction
(F52.4) Premature ejaculation
(F52.5) Nonorganic vaginismus
(F52.6) Nonorganic dyspareunia
(F52.7) Excessive sexual drive
(F52.8) Other sexual dysfunction, not caused by organic disorder or disease
(F52.9) Unspecified sexual dysfunction, not caused by organic disorder or disease

Theories for eating disorders

Anorexia nervosa

The basic pattern of anorexia nervosa seems to be the lack of desire and the lack of self-acceptance and acceptance of body and sexuality. The girl often presents severe problems related to her personality; her mind is often not fully developed compared to other girls her age, her sexuality is often less active, unless she uses this as a kind of activity that uses calories i.e. instrumentally and not for the sexual pleasure; spiritually she is often not able to give and receive love, and she often also has a poorly developed self (see (40) for a systematic way to analyze the personality disturbances). So it might be a little simplistic to point to the patients psychosexual development as the fundamental cause of the eating disorders, but according to psychosomatic theory the problems related to the lack of development of her personality is actually also likely to be caused by her more fundamental problems related to her psychosexual development.

So we do not find it hard to see how anorexia nervosa relates to repressed sexuality; the patient's sexuality is often repressed in several ways: obviously there is often the regression toward the infantile autoerotism; then there is the translocation of sexuality from her genitals to her digestive system (and often also bladder-urethra); and finally there is often a strong component of masochism leading to self-destruction. If the reason for starvation really is masochism, and it often looks so, there is a hidden sexual pleasure in the self-destruction that is stronger than any pain you can inflict on the patient during the most rigorous scheme of behavioral therapy. Actually any scheme that represses the masochistic sexual energy is likely to deprive the female masochistic patient even the last remaining joy and meaning of life. This is likely to be the reason why behaviors coercive therapy, which is still in use in psychiatry, most often is strongly contra-productive.

Bulimia nervosa

Bulimia is in many practical ways the opposite of anorexia, but it still contains from a psychodynamic view many of the same basic elements of repressed sexuality. The shift from the genitals to the digestive organs (and often also bladder-urethra) is the same; the repression of vital sexuality and orgasmic potency into the masturbatory, clitoral state is the same, although the bulimic patient often is less repressed than the anorectic; and the masochistic quality of the bulimic behavior is often rather obvious. But in bulimia the fundamental drive is preserved. The patient wants to eat; when the patient tells about the strength of the urge it carries the same feel as the other basic biological urges, making it highly likely to be an expression of a hidden sexual urge. If this is the case, it is clear that it is uncontrollable by the girl or young woman. The power of sexuality is stronger than the power of the mind; it cannot be controlled by direct repression; it can only be handled by intelligent negotiation. So if this is the case, the bulimic patient must learn to acknowledge her compensatory drive for eating as an expression of her sexuality; and her neurotic sexuality must be developed to enable it to shift back and inhabit once again her pelvis, genitals - and become a natural sexuality.

Binge eating disorder

This disorder is a less serious disorder that seldom leads to medical attention, as we find it in girls and young women with almost normal psychopathology. In many ways this disorder is the clearest expression of sexuality taken to the digestive system. Instead of filling her vagina she is filling her stomach; and instead of releasing the tension in an orgasm, she releases it through vomiting. Many of these patients seem to have their sexuality repressed to the clitoral level being able to masturbate, but not to have full orgasm during coitus (loss of orgasmic potency). The masochistic component is often lacking, but it can be there also. The simplest way to understand this is the patient masturbating through her digestive system, the same way other women masturbate by filling the vagina and emptying it again; we have noticed the habit of some of these patients to fill their anus and rectum with objects or large amount of water, and releasing this again for sexual pleasure or for reasons of “purification”. This is obviously the same sexual dynamics taking directly to the intestines. The same way the urine can be held back and finally released as a masturbatory practice of some of these often sexually innovative patients.

The bulimic and the bingeing patients are often sexually active also; not all their sexual energy is channeled to the digestive organs, making the situation a little more complex. It is like a diverted river, where more or less water is running in a parallel river. The cure is to help the patient lead all the water, all the flow of sexuality, back into the main river. First when the patient owns all her sexual energy and is able to use it maturely genitally for satisfying sex with a partner, will her eating disorder – the symptoms of her disturbed sexuality – finally be cured.

Sexological treatment of eating disorders

In treating the eating disorders as sexological disturbances it is important to go directly to the patient’s sexuality; this means that the therapist and the patient should agree completely that her sexuality and personality as a whole is much more important than her eating disorder. Of course, if the patient is dying from starvation or excessive overweight there might be practical problems in using such a strategy; it is important to remember that all problems start as small problems and only if they remain unsolved for a very long time turn into huge, even mortal situations. So this approach is wisely used as soon as the symptoms of the eating disorder appears, not when the girl or young woman has lost so much weight that she is unable to concentrate on anything and close to dying.

The aim of the holistic sexological therapy is the development of the patient’s whole personality through rehabilitation of her sexuality – her genital character – with an often-used expression by Reich (28,29).

Holistic Medicine is nothing but the classical, European medicine going back to Hippocrates; this is the beginning of modern medicine, which we know rather well from uniquely well-preserved sources called the Corpus Hippocraticum (41). We have in recent years tried to develop holistic medicine into a modern, scientifically based system of clinical medicine, where patients are cured mostly without drugs and surgery. The theory and practice of clinical holistic medicine has been described in a number of books (42-45) and

experimental cures for many illnesses and disorders including cancer and schizophrenia have already been presented in a series of papers (46-75). The sense of coherence seems to be a core concept in the understanding of holistic healing (76-81).

We are not in this chapter going to repeat all the practical tools and details, but the interested physician is encouraged to start just by talking with the patient about her personal history and present problems and after obtaining the trust of the patient continuing this therapeutic work by using therapeutic touch, i.e. massage of the whole body. The combination of the conversational therapy and the bodywork has been used for millennia to rid the patients of repressed emotions hidden in the body or related to the body and sexuality in the patient's mind. The basic idea in the therapy is to work against the patient's emotional resistance, to bring all difficult emotions up to the surface of consciousness, but first a variety of emotions will show in the therapy, often sorrow, anxiety, anger, helplessness, hopelessness or despair. After the emotional layer an even more intense layer of emotions connected to the sexual aspects of the body and its energies, including the genitals and pelvic area will appear.

The holistic sexological bodywork is normally not including the patient's genitals, as many patients can be helped without this degree of intimacy. If the patient is not sufficiently helped there are a number of small and large sexological tools to be used, like acceptance through touch (11) and vaginal physiotherapy (14,15), which are relative small tools and much smaller procedures than the standard pelvic examination, and larger tools like the expanded holistic pelvic examination (13), going all the way up to direct sexual stimulation of the patient in a radical and provocative technique developed 50 years ago by sexologist like Hoch and Reich called the sexological examination (82-92).

The fundamental strategy of therapy is to take the patient back in time, to allow her to confront the emotional and sexual problems of her early life, childhood, and even fetal life if necessary, that she could not solve at that time. The patient will get well again the reverse order of her getting ill – this is the law of Hering (93). The patients will heal her whole existence, not only a part – that is the salutogenic principle (94-95). The patient will come back into the old traumas, when she is exposed, in a symbolic form, for the traumatic events and energies that once created her wounds – that is the famous principle of similarity going all the way back to the ideas of Hippocrates; and finally she will heal when she got the resources needed at the time of the trauma, and is so confident with the therapist that she is able to receive them.

The eating disorders can easily be understood as sexual energies living their own life in the parallel body organs related to digestions, and we present our experience from the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine that the eating disorders easily can be treated, if therapist and patient can agree that sexuality, not the eating disorder, is the focus of the therapy. In our project we have observed that virtually all young female patients to some degree have an eating disorder; we understand these as symptoms of psychosexual developmental disturbances and we therefore successfully included the patients with eating disorders into the protocol for sexual disturbances (9). We found that about half the patients was cured, not only for their sexual problems, but also systematically from their eating disorders, in one year and with 20 sessions of clinical holistic therapy. In general we found that independently of the type of problem about half the patients were cured, and the more direct the patient's sexuality was approached in the therapy, the more efficient it was (9,15,96).

Ethical considerations

Holistic therapy and holistic sexology should be made according to the ethical standard of the International Society for Holistic Health (97) and the laws of the country you reside in. It will be difficult for physicians not familiar with contemporary holistic medicine or the works of Freud, Jung, Reich, Lowen, Rosen and others (26-29,98,99), to understand the full clinical rationality in interpreting the eating disorders as psychosexual disturbances. It will also be difficult for psychiatrists that normally do not touch their patients at all, to understand the therapeutic value of therapeutic touch. And when it comes to using the manual sexological tools, many physicians who are not sexologists, might find these tools too intimate and too directly sexual. In our clinic we have until now used the small manual sexological tools, and only rarely the holistic pelvic exam. Direct sexual stimulation of the female patients seems to be necessary in primary anorgasmia and similar sexual disorders, but we have not, in spite of the indication, found it correct to use these tools in our clinic, but have referred the patients in need of such therapy to the sexologists using these methods.

When it comes to teenagers below 18 years old, we have chosen to wait with the manual sexological treatment until they could sign up for these treatments themselves as adults legally responsible for their own treatment. For patients below 18 years we have often used the normal pelvic examination as basis for a conversation about sexuality and related issues, and we have found the pelvic examination to be as therapeutic as it is unpleasant and even experienced as “very painful” by 15% of the teenagers (100). We know from several studies that patients with a history of sexual abuse very often react very negative emotionally to the pelvic examination (101); the penetration of the vagina with the speculum and other instruments, or just even the fingers, often gives strong associations to - and memories of the sexual abuse, and according to the principle of similarity this can – and should – be used therapeutically to help the female patient to heal her old wound on body and soul from the sexual abuse (18-20).

Discussion

The observation of the psychoform and somatoform dissociation of the patient will naturally lead to an intent to heal the patient by reconnecting mentally and bodily to the patient. As we are sexual beings, and as a disturbed sexuality has so many symptoms and is followed by so many complications of all kinds, we cannot afford to be a-sexual and to keep all discussion of the patient problems in the a-sexual realm, if we truly want to help the patient.

For almost 100 years psychotherapy and psychiatry have disagreed about the importance of sexuality in mental diseases; this disagreement continues when it comes to the eating disorders. We cannot here settle this old discussion today; just inform the interested reader about the theories and the tools for healing also the patient with an eating disorder. When you have worked for some years in the holistic clinic, as we have now with more than 500 patients, and seen how the dynamics of masochism, sexual repression into autoerotism, and sexual shifts from the genitals to the other organs of the body like the digestive organs (from mouth to anus) and the whole urinary tract (kidney-bladder-urethra) can be easily reversed

and often followed by the radical improvement not only of the patient's sexuality, but also of quality of life, physical and mental health, and level of social, sexual and working ability, you will also come to believe in the old psychodynamic theories of Freud and his students. We found it often helpful to teach the patients about quality of life theory (102-105) and quality of life philosophy (106-113).

The sexological approach in the treatment of physical, mental, and existential problems is not new; the traditional holistic medicine of old Greece did exactly that. We have become quite alienated to simple conversational therapy and bodywork during the last five decades, where biomedicine and drugs have become the answer to every problem of the patient, but with biomedicine we have not been able to help all patients and today every second citizen in modern society is a chronic patient, even in countries like Denmark where biomedicine and health service are absolutely free. So we have to conclude that biomedicine is not going to help all patients and biomedicine is not likely to help teenagers and young women with eating disorders – especially not if the psychodynamic hypothesis presented in this chapter is likely to be true. The most fundamental problem with the sexual approach is that it has proven very difficult to understand the true nature of sexual energy in scientific terms, and that the whole field of human development is theoretically extremely farfetched (114-126). To simplify everything it is important to recall that the essence of relating is being able to say I-Thou. In therapy the courage to love your patient is what in the end will heal your patient and release the patient from disease/pathology (127).

Conclusions

Virtually all teenage girls and young females have an eating disorder to some degree. We have suggested simple sexual explanations for the most common eating disorders like anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa and binge eating disorder. We have suggested that these disorders could easily be understood as symptoms of psychosexual developmental disturbances. We have analyzed the symptoms in relation to three major ways that patients use to repress their sexuality as children: 1) The dispersion of sexual energy from the genitally mature to the immature masturbatory (clitoral) state, and further into the state of infantile autoerotism, 2) the dislocation from the genitals to the other organs especially the digestive organs and the bladder-urethra, giving a situation where sexual energy is accumulated and released through substituting organs and 3) the repression of free, natural and joyful sexuality into first sadism, and then further into masochism.

The eating disorders can easily be understood as sexual energies living their own life in the parallel body organs related to digestions and we present our experience from the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine and Sexology that the eating disorders can be treated, if therapist and patient can agree that sexuality, not the eating disorder, is the focus of the therapy. In our project we have included patients with eating disorders into the protocol for sexual disturbances, and we have found about half the patients to be cured in one year and with 20 sessions of clinical holistic therapy, independent of the problem the patient initially presented with (NNT=2) (9,128-133).

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How to Counsel and Treat Young People to Alleviate and Prevent Sexual Problems

Sexuality arises fundamentally from the polarity of our gender. The quality of our sexuality, the mental impression of it, the structure of the desire and patterns of behavior, seem to be defined by our biology and closely connected to our gender and only slightly modified by our culture. The male sexuality is often said to be outgoing and aggressive, as his biological nature is to spread his semen and the female sexuality is receptive and limiting, as she has to chose the right partner for her offspring. From a biological perspective this makes good sense. In this chapter we try to analyze the nature of sexuality from the qualitative perspective of motivation.

Introduction

Caroline Free points to an issue of extreme importance in her editorial on “Advice about sexual health for young people” (1). Combining the fact that more than a quarter of young people are sexually active before they are 16 years of age, that one in ten suffer from severe sexual problems and half of them from minor sexual problems, the need for counseling and supporting the teenager in the sexual area is obvious.

Sexuality remains the biggest taboo in society and in the medical community this taboo is the constant fear of losing the license, if the physician is accused of overstepping boundaries. The development in most western societies has for decades been towards a more open attitude towards sexuality and pornography with an earlier sexual debut, that today in the Nordic countries, England and USA find teenagers aged only 13, 14 and 15 years highly sexually active and often much more experimental than their parents have ever been.

From our clinical experience, sexual problems are almost always both in the young teenager and in the young adult related to existential and emotional problems. Therefore a holistic approach seems appropriate focusing at the same time both on the physical, emotional and existential aspects of the sexual problems. Often solving the existential problems causing

the sexual inadequacy is the key to a permanent solution. This means that an open and honest dialog with a non-judging and accepting attitude can benefit the teenager for life. Many or maybe most sexual problems can simply be prevented, if the physician takes time to give thorough counseling and even sexological treatment to the teenager, when needed.

The conversation is so far the most important tool for helping the teenager, educating him or her in the fundamental dimensions of existence and sexuality and the correspondence between these dimensions. What is so desperately needed by the physician is the words, structure and understanding of both sexuality and the existence, so he can educate the teenager, who more than anything needs understanding.

Holistic sexology for teenagers

The scientific breakthrough in the understanding of human sexuality came with Masters and Johnson's brilliant work in the middle of the last century (2,3). The most famous curve in sexological research is still the curve of the male and female sexual reaction cycles, explaining the four phases of the normal sexual intercourse: the excitement phase, the plateau phase, the orgasmic phase and the relaxation phase. Since their work, most clinical sexologists have recognized a pre-phase of lust, where one of the most dominant problems of our time is the lack of sexual lust in females (4). In spite of this excellent description of sexual experience and behavior, we still lack a sufficient theory of sexuality that can serve as guidance for the sexologic therapy, especially when we in the holistic sexological clinic want to treat the whole person and overview all the relevant dimensions of sexuality and existence, as is often the case when we want to help the teenager. We want the teenager to be a whole, balanced, ethical and able person, not just to be able to function sexually.

As sexual and existential problems often go hand in hand and as both existence and sexuality is theoretically difficult issues, the two maybe most fundamental questions of the research in human life and quality of life are: "what is existence?" and "what is sexuality?" Often the first question are left unanswered and the second met with theoretical answers from evolutionary theory and psychosocial models (5,6), but difficult to use in sexual education as well as in the sexological clinic with the teenager.

We want to make up for this lack of a comprehensive theory of sexuality by introducing an existentially oriented theory of sexuality, taking its basis in the life mission theory (7-13) of human existence. The useful thing of having two strongly related theories for both existence and sexuality is that it becomes easy to work with both sexuality and existence at the same time in the holistic clinic, as the physician often must to help the patient, both the patient with sexual problems and the patient with existential problems.

The theory of existence and the theory of sexuality

According to the theory of talent (10) the human being has three fundamental dimensions of existence:

- Purpose of life – giving meaning, happiness, existential and spiritual satisfaction
- Gender and sexuality – giving joy and sensual pleasure, sensual satisfaction
- Power in mind, feelings and body – giving fun and success, mental satisfaction

Purpose of life

The dimension of purpose of life, also called love, or primary talent, arise according to the life mission theory (7-13) from human choice. The life mission theory is a theory of the purpose of life, which integrate neo-Freudian, existential and transpersonal models. It explains in general the loss of health, quality of life and ability of human beings. It states, that our human nature gives us choice, that is freedom to an autonomous intention, and that our first intentional choice becomes our purpose of life. This intention of our wholeness, or soul if you like, sets the fundamental perspective of the person, which again gives birth to the personality and a consciousness mind, that is the structure of interpretation of the world (the consciousness is in our understanding basically based on our cellular biology, giving rise to a purpose of life, and other intentions) (14-20).

The fundamental differences in worldview give human beings their fundamental difficulties in understanding each other. We all have a very personal perspective of reality and only when we realize how deep down this goes, to the bottom of our totality, or soul, can we understand the other, patient or peer. Only when we know ourselves do the very bottom of our soul, including all aspects of our character (13) and purpose of life (7-13), can we truly know the other.

When we rehabilitate the purpose of life and human character, we rehabilitate the person's ability to be coherent with the world at large (21,22), that is, our ability to love, our ability to exist on a spiritual level – be on an abstract level of existence – and to use our central talents to be of value to the other.

The dimension of power comes from the biological fact that we all have a mind, feelings, and emotions, where rehabilitating this dimension is important because of the sad fact that we often need to modify our self and restrict our own power to be tolerated and accepted by our parents. If we as children and teenagers are too powerful and dominating, we are often meet with rejection, neglect, violation (11), so we have to deny our own intelligence, feelings or bodily presence.

While these two dimensions with the presented theories are fairly well understood, we have yet to explain the third dimension of gender and sexuality. The dimensions of love and power must relate to the dimension of sexuality, for us to lead a whole, balanced and successful life.

The physician must always, when evaluating a teenager's sexual relationship, reflect on the ethical side of sexuality or answering the question: when is a sexual relationship harmful to the patient? If the relationship is seen as harmful, harm must be prevented. The best way is to make the teenager understand what causes the harm and letting go of this part of the relationship or of the sexual partner when necessary. Without educating the teenager to be able to protect herself, the harm can only be temporarily avoided; if a negative pattern is there, the harm is likely to happen later. Prevention of sexual abuse is thus possible in many cases.

What is sexuality?

Sexuality arises fundamentally from the polarity of our gender. The quality of our sexuality, the mental impression of it, the structure of the desire and patterns of behavior, seem to be defined by our biology and is closely connected to our gender and only slightly modified by our culture. The male sexuality is often said to be outgoing and aggressive, as his biological nature is to spread his semen and the female sexuality is receptive and limiting, as she has to choose the right partner for her offspring. From a biological perspective this makes good sense. We suggest that we analyze the nature of sexuality from the qualitative perspective of motivation and we thus find the following nine reasons for human beings to engage in sexual activity:

- Reproduction: To have children or to give children
- Sensual enjoyment
- Love: As an expression of love, including spiritual and developmental reasons.
- Fun (power games): either to give or receive it, or not to give or not to receive it, as an entertainment, reward or punishment.
- Dependency of sex (substituting meaning in life and love, often after incest of sexual abuse in childhood) (24)
- Prostitution: To trade it for material or immaterial values (money, food, accommodation, drugs, safety, protection, and more)
- Manipulation: social pressure, seduction (abuse, group pressure, societal prestige, incest, and professional incest)
- Rape: to exploit the of lack of resistance (lack of mental, emotional or physical power)
- To do evil (to consciously or unconsciously revenge wrongdoings towards self, or just to materialize an evil intention) (12)

Only the first two are directly related to the existential dimension of gender and sexuality. The enjoyment is obviously closely related to the intent and behavior of reproduction, and it is normally suggested that this activity is rewarded by the organism releasing a morphine-like substances in the brain (25). While the objective meaning of reproduction is easily understood, the subjective dimension of joy is much more difficult to comprehend. The joy can be understood as a biological reward system connected to reproduction, but as the female interest in and enjoyment of sex often starts long before and continues long after the menopause, this is not a very good explanation. The real mystery about sex obviously lies in understanding the biological and existential source of the sexual pleasure, which seems to be connected to all living being, going all the way down the eukaryote cell's path of evolution to the bacteria's strong interest in foreign genes (please see the discussion below).

What are the dimensions of sexual enjoyment?

The sensual enjoyment in sexuality is traditionally described to have the following dimensions (2,3,26-33): Lust is basically an expression of the wish to have sex, which is the intention of sex. Excitement is basically the mind, feelings and body getting involved with sex. Pleasure is the enjoyment coming from the female and the male pole meeting.

Orgasm is lust, excitement, and pleasure culminating in a peak (peak orgasm), which can be prolonged into a plateau of intensity (plateau orgasm); the multi-orgasmic experience which is natural with woman and obtainable for more men with tantric exercises is a somewhat dynamic combination of these two. The orgasm can be local, located to the genitals and pelvis, or more global, or all including, often deathlike, and transcendent experience.

Orgasmic potency is the ability to get a high level of intensity, prolonged orgasms, more orgasms, and all-including, transcending orgasms. Interestingly, for women orgasmic potency seems to be the inverse of the time needed in the Master and Johnson's plateau phase; the more orgasmic potent, the less time you need to spend in the plateau phase before you reach orgasm; for men it is actually the same but orgasmic potency is also direct proportional with the time the man can hold his ejaculation back, as he can build a high intensity of pleasure/orgasm without letting go of the "tension" (the sexual polarity), this being the secret of the multi-orgasmic man.

Tantra. The orgasm has two components of pleasure, one is the sensual pleasure rising to its peak, and the other is the existential satisfaction of reproduction – giving and receiving the semen and thus making a baby. When consciousness develops to a certain level, the existential satisfactory part of the normal, re-creative and non-reproductive sexual act is seen to be balanced with an existential frustration a moment after, when it is realized that reproduction does not follow the intercourse. The conscious person will then let go of this part of the sexual pleasure, reorganizing sexuality into the classical tantric path.

Correspondence of dimensions. Interestingly, the three above mentioned dimensions of sexuality fits well into the general theory of talent (10): lust arises from intention, excitement from power (freedom and liveliness of mind, feelings and body), and pleasure from the dimension of gender. Orgasm comes from the combination of lust, excitement, and pleasure, but only if the individual can let go of the mind and transcend into being fully a life.

Sexual health depends thus on the ability to allow oneself to experience the maximal level of sexual desire, and in the same time to completely control ones level of sexual excitement and behavior; this is rehabilitated together with the ability to know and be your true self in the course of personal, existentially oriented development.

The ability to desire is rehabilitated together with your general purpose of life, which is your fundamental source of lust for life. The ability to get a high level of excitement is rehabilitated when your full personal power is rehabilitated, so you can involve your mind, your feelings and your body a 100% in the sexual act. Sensual pleasure is rehabilitated when the ability to sensual enjoyment in all areas of life is fully rehabilitated, together with your general self-esteem and your ability to embrace a strong sexual polarity, being fully the male or the female sexual pole. Orgasmic potency is rehabilitated, when lust, excitement, and pleasure is rehabilitated, together with the ability to let go of the ego and transcend.

Relevance to holistic sexological therapy

Nothing is as practical as a good theory and this theory supports the intervention on the sexually dysfunctional teenager male or female, in the way that what needs to be done is always rehabilitation of lust, excitement, sensual enjoyment and orgasmic potency, together with the processing of tensions and aches giving pain and discomfort, often caused by the feelings from negative life events related to sex and gender, which are at that time repressed and placed in body and mind as blockages, specifically in the pelvis and the sexual organs and tissues (34-37).

The four standard steps of holistic existential therapy: love, trust, holding and healing are more needed with the vulnerable and insecure teenager than with any other patient. Holding consists of awareness, respect, care, acknowledgement and acceptance and when it comes to sexual problems acceptance is often the most important of these five. The lack of self-acceptance is primarily felt as shame and low self-esteem. The most efficient procedure in holistic sexological therapy to solve problems with shame seems to be acceptance through touch (35). Using this kind of holistic therapy with young teenagers is ethically highly problematic and must always be justified by a strong medical necessity like unbearable vulvodynia as an alternative to surgery or strong lifelong medication and done by physicians, which masters a high degree of self-control and self-insight. Conversation is therefore in general the preferred holistic medical tool in the holistic sexologic clinic with the young teenagers.

In general, sexual problems cannot be solved without a partial focus on existential issues and this is more so with teenagers, which are normally going through so many deep existential crises. Many young patients will when sexually active present existential problems as sexual problems, as sexual dysfunction, lack of lust, and lack of orgasmic potency is often the most noticeable subjective symptom of poor quality of life and low self-esteem. In older patients this pattern is reversed; often they do not expect to function sexually, but they complain of lack of lust for life in general. Often the rehabilitation of sexuality and character (11) is the path to insight in self and the purpose of life, the essence of self (7-13).

Sexual ethics and medical ethics for working with the teenager

With the mapping of the three experiential dimensions of sexuality leading to the transcending experience of orgasm, it is possible to analyze what is necessary for a high sexual ethics needed for working with the vulnerable teenager.

As most people are unaware of their most fundamental intentions, most people cannot control lust. The holistic physician comes from a clear intention of being there for the patient in the same way as a good parent, and this is an efficient means of controlling intention, making the intention of helping, healing and supporting the patient his/her sole focus; to accomplish this to a degree where sexual desire and other unwanted intentions does not appear anymore, which is one of the signs of mastery of the holistic medical clinical practice.

As the sexual polarity is an innate quality, the sensual enjoyment connected to the mere contact with a person of the opposite sex can be diminished by repressing ones sexual poles (male or female); as the repression of one's own gender in the clinic often will be somewhat irreversible and therefore leave a degree of permanent sexual inhibition, this strategy of controlling sexuality is damaging to sexual health, and to ones character in general (11) it cannot be recommended.

Interestingly, as according to the presented sexual theory, sexual excitement comes from investing mind, emotion and body in sexuality, excitement is completely controllable. This means that instead of just controlling ones sexual behavior, a person or a physician can chose not to get sexually excited, even if the desire in itself cannot be controlled. After some practice sexual excitement can easily be controlled in the holistic medical clinic, making it possible to obtain extreme intimacy without getting sexually involved (35,37), which is of extreme importance in the adolescent holistic sexologic clinic.

The interesting consequence on this is that practical sexual ethics can be taught both to patients and to their physicians. We suggest that this ability of getting intimate with the opposite sex without getting sexually excited should be an obligatory part of every physician's medical training, as physical intimacy is a natural part of the doctor's job. The physician still needs to carefully control his behavior too, as the patient still will interpret the behavior of the physician, and a patient should never feel sexually abused. In our experience any person, man or woman, will normally take an appreciation, when expressed verbally or non-verbally without any sexual excitement, as a compliment, while the same appreciation, when expressed with such an excitement, often will be taken as a flirt and invitation to a sexual relationship, or as a sexual harassment or even a sexual violation.

The highest degree of responsibility that a physician can take is the responsibility for the experience of the patient; in holistic existential therapy and sexology where painful old emotions are confronted and integrated an important competence is the physician's mastery of the patients experience, calling old painful moments into this moment, while letting the patient clearly know and experience, that the intention of this is solely the healing of the patient. The physician being completely relaxed and without any sexual excitement and emotional tension, giving the patient through an honest appreciation the feeling of being a well-respected, autonomous, precious, and whole being, is an important precondition for this kind of therapy (41,42).

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Section 5: Psychodynamic Holistic Therapy

Factors Influencing the Therapeutic Decision-Making

We consider the classical sexology to be a part of the Hippocrates holistic medicine, as most of the sexological procedures were described in the classical textbooks called the Corpus Hippocraticum. Modern sexology acknowledges these ancient roots and shares the same close relationship to the contemporary scientific holistic medicine. Holistic medicine is different from many types of alternative and complementary medicine (CAM) as it focus on the *whole person*, body, mind, spirit and heart together with the person's *sense of coherence* (SOC) with the surrounding world.

Scientific holistic medicine is built on holistic medical theory, on therapeutic and ethical principles. The rationale is that the therapist can take the patient into a state of salutogenesis, or existential healing, using his skills and knowledge.

But however much we want to make therapy a science it remains partly an art, and the more developed the therapist becomes, the more of his/her decisions will be based on intuition, feeling and even inspiration that is more based on love and human concern and other spiritual motivations than on mental reason and rationality in a simple sense of the word.

The provocative and paradoxal medieval western concept of the “truth telling clown”, or the eastern concepts of “*crazy wisdom*” and “*holy madness*” seems highly relevant here.

The problem is how we can ethically justify this kind of highly “irrational” therapeutic behavior in the rational setting of a medical institution. We argue here that holistic therapy has a very high success rate and is doing no harm to the patient, and encourage therapists, psychiatrists, psychologist and other academically trained “helpers” to constantly measure their own success-rate.

This chapter discusses many of the important factors that influence clinical holistic decision-making. *Sexuality* could, as many psychoanalysts from Freud to Reich and Searles have believed, be the most healing power that exists and also the most difficult for the mind to comprehend, and thus the most “crazy-wise” tool of therapy.

Introduction

400,000 Danes used CAM (complementary and alternative medicine) in 1990, which is holistic and alternative medicine (defined as non-biomedical complementary, alternative, integrative or psychosocial interventions for medical purposes). This increased to 800,000 by year 2000 (1) and expected to be 1,600,000 in 2010. If the development continues, as it has done in the United States already, there will be more CAM consultations than biomedical consultations in Denmark year 2020. One of the fastest growing areas of CAM in the whole western world is sexology, presumably reflecting both a liberalization of society and an increasing rate of severe sexual problems in the population.

In spite of all this activity, the effect of CAM in general is still not clear at all. This is primarily because the term now refers to hundreds of treatment systems focusing on some aspects of “the whole patient” and not primarily on symptoms or diseases, as is normal practice in today’s mainstream biomedicine (pharmacological medicine).

What works in holistic medicine is healing of the patient’s existence, called “salutogenesis” by Aaron Antonovsky (1923–1994) (2-9). This is most often done by creating a deep shift in the consciousness of the patient towards a more positive and constructive attitude towards self, including body and mind, other people, and the world at large. The reason for the medical efficiency of such a shift towards positive attitudes and behaviors seems to be that consciousness is the primary determinant of global quality of life (QOL), health, and ability in general (10-14). Because of the appreciation in the causal power of consciousness, many physicians and therapists are now focusing on this important shift in the patient’s consciousness as their primary goal in treatment, when they want to improve QOL, health, and ability of the patient. This focus has caused the emerging field of scientific holistic medicine, i.e. “clinical holistic medicine” (15-55).

We have been able to document that such an approach can help every second patient in the patient’s own experience - with physical illness and chronic pain, mental illness, low self-esteem, sexual dysfunction, low quality of life, and low working ability (56-62). Interestingly we tested the holistic therapy on patients that could not be helped by their doctor with standard treatment (drugs), and many of the patients had had their chronic conditions for many years. This indicates quite a powerful effect of scientific holistic medicine. The clinical decision making were guided by many sound and rational theories and principles, but the different treatments took so many different routes that we literally invented a new cure for every new patient, leaving us with a need of deep reflections on what really is happening in the therapy. What are the “unpredictable” factors that are so radically influencing the therapists decisions, when not the rational principles of healing and therapy themselves? From where comes the surprising creativity in the session that in the end seemingly sets the patient free?

The therapeutic principles

Since Hippocrates, holistic healing has been guided by medical principles (63). The better the holistic therapist knows and understands these principles, and the more fluent he is in

using them, the more efficient will the therapy be and the more lasting the results. Holistic therapy uses primarily four core principles of treatment (56):

- Induce healing of the whole existence of the patient (salutogenesis) and not only his/her body or mind (2-9). The healing often included goals like recovering purpose and meaning of life (64-72) by improving existential coherence (71) and ability to love, understand, and function sexually (67).
- Adding as many resources to the patient as possible as the primary reason for originally repressing the emotionally charged material was lack of resources — love, understanding, empathy, respect, care, acceptance, and acknowledgment — to mention a few of the many needs of the little child (17,49,68). The principle was also to use the minimal intervention necessary by first using conversational therapy, then additional philosophical exercises if needed, then adding bodywork or, if needed, adding role play, group therapy, and finally when necessary in a few cases, referring to a psychiatrist for psychopharmacologic intervention (49). If the patient was in somatic or psychiatric treatment already at the beginning of the therapy, this treatment was continued with support from the holistic therapist.
- Using the similarity principle (see 56 for references) that seems to be a fundamental principle for all holistic healing (63). The similarity principle is based on the belief that what made the person sick originally will make the patient well again, when given in the right, therapeutic dose. This principle often leads to dramatic events in the therapy and to efficient and fast healing, but seems to send the patient into a number of developmental crises that must be handled professionally (50-52).
- Using Hering's Law of Cure (see 56 for references) to support the patient in going once again through all the disturbances and diseases, in reverse order that brought the patient to where he or she is now. Other important axioms of Hering's Law of Cure are that the disease goes from more to less-important organs, goes from the inside out, and goes from upside down. The scientific rationale for the last three axioms are less clear than for the first: The patient must go back through his/her timeline in order to integrate all the states and experiences he/she has met on his/her way to disease. Going back in time is normally done through spontaneous regression in holistic existential therapy.

These four principles seem to be a lot to keep in mind, when you are practicing therapy, but you will soon learn that they are all aspects of the same fundamental principle, the abstract law of integration – everything to emotionally intense in your patients life must be felt again, recalled and understood, and finally “melted” into the patient's own, natural understanding of life and being. This is the same as the patient returning to being him- or herself. So in this respect everything gets simpler as you get more experienced as therapist. Get your patient back into contact with the world through body and mind, heal the patients psychoform and the somatoform dissociation, just restore the patient's sense of coherence, and you are home free. But in practice therapy develops paradoxically more and more complex and more and more simple at the same time - more and more complex for the therapist's mind, and more and more simple for the therapist's self.

What is a decision?

One rational way of understanding the development of a treatment of a patient is as a series of rational choices each one serving the purpose of using tools for healing the patient's life. This is a nice idea, and highly popular with academic thinkers. Unfortunately most choices in therapy are not based on ratio and reason, but on emotions, feelings, sensations and intuitions. This is because we are dealing with emotions. Therapy is about integrating difficult emotions. But still there is a consciousness and a will guiding these choices.

Philosophically, in the grand tradition of existentialistic thinkers, man has free will, and from that, free choice (73,74). Choice is a consequence of the presentation in our human consciousness of more than one alternative, future action; the more conscious we are the more alternatives will be acknowledged by our self, and the wiser the choice, and thus the bigger the power and influence of the choice on our future destiny.

In the existentialistic philosophy of Søren Kierkegaard (1813-1855) we are divine beings empowered to create our own destiny good or bad. The empowerment comes from man containing in his innermost existential core the possibility to connect to the universe and from this connection in each situation draw the wisdom to make the good choice. When we lose this connection to the universe, we lose our existential orientation, and we fall into darkness and random choices, leaving responsibility for our live and relationship behind.

Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) and their students elaborated on this further, defining the subconscious and the repression of emotions and sexuality, giving the science of psychodynamic therapy (75,76). Antonovsky gave in the 1980s his theory of "sense of coherence" (2,3), which stated that the healthy person has a sense of coherence – inwards towards life and inner self making him alive, and outwards towards the world, making him real. Being alive and real is what a sound person is, and loss of health is loss of the sense of coherence making the person emotionally dead, mentally delusional, and spiritually aloof.

Recent developments in research on therapy have identified that this sense of coherence has two main vehicles, the mind and the body. The sense of coherence can be lost in part, when one of our two channels to the world shut down, either as somatoform or psychoform dissociation. Or both these vital channels can be closed leaving the patient without any real contact to the outer world, in a severely ill state, often suffering from both mental, existential, physical, and sexual problems and illnesses.

Rehabilitation of the connectedness to life and to the world, i.e. rehabilitation of the sense of coherence, is also the rehabilitation of the patient's life, power, wisdom, and freedom of choice. This total healing of the patient's existence, the existential salutogenesis, is the primary intention in scientific holistic therapy; this fundamental shift from not being into being seems to be the central theme of the works of Kierkegaard on "hjaelpekunst" (Danish: the art of helping) and the focus of the old holistic medical tradition going all the way back to Hippocrates, who calling his noble medical art of helping and healing for "the art" (63).

In practice the therapist will make many choices in each treatment, but as the fundamental problems of revitalization and existential rehabilitation in holistic therapy are pretty much the same with each patient, the choices seem to repeat themselves. The uninspired, experienced therapist will tend to take therapy into a boring and non-productive state of quite mechanical repetition, which is the dead of efficient therapy; when routine and

dullness takes over the love dies; the investment of the therapist's libidinous energy in the relationship with the patient is closed down; and what is left is the remote and formal relationship. The experienced, but inspired, therapist will move in the completely opposite direction, into a state of being where there is almost no choices left, but just a stream of consciousness and dancing libidinous energy, in which the whole therapeutic setting and therapeutic process is embedded.

The therapist as the tool

To be in flow (77), to be conscious (78) and to be happy (in the state of sat-shit-ananda: present, knowing and happy) seems to be the holistic therapeutic ideal of a human being; this can be further developed into non-knowing (cp. Zen: "state of no mind"), just being dancing with the patient's consciousness in a state where all decisions are not made and the action never becomes a problem. This is the intuitive state of the experience holistic therapist, coming from love, and being completely in service of his patient.

Holistic therapy and the process of existential healing is unwrapping the personal history of the patient, sending him back to heal all wound on body, mind and soul, rehabilitating the "natural philosophy" of the patient, that is: the understanding of life that best serves his character and purpose of life. Unfortunately every therapeutic action is intensively impacting the philosophy of life of the patient, actually implanting philosophy in the patient; this philosophy must be de-learned for the natural philosophy of the patient to emerge.

The holistic therapeutic principles includes the most important principle of similarity; the patient will have to transfer his past into the present and transfer the emotional charges of his childhood traumas on the therapist. Without this actualization of the past, the therapy cannot work, as already noticed by Freud. As we are transferring from both our bodily (emotional, sexual), and mental (philosophical, energetic) and spiritual (consciousness, love) realms, holistic therapy is often extremely complex, and much too complex to monitor by the therapist brain-mind. The body-mind (instinctive domains) and spirit-mind (intuitive domains) must be strongly involved for the therapist to be effective and successful as healer.

The most important thing in holistic therapy is the state and quality of the tool (one self as therapist), and personal development to a state where unconditional love to all human beings is natural is a *sine qua non*; unfortunately most therapist reaches this level late in life, if the therapist's own therapy is not intensified and buddhahood actively pursued. Only in the state of unconditional love can the therapist be pure and unselfish and coming from his heart in service; only love allows the therapist to use all aspects of him without hesitation to help the patient to heal his existence. Only another person's true love can set a tormented soul free, and that is what holistic healing is all about. And when you love, most choices are easy, because your personal interests are suspended, and all that matters is what best can help your patient. When the patient feels your love as a therapist, he or she will let go of the neurotic control that for survival reasons has replaces responsible conscious being, and the existence will heal and re-emerge.

The philosophy of life of the therapist

Holistic, existentially oriented, therapy is basically about re-interpreting life and through a more containing philosophy of life being able to integrate past events. The expansion of the patient's philosophy of life is done by consciously or unconsciously implanting a more accepting and loving philosophy of life in the patient. This is done through therapists body language, the way the clinic is decorated, the quality of therapist awareness, the concepts used, the attitude in the meeting, the nature of the therapeutic contract, the methods and technologies used, and of course primarily by the inspiration coming from meeting on a regular basis with a (hopefully) more sound and higher developed person than the patient him- or herself. Even if the relation is equal, holistic therapy can only work if the therapist is empowered by the patient by the patients illusion of the therapist being in some aspects wiser and superior – because most traumas and philosophical misunderstandings comes from the patients childhood, and the therapist must substitute the parent(s) to make the healing happen.

The therapist's own philosophy of life therefore becomes of crucial importance, and the more evolved and deep-sighted the therapist's philosophy is, the more efficient can he plant the containing philosophy. Truthfulness and honesty about the philosophical implantation will ease the process of de-learning the philosophy in the final stage of therapy. When the therapist is honest the patient will suffer, and this suffering is the patients meeting with reality, that in the end will restore sense of coherence with the outer world. The loving acknowledgment will support the patient in rehabilitating the sense of coherence inwards towards life and the deeper existential and spiritual layers (the "soul").

It is therefore helpful for the therapy that the therapist has values such as: honesty, openness, directness and compassion as a part of his actively worded philosophy.

Understanding the therapeutic process

The processes of healing the existence are quite predictable and in an abstract sense always the same (see figure 1). The movement is from the body (holding the repressed material) to the mind (denying responsibility by negative philosophy of life) to the spirit (the original cause of the problems by the historic unwise choices of the original, spiritually awake being). In the process of healing there are obligatory developmental crises, which the patient must go through to rehabilitate ability of love, understand and be in a sexual body. The better the therapist understand the process and the nature of the crisis, the better can the patient's resistance and problems in the therapy be handled?

Many patients in intensive therapy experience the healing as a series of phenomena or breakthroughs and existential crises with characteristic content. The most intense crises are metaphorically called the "psychotic", the "visionary", and the "suicidal" crises. They include feelings of going insane, not knowing the world or oneself, and wanting to die. Knowing what is coming next in the course of therapy is of great help to the patient, making it much easier to confront and integrate the often extremely intense, painful emotions and states of being, arising from integrating the early childhood traumas. The 12 steps (see figure 1) are some possible steps in the process of healing and human transformation; understood though an ancient and powerful metaphor as the steps of "human metamorphosis" (52).

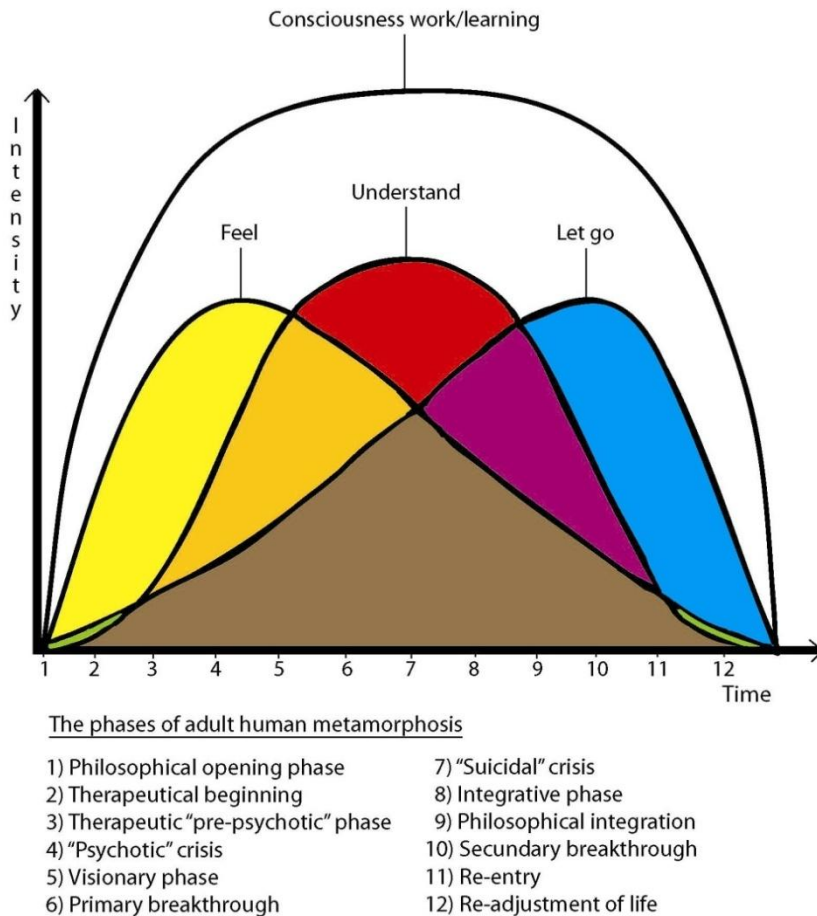


Figure 1. The process of holistic healing seen as three phases of feeling (yellow), understanding (red), and letting go (blue) of negative beliefs, attitudes, and decisions. As an end result, the process was improving the patient's philosophy of life and thus allowed the patient to rebalance existence and to assume responsibility for life. During the process, the patient's will re-established quality of life, health, and existential coherence, along with the ability to love, understand, and enjoy the whole spectrum of feelings and emotions, including sexuality.

Understanding health and disease

Man consists of body, mind and spirit, and many of the energies are going through all aspects of the human being, like sexuality, meaning, and sense of coherence. The highly complex construction of the human being through billions of years of evolution and the limited ability to represent complexity in the brain-mind, the brain after all just being a small part of the human being, makes understanding health and disease one of the most central problems and most crucial issues in holistic therapy.

The modern holistic therapist must know a wide range of sciences from physics, biochemistry and biology, to medicine (anatomy, physiology, pathology), psychology, philosophy, and sociology. In the same time the therapist must be trained in art and literature,

and he must also be deeply involved in the project of self-exploration, to develop a deep and thorough understanding of all aspects of self – from sexuality to spirituality.

The training and education of a holistic physician thus never ends. And many therapists get exhorted in the process of assimilating all existent scientific knowledge and ends up feeling insecure and insufficient. The temptation of closing ones view down to a specific therapeutic system with specific tools is big, but holistic medicine can newer work if the doctor himself is not the tool. The person cannot be substituted with procedures or machinery. An many therapists ends up not working holistically, but just practicing some procedure and techniques mechanically, without the therapy healing existence and giving lasting effects.

Hermeneutic problems

The most fundamental problem of working professionally with induction of shifts in consciousness is the hermeneutic problems: that what we believe will be our reality. The reason for this is that our reality is a materialization of our consciousness (79). Therefore we will always find confirmation for our beliefs in reality, in spite of our beliefs being in deep conflict with life itself, and with the larger world. This problem makes it a necessity for the holistic therapist to involve in a spiritual practice to develop consciousness.

Awareness of planting philosophy of life in the patient is a condition for de-learning the philosophy ion the end of the therapy. Not doing this leads to all the problems with dependence between therapist and patient, extended therapeutic courses with no progress lasting up to many years, and the famous problems of implanted memories, known from the trials where the family sue the therapist for implanting incest-memories – such “fake memories and ideas” are just the events of the patient’s personal history, interpreted though the “glasses” of the implanted philosophy, lasting after therapy because of lack of philosophical de-learning.

Supervision

The quality of the holistic therapist’s choices is because of hermeneutic problems completely dependent of second opinions; Balint group work and supervision is mandatory. The therapist must work in his own therapy with the existential problems that continue to be revealed because of a mirroring effect from the patients into the therapist – the famous process of counter-transference.

We have identified (71) nine key dimensions of existence, which exist in a passive and an active form, corresponding to the being and doing of life (see table 1).

Interestingly, as a person develops, the nine areas merges completely; every part of existence becomes conscious, filled with love, meaningful, joyful, enlightened, purposeful, urge-driven, ecstatic and coherent, as all parts of existence expands into the neighbor areas. This expansion of all existential areas is the project of personal development, such as sex expands into the consciousness and love expands into sexuality we have the classical art of sexual tantra (see “the path of tantra” (reference 71, Figure 4), that is integrating sex and consciousness). One by one all the splits and participations that torment modern man heal in

this process of existential integration. Existential healing is therefore the primary goal of personal development (2,3).

Table 1. Nine key dimensions of existence, which exist in a passive and an active form, corresponding to the being and doing of life.

	Active form	Passive form
1. Coherence, the web, the nest of the world	Receiving, taking in	Being an integrated part
2. Intent/purpose of life	Intention, decision	Having a purpose (of life)
3. Talent/strength	Using skills and urges	Having strength and structure
4. Consciousness	Noticing, knowing, understanding, planning	Being awake
5. Love	Acting in love	Being in love
6. Sex/physicality	Meeting, enjoying	Being man/woman of character
7. Light	Bringing light	Being in light/enlightened
8. Joy	Bringing joy	Being in joy
9. Meaning/QOL	Creating/fulfilling life, giving	Being alive, having impact

State of mind

The more relaxed, in flow, free, and happy, the therapist is, and the less he controls his rational and irrational impulses of talking and acting, the more flawless and efficient is the holistic therapy. Modern short-term therapy, where huge problems is intended solved in only 10 or 20 sessions, demands the therapist to be extremely active, in strong contrast to the old-style psychoanalytical therapist, who did almost nothing but listen to the patient while he did his free associations. Body work is becoming more and more common, and spiritual and philosophical exercises have become modern all over the western world as a part of holistic therapy. This puts new demands on the therapist to be ethically aware, and conscious about sexual transferences, emotional energies, symbiotic dependencies etc.

The therapeutic tools

The ideal therapist uses only the loving and caring contact with the patient to induce holistic healing, the process Antonovsky called “salutogenesis”. But as we are not as loving as we potentially could be, our love is often not powerful enough to make the healing happen, and then we can go to using tools as a compensation for this lack of healing power. Unfortunately, tools are a meager substitute, and results obtained with tools are often temporary and not lasting long.

But as everything is a learning process, the acceptance of one limitations is an important prerequisite for growing, and daring to use tools to materialize ones firm intent of helping the patient to heal is the road to learn how to practice medicine, as it inevitably reveals our own

impurities and shaddowish sides – if we dare to look, and we have someone to assist us by pointing at what we least of everything want to see in ourselves.

The “staircase” of therapeutic tools of increasing power [49]

As demonstrated throughout our many papers on clinical holistic medicine (15-55), almost everything can be used as a tool, since only the imagination sets the limit. To induce the state of consciousness we call “being in the process of healing” (17), the physician (according to Yalom (80)) needs to invent a new cure for every patient. This ability to be imaginative, creative, and use whatever is necessary to induce the healing is the hallmark of the excellent therapist. Good intent, balanced action, and good results are definitely needed in holistic medicine. Giving up on your patient and not doing anything at all might be a bigger sin, in many cases, than doing your best as a holistic physician and still losing your patient. Still you need to use any tool only after careful consideration, respecting the golden rule never to use a tool more powerful and dangerous than necessary (compare that both in surgery and with chemotherapy the patient is risking death as a result of the treatment).

Almost everything in the world can be used as a tool, but as the physician lines up his tools, some tools are used naturally before others and some might be painfully out of reach because of lack of expertise or due to the laws of your country. The ranking of tools after intensity, danger, and needed expertise of the physician gives a “staircase” of advanced tools of holistic medicine; its function is to help the holistic physician to “step up” in the use of the techniques one level at a time.

Let us admit that therapy often is a little “messy” with the combination of a number of tools and techniques. To think of therapy as the clear-cut process of “walking the staircase” is too simple. Often, many of the steps are used in subtle and symbolic ways by the skilled therapist, i.e., hidden in jokes and ironic remarks. So this staircase is meant for education, training, and treatment strategy, and not to limit the flexibility and spontaneity of the therapy.

The concept of “stepping up” in the therapy by using more and more “dramatic” methods to get access to repressed emotions and events has led to the common notion of a “therapeutic staircase” with still stronger, more efficient, and more potentially dangerous traumatic methods of therapy (see figure 1). We have identified 10 steps of this staircase:

- Is about establishing the relationship
- Is about establishing intimacy, trust, and confidentiality
- Is about giving support
- Is about taking the patient into the process of physical, emotional, and mental healing
- Is about social healing of being in the family
- Is about spiritual healing – returning to the abstract wholeness of the soul
- Is about healing the informational layer of the body (from old times called the ethereal layer)
- Is about healing the three fundamental dimensions of existence: love, power, and sexuality in a direct way
- Is mind-expanding and consciousness-transformative techniques, and

- Techniques transgressing the borders of the patient and therefore often traumatizing, like using force and going against the will of the patient.

When the holistic physician or therapist masters one step, he can go on to training and using the techniques of the next step of the staircase. As step 10 is often traumatizing for the patient even with the best of physicians, it is generally advised that the holistic physician or therapist do not go there. When mastered by the physician, steps 5–8 (9) can be used, when steps 1–4 do not help the patient sufficiently. The tools must be used one level at a time and each step implies an increasing risk for traumatizing the patient. Levels 8 and 9 often take many years of practice to master.

When everything else has been tried, but the healing has not occurred and the physician still senses that there is more to be done, the holistic physician can — if he has the necessary qualifications such as training in medical ethics and in the different treatment techniques, combined with a sufficient level of personal development and sufficient courage — use the advanced tools of holistic medicine. The advanced holistic physician's expanded toolbox contains powerful tools that can be organized into a staircase of the intensity of the therapeutic experience that they provoke and the level of expertise they take to master (see figure 1 and table 1). The more intense a therapeutic technique, the more emotional energy will normally be contained in the session and the higher the risk for the therapist to lose control or lose the patient to the dark side, which can make the therapeutic session very traumatic and damaging. These induced problems can almost always be healed if the patient stays in the therapy, so the real risk is losing the patient because he or she completely drops out of the therapy.

Libidinous investment in abstinence as effective, crazy-wise, therapeutic behavior

Interestingly, the destiny of the therapist experience with therapy is his choice of closing down or opening up for his libidinous energy towards his clients; the most dangerous of these energetic openings are of course the acceptance of the transference and counter transference of Oedipal love, because the temptations of not keeping the borders are biggest here. Harold F Searles stated in his brilliant paper "Oedipal love in the counter transference"(81) the thesis that it is the therapist's libidinous investment in sexual abstinence that helps mentally ill patients to recover; he is believed to have cured 40% of his schizophrenic patients by using the combination of a good heart and a brilliant administration of sexual energy to cure his patients. Using the therapists own sexuality in combination with a strict sexual ethic as the therapeutic tool is an example of a crazy-wise therapeutic behavior, that most people would abandon, if it was not for the fact that he cured so many patients and harmed no one. Most interestingly, if you are a firm believer in Freud's theory of libido as the only creative power of man, you will not find a libidinous investment in a patient "crazy-wise" or plain crazy, you would find it rational and well based on theory. From a crazy-wise perspective the Freudian concept of libido is a crazy-wise theory in itself.

Intention and spiritual matters

The nature of the human wholeness is difficult to grasp as it is abstract; the essence of man – the essence of the soul – seems to be love in a particular color, the gift of the person, or the mission of the person's life (64-72). When the patient recovers his remembrance of what he really is, the great talents of his personality are also revealed. Life is from this perspective about being of value to the world by using one's talents to enriching the surrounding world, and thus contributes in all relations.

The theory of existential coherence explains many of the same facets of existence covered by the "Four quadrant theory" of Ken Wilber (82). He also started with "The great nest of being", what we call the coherent matrix of energy and information, or the web of the world. Wilber's four quadrants are intentions, behavior, culture and social relations, but love is rejected as a central concept in Wilber's model, making this model less useful for deep holistic, existential therapy, where love, trust, and holding are prerequisites for taking the patient into the state of consciousness we call "being in the process of existential healing" (17). Responsibility for the person's own world is also difficult to rehabilitate using the Wilber model, whereas this is the consequence of walking the path of responsibility, noticing and reacting to your own impacts.

Research and development

Both human, culture, and society develops, and medicine must follow, if it is to be contemporary and helpful to modern man. But research is always about stepping over the borders of today and yesterday, and sometimes the decisions taken in a field of little experience will show wrong or insufficient.

In this field, making the wrong decisions is not only allowed, it is an obligation, for you cannot make any decision on incomplete foundation of knowledge without the attitude that it is completely OK to make mistakes, when you only learn from them and do whatever you can to make it up to the patient.

Research will naturally be done with the group of patients that cannot be helped with the standard method, and it is justified by their need for help. Often the case is that if the holistic therapist cannot help them, nobody can, as the biomedical doctor is sought first in most cases.

Both positive and negative results must be shared with the international community for the patients not to have suffered for nothing. The decision of doing something completely new in the intent of helping the patient on an experimental basis is the most difficult decision to make in the holistic clinic. Surprisingly, if the therapist remembers the principles of healing and makes sure that the experimental treatment complies with these few basic rules, most new interventions will in our experience help the patient, also when all hope is lost. We have seen this with cancer patients, where chemotherapy has failed to help, and we have tried something untraditional to induce holistic healing; in most examples this has seemingly actually helped the patients to survive the life expectance given them by their biomedical doctor.

Learning process

The attitude that “I as a physician” myself got a little of all diseases, imbalances, impurities, and disturbances is extremely helpful to accept the often dramatic impact on oneself from holistic therapy on the patient. The openness to learn takes the humility of a therapist who knows that he or she is not at all neither perfect nor completely sound. But to look deeply into your own wounds from being raised in a dysfunctional family with incestuous bindings are really challenging. And when it comes down to it, perfect parents are really rare. So we are all quite neurotic and damaged, and in need of healing our existence our self.

Helping other people knowing this about our self takes the challenge of being therapist to a new level. Surprisingly, the fact that therapy is provoking and inspiring our own personal growth, is what makes being a holistic therapist so satisfying and extraordinary. Only the painstaking process of personal growth will lead us to realize that there really are no limits for what we can do for our self and our patients.

Humility, love and acceptance

Coming from the heart is the solution to the problem of how to help. Because we are all caught in our mental description of the world, we will inevitably start our medical practice less holistic and more “methodological” and instrumental. But as we little by little realize that the drugs are not really helping much, and that other therapeutic tools and techniques are only excuses for intimacy, closeness and loving contact with the patient, we will day for day stand more bravely forward and finally admit, that we are beings of love, and that our natural tendency is to care and to give without getting anything but our own happiness in return. And in this realization we will grow into powerful holistic healers, in the same time, as we will feel more and more humble and powerless.

The paradox of love is that only when we let go, and accept that we really cannot do anything for another person, for the person must decide for himself, and create his own life – autonomously – for himself, can we help. This is the paradox and the miracle of holistic medicine. Being a successful therapist in this field is very much a question of surrendering to reality, being one with the Great Spirit, being purely of service, or how you want to put it.

Metamorphosis

The belief of most holistic healer is that the blue-print of body, mind, and spirit is always intact and that contacting this informational source within can lead to complete healing in spite of every seemingly misery and hopelessness of the situation. This is really a kind of religious belief, where life is in our imagination empowered with almost magic powers. Because of the logic of hermeneutics, this believes will often materialize, so the therapist that believes in true miracles will see them every day, and the therapist that will never see them. When the skeptical therapist enters the optimistic therapists clinic, he will find nothing but

doubtful successes and certain failures, and when the trusting and positive therapist come to the skeptical physicians clinic he will find miracle after miracle happening even there.

Patients who come to believe will go to therapists that believe and here go through adult human metamorphosis (83-92) and be transformed into wonderful, able and happy people, even their bodies will be transformed. And patients that do not believe will go to therapist and get their bodies and minds damaged and destroyed. The religious healer will attract religious patients. And the skeptical healer will attract skeptical patients. Every person will get what he materializes. The therapist role is to serve and to materialize what he believes in. The holistic therapist will often believe in healing the whole existence. And all choices will be made in that belief.

Different worlds

The fact that the biomedical and holistic therapist are living in very different worlds with very different cosmologies and very different experiences is often becoming a problem for the patient, who has to choose between two fundamentally different worlds and different treatments.

And often are the skeptic minds much more powerful than the trusting souls, making biomedicine winning many legal and political battles. But all over the world people are more positive in their attitudes and philosophies, and holistic medicine is growing fast with more consultations now in the USA than biomedical consultations. The battles are becoming intensified all over the world, and it seems that we in the next 20 years or so will have a complete commercial shift into holistic medicine; this shift is already predicted and being prepared for by many of today's large pharmaceutical companies. In the same time we see increasing lobbyist activities from physicians and industry trying to suppress holistic medicine – the war against homeopathy in Germany being an example.

The war is happening in the way that the holistic medicine is tested on the premises of biomedicine. With homeopathy, it is most unlikely that it is the homeopathic drugs in themselves that has any effect; the healing happens as the patient becomes more conscious of his human character and thus more accepting and integrating in attitude and philosophy of life. But instead of looking of these shifts in consciousness and acknowledging all the good things there is happening for the patients who believe, skeptical research is dis-empowering the homeopathic tradition, obviously in the intention of substituting it with biomedicine (“rational medicine”, “evidence based medicine”).

There is really nothing evidence based about the way the war is going on; only materialization of beliefs, as both patients and researchers are caught in the hermeneutic illusory web of interpretation of the world. We need a truly integrative medicine now, with space for more than one cosmology, i.e. a poly-cosmological entrance. Because biomedicine is not wrong; from one perspective the world is really chemistry and physics only. And the spiritual medicine is not wrong either. From another perspective, everything is really a materialization of consciousness. It is time to embrace a poly-paradigmatic medical science.

Ethics

The purpose of medical ethics is to ensure that the patient is not exploited or harmed in any way. To monitor the effect of the therapy and to be sure that it really helps and that it does not harm the patient is the primary ethical concern in holistic medicine. As the sense of coherence is the primary goal, and as this has been difficult to measure directly (4-9), the effect of holistic therapy on quality of life, health and ability has proven easy and efficient as an effect measure (it takes only 5 minutes to fill in the QOL5 questionnaire (93) self-assessed QOL, subjective health (physical and mental) and the quality of human relationships); ability of functioning (love, work, social, sexual) is also relevant to measure.

To measure the patients before and after treatment seems to be mandatory, and we have done that for years in our clinic, being able to document sufficient results of the interventions on more than half the patients (56-61).

Bodywork is a hallmark of holistic therapies, and bodywork introduces a lot of ethical problems known already by Hippocrates and his students (63). The ethical problems of modern bodywork might be best illuminated by using the extreme example of holistic sexological bodywork, originating both from the Hippocratic tradition and from the Asian/Indian holistic medical tradition (54,55). The procedure of Hippocratic pelvic massage, in Denmark known and practiced by hundreds of therapists as “acupressure through the vagina” is such a technique that seemingly is extremely efficient to help patients with primary vulvodynia and chronic pelvic pain, but must be performed according to ethical standards. The holistic sexological procedures are derived from the holistic existential therapy, which involves re-parenting, massage and bodywork, conversational therapy, philosophical training, healing of existence during spontaneous regression to painful life events (gestalts) and close intimacy without any sexual involvement.

In psychology, psychiatry and existential psychotherapy (80), touch is often allowed, but a sufficient distance between therapist and client must always be kept, all clothes kept on and it is even recommended, that the first name is not taken into use to keep the relationship as formal and correct as possible. The reason for this distance is to create a safety zone that removes the danger of psychotherapy leading to sexual involvement. In the original Hippocratic medicine (63), as well as in modern holistic existential therapy such a safety zone was not possible, because of the simultaneous work with all dimensions of existence, from therapeutic touch (22) of the physical body, feelings and mind, to sexuality and spirituality. The fundamental rule has since Hippocrates been that the physician must control his behavior, not to abuse his patient. The patients in holistic existential therapy and holistic sexology are often chronically ill, and their situation often pretty hopeless, as many of them have been dysfunctional and incurable for many years or they are suffering from conditions for which there are no efficient biomedical cure.

The primary purpose of the holistic existential therapy is to improve quality of life, secondary to improve health and ability. The severe conditions of the patients and the chronicity is what ethically justify the much more direct, intimate and intense method of holistic existential therapy, which integrates many different therapeutic elements and works on many levels of the patient’s existence and personality at the same time. Holistic sexology is holistic existential therapy taken into the domain of sexology. The general ethical rule is that everything that does not harm and in the end will help the patient is allowed (“first do no

harm”). An important aspect of the therapy is that the physician must be creative and in practice invent a new treatment for every patient, as Yalom has suggested (80). To perform the sexological technique of acupressure through the vagina, the holistic sexologist must be able to control not only his/her behavior, but also his sexual excitement to avoid any danger of the therapeutic session turning into sexual activity. Most physicians can do the classic pelvic examination after their standard university training, but the vaginal acupressure we are discussing here in this paper can only be obtained through long training and supervision in order to reach a level, where such a procedure can be performed.

Side effects of the treatment can be soreness of the genitals and periods of bad mood, as old painful repressed material are slowly integrated. We have seen acute psychosis as a sexually abused woman confronted her most painful experiences, but she recovered in a few days without the use of drugs and this episode was an integral part of her healing. In fact it was her therapeutic breakthrough. As it is possible that the patient can feel abused from transferences, it is extremely important to address this openly to prevent this situation. We recommend that the patient is contacted or followed for 1-5 years, to prevent and handle any potential long-term negative effects of the treatment. In spite of these problems we have found the treatment with holistic existential therapy combined with the tool of vaginal acupressure to be very valuable for the patients (54,55).

Discussion

There are many factors influencing the therapist's choice of action in the therapeutic session. We have presented it as if the therapist had the power of deciding what is going on. The reason that every treatment of a patient takes its own route might very well be that every patient because of his or her basic resistance is struggling very hard not to get well, not to get cures, not to get into the state of salutogenesis. The reason for this is clear from a psychodynamic perspective: The defenses are created for survival difficult situations in the past, and the patient will unconsciously feel like dying if these situations reappear in consciousness.

So therapy is a dance, or a fight, or a play; a complex pattern is created like always when to forces are almost of same size and opposite each other, and creating a chaotic, highly dynamic middle zone of whorls and constant changes.

Our list of factors influencing therapy might be complete useless, if it is so simple that the patient subconsciously is doing whatever possible for destroying the therapy, and the therapist just is following along as well as possible. Because then the “individual cure for every patient” is nothing but the patients escape route before he or she is finally caught, and the destructive, neurotic or psychotic survival patterns busted for good.

The argument that the large creativity observed in clinical holistic therapy is coming from the therapist emotional and spiritual intelligence, might just be the therapist's narcissistic positive interpretation of what it is like to be almost completely out of control in the session. Maybe it is not a deeper and wiser layer of the therapist taking over, but just the patient unconsciously fighting for his or her survival, and therefore naturally investing more energy and efforts and therefore being smarter than us.

Many of the tools of the advanced holistic medical toolbox are inducing dramatic feelings in the patient, and it is an art to know when to use and when to avoid using a specific tool. The truth is that in spite of all the rational principles only the emotional intelligence can provide us with the wisdom of when to use a tool, because of the extreme complexity of the human consciousness. The central thing is therefore that the therapist at all times is aware of his intentions, and certain that he is in good intend towards his patients and acting in accordance with all professional and ethical principles. It might be almost impossible to control this from outside; because of this measuring the results of therapy and being sure of really helping his patients might in the end be the most ethical the therapist can do.

Conclusions

Clinical holistic medicine is curing every second patient – in the patient's own experience – from physical illness and chronic pain, mental illness, low self-esteem, low quality of life, sexual dysfunction and low working ability (57-62). But the therapy is not following any nice and reproducible pattern, in spite of four rather clear therapeutic principles and a well-defined tool-box (49). On the contrary every treatment has its own course, and we say that we need to invent a new treatment for every patient. We are in this paper identifying many of the factors that seem to come into play guiding the therapist's decision-making in the session. We are suggesting that crazy-wise aspects of the therapist are responsible for the creativity that in the end will take the patient into existential healing (salutogenesis).

"Holy madness" (94) is a well-known concept from eastern spiritual teaching (as a Google-search will show), and seems to be a very appropriate expression for what is going on in the therapy, inside the therapist when he is fully engaged. Most interestingly "holy madness" is also a very accurate description of the state of consciousness called "holistic healing"(17). And maybe all the chaos and creativity is not really delivered by the therapist but much more by the patient him- or herself; as therapists we like to flatter our self with the idea of being in control, creating the cure, and helping the patient making the idea of the patient being responsible less attractive (but never the less very likely).

We suggest that the therapist that allows himself to be existentially absorbed and engaged beyond the mind in the therapeutic process, and who is able to use all aspects of himself, body, mind and spirit included in the service of the patient, is much more successful in inducing existential healing in the patient, than the classic, rational, distant, mind-oriented, physician who uses only reductionistic, and scientific principles and tools for therapy.

Spiritual commitment and love is what we firmly believe heal the patients; only by letting go of the minds firm grip on reality can love find its natural and full expression in the therapy. Sexuality and libidinous interest is a natural part of this, and the investment of libidinous energy without acting out sexually has been suggested as the key to entering the universe of "crazy-wise healing".

Only by allowing the energy to dance within our self, and make the therapeutic decisions that we instinctively know are right to free our patient, and allow our self to speak and act completely without censorship, can we be as natural and powerful as we need to be, to overcome the resistance – the dark side of our self and the patient in combination - and induce Antonovsky salutogenesis (2,3) – the healing of the patient's whole existence that will be

followed by recovery of illness, improving of the patient's abilities, and recovery of the patients global quality of life.

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How to Recover Memory without “Implanting” Memories

Every therapeutic strategy and system teach us the philosophy of the treatment system to the patient, but often this teaching is subliminal and the philosophical impact must be seen as “implanted philosophy”, which gives distorted interpretations of past events called “implanted memories”.

Based on the understanding of the connection between “implanted memory” and “implanted philosophy” we have developed a strategy for avoiding implanting memories arising from one of the seven most common causes of implanted memories in psychodynamic therapy: 1) Satisfying own expectancies, 2) pleasing the therapist, 3) transferences and counter transferences, 4) as source of mental and emotional order, 5) as emotional defense, 6) as symbol and 7) from implanted philosophy.

Freud taught us that child sexuality is “polymorphously perverted”, meaning that all kinds of sexuality is present at least potentially with the little child; and in dreams consciousness often go back to the earlier stages of development, potentially causing all kinds of sexual dreams and fantasies, which can come up in therapy and look like real memories.

The therapist working with psychodynamic psychotherapy, clinical holistic medicine, psychiatry, and emotionally oriented bodywork, should be aware of the danger of implanting philosophy and memories. Implanted memories and implanted philosophy must be carefully handled and de-learned before ending the therapy. In conclusion modern sexology and contemporary holistic medicine (“clinical holistic medicine”) have developed a strategy for avoiding implanting memories.

Even the best of therapists can sometimes not avoid the patient from developing an “implanted memory” to some extent, as this is a natural part of the therapy, as will be discussed in chapter 20. If the patient has a strong female Oedipus complex it might even be necessary to use the avoidable “implanted memory” as a tool for healing; how this is done is discussed in chapter 20.

The rule is to avoid implanting memories in the patient, if at all possible. In reality it is the patient him or herself that implants these memories, which are interpretations of the past and not memories in the classical (visual) sense, but these dynamics are only to a certain degree under the control of the therapist.

Introduction

During the last decade there has been an intense and ongoing debate in the medical scientific community about therapy and implanted memories (1,2). It has generally been concluded that memory is not perfect and often more like an idea or an impression than actually like a movie that you can play again and see what really happened. Memory in this sense is known to be highly sensitive to emotions and expectations, as is well known from forensic psychology. Another problem is that the human being constantly has fantasies and reveries (3,4), and when we remember such a fantasy, this is an actual remembrance but of an unreal event. If this happens with a patient, this can cause large confusion in therapy. In general the mind is not very reliable and the interpretation of the world in present time and in the past seems to be easily affected by intentions and needs, both bodily and mental.

Because of this vagueness of most people's memories it is now generally believed that it is actually possible to implant "memories" during therapy. The normal solution in therapy is to be sure that you do not make any judgments about what actually happened, until the patient finds out for herself what happened. It is important to actively avoid influencing the process of interpretation (i.e. give suggestions that can be taken as indications of how a feeling or gestalt should be interpreted by the patient). The central dogma of not interpreting the material of the patient is at the root of classical psychoanalysis, and gives a relaxed and often not-so-intense kind of therapy that often includes several hundreds of hours of therapy during several years.

When it comes to intensive psychodynamic short-term psychotherapy (often defined as less than 40 sessions) and existential psychotherapy the therapist becomes more dependent of his own theory for the individual patient (5,6). Unfortunately, the patient will often know this theory, or sense it as the therapist cannot help revealing its central idea in the way he approaches the patient, and the subjects he addresses in the therapy. In the beginning of the therapy the only way the patient can cooperate is letting go of the control and playing along. In doing this there is a lot of learning that is actually implanting philosophy. When the patient's personal past is seen in the light of this new or corrected philosophy, the whole past will look different, which is actually also the core idea of therapy. So every therapist is in fact implanting memories in the broadest sense of this concept.

When the therapist expects sexual abuse to be the caboose of a complex of symptoms, the patient will look for and often find events that can be interpreted in this way, in order to comply. Here we have the implanted memories of incest or abuse. The problematic thing about such memories is that if they are taken as real, the patient needs to "clear" the relationships with the relevant people (often the parents or other family members), and often this is done in a non-forgiving and destructive way harming the patient and sometimes also her surroundings.

The loss of self-esteem in connection with such a recovery of incest memories is always a difficult problem, but can be solved in existential therapy. If the events are implanted memories, incongruence is introduced, making it very difficult for the patient to move forward, and heal herself and her relationships to the people of her world. (Please notice that we use "she" as the sexually abused patient is normally a woman, but the patient could as well be a man; we use "he" about the therapist who is sometimes a man but could as well be a woman).

This becomes even more problematic, when intensive psychodynamic short term psychotherapy are combined with bodywork and holistic gynecological/sexological therapy (7-18), where the intensity of the confronted repressed emotions in the therapy often is getting high. The reason for using the combination of techniques is that the patient needs a lot of support on many different levels, to be able to confront i.e. a childhood rape scenario without experiencing unbearable existential pain in the session.

We have worked with the problem of how to avoid implanted memories for years in the research project “Quality of life and aetiology of diseases” and believe that we have come to a practical solution of the problem, allowing us to make the most intensive therapy without damaging the patients (i.e. by implanting memories).

A recent follow-up of 109 patients from our Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine in Copenhagen after clinical holistic medical treatment (receiving the mindful combination of psychodynamic short time therapy and bodywork) has documented that the patients were not harmed, but often helped by this therapy (19-24).

A pilot study of 20 women that had continuous sexual problems on average for almost nine years (in spite of seeing physicians and alternative therapists over that period) showed that most of the patients were helped in this therapy and no patient was harmed (reporting significant side-effects or ending at a lower score in quality of life, health and ability than before starting the therapy) (17).

We have solved the problem on a theoretical level, and when we took this solution into practice we found that it worked good with reliable results. We used contemporary models from the research fields of quality of life, human development, and holistic medicine to understand what happened in therapy to make implanted memories possible. We found a simple solution to the complex problem of implanted memories, which is recovering the memory and sense of truth in general in the patient.

Seven causes of implanted memories

The seven most common causes of implanted memories are:

- 1) Satisfying own expectancies: If the patient expects that she had been abused sexually i.e. because a sister was, she can implant more or less vague memories of incest herself.
- 2) Pleasing the therapist: The patient wants to be in accordance with the therapist and is therefore accepting his view or what she believes or imagine is his view. This is enhanced if the therapist shares his interpretations and gives the patient leads (i.e. questions that are not neutral but biased in some direction); and even more if the therapist is making judgments on what happen instead of bearing not knowing what happened until the patient finds out for herself.
- 3) Transferences and counter transferences: If the patient develops sexual feelings towards the therapist and if these are ignored by the therapist, or if the patient senses that the therapist will not accept them, this can enhance sexual fantasies, which eventually can take the form as an implanted memory; old sexual fantasies can also be boosted by this unconscious wish in the patient, and even real events

can be distorted and reinterpreted now filled with the sexual feelings that the patient cannot allow to emerge in the personal relationship to the therapist.

- 4) As source of mental and emotional order: A third source of implanted memories has nothing to do with the therapy in itself. The patient needs to get a kind of order in the chaos of emotions and symptoms, and having a simple explanation can be a relief instead of living with chaos and mystery.
- 5) As emotional defense. Sometimes the recovered but false memory is hiding another event that is much more painful. This could be that her father left her and her mother when she was a child. This may be much more difficult to integrate than sexual abuse. If the patient is desperately angry with her father and cannot confront the event causing the anger, an implanted event can be a solution. It could also be neglect that is the problem; it seems that neglecting the bodily presence and sexual character of a girl can be as destructive to her self-esteem and psychosexual development as actual physical or sexual abuse.
- 6) As symbol. Often, the parents have been abusing the child in subtle and psychological ways, (i.e. not respecting the child's sexual borders, or having used the child as a sexual partner, which is most often seen when a parent lives alone with a child of the opposite sex). This does not mean that there was a sexual act of objective, physical, incest like coitus, but what we could call the "symbolic incest" or "energetic incest" is often extremely painful and very harmful to a child on an emotional level. "Energetic" incest happens typically when her father being the only parent raises a girl (or when a mother raises her son alone), and the two of them "pair up" as man and woman making wholeness emotionally and energetically comparable to the wholeness of a sexual couple, but without the sexual acting out. A lot of sexual energies are accumulated and circulated here, and the girl is often, as Freud pointed out, having secret sexual dreams about her father with lots of shame and guilt. An implanted memory that carries all the shame and energy of a real incestuous trauma, but where intense therapy does not reveal any recorded "movie" of the event(s), might very well come from "energetic incest".
- 7) Implanted philosophy. When a patient learns that problems often are caused by traumas, she often starts speculating which traumas could have caused which problems. Sexual problems often then lead to dreams about sexual dominance/abuse/perversions and dreams can be interpreted as memories. Freud taught us that the child's sexuality is "polymorphously" perverted, meaning that all kinds of sexuality is present at least potentially with the little child. In dreams, according to Freud, consciousness often goes back to the earlier stages of development, potentially leading to all kinds of sexual dreams and fantasies.

"The mind can interpret the same event in many different ways and one version of a "memory" cannot immediately be trusted over others. Many therapists therefore turn to the physical body for the truth about the past of the patient, assuming that the body cannot lie, because it carries the traumas as tensions that can be released, when the emotional and cognitive content of the gestalt is reintegrated in the consciousness of the patient. But as the body is seen through the patient's delusive mind, just turning from the mind to the body does

not solve the problem of validating that a particular event actually happened as the patient recalls it.

Three phases of existential holistic therapy

During the last decade of research in clinical holistic medicine at the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine in Copenhagen, we have found that the therapy in general has three phases (25-28):

- 1) Feeling the repressed emotions of the past
- 2) Understanding the objective elements of the traumatic event
- 3) Modifying/changing negative beliefs about the traumatic event (“letting go”)

We have analyzed the therapeutic work of about 500 patients with a number of different diseases and health issues (29-45) and learned that, in general, therapy has the following course. In the first sessions, the emotional discharge dominates; as intensity in therapy grows, the element of understanding the traumatic event becomes dominant, and in the end when the intensity leaves the therapeutic process, a deeper understanding arises from the bottom of the patient’s soul (wholeness).

We have also learned that the therapeutic process can be understood as a metamorphosis (see figure 1) – the patient enters the therapy like a butterfly’s larvae in need of transformation; she lets go of her old identity and melts down (entering the “pupae”). In this state, she develops a new understanding from recalling what she was originally meant to be; and finally she enters the world again as a renewed and transformed person (free to fly like the butterfly), much more beautiful, good and true. We know this process as the autogenetic process (46,47), where the patient regains physical and mental health, quality of life, and the ability to function in all areas of life. During this process, the patient will experience a number of crises that are not dangerous to the patient assuming that the patient is cared for intensively and properly (see figure 2).

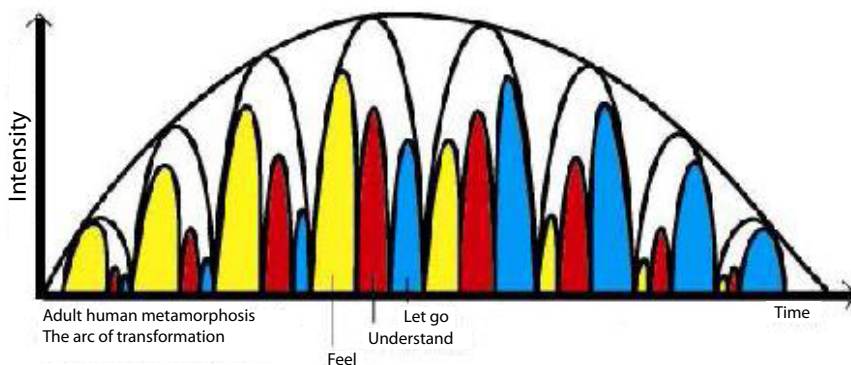


Figure 1. The arch of therapeutically transformation in clinical holistic medicine. There are three core elements of the therapeutic process: to feel (yellow), to understand (red), and to let go (blue) of negative, life-denying beliefs and attitudes. In the first sessions the emotional discharge dominates; as intensity in therapy grows, the element of understanding becomes more dominant, and in the end when the “heat” leaves therapy, cool understanding raises from the bottom of the patients soul (wholeness) (15).

A model for the wholeness of man

Humans have classically been described as consisting of three separate entities, all of which in psychoanalytical therapy are seen as carrying each a very different representation of self: the body carrying the Id, the mind carrying the Ego, and the wholeness carrying the True Self (higher self, soul, comparable to Freud’s “Super Ego”). The wholeness of man consist of these three parts, and these points to a simple reason why neither the body nor the mind can be trusted much: they are only parts of our being, and as such they are not able to contain the totality. Only through our wholeness can we truly “see” the world and our personal history.

This understanding is very important as it gives us a key to understanding why patients cannot remember much in the beginning of the therapy, when they are starting to confront their own emotions. We also understand the reason for the intensive involvement of the mind in the second phase of the therapy, which does not provide clear understanding and recalling (memory) to the patient. It is only in the third phase of therapy, when the patient lets go of all negative and defensive beliefs and attitudes and returning to her natural philosophy of life will everything become clear, and (s)he will find herself remembering and understanding everything as the “true” reality.

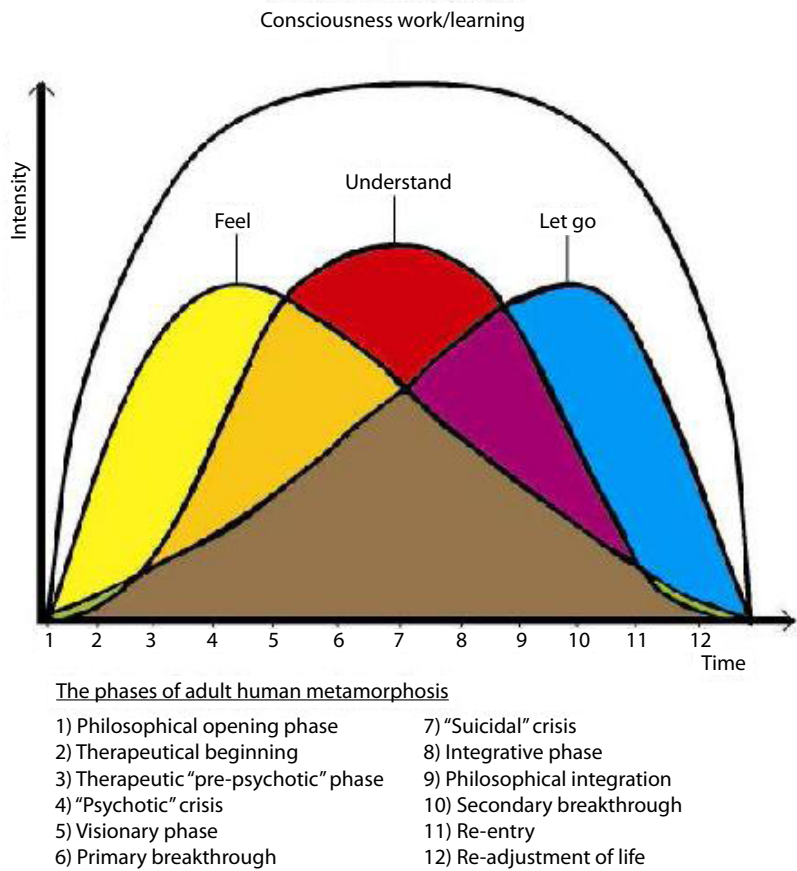


Figure 2. The experimentally found major phases and crisis in intensive dynamic short time therapy when complemented with bodywork (15).

Interestingly, the majority of patients may see themselves as part and parcel of a severely harmed body and not a free and enjoyable spirit (the wholeness, the free and true “soul”). In therapy, the patient needs first to recover the energy of the body (physical character and sexuality - a process, which has been used as medicine since Hippocrates) then they need to recover the mind (the mental character), and finally they will recover the spiritual dimensions of love, individual talents, higher intelligence (the spiritual character and purpose of life/life mission), and real happiness coming from being able to contribute to the world.

In the therapy we often teach this in a popular way to the patients, talking about “the four doors of existential therapy”:

- 1) getting into sexuality
- 2) getting into consciousness
- 3) getting into love
- 4) getting into life

Most (Danish) patients realize the needs of re-conquering these dimensions of life, and therefore understand and accept this path to the healing of existence (salutogenesis) (46-48) immediately. Interestingly, as this process proceeds, first ability to feel, then ability to understand, and finally ability to judge what is true and what is not comes into focus. This originates from the patients reconnecting to the universe, and obtaining the Antonovsky’s existential experience of the sense of coherence (46,47,49).

Case story

A 24 year-old psychology student, very intelligent, with a “head-centered”, mental approach to the world and with a strongly repressed sexuality presents in clinical holistic therapy desiring to solve her existential and sexual problems. She strongly expected her father to have abused her sexually and remembers many such events. As therapy progresses and the emotional charge is relieved, she gradually changes her mind about the occurrence of abuse. After the fifth session, she starts to doubt that she has been physically abused, and in the end she realizes the sexual abuse to be energetic (symbolic). Before the therapy she rated herself as functioning poorly sexually, with lack of sexual interest and orgasm, but after the integration of the energetic incest she was able to enter a relationship and a satisfying sex life. She managed to keep this relationship vital for years.

Intensive psychodynamic short-term psychotherapy with role-playing (re-parenting) and bodywork (body dynamics, vaginal acupressure) was used with this patient using the advanced therapeutic toolbox (12). In the beginning of the therapy emotions were not intense with this patient, but only slowly did she open up. When she finally did, the session was almost exploding in intensity. The breakthrough session happened at point 6 in figure 2, right when the most intense feelings were turned into understanding. At this point in time, the realistic memories of the abuse were still hidden from the soul, and the mind can interpret such events in many different ways. The repressed sexuality of this patient seemed to distort the patient’s memory up to and including sexual sadism. Most interesting was the therapeutic catharsis and the effect of allowing the patient to go fully into exploring her past history of

sexual abuse, making her finally doubt that it really happened: “I can’t understand that this should really have happened”. In the session the patient was sent back into the early events using the principle of similarity. The issue related to using similarity is that you cannot, as a therapist, avoid “implanting the memory” that the patient and you as a physician agree upon treating. But in this phase the trauma cannot be remembered, because the emotional charge is efficiently clocking the admittance to the time line. So we are really making a drama, only led by the emotional charge of the patient’s repressed traumas. But only by supporting the patient in confronting these emotions can she get closer to a real memory of what happened to her. This is a most difficult technique that only can be done, when there is a very close and intimate relationship between the patient and the physician. At the same time, this intimacy invites implanted memories of the “transferences and counter transferences” kind (see above point 3 in causes of implanted memory). The situation looks impossible, but fortunately the processing of the trauma and the subsequent emotional discharge is, in the end, the key to solving the problem. The only thing the therapist cannot do is to back out and abandon the patient.

A most interesting thing to observe in this example is the high degree of certainty she had about past traumatic events at the beginning of the session. When the memories start to clear up, after she confronted the unbearable emotions of the gestalts, she became more and more doubtful that what she has remembered was “real”. After reflecting deeply over the content of the session for some months she concluded that the abuse had not actually happened on a physical level although it did happen energetically. Thus it was a symbolic representation of energetic abuse (the 6th reason of implanted memories, see above).

Discussion

The use of the similarity principle with patients that believe they have been sexually abused sometimes reveal that what they seem to remember and recover in the therapy did not actually happen. This is an amazing process of recovering severe sexually traumatic memories and through careful evaluation, the patient realize that something completely different and much more complex actually happened.

We are complicated beings with needs and consciousness of many layers. As we develop, we need to be physically touched and emotionally supported, met at our borders and loved unconditionally. Unfortunately, most parents are not really able to meet the demands of their children and many children ends up more or less traumatized – a sad fact known ever since Freud.

The only way to cure somatic, mental, existential, and sexual problems arising from early childhood trauma is to discharge the emotional components by confronting the content of the traumas. The emotional charge also makes the trauma impossible to remember; the only route for inducing healing of the patient’s existence (salutogenesis) (46-48) is to support a blind” confrontation of the repressed emotional content of the patient’s sub-consciousness. The similarity principle seems most useful (49-55), as this principle allows the therapist to take the patient directly down to confronting the old traumas causing the problems.

The problem with this kind of therapy has been the fear of planting memories by the therapy itself. Our experience with holistic existential therapy is that sometimes such false

memories are in fact implanted, but as therapy progresses these implanted memories are seen as not true. This is happening when the patient acquires a soul-perspective and becomes able to look at the whole life – the whole timeline from conception to now – as one single event, that is understandable in the light of the purpose of life that then is denied and repressed (see the life mission theory (56-62)).

The only real problem with this form of therapy is if the patient drops out of the therapy, before the temporarily false memories are reinterpreted and integrated. It is the obligation of the therapist to continue the therapy, until the patient is cured and free of her problem. Therefore, it is important that the patient stays in therapy no matter how unpleasant emotionally it is to confront the old traumas.

We have analyzed the problem of implanted memories and found that such implantations indeed do happen in therapy for a number of reasons. When extreme memories of sexual abuse occur in patients with a strongly repressed sexuality and a very active mind, the therapist should consider if the memories are actually implanted. This does not mean that he should disrupt the therapy, but he should most carefully be sure not to interpret for the patient. This allows the patient to modify the memories about what has really happened in her childhood. If the emotional charge of the early traumas – often feelings of guilt and shame – is systematically relieved, the patient will in the end obtain the position of being able to review her whole time line and understand the real events (no matter how traumatic) leading to the emotional charge that has given the patient so many challenges.

Only when the patient can look from her wholeness, the truth can be perceived and the past truthfully remembered. The therapist must be extremely certain that the therapy reaches this conclusion. Fictive memories temporarily implanted are not a problem if this happens, but will be if the therapy for some reason is disrupted.

Using the similarity principle (49-55) during intensive, mindful psychodynamic short term psychotherapy complemented with bodywork seems to be the most direct way to induce holistic healing – salutogenesis – in patients with a complex of somatic, mental, existential and sexual problems. The therapy will often be very intense and the content of the therapy might be extremely explicitly sexual. If the therapist can contain the patient and all her emotions, the existential healing can be completed with no serious hindrances.

Freud taught us that the child sexuality is “polymorphously” perverted, meaning that all kinds of sexuality is present at least potentially with the little child; and in dreams consciousness often go back to the earlier stages of development, potentially causing all kinds of sexual dreams and fantasies, which can come up in therapy and look like real memories.

The therapist working with sexology, psychodynamic psychotherapy, mind-body medicine, clinical holistic medicine, psychiatry, body psychotherapy and other kinds of emotionally oriented bodywork, should be aware of the danger of implanting philosophy and memory. Implanted memories and implanted philosophy must be carefully handled and de-learned before ending the therapy. In conclusion, modern sexology and scientific, holistic medicine (“clinical holistic medicine”) has developed a strategy for avoiding implanting memories.

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How to Avoid the Freudian Trap of Sexual Transference and Counter Transference

Sexual transference and counter transference can make therapy slow and inefficient, when the libidinous gratification becomes more important for both the patient and the therapist than real therapeutic progress.

Sexual transference is normal, when working with a patient's repressed sexuality, but the therapeutic rule of not touching in most psychotherapy often hinders the integration of sexual traumas, as this process needs physical holding. So the patient is often left with her sexual, Oedipal energies projected on the therapist as an "idealized father" figure.

The strong and lasting sexual desire for the therapist without any healing happening can prolong the therapy for many years, as it often does in psychodynamic psychotherapy and psychoanalysis. We call this problem "Freud's trap".

Freud used intimate bodywork like massage of the female patient legs in the beginning of his career, but stopped presumably for moral and political reasons. In the tradition of psychoanalysis touch is therefore not allowed.

Recent research in scientific holistic medicine (clinical, holistic medicine, CHM), salutogenesis and sexual healing has shown, that touch and bodywork (an integral part of medicine since Hippocrates) is as important for healing as conversational therapy.

The combined holding and processing of holistic medicine allows the patient to spontaneously regress to early, sexual and emotional traumas, and heal the deep wounds on body, soul and sexual character from arrested psychosexual development.

Modern sexology and holistic medicine treat sexuality in therapy more as the patient's internal affair (i.e. energy work), and less as a thing going on between the patient and the therapist (i.e. transference). This accelerates healing and reduces sexual transference and the need for mourning in the end of therapy.

Introduction

There is plenty of literature on the need to work in abstinence, and almost every therapist on the planet agrees on the Hippocratic ethics of avoiding sexual contact with the patient. Sexual transference and counter-transference is therefore a concern in psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, but there is a scarcity of papers analysing this mutual libidinous gratification in spite of the issue being highly disturbing to so many therapists (1).

A few years back Irvin D Yalom, the father of “existential psychotherapy” (2) on a visit to Copenhagen addressed the taboo of sexual feelings in therapy directly by declaring that: “I have been sexually aroused by patients and so have every therapist I know”. A participant in this conference and teacher in psychoanalysis was somewhat uncomfortable by admitting that he, in the end of a very difficult, almost 10-year long, four-sessions-a-week analysis with a mentally ill, sexually abused, female patient, had an erection. But this event signified to him more than anything else that the patient had finally successfully healed not only her sexuality, but also her basic existence; but he still felt uncomfortable to be aroused by an abused patient, especially as he earlier in the therapy was positioned as the abuser in the transference.

We must face the fact that therapists are human beings with the same sexuality and also the same feelings of shame and guilt as other people. This means that whenever a man and a woman are together, and they share intimate details, this will affect them sexually (3-6). There will always be some internal reaction, and also some reaction towards the other, i.e. transference and counter transference of love and sexuality, and sexuality thus ceases to be entirely the internal affair of the patient. The ethical art of therapy has since the days of Hippocrates been not to act out on these feelings (7).

Any relationship needs an investment of energy to be of any importance, and this energy is our life energy, which is very sexual, as Freud noticed correctly (8). When the therapeutic relationship turns sexually rewarding, the therapist must guard his intention at all times and be certain that he intends to help the patient, not to engage in the libidinous gratification, however pleasant and however unavoidable.

Unfortunately, the subconscious drive often wins over the mental and spiritual interest of curing the patient, and in this case the therapy often gets stuck. By addressing the sexual healing explicitly and directly, the therapy can move on, but if this does not happen, the therapist and the patient are often hopelessly trapped in what we call the “Trap of Freud”: the continuous libidinous gratification that will make the patient pay for many sessions with no real progress, and with great, prolonged, and painful mourning in the end.

It is difficult to know when this state has been reached; one sign of this problem might be that the therapist is starting to dream and fantasize not only about coitus with the patient, but also about actually marrying him or her; on the other hand such fantasies might be necessary for the therapy (4,5). We must admit that therapy in this situation almost has turned into a real “marriage” between the therapist and the patient. There are so many similarities to marriage that the only major difference is the lack of physical acting out.

For Searles the difference between fantasising about marrying or having sex with the patient and actually doing so is crucial (4): Without the fantasy sexual energy is not available for therapy, but without the taboo on acting out this energy is channelled into the sexual relationship with the therapist not the therapy; this taboo however brings mourning because the desired relationship is sacrificed for the therapy. But Searles also worked under the taboo

of touch, and from our perspective this unnatural distance to a person you care for, is what created the accumulated, and stagnant, libidinous energy experienced by Searles, and thus the fantasies. In one study Searles worked for 900 hours in average on the patients (9).

Sexual transferences and counter transferences are not bad for the therapy; brilliant therapists like Freud, Searles believed that transference and counter-transference of love and sexuality was necessary for therapeutic progress, but they must be used wisely (3,4). The need for sexual healing must be acknowledged, and the therapy must address this need directly in order for therapy to progress efficiently. In order for healing to take place (according to the theory of holistic healing (7,10), see discussion below) it is necessary to provide the patient with the support and holding needed for spontaneous regression back to the traumas. What most patients need is according to the Hippocratic medical tradition physical and mental contact, love, respect and acceptance, honest conversation, and physical intimacy (11,12).

According to some experts, Freud and the other psychoanalysts stopped giving physical holding precisely *because* it encouraged sexual gratification, but this could also be a way to signal to the surrounding world that now sexuality was under control in the therapy. Physical contact and therapeutic touch has been an integral part of holistic medicine since Hippocrates, and Freud was of course familiar with this tradition, being his own medical roots and his own initial practice (see below how he treated hysteria very much the same way as the Hippocratic doctors).

So we find it highly unlikely that Freud's really believed that stopping bodywork would solve the problem of therapists acting out; probably Freud who was a politically cunning developer intended to modernise the somewhat old-fashioned holistic medicine, and take it into a medical practice that could be widely accepted and used by his contemporary fellow therapists. We know from his many writings that Freud often reflected deeply upon what could be accepted by the press and contemporary culture and what could not.

Most interestingly, the energy needed for deep existential healing (salutogenesis) (13,14) is what we would call of a maternal character; if patient receives a nourishing, female, motherly energy, he or she will often spontaneously regress into and heal from his early, infantile, sexual traumas. It is important though that the therapist is not excluding the male pole in his contact with the patient, as treating the supportive energy as only a maternal energy can lead to a serious denial of sexuality.

In many pre-modern cultures the medicine man was a person of "double sex", being able to be both father and mother at the same time. The same idea is prevalent in today's Indian yogis; the famous yogi Sai-Baba's name meaning literally mother-father. The Jungian idea of an inner opposite sex (anima and animus) was an important development in psychoanalysis (6) and many psychoanalysts have believed that Freud's limited ability to help the schizophrenic patients was due to his lack of willingness to be the mother. Let us quote Harold F Searles in one of his fine passages:

"My impression is that Freud himself clung to this father-transference role in order to avoid facing the anxiety associated with the patient's working through their earlier conflicts in relation to him as a mother in the transference. This is a clue, I think, to why Freud considers schizophrenic patients, in whom the resolution of such conflicts is crucial, to be insusceptible to psycho-analytic therapy." (5:440).

Most interestingly the re-parenting and the care for spirit, mind and body at the same time is also what characterized the original Hippocratic character medicine (7). Many of the Hippocratic procedures had the purpose of re-balancing the sexual energies, especially of the female patient who received pelvic massage (7,15-17).

The indication for this treatment was “hysteria” (from Gr. Hystera: Uterus), believed to signify a broad range of female, mental illnesses. This treatment (also called vaginal acupressure) give intense physical holding to the female patients body, including the genitals (15,16) allowing her to regress and heal infantile sexual traumas related also to infantile (auto)erotism (see below). This treatment is thus highly rational from a psychodynamic perspective, in spite of obvious, ethical problems (15,16) (see below), which presumably inspired the Hippocratic doctors to developing their famous ethics.

Sexual transference and counter transference

Sexuality is ubiquitously present in nature and two sexually sound people will always to some extent have some bodily sensations of sexual nature provoked by each other's body. If we were just animals, sexual interest would be constantly and openly present. Being composite creatures with body, mind and spirit, and Id, Ego and Self (soul, higher self), the bodily part of us is constantly interested in sex which are in many ways sublimated, as Freud ingeniously noticed, as much of our natural interest in other people come from sexuality, but is turned into mental and spiritual interest. Researchers in tantra (18) have noticed, as Freud, that our mental and spiritual energy basically is transformed sexual energy. And here it is important not to fool oneself: It is still sexual energy, just in a more socially acceptable form.

Having stated these plain and well-known facts, we can take a deeper look at sexual transference and counter transference. This has been a strong taboo in psychoanalytic and psychodynamic psychotherapy (1), and from the very beginning it was considered a serious threat to the reputation and practice of psychoanalysis (3:170). The reason for the taboo is not very surprising, because who will send their sick young daughter to a man whose primary interest is to engage his sexual energy in her? So psychoanalysis has from the very beginning, in spite of Freud always stressing frank honesty as a key value made, made very smart cover-ups, especially in the language it has been using. Most people do not realize what the Oedipus conflict is about, and they do not want to know either, for this issue is far much too provoking. Most sexual transference seem to be of Oedipal nature; that was the reason for Freud to develop this seemingly strange Oedipus theory: It seems that the nurturing relations between children and parents are carrying extremely strong, but often unconscious, sexual feelings; and this energy is very often materializing itself in therapy, when the patient is regressing to early childhood scenario, and projecting father or mother (or both) on the therapist (10). But Freud did talk about this mother infant bond as sexual in a broad sense. Psychoanalysis has had to operate throughout its history with a tension between its highly sexual theories and its wish to be accepted in a repressive culture. It hasn't always got everything right, but it would be over-simplistic to simply say it has covered up sexuality.

These subliminal or conscious sexual complexes and feelings in psychodynamic therapy and psychoanalysis have been sought resolved in a simple way. When years of intensive contact in the therapy have finished its sexual-energetic process, its natural end is a very

intense and prolonged mourning. This whole process often takes years and during this time many patients will stick firmly to their symptoms, since these supply the patient with a justification for staying in the most intense, intimate and pleasurable psychosexual contact to another human being they have ever experienced.

Meetings four times a week for years are not unusual – literally thousands of sessions. The obvious lack of progress in therapy is understandable if we acknowledge that our body has priority in our subconscious universe controlling so much of our behaviour. This trap of psychoanalysis must be avoided at all cost, as it makes therapy expensive and inefficient.

We know of course that some psychoanalysts might find our analysis hard to accept, and from a traditional psychoanalytical position it is clear, that what we have stated above could be seen as a misunderstanding and oversimplification of psychoanalysis on a number of fronts. Firstly, psychoanalysts could argue, the mourning is in part at least because of the lack of sexual gratification not because of the loss of it. In the same way the incest taboo between parents and their children is what compels them to form sexual relationships outside the family of origin. But there is a kind of mourning involved in the acknowledgement that although daddy finds the child lovely he is married to mummy and therefore not available. And as the many fine statistics have documented (9), it is not correct to say that no-one benefits from or needs long-term therapy. Another argument that could meet our position in this paper is that it promotes a ‘one size fits all’ type of philosophy that might not be correct; it might simply be that some types of patients need many years of dialog and verbal therapy, and not bodywork.

Our aim with the ongoing research is to develop more effective and fast therapy, so it might definitely in the end turn out that we have been too optimistic of the methods of clinical holistic medicine and the combination of psychotherapy and bodywork. But for now, we prefer to stick to our optimism, especially as this optimism in itself seems to accelerate therapy immensely.

The only way to accelerate the process is to address it directly and consciously to abort the more or less unconscious, mutual plan of a sexual-energetic long-term “marriage”. Actually it is well-known from analytic literature (3-6), that both therapist and patient have such intense and ongoing fantasies of sexual intercourse and marriage. And it is, from our perspective, not a shame, not a bad thing, but a biologically and completely natural thing, but still a trap that we definitely must be smart enough to avoid.

The only way to avoid being caught by the subliminal sexual rewards of therapy is to address sexual issues openly, and get the therapy going at a well-defined and high speed. We must talk openly about sexuality, address sexual transferences and counter-transferences as soon as they are noticed, keeping the focus on the goal of therapy, and avoid being afraid to take the patient in deep regression and earlier sexual traumas by using the holding and support needed for this, including therapeutic touch.

The roots of Freud in holistic medicine

Interestingly, Freud did work rather intensively with therapeutic touch in the beginning of his career, very much in the Hippocratic tradition of the holistic medical doctors, but stopped

giving physical holding to his patients as he continued to develop psychoanalysis. Lauren Nancarrow Clarke writes (19:8):

“Freud (20) used physical, body-to-body touch as one of his therapeutic tools... Freud, in several recorded case studies, performed the necessary leg massage and rolling for his hysterical patients to help alleviate their symptoms (see Fraulein Elisabeth von R.’s case, for example). Although touch is not the primary focus of this study, Freud’s use of touch raises interesting thoughts about the ‘touch taboo’ in psychotherapy (21). Additionally, while this practice has been lost, the creator of psychoanalysis thought that touch was an important part of the healing process. If one of the patients’ main modes of communication is through the bodily symptoms, why is this no longer an area of focus for all clinicians working today?”

It is well known from “The Cocaine Papers” (22) that Freud did much of his research into the psyche on cocaine, which has a well-known tendency to enhance libido (the large need of self-medication for sexual problems might be the reason why cocaine is available on every “black market” on the planet). It might very well be that the continuous use of cocaine is not very compatible with intimate bodywork, if you want to avoid acting out, but a much more plausible reason for Freud to abandon bodywork was extremely tense sexual-political and moral situation at that time (Freud talked about “highly explosive forces” (3:170), making physical contact with a patient questionable, even for a physician.

Use of bodywork

Holistic doctors have used bodywork since Hippocrates. Freud abandoned it, but many therapists after Freud, like Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957) (23), continued to use it and noticed that bodywork really was extremely effective in healing by sending patients back into earlier sexual traumas, including unsolved issues relating to infantile sexuality. Unfortunately Reich did his therapy in a way that, in spite of it being scientific (and also traditional) (17) was seen as a treat to the therapists and physicians of his time, namely by direct sexual stimulation of his female patients. This situation led to the dramatic actions of burning his brilliant books with his unique research on human sexuality and a jail sentence and death of heart failure, while in jail.

In Denmark after two sexual revolutions (in the 1960s and in the 1990s) and legalization of both pornography and prostitution with pornography in every store and almost every TV-program-package, and even with porn-stars becoming TV-heroes on national TV, we still have problems with this kind of explicit, manual, sexological therapy. Today we can talk openly about sexuality, we can use bodywork to take patients into regression, but working directly with sexual stimulation of the patient in the sexological clinic is still highly controversial. Direct sexual stimulation of patients with vibrators for clitoral use are coming into use in holistic sexological therapy by alternative therapists, like the Danish sexologist Pia Struck, who like a dozen other Danish therapists have been trained in this method by the American “mother of female masturbation”, Betty Dodson (24). Direct sexual stimulation during therapy must be considered classical tool of holistic medicine (17) and is therefore listed as an advanced tool of clinical holistic medicine (25); its rationale seems to be to induce

a sexual opening when the patient's sexuality has been definitely shot down since early childhood. It might be this ancient tradition of holistic, manual sexology that Freud tried to get away from by inducing the taboo of touch.

The bodywork needed for inducing healing, when the patient has strong sexual transference, is not sexual stimulation but often just simple therapeutic, accepting touch, which can be done while the patient has the clothes on (18). More intensive holding can be given with the patient partly undressed or nude (19) and with more therapists and holders (20), without touch becoming sexual. Acceptance though touch (19) and vaginal acupressure, also called Hippocratic pelvic massage after its appearance in the famous *Corpus Hippocraticum* (7,17), seems to be valuable tools for giving intensive holding and support to the sexually traumatized female patients (26,27), without direct sexual stimulation.

Interestingly vaginal acupressure is equivalent to the explorative phase of the pelvic examination; we therefore believe that this procedure is legal in most countries. But as a therapist you must be absolutely certain that a holistic medical procedure is legal in your country and that you have the needed therapeutic competency, ethical training, and supervision, before using it.

We have noticed at the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine in Copenhagen that sexual issues and severe existential problems after rape and sexual abuse often can be solved in only 10 to 20 hours of holistic therapy, if sufficient bodywork is included, when needed (16,28,29). The extreme acceleration of therapy from up to 2,000 hours of psychoanalysis (one hour four times a week for 10 years) to 10 or 20 hours of scientific holistic therapy has been the main reason to include therapeutic touch (18) in our development of clinical, holistic medicine (20,30-32).

If one as a therapist dares to go all the way to working with direct sexual stimulation in the holistic, sexological clinic, even the most severe and chronic, sexual problems and dysfunctions can be solved; an example of this is the treatment of anorgasmia, where even in the most difficult cases of lack of orgasm and desire lasting for decades could be solved after only 15 hours of intensive therapy (24). Struck and Ventegodt (24) found that 93% of 500 patients with anorgasmia were cured in this way and the method had no negative adverse effects.

Unfortunately, not many therapists would like to work so directly with the sexuality and genitals of the patient, as it is possible to do with the most radical, advanced tools of holistic, sexological, manual therapy. But in most cases simple therapeutic touch will do the job. We must strongly recommend that therapists acknowledge the value of manual therapy and the need for physical holding, because many problems are coming from our childhood and a condition, where we did not get sufficient love and care from our parents. When we spontaneously go back to these days of early childhood in the therapy, we simply need physical holding – as we did then (7,10).

Psychoanalysts, who defend the taboo of touch, have disputed the need for physical holding. It has been a constant experience from many therapists now, working on hundreds patients with many different diseases, that touch is often needed for a complete healing of childhood traumas (33-35). The reason that therapeutic touch is needed seem to be the way information are transferred from body to body, by direct transference of biological information (36-45); especially when the patient has been sexually abused seems touch to be the key to healing (33-35).

Using sexual energy in healing

Harold F. Searles (1918-) wrote in his excellent paper on "Sexual processes in schizophrenia (5:441):

"This vignette brings up the point, too, that as the patient and therapist encounters prolonged periods of mutual despair at ever resolving the illness, both experiences powerful urges to give up the difficult struggle towards a genuinely psychotherapeutic goal, and to settle for a much more primitive goal of finding sexual satisfaction in one another."

Here we see the conflict in the therapy. The mutual sexual interest is on the one hand what sets the patient free energetically and consciously and motivates for the often-painful exploration into a wounded existence. On the other hand the same mutual, sexual interest can be fixating the therapy until it breaks down in mutual despair and reveal its true, sexual nature. Searles continues (5:441):

"One may see this phenomenon when mutually gratifying investigative work is interrupted, for long weeks and even months, by a recrudescence of the patient's defensive withdrawal. The therapist, having tested the pleasure of carrying on a relatively high order of collaborative therapeutic investigation with the difficult patient, now has a reason to feel that such gratifications are irretrievably gone, and he apt to be preoccupied more than usual by sexual feelings towards, and fantasies about, the withdrawn patient. Such sequences suggest the extent to which the gratifications of psychotherapeutic or psycho-analytic work represent sublimations of libidinal impulses, which break down, for varying periods of time, during such periods of withdrawal... in the relationship between patient and therapist. Just as sexual behaviour by a schizophrenic person may represent his last-ditch attempts to make or maintain contact with outer reality, or with his own inner self... so the therapist sexual feelings towards the withdrawn patient may be, in part, an unconscious effort to bridge the psychological gulf between them, when more highly refined means have failed."

What Searles shares with us here is extremely important: Behind the independent interest of our Id and Ego we still have the intentions of the self, and if the therapist is conscious of his intentions and constantly intends to serve his patient every second of the therapy – which is the real challenge of being a therapist – then sexuality might serve a higher and healing purpose. So Searles noticed in himself that his sexual interest in the patient actually was embedded in his good intent for this patient – as is our physical interest in our children, when we are good parents. So after all, being a therapist is not that difficult – one must just be like a good parent.

Transference or regression

One cannot avoid sexual transferences in psychodynamic therapy of any kind, but by focusing directly on the triple rehabilitation of body, mind, and spirit (id, ego, and self/soul) one can take the focus from mutual interest here and now – which is good for confidence and

trust but bad for therapeutic speed – to the crucial rehabilitation of the patient's talents of body, mind, spirit, love, consciousness and sexuality. Working on these issues seems to be what heals the existence of the patient, i.e. induces the salutogenesis.

The therapeutic schools hold somewhat different opinions on regression; according to most contemporary schools and to holistic medicine in general, salutogenesis is happening, when the patient regress back to the painful moments, where striving for survival forced her/him to stretch fundamental existence and reshape personality at its core. We have coined this radical and total human transformation into a more hardcore and survivable version of “juvenile human metamorphosis” and the deep process of existential healing similarly called “adult human metamorphosis” (33-45). These states are so painful that only the most intensive holding can give sufficient support and often this takes all the intimacy the patient can get. These processes can be extremely resource-demanding; if the patient is severely traumatized i.e. by repeat rape or sexual abuse in childhood and they are best done in a group setting (29). The “healing crisis” that the patient enters is well described as “holy madness”, and the therapist is well advised coming from “crazy wisdom” (46).

Interestingly, when holistic therapy is done with a strong intentional focus on love, consciousness and sexuality, transference is mostly prevented and the healing process focused internally in the patient. In the process of salutogenesis (7,13,14,47-52) not only the mind heals (53), but also the body (54), sexuality (28) and life as a whole (55,56).

So by working on body, mind, and spirit at the same time, much human suffering can be alleviated and most interestingly even the working ability is given back to the patient. Scientific holistic therapy is therefore also helping the patient's economy, which should be very much appreciated by poor patients, and equally by the states that offers free health service to its citizens. To return the patient to society, initiating a process that in the end turns the patient into a valuable person for him-self and others and for society at large is the finest goal of therapy, and the only goal that really served the purpose of rehabilitating the patient's character (7) and by that also his sense of coherence (13,14) and purpose of life (57).

Foetal sexuality and infantile autoerotism

From research in the tradition of tantra (18) we know that sexual health is associated with the ability to contain large amount of sexual energy. We also know that the ability to control the letting go and action out of this accumulated, sexual energy is essential to sexual health. Problems with containing sexual energy is often experienced as a tension or a pressure, leading to emotional lability, premature ejaculations, frigidity, and many other problems related to sexually and personality (2,3,6,7,8,18,20).

Most interestingly the therapeutic regression into infantile sexually is healing our ability to contain huge amounts of sexual energy. The regression into early childhood and into the womb as a foetus is often an extremely sexual experience, but the sexual energies are internally circulated, not circulated between self and other persons, as in mature sexuality. Freud called this “infantile auto-erotism”, and believed that schizophrenics were ill, because they were stuck at this level of psychosexual development (5:429), very much in accordance with our own observations from deep therapeutic regression of such patients.

It seems that only if our inner, sexual energy system is well functioning and healthy, that our body and mind can be healthy. It seems that early traumas arresting our psychosexual development at this stage is causing many of the mental, existential, sexual, and even physical problems we see in the clinic. It therefore seems necessary for the existential healing (salutogenesis) to take place that the therapeutic work includes early regression and healing of the traumas related to infantile autoerotism.

Ethical aspects

As so often in our life, the rule is that what we most desperately try to avoid will be our destiny. This simply follows from the way our mind works. Everything we hold on to with the mind will subconsciously direct our behaviours, also when we cling to something negative. All therapy is about telling the patient to let go of the mind clinging.

From the very beginning psychoanalysis has desperately avoided sexual exploitation of the patients. This has been regulated by firm rules of not touching and to avoid physical acting out of the sexual transference and counter transference. But sexual interest is not going away, because of such rules. And they most obviously do not prevent sex between therapist and patient, as this continues to be a huge problem, and the largest taboo among physicians and psychotherapists, whether they are classical psychoanalysts, gestalt therapist or CAM-healers.

We believe there should be firm ethical rules in therapy, but avoiding touch has destroyed the therapeutic progress. Touch is a basic human need all the way through life and in all kinds of care (58,59). Positive, accepting, pleasurable touch is most definitely needed for normal childhood development, and therefore most definitely needed as the most important part of the holding, when the patient regress to the childhood in order to solve traumatic childhood issues.

The healing of sexual traumas needs (more than healing of any other trauma) physical support and therapeutic touch. By avoiding touch in therapy in order to avoid sexual abuse, we believe that Freud and other psychoanalysts ended up with many patients being “married” to their therapist in a “sexually gratifying relationships” of little therapeutic value. The ethical problems connected with Freud’s trap are:

- The patient is deprived of her healing believing it is on its way, instead of a healing that could happen in less hours of intensive therapy involving physical touch. Therapy without touch can also be fast, if you address the issues directly, as done in short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy, where even severe psychiatric illnesses often can be alleviated in 20-40 hours (60-62) and clinical holistic medicine (53).
- The patient will be deeply involved mentally, emotionally, sexually, and existentially with a therapist for many years, often having her therapist as the closest person in her life, with him being the object of her longings, sexual fantasies, and desires. This energetic “marriage” will deprive her of the possibility of getting the male she really needs, and getting the sexual

satisfaction she so separately longs for. So the patient is basically wasting her life.

- Another important aspect is the question of possible financial exploitation. Independent of Freud's trap, the use of relative inefficient therapeutically methods will always be unethical for the reasons of prolonging therapy and taking too much money from the patient. The patient eternally trapped in Freud's trap will be caught like a mouse in a mouse trap; driven by her emotions and desires, projecting her inner male into therapist as the "divine" idealized father (or mother if a patient is having a female therapist). She will gratefully and without hesitation spend all her available money on the therapy continuing for many years, because it is just such an honour to be with the therapist for 2 or 4 hours a week - and such an Oedipal pleasure to finally be "married to dad". If there is no therapeutic gain and the purpose for meeting is the mutual libidinous gratification, this is very much like prostitution with the therapist being the prostituted "expert lover". But this is not prostitution, as the therapist is not admitting - and often not even aware of - the simple, sexualised purpose of their time together. The therapist experience to work seriously; but she is just a very hard case so solve. The harder the patient's case is, the more desperately will the patient need the therapists help. This necessity of prolonged therapy is not only obvious for the patient and the therapist, but often the patient's whole social network is backing the continuation of the therapy up as extremely and vitally important; everybody is happy that the patient finally found such a brilliant doctor who really gets the therapy going. Seen by a cynical, analytic eye, the patient sitting in Freud's Trap is caught and exploited financially; as the sexual pleasure is mutual it would not be correct to say that she is exploited sexually.
- In the end of therapy there will be mourning and grief. Therapist and patient must separate, because the energy is leaving the relationship, as it always will in a sexual relationship without fundamental renewing. So the joy of therapy is converted into the pain of therapy. Much of the pleasure the patient paid for must be returned in the end, without the money being returned.

In order to sum up, the concept of Freud's Trap is giving us a view into a part of psychodynamic therapy and psychoanalysis that is not working well. We find the reason for this to be the taboo of touch. There are many reasons for contemporary therapist not to want to touch the patients; there are restrictive therapeutic rules, there are strategies for avoid being tempted sexually, and strategies for avoiding being accused of sexual abuse. Whatever the reason for not touching is the therapist ends up involving the patient deeply emotionally and sexually in a relationship that is supposed to be healing, but because of the taboo of touch it is not.

Such a relationship is neither truly, sexually rewarding, in spite of an often-strong focus on sexuality and some sexual gratification, nor healing. The therapist stuck with the patient ends up very much like a prostitute, with the client coming to the "expert lover" for love-sessions; but the costumers buying this kind of therapy are paying for something that neither develops into the real sex the patient is longing for, nor into the healing she actually pays for. We think that the taboo of touch is a historical mistake that prolongs therapy for years; we do not find that Freud's Trap is causing any direct harm to the patients.

We acknowledge that psychoanalysts might disagree with our position in this paper; we admit coming from the old tradition of Hippocratic holistic medicine, where touch has been an integral part of medicine for millennia; this gives us very different experiences than does psychoanalysis and psychodynamic psychotherapy working with all the pragmatic restrictions of the taboo of touch.

Conclusions

Sexual transference and counter-transference has been one of the large and unsolved problems in psychoanalysis and psychodynamic psychotherapy as it often makes therapy slow and inefficient, because of the mutual libidinous gratification of the therapeutic relationship subconsciously being more important than therapeutic progress. Purposeful and expressive work on healing the patients sexuality using bodywork often takes the patient spontaneously into deep regression and all the way back to the sexual traumas in early childhood and even into the womb.

Holistic doctors have used a combination of conversational therapy and bodywork ever since Hippocrates. Freud also used intimate bodywork like massage in the beginning of his career, but stopped, presumably for moral and political reasons. In the classical tradition of psychoanalysis and psychodynamic psychotherapy touch is not allowed, especially not when related to the patient's sexuality and genitals.

Modern sexology and scientific, holistic medicine integrates, in the classical tradition of Hippocratic holistic medicine, psychodynamic psychotherapy and therapeutic touch, making it possible to support the healing of the patient's sexuality also on the physical level. Recent research in holistic medicine, salutogenesis and sexual healing has shown, that touch and bodywork is as important for healing as conversational therapy (63,64).

Holistic medicine (CHM) has also shown good results, presumably because it integrates psychodynamic psychotherapy and therapeutic touch (7,10,26,65). It thus allows the patient to spontaneously regress to early, sexual and emotional traumas, and heal the deep wounds on body, soul and sexual character from arrested psychosexual development. Modern sexology and holistic medicine treats sexuality in therapy more as the patient's internal affair (i.e. energy work), and less as a thing going on between the patient and the therapist (i.e. transference). This form dramatically accelerates healing and reduces intensity of the sexual (Oedipal) bonding between therapist and patient and as a consequence the experience of loss and need for mourning in the end of therapy.

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How to Use Implanted Memories of Incest as a Tool for Dissolving a Strong Female Oedipus Complex

To claim that Freud at the end of his life meant that we should avoid working on sexual traumas is to misread Freud in our opinion. On the other hand it seems that for political reasons and in order for psychoanalysis to survive in a period of severe critique, he chose to focus psychoanalysis on internal conflicts and not on sexual traumas. Later in his life he even admitted to have consciously repressed the fact that the parental sexual abuse of several of his female patient had created the strong female Oedipus complex that caused the hysteric and sexually dysfunctional symptoms of these patients.

As a rule such early, emotionally painful life events cannot be contacted directly by the patient's consciousness as they are deeply repressed. The way such content emerge in the therapy is by a series of phantasies or interpretations that gradually become more and more solid, until an "implanted memory" appears. This memory is not at all accurate, but carries the part of the emotional content of the trauma that the patient can tolerate. As therapy progresses this "implanted memory" will transform into a true recollection of the actual traumas. "Implanted memories" can therefore be an important tool in the sexological clinic.

Sometimes the abuse of the child was physical, but as often it was psychological (energetic incest). If the process of healing continues to its natural closure, the patient will know with certainty what actually happened at the end of the therapy.

Introduction

In the ongoing debate on implanted memories and sexual traumas (1-3), Robert Withers (4) pointed out that it is possible to use memory defensively to evade uncomfortable feelings in the transference, and similarly possible to use the transference defensively. So we are in great trouble as therapists, when we want to be sure that what we are dealing with is based on reality and not on defensive construction.

To claim that Freud at the end of his life meant that we should avoid working on sexual traumas is to misread Freud in our opinion. On the other hand it seems that for political reasons and in order for psychoanalysis to survive in a period of severe critique, he chose to focus psychoanalysis on internal conflicts and not on sexual traumas. Later in his life he even admitted to have consciously repressed the fact that the parental sexual abuse of several of his female patient had created the strong female Oedipus complex that caused the hysteric and sexually dysfunctional symptoms of these patients (5,6).

It is not difficult to understand why Freud chose this path, away from conflicts that easily could have put psychoanalysis in a bad position. We have learned from the way the brilliant researcher Wilhelm Reich (7), the founder of modern sexology, was treated with persecution, imprisonment and public book burning, that Freud chose a wise route for psychoanalysis, when he avoided the hot issues that could explode in the media. All readers of Freud will know how often Freud addressed this political level and how thoroughly he incorporated it when he developed psychoanalysis.

But time is no longer for hiding the truth and being political; we need a science of therapy that works and effectively will cure our patients. Robert Withers (4) is correct when he states that the sexually traumatized patient that hear her analyst saying in essence: 'Let's not talk about your father raping you—let's talk about us' is severely let down by her therapist. He concludes: "There is no doubt that at times the transference/counter transference can be a wonderful therapeutic tool. But we do our patients a disservice, if we forget Freud's original insight that it can also be used by the resistance—especially in the face of emerging traumatic material."

We would like to take this a bit further. We want to state that implanted memories of incest can be a wonderful tool also, if the energy of this false memory comes from a strong, un-dissoluted female Oedipus complex. One can ask: How can such a fixed energy most easily be dissolved? What is the most direct route? Basically the female Oedipus complex is the girl's sexual energy directed towards her father and because of the taboo of incest denied and repressed. So the most direct route is to visualize the intercourse with the father in order to free the energy. But we all know that the superego, because of the incest taboo, will not allow such a fantasy. But if this enters as an unconscious, implanted memory of sexual abuse or rape, this problem is solved. Now the problem is how to own and integrate such a forbidden gestalt. If the therapist and the patient simply allows this to be explored in a non-judging atmosphere, the emotional charge will little by little be taken out of the gestalt and set free to be used by the woman in her adult relationships.

Interestingly, the mention of the Oedipus complex as a possible real intercourse with the father is taking much of the sexual charge out of the transference-counter transference dynamic, making this a much faster route to sexual healing and re-sexualisation of the woman, than the traditional psychoanalytic method of addressing everything as transference.

We even suggest that some women is unable to process and heal all the way to mature genital sexuality, if their Oedipus complex is not treated like it was caused as an actual, sexual trauma. This is most definitely the case, when the patient actually was sexually traumatized, for without the full integration of the trauma there will be no complete healing. This is also the case when the Oedipus complex is caused by symbolic abuse, i.e. where a father psychologically has substituted a mother with a daughter, which is quite normal, i.e. when the mother dies, is divorced from the father, or just leaves the home for a longer period of time.

Eight causes of implanted memory

The eight most common causes of implanted memories are (8):

- **Satisfying own expectancies:** If the patient expects that she had been abused sexually i.e. because a sister was, she can implant more or less vague memories of incest herself.
- **Pleasing the therapist:** The patient wants to please or be in accordance with the therapist and is therefore accepting his view or what she believes or imagine is his view. This is enhanced if the therapist shares his interpretations and give the patient leads (i.e. questions that are not neutral, but biased in some direction). Even more so, if the therapist is making judgments on what happened instead of waiting until the patient finds out for herself.
- **Transferences and counter transferences:** If the patient develops sexual feelings towards the therapist and if these are ignored by the therapist, or if the patient senses that the therapist will not accept them, this can enhance sexual fantasies, which eventually can take the form of an implanted memory. Old sexual fantasies can also be boosted by this unconscious wish of the patient, and even real events can be distorted, reinterpreted and now filled with the sexual feelings that the patient cannot allow to emerge in the personal relationship with the therapist.
- **As source of mental and emotional order:** A third source of implanted memories has nothing to do with the therapy in itself. The patient needs to get a kind of order in the chaos of emotions and symptoms, and having a simple explanation can be a relief instead of living with chaos and mystery.
- **As emotional defense.** Sometimes the recovered, but false memory is hiding another event that is much more painful. This could be that her father left her and her mother, when she was a child. This may be much more difficult to integrate than sexual abuse. If the patient is desperately angry with her father and cannot confront the event causing the anger, an implanted event can be a solution. It could also be neglect that is the problem; it seems that neglecting the bodily presence and sexual character of a girl can be as destructive to her self-esteem and psychosexual development as actual physical or sexual abuse.
- **As symbol.** Often, the parents have been abusing the child in subtle and psychological ways, (i.e. not respecting the child's sexual borders, or having used the child as a sexual partner, which is most often seen when a parent lives alone with a child of the opposite sex). This does not mean that there was a sexual act of objective, physical, incest like coitus, but what we could call the "symbolic incest" or "energetic incest" is often extremely painful and very harmful to a child on an emotional level. "Energetic" incest happens typically when her father being the only parent raises a girl (or when a mother raises her son alone), and the two of them "pair up" as man and woman making wholeness emotionally and energetically comparable to the wholeness of a sexual couple, but without the sexual acting out. A lot of sexual energies are accumulated and circulated here, and the girl is often, as Freud pointed out, having secret sexual

dreams about her father with lots of shame and guilt. An implanted memory that carries all the shame and energy of a real incestuous trauma, but where intense therapy does not reveal any recorded “movie” of the event(s), might very well come from “energetic incest”.

- Implanted philosophy. When a patient learns that problems often are caused by traumas, she often starts speculating which traumas could have caused which problems. Sexual problems can then lead to dreams about sexual dominance/abuse/perversions and dreams, which can be interpreted as memories. Freud taught us that the child’s sexuality is polymorphously” perverted, meaning that all kinds of sexuality is present at least potentially with the little child. In dreams, according to Freud, consciousness often goes back to the earlier stages of development, potentially leading to all kinds of sexual dreams and fantasies.
- Implanted memories function as the patient’s subconscious tool for sexual healing. When a patient has a very strong Oedipus complex and not willing to take this to transference and prefer to handle it psychologically as an internal affair, this will materialize as a visualization of intercourse with the opposite-sexed parent. This as the incest-taboo will make it impossible to accept the fantasy in present time and therefore it will materialize as a false memory of physical sexual abuse. Only if this memory is acknowledged and taken seriously, the Oedipus complex will dissolve; in this process the patient will realize the true nature and mission of the “implanted memory”.

Different opinions of Freud

It is worthwhile to give the word to Freud himself, who wrote: “In the period in which the main interest was directed to discovering infantile sexual traumas, almost all my female patients told me that they had been seduced by their father. I was driven to recognize in the end that these reports were untrue and so came to understand that hysterical symptoms are derived from phantasies and not from real occurrences. It was only later that I was able to recognize in the phantasy of being seduced by the father the expression of the typical Oedipus complex in woman” (6).

Anna Freud reflects on this passage as follows: “In his early discussion of the etiology of hysteria Freud often mentioned seduction by adults as among its commonest causes. But nowhere in these early publications did he specifically inculcate the girl’s father. Indeed, in some additional footnotes written in 1924 for the *Gesammelte Schriften* reprint of *Studies on Hysteria* he admitted to having on two occasions suppressed the fact of the father’s responsibility” (6:419).

Conclusions

Where does this take us? To the practical position, where we are willing to do what it takes to cure our patient. Every therapist should know that a patient’s memories are not

accurate, and in the start of therapy the “memories” are much more like guessing or diffuse interpretations than visual and tactile accurate recallings.

There should be plenty of room in the therapy to allow the patients all kinds of “memories”, fantasies, ideas and mental and emotional experiments. The therapist should keep the patient safe by securing that she is not sharing her ideas with her parents etc, as long as the therapy is not completed and her Oedipus complex not dissolved.

If the “implanted memory” or more correctly put “visually false but emotionally correct memory” is taken as a powerful therapeutic tool instead of something that should be avoided at any prize, the patients will heal and become sexually mature at a much higher speed and success rate, than if the therapist and patient is avoiding the core issue from fear of the possibility of making an implant. In the end of the therapy the patient will know exactly what happened.

The art of therapy is to keep the patient on the right track of facing all resistance and difficult emotions, following her all the way though the dark night of the repressed and unconscious, and into the dawn of the bright day of mature sexuality, unconditional love, and mental and existential freedom.

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The Use of Hippocrates' Healing Principle of Similarity in Classical Sexology and Traditional, Holistic Medicine

Hippocrates induced healing (salutogenesis) with the “principle of similarity” - like cures like. The similarity principle has been used as the major therapeutic principle in the modern holistic medicine. One radical style of holistic mind-body medicine has been developed by the late Swedish physician Bengt Stern. This type of therapy that make use of dramatic, sexological elements has recently been found highly efficient in improving quality of life and normalizing sense of coherence (estimated NNT=2) without any side effects or adverse events.

Stern's therapy mimics the most difficult events in life during role-plays. His unique therapeutic program, “Meet yourself”, takes the participant through the most difficult aspects of life, including birth, death, and neurotic and evil human interactions, also of violent and sexual nature. About 4,500 patients have now been through the “fascist exercise” without getting side effects or adverse events (NNH>4,500). This exercise includes the methods of controlled sexual and psychological abuse (level 8 in tools of clinical holistic medicine).

Since Freud it has been known that to rehabilitate a patient's health the healing of the patient's sexuality is particularly important. In his therapy Stern has done what Freud could not do for moral reasons hundred years ago: Making the full, painful drama of early life happen again for patients to heal not only their physical, mental disorders and sexual dysfunctions, but their whole life and existence.

The therapeutic program of Bengt Stern is evaluated in this chapter and found to be ethical and in accordance with the healing principles and traditions of holistic medicine, in spite of its use of explicit sexual elements that outside the therapeutic sessions often are believed to be harmful. The use of such elements in the therapy has ever since Hippocrates been the essence of using similarity for healing. Most of the known healing principles of CAM are used in this therapy.

Stern's “Meet yourself” course is an effective, non-pharmaceutical medicine that does not cause any harm as it has been found to be without side effects or adverse events.

Introduction

The principle of “the same cures the same” was made famous by Christian Friedrich Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843), who wanted to find more elegant solutions to the rather painful, traditional Hippocratic cure of exposing patients to the same violation that originally made them ill (1). Hippocrates and his students did practically not use drugs for medicine (2). Instead they rehabilitated the patients character by supporting self-exploration—a strategy called “clinical medicine” (3). What needed exploration were all the episodes and events from the patient’s life that was painful, and problematic—traumatic and repressed—in modern psychodynamic language.

Hahnemann’s intent was impeccable. If a woman had been raped, we all know how painful it is for her to go back to relive the trauma in therapy to integrate the unbearable feelings of the violation. If a person had been abused or neglected as a vulnerable, little child, we all know how troublesome therapy is when taking the patient back to this painful event. If this could be solved in a more elegant way, this would be extremely valuable.

Homeopathy has been very successful, and today about 10% of all treatments in the world done by a physician are done with homeopathy. Most unfortunately homeopathy has not been very effective, at least according to much recent research. Therefore, therapy has not been able to move away from the strategy of directly confronting patients with the content of their traumas. This can be done in many therapeutic ways.

Some types of therapy only works through the mind, others only through the body, others only through the mind, while still other systems combine conversation and touch therapy, and still others intervene holistically on all aspects of man at the same time. The latter is called holistic medicine. It exist today as many non-scientific systems i.e. the shamanistic healing ceremonies known from almost all premodern cultures. It is also developed into medical science as in clinical holistic medicine.

There are different styles of clinical holistic medicine: Holistic body psychotherapy (England, Germany) (4-8), holistic mind body medicine (Sweden) (9-13) and the Nordic School of Clinical Holistic Medicine (Denmark) (14-16). The most intensive of these are undoubtedly the Swedish system, which works very directly on healing physical and sexual abuse and violation by use of the similarity principles.

How unpleasant this therapy might be felt by the participants, it is known to be absolutely safe, without any significant side effects or adverse events (8,9,13,17). The physical intensity of this therapy is well reflected in the fact that one participant in 1,000 broke a rib (13).

Bengt Stern’s therapy

Bengt Stern, MD (1938-2002) was a physician who believed strongly in non-drug medicine. He built his holistic therapy on the most efficient and intense non-drug techniques he could find or invent himself (9). He used the Reichian therapeutic principle of working against the resistance.

Stern’s therapy was about “raising the patient’s consciousness”. According to his book “Feeling bad is a good start” (9) his therapy combines a number of highly provocative and intense techniques:

Body-psycho-therapy, psychodrama, gestalt therapy, transactional analysis, and Janov's primal therapy. Holotropic breath work of the Stanislav Grof type is also used, to make his therapy among the most intensive non-drug therapies in use today. The techniques he included are efficient, because "they activate painful emotional memories. In processing these memories, one understands the effect these experiences have had on one's adult life. Sometimes you re-experience very clearly, and in detail, painful emotional memories from early childhood."

Stern wrote about his body psychotherapy:

"Body-psychotherapy is not psychotherapy in its usual sense, but rather a technique to contact pre-intellectual emotional memories, so called cell memories. Body-psychotherapy is the conscious activation of these cell memories in your body. In its practical application body-psychotherapy consists of hundreds of different breath exercises, body movements, massage techniques, etc. The pioneer of body-psychotherapy was Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957). Other prominent figures within this science are Alexander Lowen, John C Pierrakos, Charles Kelley and David Boadella."

Bengt Stern was interested in all major aspects of life, especially the three aspects he found most difficult and traumatizing: birth, human interaction and death. To help the participants in his therapeutic course "Meet yourself", he made everyone go through three most intense exercises, which he labeled the "birth excise", the "fascist exercise", and the "death exercise" (9). In all three exercises, he used psychodrama, role-play, and imagination to mimic the emotional reactions in every little detail of a painful and difficult birth, sexual and non-sexual abuse, violation and repression in human interactions, and the transformative crises of the psychological death process—often called "metamorphosis" (18-21).

The text below is Bengt Sterns own description of his most central and famous "fascist exercise" from his book (9). Around 1985, when his book appeared in the first edition, a great number of people had already participated in it, and most fortunately this exercise proved to have no side effects of adverse events associated with it, as Bengt Stern stated in his book:

The "fascist" exercise in the "meet yourself process"

An essential exercise, a kind of psychodrama, is part of the first step. This exercise has the nickname "the "fascist" exercise". The aim is for the participants to become aware of their fascistic shadow. That is the part which people unconsciously allow to leak out on their daily life. When participants become aware of their fascistic tendencies, these tendencies lose their destructive energy. So these tendencies will, to a great extent, start disappearing.

Just as with other intense exercise in the Meet Yourself Process, this exercise is explained in detail beforehand. No participant is told they must participate in this exercise. Rather, every participant will have to express a wish to take part. Some of them might be advised by the course-leader not to participate in this particular exercise.

In the exercise, participants, working in couples, suppress each other within a given framework. They are, of course, not allowed to hurt each other physically, but within the given framework they are encouraged to participate totally. In the role of oppressor they are to use all their creativity to offend their partner. In the role as victim they use all their

creativity to enter the role of being totally invaded. This exercise lasts for about thirty minutes before the partners change roles.

Participants react in a variety of ways. Many participants totally enter both roles. Some are quite capable of handling the role of the oppressed but have difficulties being the oppressor, or vice versa. Occasionally, participants are psychologically paralyzed, mostly in the role as the oppressor, but sometimes even in the role of oppressed.

If participants do become paralyzed they will receive an individual emotional release session with one of the course-leaders. It is then evident that the psychological paralysis is their way of avoiding contact with the memory of the mental, and often physical, violence to which they were subjected by one of their parents early in life.

In such a session the participant has an opportunity to express his pain and rage, because of the violence. The opportunity to complete this exercise through such a session is a great relief for the participant.

After this exercise, the couples share their experience with each other – i.e. how they are now able to identify their oppressive role and their victim role in their everyday life.

This is followed by an exercise of emotional expression in which the participants liberate them-selves from all the preintellectual pain that has been activated during the exercise.

About two thousand people have been through the “fascist” exercise. They consider this exercise one of the most essential of the course. Although it is demanding, nobody regrets having participated in it. Those who wholly participate in this exercise stand a great chance of avoiding being suppressive or of allowing suppression in the future.

Case reports

After the documentation of the efficacy of Bengt Stern’s therapy, it has been taken into use in all the Nordic countries. In Denmark the “fascist exercise” is used especially for the training of therapists that works with traumas from violent and sexual abuse, i.e. incest. One training center that uses it is the Nordic School of Holistic Medicine in Copenhagen. The following are descriptions of how two participants experienced this exercise:

Training session, female holistic body psycho-therapist, 28 years old

For many years I had vulvodynia with strong daily genital pains and not being able to have intercourse. I had the condition for 15 years and I had been to a large number of experts, physicians, gynecologists, sexologists and complementary therapists and used a lot of money on these treatments, but with almost no results. I had finally given up. As part of my training as therapist I finally encountered the gestalts that had caused my gynecological problems. This happened in the “fascist exercise”. In this exercise it was not difficult for me being the oppressor. I was together with a man around 40 years and I humiliated him totally, but this did very little to me. I just felt like he deserved it. When it was my turn to be the “slave” this was something totally different. I felt from the beginning the most intense anxiety. Just meeting him and seeing him standing there in front of me, sensing his scary, dominating, male, aggressive energy was quite impossible for me to cope with. So the exercise hardly

started before I broke down and regressed into an ocean of the old emotions of shame and being abused. The idea that I had to obey him in spite of his intention to abuse me was totally intolerable for me. Without him doing or saying much I felt so abused, so violated. I just had to obey. It was like being buried in an avalanche of shame and humiliation. What really got to me was the idea of not being able to have my own opinion. It was like my will was broken at its very root.

He started calling me names and humiliating me. He did not touch me, but that didn't matter. If he had raped me this could not have been much worse. I felt like dying. At the same time I was completely aware that this was an exercise and that I just stood and confronted a normal, rather good looking, intelligent and empathic man, who actually had been kind to me just an hour ago. In the normal world I liked him. But in this exercise he was the devil himself. I was not in present time. I was with my parents a long time ago when I was a little child.

The next thing I was asked to do was to dress naked and lie on the floor in front of him. I did it, but I felt like dying every second. He told me I was the most ugly girl he had ever seen and that I had a clammy body. He yielded at me and told me in the meanest way that I was just a pussy. He then ordered me to show him my vulva. This did it for me; it was like an old cinema movie that suddenly broke. I just disappeared. I found myself in the position typically held by embryos, and felt like vomiting. I felt really sick. After this I was done. And I was through. I felt such an immense relief. Lying there on the floor I realized that this was what had been repressed and what caused my vulvodynia. It was like a huge matrix of negative emotions, thought and beliefs that came from adapting to my sexually rather dysfunctional parents, when I was very small. I felt it like hell at that time. I was not physically abused, but energetically I had been violated again and again. The feelings could not have been worse. They were really unbearable. No wonder I did not have access to them in my normal therapy. The degree of resistance I had made for myself made it necessary for me to get through to myself only in the course of the "fascist exercise".

The exercise released the most intense bodily emotions and already the next day I felt much better. Since then my vulvodynia has been gone. Sometimes I still have pain during intercourse, but my daily genital pains have disappeared. I feel much more proud of my body (and my genitals) and my self-esteem has improved radically. I was scared of getting men's attention, but this has also changed. Today I can perform for a crowd with a relaxed attitude. When men say something humiliating to me, as they sometimes do, I don't care much. It is like it doesn't get to me anymore. When somebody tells me that I look bad, I simply cannot believe it. My whole experience of myself as woman has improved immensely thanks to this exercise. What from the outside looked like I was being tortured was experienced from the inside the most healing event.

Training session, male holistic body psycho-therapist, 42 years old

The most intense exercise for me was the "fascist exercise", where you work with a partner; normally the couples consist of a man and a woman. The idea is that a person of the opposite gender has repressed everybody earlier in life and because of this there has been a sexual element in the repression. Often there has been more than that – a direct violation, physical, mental or sexual. In this exercise the participants are allowed to work with all these

painful aspects of unequal human interaction. The instructor told us that he would not guide our experience – we could go where we needed to go in this exercise – but for him, it had been about sexuality, from beginning to end. In this way, everybody who needed to work on their sexuality – and I think we all did – got acceptance to go into this most difficult and painful space of sexual trauma, to heal whatever wound we would have here.

In the exercise the person who feel most violated, start by “getting even” by violating the partner. All energy from old traumas are used, the preparation takes everybody deeply into the feeling of being hurt and wanting go get revenge by repressing the person that hurt you – by proxy, using the partner in the exercise.

The beauty of the exercise is that it really is cooperation, where you mutually allow yourself and your partner to go into the sexually wounded space and express all you anger, grief, fear etc. In the role of the oppressor you do to the other what originally, traumatically, was done to yourself. In real life you are never allowed to go into this “evil” space; the strong sexual taboo of our culture also makes this absolutely impossible. But in this exercise you go there together with your partner, who also wants to heal and even more importantly, also wants to help you heal, by giving you the opportunity to express the most dark and dirty sides of your own shadow, and to re-experience being violated and abused. In the exercise this happens in a useful way that helped me to integrate my past and to learn that I today am a strong adult that in reality cannot be so deeply hurt any more. What harmed us happened to us, when we were vulnerable kids, which could not withstand the hard pressure of our parents. Today we are not vulnerable kids any more.

First one is “fascist” and the other is a “slave” for 30 minutes, and after that the partners shift roles. So all the humiliations you just got from the other are given back right away. What a wise and wonderfully balanced design of this exercise!

There are some rules in the exercise: You must promise confidentiality; you are not allowed to touch the other person; you are not allowed to put bodily fluids (spit, sweat etc) on the other person and you must stay in the exercise for the 60 minutes it takes, if you accept to participate. You are supposed to cooperate and help the other person repress and humiliate you by revealing your sore spots and suggesting things that could be done to you that you would feel awful. As people come for healing, everybody engaged surprisingly willingly in this. When you are a “slave” you are supposed to obey your “master”. But you are allowed not to, if what you are asked is too difficult.

Now the idea of the exercise is that the “fascist” uses his or her imagination to abuse and exploit the “slave”. This can be done by asking the “slave” to undress, take humiliating positions and say horrible things about him or herself... The “fascist” may scold the “slave”, ridicule etc. The art is to find out how to “break down” the partner, as this break is exactly the historical break the partner needs to confront and heal. So the whole exercise is nothing, but support to go back into the core trauma of life, regarding the body, sexuality, self-worth etc. You are allowed to break down and just lie on the floor, crying or whatever you are doing, feeling the old painful emotions again. You are not allowed to leave the room during the exercise. During the whole exercise there is a physician present to ensure that no person is getting “repressed” more that necessary for the healing to happen. The therapists will also moderate the participant’s behavior – tell the “fascist” to go slower, or faster, and the “slave” to let go of fear and engage more fully in the exercise.

I was given a partner by the therapists, a woman about 30 years old and judged from her behavior in the exercise with a personal history of sexual traumatization. I was worried that

she would be harmed by this exercise, so I talked to the therapists about my great concern for her future well-being, but they all ensured me that the exercise was harmless, if done correctly. I had heard that this kind of therapy could cause re-traumatization – giving a new similar trauma on top of the old one – but the therapists ensured me that this never had happened in this kind of therapy {which is in accordance with (8,9,13,17)}.

Finally we engaged in the exercises and the things she got me to do gave me a feeling of shame so badly that I felt I should die. I was exactly like a little boy that was ridiculed and humiliated by his mother, who hated men and sex. I had no recalling of my mother doing this to me, but as the exercise went on I felt more and more that I had been harmed by my mother's energy and her sex-negative attitude, that had colored my relation to my own body and sexuality. It was a deeply healing experience, in spite of it being ugly.

When it was my turn, I asked her to undress and show herself to me. She had extreme resistance and finally she broke down and cried as a little child. The most difficult thing was that I liked it! I had never seen myself as a sexual sadist, but I realized that I contained so much hatred and anger toward the woman (= my mother). I was very surprised of all the repressed sexuality this exercise released for both of us. It was a small miracle and Bengt Stern was right. Confronting this was not yet another trauma on top of the other. The principle of similarity took us straight back to some of the most difficult and most efficiently repressed feelings and events in our lives. The exercise did not turn me into a sexual sadist, but it made me own my sexual aggression, which had been repressed since early childhood. I felt that I finally became a man. It was wonderful. My partner revealed she had a similar experience, and that she finally dared to be sexual again.

I was obviously one of the participants that became paralyzed from the exercise and was therefore offered a special session (as described above), which I accepted. This was a session with three female therapists at one time. The three women intended to help me free my life energy and sexuality further. They did this by tempting me with their bodies, moving sexually around me, inviting my interest in them, flirting and revealing parts of breasts, stomach and other intimate parts of their bodies and whenever I revealed the slightest interest they scolded and humiliated me for being a pig, a horny, dirty man, totally worthless and good for nothing, a pervert and a real lowlife scumbag. The double action of tempting and humiliating me took me into the most difficult feelings of male repression by dominant women, like being castrated – the “vagina dentata” from Freud's writings. It was really amazing what it did to me to confront the most evil aspects of the feminine – it was like dancing with the good Kali from Indian mythology. The energy was totally wild and animalistic. Little by little I came to peace with the shadow of the female.

Not so long time after this exercise I was able to take a big step forward in my own relationship and surrender to my own woman. I finally was able to choose her as my partner for life. The exercise had helped me confront the most dark side of my “own inner woman” and finally taught me to let go of my fear and bond devotedly to my own women. I also felt like being a much better therapist after this. I found new trust in the female and I dared to help women who had been raped or sexually violated in their childhood in a much more open and intimate way. I got better results and much better feedback from the female victims of sexual abuse and incest that I had in therapy. I realized that sexual torture, the most harmful kind of torture there is, is damaging because it repeats the child's reality, where the victim must adapt him- or herself to the reality of the offenders – similarly to the child's need to adapt to its

parents reality for survival. As adult human beings we do not need to adapt in this way, hence we are not vulnerable.

Elements of Bengt stern's holistic philosophy

One very important aspect of Stern's therapy is forgiveness (9):

"In forgiveness, man moves beyond his intellect and explores his greatest vulnerability. He encounters the pain of his unprocessed emotional memories. Only by stopping and encountering this pain may it be released and allowed to disappear. Clearly, forgiveness is not a superficial, intellectual process, but an energy release at one's very depth."

Another aspect is that sexuality is the basic energy in life. Our culture strongly represses, which leads to prostitution, pornography, child abuse and incest. On the latter subject Bengt wrote:

"Incest: The reason behind incest is suppressed sexuality. A culture, which is dominated by feelings of guilt, because of sexuality and/or intercourse before marriage, encourages early marriages. Before marriage neither the woman nor the man is allowed to have intercourse. As their marriage continues the two partners might find that they are not compatible, although they now have children and refrain from having sex with each other. In the vacuum that then arises, a father who suffers from perverted sexuality may approach his daughter and a mother who suffers from perverted sexuality may approach her son. Both parents are always responsible for the incestuous act by not taking responsibility for having a mature and satisfying sexual life with other or with new partners."

Stern was a strong believer in self-insight as the primary outcome of psychotherapy:

"The role of psychotherapy: Profound self-insight is knowing oneself beyond the intellect and contacting one's wholeness. Self-insight then increases and brings about the understanding and practicing of an existential view of humanity and the world. Through profound self-insight people can find the existential answer as to why they are feeling bad. Once that is understood the leap toward well-being is not far away. However, profound self-insight is not limited to treating mental problems. Even many physical problems, often irrespective to the degree of difficulty they cause, improve dramatically when man understands the reasons behind the problems. Above all, when people come to know themselves, their quality of life increase in every respect."

Discussion

The principle of similarity has been used to an extreme degree in Bengt Stern's holistic mind-body medicine, which is why it has been so effective in inducing salutogenesis (22,23). Recent analysis of the effects of Bengt Stern's therapy has proven it highly efficient with people who have the most severe mental and existential problems including suicidal patients (8,9,13,17).

Not only the principle of similarity is taken into use in this therapy; all five healing principles of holistic medicine are used (8) and this is done impeccably, without any of the medical errors it is easy to make in this kind of therapy (24). This is making the therapy highly effective with NNT-2 for improving of quality of life and sense of coherence estimated from the non-dichotomous data in (2-4).

There might potentially be an ethical problem in making the participants engage in repressing, abusing and violating each other, but it is important to understand that all participants as described by Stern above was fully informed about the purpose of the exercise, how it would be practiced and what the expected benefits were for the participants, based on experience with at least 4,500 participants who had been through the therapy during the 24 years, since it was invented by Bengt Stern (13).

All participants are free not to participate in an exercise if they do not feel up to it or do not see how this exercise could help them. Therefore everything is happening with consent after full information. The purpose of it is clear and everybody who is participating is doing this to help him or herself and the partner in the exercises.

Having a physician present to exclude patients that are not likely to benefit from the therapy is an extra precaution that we do not believe is necessary anymore based on the complete lack of side effects and negative events with the fascist exercise. We know of no cases where the physician prohibited a patient from participating.

We have evaluated the therapy according the Ethical Rules for International Society for Holistic Health and found all the exercises in Bengt Stern's "Meet Yourself" course to be in accordance with the ethical standards of holistic medicine (25). Controlled sexual and violent abuse and repression are well known tools of holistic medicine (categorized as "level 8 tools" in (26)). They have been used since Hippocrates and cause no side effects or adverse events if used correctly (1,3,9,13,17). They are especially useful in the training of therapists that work with healing traumas of incest, violent, sexual or mental abuse, repression and violation.

The principle of similarity, which has been known since Hippocrates, has been cultivated into its purest form in Bengt Stern's therapy. Because of the courage of Bengt Stern to mimic the most difficult events in life in role-plays in his therapy, he has created a unique therapeutic program that in one single process takes the participant through all the most difficult aspects of life, including birth, death, and neurotic and evil human interactions, also of violent and sexual nature. People who would judge this kind of therapy as bad and unethical are the people who haven't understood the basic rules of holistic non-drug therapy.

Bengt Stern's "Meet yourself" course is candidate to be among the most effective types of holistic mind-body medicine in use today, thanks to his thorough understanding of the principle of similarity and consequently his inclusion of controlled sexual and violent abuse into the therapeutic program. Since Freud it has been known that to rehabilitate a patient's health the healing of the patient's sexuality is particularly important.

Stern did what Freud could not for moral reasons do hundred years ago: Making the full, painful drama of early life happen again for the patients with physical and mental disorders and sexual dysfunctions, who need to confront the most intense and difficult of traumas to heal life and existence. The program is evaluated and found to be ethical and in accordance with the traditions of holistic medicine.

Stern's "Meet yourself" course is effective nonpharmaceutical medicine with radical, sexological elements that do not cause any harm, neither side effects nor adverse events

(estimated NNT=2 for the outcome “quality of life improved” and NNH>4500 for significant side effects).

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Section 6: Sexual Trauma

Holistic Approach to Rape and Incest Trauma

Studies indicate that at least 15% of the female population in western countries has experienced sexual abuse and severe sexual traumas. This chapter explains how even serious sexual abuse and trauma can be healed, when care and resources encourage the patient to return to the painful life events. When the physician care and receive the trust of the patient, emotional holding and processing will follow quite naturally.

Spontaneous regression seems to be an almost pain free way of integrating the severe traumas from earlier experiences of rape and incest. This technique is a recommended alternative to classical timeline therapy using therapeutic commands.

When traumatized patients distance themselves from their soul (feelings, sexuality and existential depth), they often lose their energy and enjoyment of life. But this does not mean that they are lost to life. Although it may seem paradoxical, a severe trauma may be a unique opportunity to regain enjoyment of life.

The patient will often be richly rewarded for the extensive work of clearing and sorting out in order to experience a new depth in his or her existence and emotional life with a new ability to understand life in general and other people in particular.

So what may look like a tragedy can be transformed into a unique gift, if the patient gets sufficient support, there is the possibility of healing and learning. Consciousness-based medicine seems to provide the severely traumatized patient with the quality of support and care needed for the healing of body, mind and soul.

Introduction

The problem of victimization and re-victimization is psychologically extremely complex. Most people believe the victim is chosen randomly by the offender, but research has shown that victims very often have been victims before and that victimization often is a long chain of life events containing many different objective events, but they are the same mode of victimization.

Russell (1,2) found that between 33% and 68% of the sexually abused victims were subsequently raped. This is compared to an incidence of 17% for non-abused woman. Other researchers (3) have found that 18% of repeat rape victims had incest histories, compared to 4% of first time victims.

The research indicated that for many rape victims, who have been victimized before, the rape and sexual assault are seldom accidental. These events follow a dark and sad pattern of unconsciously replaying and reliving the role of the victim. This makes the therapy of the rape and incest victim complex. Most rape victims have earlier incidents of victimization and most incest victims have had difficulties with keeping their boundaries and taking care of their personal safety.

As sexual assaults and rape is among the life events with the most dramatic negative effect on quality of life, the physician must take such traumas extremely seriously. Unfortunately, such sexual assaults are fairly common in the population. Studies from different western countries indicated an incidence of about 15% of the girls being assaulted sexually in childhood (1,4,5). These patients are also more likely to be physically abused by husbands and partners (1,6). Unfortunately some are even abused by the therapist, who was supposed to heal and protect them (7).

Poor quality of life is statistically connected to bad health. About one in four of the patients seen by the family physician will have such highly painful histories. Most of these sexual traumas remain hidden. The work with these serious problems can therefore not be a task for specialists. Every physician must be able to handle these traumas, when met in the clinic.

Fortunately, the loving and caring physician or sexologist, using the tools and principles of modern sexology and scientific holistic medicine (8-16), can help the patients to heal, even with serious wounds on the body and soul. The most effective and safe sexological and holistic medical tools are discussed in chapter 26-30. In this chapter we discuss the general principles of holistic and sexological treatment of incest and rape victims.

Therapy with incest and rape victims

Many forms of therapy have proven effective with rape victims, like cognitive-behavioral therapy (17-19), reality therapy (20) and group therapy (21). Many forms of therapy has also proven effective with incest victims, like play therapy (22), analytical psychotherapy (23), supportive group therapy (4,8,24,25), couples therapy (26) and family therapy (27), but as shown by Kroch and Zen's (7) the result of the therapy is often not completely satisfactory. This is in part because the ethical standards of the therapist working with the incest victims have often been regrettably low. 46% of the incest victims feel abused after the therapy, (sexually or otherwise). The toolbox of holistic medicine includes an ethical strategy ("coming from the hearth") (29), which it intended to eliminate the possibility of such malpractice in the holistic medical clinic.

Holistic trauma treatment: the use of spontaneous and guided time line therapy

When we feel that we have lost our value as human beings (as many girls do following a sexual assault), or when we feel that our manhood and self-confidence have been seriously damaged, (as many men do following a violent assault) a destructive decrease in self-esteem and self-confidence will result. This is often due to the decisions made during or after the incident to overcome the unbearable feelings of fear, shame, guilt, powerlessness and hopelessness. Holistic treatment of the after-effects of sexual and/or violent traumas is important in order to work on the mind-body dissociation (27), post traumatic stress, self-blame, sexual dysfunction and low self esteem. Holistic treatment in this case is based on classic time line therapy, going through the incident over and over again, until the patient clearly acknowledge what happened then and can let go of the negative decisions, made in the heat of the moment.

First the patient has to feel the pain once again and then everything will be understood. Ultimately, the victim can let go of the life-denying decisions and will feel as though the incident never occurred. Very often the whole chain of similar events must be processed, to cure the symptoms. Often this will require thorough and time-consuming work which gives the patients an important learning experience. Relief from the painful events and often even a gratitude that it happened that an old, self-destructive pattern finally can be broken.

Aldus Huxley's novel, *Island* (30), provide a beautiful description of time line therapy. Sending the patient back to the trauma can be done by means of the classic time line commands, if the physician has gotten the full trust and acceptance by the patient to receive the necessary holding (awareness, respect, care, acknowledgment, and acceptance) (31):

- Go back to when it happened.
- With your eyes closed, go through the event from the beginning to the end.
- Tell me what happened.

This process should be repeated until the problem has been processed, the learning gained, and the pattern broken. Despite the simplicity of the commands, time line therapy is not a simple process. Indeed, the skilled time line therapist must be able to identify the patient's position on the time line at any time. Also, the experienced therapist rarely needs to apply time line therapy at all. Meeting and joining the patient exactly where she is will send her back in time spontaneously. To be more exact: the patient has never moved beyond the frozen now. So the good doctor should simply join and support the patient with the intention of helping her, then the patient will regress spontaneously – or to be precise- the patient will confront the pain in the frozen now.

In our opinion, therapy with many mental commands is therapy that tries to process things without the requisite emotional holding. In our view, love and compassion constitute a much stronger therapeutic strategy than using power and mental guidance. The former is holistic and practical, the latter keeps within the framework of the mind. From our perspective, Neuro Linguistic Programming (NLP) and mental processes of that kind are not holistic therapy. With love and compassion holding and processing come quite naturally and thus it is holistic healing.

Modern holistic medicine and sexology

The major difference between classical holistic medicine and sexology and its modern counterpart is the theories used by the latter. The belief is that nothing is as practical as a good theory and from this philosophy a number of new theories for existential healing and holistic therapy have emerged. These theories are not substituting Hippocrates original theory of repression of the human character as the primary cause of all physical, mental, existential and sexual problems, but elaborate on the aspects, where Hippocrates and his students were less clear.

The life mission theory (31-36) states that everybody has a purpose of life, or huge talent. Happiness comes from living this purpose and succeeding in expressing the core talent in your life. To do this, it is important to develop as a person into what is known as the natural condition. This is a condition where the person knows himself and is able to use all his efforts to achieve what is most important for him. The holistic process theory of healing (37-40) and the related quality of life theories (41-43) states that the return to the natural state of being is possible, whenever the person gets the resources needed for the existential healing. The resources needed are "holding" in the dimensions of awareness, respect, care, acknowledgment and acceptance with support and processing in the dimensions of feeling, understanding and letting go of negative attitudes and beliefs.

The preconditions for the holistic healing to take place are trust and the intention of the healing to take place. Existential healing is not a local healing of any tissue, but a healing of the wholeness of the person, making him much more resourceful, loving, and knowledgeable of himself, needs and wishes. By letting go of negative attitudes and beliefs the person returns to a more responsible existential position and an improved quality of life. The philosophical change of the person healing is often a change towards preferring difficult problems and challenges, instead of avoiding difficulties in life (44-51). The person who becomes happier and more resourceful is often also becomes more healthy, more talented and more able to function (52-55).

Acute trauma

Female, aged 34 years with acute trauma

Arrives in a state of shock and on the brink of tears after having a street fight with her former husband and having had her life threatened by him. He is now on the run from the police, as he has a suspended sentence. She has sent her two children of 5 and 10 years to stay with relatives and friends. Needs psychological assistance, perhaps one weekly session for eight weeks. Sick leave for three weeks. Prescribe urgent counseling – the incident is reviewed four times here, until the patient no longer cries, when confronting it. The psychologist should take over from there.

We refer the patient to a psychologist or a gestalt therapist, but cannot send her home, as she is completely emotionally incoherent. We relieve the pressure by means of simple time line therapy. The patient goes through the incident until the intense emotional reaction has worn off. In this case, the psychologist is also needed because of the social circumstances.

Successful trauma therapy is about keeping patients in the present, while their attention moves back in time and confronts the traumatic events. Difficult feelings, which the patient receives insufficient support in facing, will allow her to let go of the present and return to the past. Without contact with the present the patient is technically psychotic and the therapeutic gain from the session will be negligible.

An experienced holistic therapist will notice that the patient is about to lose her mental focus (“third eye closing”), before she has left the present. In this situation we would quickly call in another therapist to support the patient. A patient, who is on the brink of psychosis on arrival has to receive ample support, for instance in the form of a “good father” and a “good mother”, before the therapeutic process can begin.

Traumas in body and mind

The classic trauma is a serious and unexpected assault such as rape. In a holistic perspective, even in the case of atrocities, most injuries to the body and mind can heal,

Female, aged 16 years and raped

In the train, a 16-year-old girl noticed that a young man has taken an interest in her. She avoided his glance, but as she gets off the train on a dark road, he follows her. She becomes scared and tries to run away, but he catches her, throws her to the ground and rapes her. It hurts and she is very frightened. “If you tell anybody, I’ll kill you,” he whispers to her. She tells no one, but her friends notice that she has become quieter. Once she managed to let go of the sentence “He’ll kill me” during therapy, she brightened up and returned to her old self.

This girl has been marked by the incident. The question is why events affect individuals so differently, and what actually takes place when we are injured by a trauma. Exactly what was is it about the rape that traumatized her? Suffering inflicted on us by the trauma itself, however unpleasant in the present, does not seem to harm us subsequently – unless we repress the suffering in the situation and consequently carry it with us. Thus, pain is not traumatizing in itself. Whether or not we become traumatized depends on how we relate to the pain. In the specific situation, the victim can repress the unbearable emotional pain for which she cannot assume responsibility. By drawing a justifying conclusion she makes the pain go away and consequently enables her to cope with the situation. But although the pain has disappeared from her conscious mind, it still exists below the surface. After the event, she now carries it along with her. The statement “He’ll kill me” is impressed on her subconscious mind and she now has an impression of men that will restrain her in future, until she relives the pain by being a victim during therapy. In this way she chooses to suffer without resistance and makes her mind let go of the statement. For lack of a better expression, we call such statements which are generalized justifications enabling us to disclaim an unbearable responsibility, “decisions”.

Early sexual abuse

Early sexual abuse is often extremely traumatizing and the girls, who are most frequently the victims, end up making numerous self-destructive decisions, which are very difficult to become aware of and let go of. But as the victims address the pain and fully understand the assaults and their nature, they can let go of the negative decisions and life returns. We believe that holistic medicine, when used correctly, can be so effective that no serious scars remain on the soul... The patient can achieve complete recovery, but it takes love and care. Holistic therapy alone is not enough.

Female, aged 21 years and sexually abused

First quality-of-life (QOL) session: Wants to resolve her inner existential problems that peaked after she had helped a friend recover from a suicide attempt. Has a very difficult personal history, but has tackled it surprisingly well. Has very strong defenses, enabling her to appear as a smart and sensitive young woman. SOCIAL: Both parents alcoholics, she lived in a foster home when she was young, was adopted by a couple who divorced four years later, new father also an alcoholic, died when the patient was 9 years old. Subsequently, she lived with the mother of her adoptive father, who ignored her. At the age of 12 years she asked to be placed in a foster home, where she stayed for one year, but the foster family was psychologically mean to her and she felt like a prisoner. Moved to a student hostel on her 18th birthday. On examination: On the couch, however, it can be seen that from the chest down she is practically dead – her abdomen looks more like the abdomen of a corpse, all pale, devoid of blood and life. Strange damage on the skin of both hips, like the cracks in the dermis layer normally seen in pregnant or obese women, but the patient was never overweight. Previous assessment for this, no conclusion. SUBJECTIVE FINDINGS: We talk about emptying the internal waste bin and she appears to be clear and determined about her personal development project: The aim is to find out what you want to do with your life. She wants to provide care, but that is an understandable reaction to her life. Should rather grow up and become independent. She has had about four boyfriends. Her self-esteem needs to be restored. Deserted repeatedly in her life, so she needs to reopen her heart. EXERCISE: Write down your life story – focus on your feelings, thoughts and decisions. Start from the present. What happened? How did you feel? (What decision/conclusion did you make?) What happened? How did you feel? Topics: friendship, love, sex, food, failure – school/work, family, leisure-time. Next appointment in two weeks.

Second QOL session: Has been well, has been very much at home in her abdomen and has felt more than she used to since last session. Has done her homework nine months back. We look at it together. She does not write as much about her feelings, as I (SV) would have liked, it is as though she finds it difficult to recall her feelings. We work on that. EXERCISE: Make friends with your body – do some sport, possibly together with other people, cook some nice meals for yourself, preferably three times a day, explore your sexuality and get to know yourself better, also inside the pelvis and abdomen. EXERCISE: When you continue your autobiography, take the emotional perspective. One hour a day at the most, opens up and then

closes. Next appointment in two weeks. Should come sooner if she suddenly feels bad. I think therapy will be hard on her.

Third QOL session: We talk about what theme she is dealing with in her current process. Something about playing dead to survive some horrible situation. Has met a 24-year-old man, whom she has had sex with. The relationship is good. She can feel her emotions. She seems relaxed and happy, and is going camping in the summer and will take our summer course, Life Philosophy that Heals. Should continue the exercises from last session.

Fourth QOL session: Fourth QOL session: Attended the course Life Philosophy that Heals (life purpose: I am wise.) She relived the extensive sexual abuse that she experienced as a child when she was about three years old. Has cried for hours and felt a terrible pain in her reproductive organs and abdomen.. Attended the course Life Philosophy that Heals (life purpose: I am wise) and has relived extensive sexual abuse as a child when she was about three years old. Has cried for hours and felt a terrible pain in her reproductive organs and abdomen... Today she feels much more alive and energetic, and she looks much better, although she still has the habit of “playing dead” – she gives, but does not take from her boyfriend, whom I believe she really needs. She has close friends, but she shares only a small part of her life with them. EXERCISE: Rely more on your friends: give and take –take the initiative to be with them, frequently and intimately. Make use of your sexuality. Feeling EXERCISE: Sit on a chair for five minutes every day and sense how you feel. She already does that exercise. How to become truly wise and smart? Write two A4 pages about it. You are going at 1 km/h – it’s time to speed up!

Fifth QOL conversation: Things are going well – has set her boundaries with her supervisor, has attained self-respect and her own space. Has experienced close contact with girlfriend. Feels buoyant and happy today. She has reflected sexuality, no problems there, she believes. 1. Rely more on your friends: give and take – and take the initiative to be with them, frequently and intimately – OK, she has done that. 2. Make use of your sexuality– OK about herself. Feeling EXERCISE: Sit on a chair for 5 minutes every day and sense how you feel. She is already doing that - OK. EXERCISE: How to become truly wise and smart? A two-page draft – she has not done that – for next time – write down all sub-aspects you can find of “knowing”.

This patient will have to work on herself for years in order to heal the early damage from sexual abuse. Perhaps her wounds will not heal completely, until the day she finds herself in a warm and genuine relationship.

Discussion

It is not always possible to work on a certain event in life during therapy. Sometimes the event is thoroughly repressed, even though well-defined symptoms may have begged the patient to deal with it. Often, the reason for this is that the traumatic event is not a singular event, but occurred as follow-on from earlier traumas and life-denying decisions.

Indeed, in our culture it is common to have experienced a handful or more traumatic events that are related to our problematic themes in life, as mentioned previously. The reason why the individual trauma, which need not be particularly severe, may tip the balance is its contact with earlier, underlying traumas in the particular situation, reactivating their painful

content. Most people believe that the anxiety, pain, shame and hopelessness, come from the most recent event. The most recent events have much deeper and more serious roots.

The patient has to reconsider his entire life philosophy and large parts of his personal history in order to regain his balance. The patient needs to be relieved of what may appear, in retrospect, to be a considerable amount of naivety and shallowness. Not until the patient has developed and raised his personal level of responsibility can he integrate the underlying traumas. The patient is now facing two choices: To shut off emotionally and survive, perhaps sustained by symptom-relieving medication such as antidepressants, or to give life a thorough clean up.

With love for our patient comes trust, holding and processing and results in holistic healing. Instead of giving commands, giving a surplus of care and resources invites the patient to spontaneously return to the painful events of life. Spontaneous regression seems to be an almost pain free way of integrating even severe traumas, like the traumas that result from rape or incest (affecting at least 15% of the population) (1,4,5). Interestingly, most of the incest traumas remains hidden in the biomedical clinic, but are often revealed in the holistic clinic, where love or professional care and intimacy is an important part of the therapy.

When traumatized patients distance themselves from their soul, feelings, sexuality, and existential depth, they can easily lose their energy and enjoyment of life. But this does not mean that they are out of the game of life. Although it may seem paradoxical, a severe trauma may be a unique opportunity to gain new understanding and regain participation and full enjoyment of life. The patient will often be richly rewarded for the extensive work of clearing and sorting out and will often experience a new depth in his or her existence and emotional life with a new ability to understand life in general and other people in particular.

So what may look like a tragedy in the beginning of the therapy can be transformed into a unique gift. If the patient gets the sufficient support there is a possibility of healing and learning. Consciousness-based, holistic medicine and sexology seem to provide the severely traumatized patient with the quality of support and care needed for their soul and deepest existence to heal.

The most important prerequisite for the healing to happen is the physician's or sexologist's love or care for the patient and every physician with a loving heart can learn to use the holistic medical toolbox and thus help his patients to heal existentially.

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Long Term Effect of Child Sexual Abuse and Incest with a Treatment Approach

The nervous breakdown of a 22 year old young woman was caused by severe sexual abuse in childhood repressed over many years. During the therapy the patient accumulated resources to start the painful integration of these old traumas. Using holistic existential therapy in accordance with the life mission theory and the holistic process theory of healing, she finally was able to confront her old traumas and heal her existence. It seems she recovered completely, including regaining full emotional range, though holistic existential therapy, individually and in a group.

The therapy took 18 months and more than one hundred hours of intensive therapy. In the beginning of the therapy, the issues were her physical and mental health, in the middle of the therapy the central issue was her purpose of life and her love life and at the conclusion the issue was gender and sexuality. The strategy was building up her strength for several months, mobilizing hidden resources and motivation for living, before the old traumas could be confronted and integrated.

The therapy was based on quality of life philosophy, on the life mission theory, the theory of ego, the theory of talent, theory of the evil side of man, theory of human character and the holistic process theory of healing. The clinical procedures included conversation, philosophical training, group therapeutic tools, extended use of therapeutic touch, holistic pelvic examination and acceptance through touch was used to integrate the early traumas bound to the pelvis and scar tissue in the sexual organs.

She was processed according to 10 levels of the advanced toolbox for holistic medicine and the general plan for clinical holistic psychiatry. The emotional steps she went through are well described by the scale of existential responsibility. The case story of Anna is an example of how even the most severely ill patient can recover fully with the support of holistic medical treatment, making her feel, understand and let go of her negative beliefs and life-denying decisions.

Introduction

The scientific breakthrough in the understanding of human sexuality, still a most central theme in the clinic of the general practitioner (1)], came with Masters and Johnson's brilliant work in the middle of the last century (2,3). The most famous curve in sexological research is still the curve of the male and female sexual reaction cycles, explaining the four phases of the normal sexual intercourse: the excitement phase, the plateau phase, the orgasmic phase and the relaxation phase.

Since their work, most clinical sexologists have recognized a pre-phase of lust, where one of the most dominant problems of our time is the lack of sexual lust in the female (4). We have recently presented a theory of sexuality that can serve as guidance for the holistic sexologic therapy (5), especially when we want to treat the whole person and overview all the relevant dimensions of sexuality and existence.

We want our patient to be a whole, balanced, ethical and able person, not just to be able to function sexually. In our work with sexually abused patients we have often found that severe mental disturbances and even insanity can follow directly from sexual abuse.

As sexual and existential problems often go hand in hand and as both existence and sexuality is theoretically difficult issues, the two maybe most fundamental questions of the research in human life and quality of life are: "what is existence?" and "what is sexuality?" Often the first question is left unanswered and the second met with theoretical answers from evolutionary theory and psychosocial models (6,7), but very difficult to use in the holistic sexological clinic. The following case story shows how a combination of holistic sexology, holistic psychiatry and advanced holistic existential therapy can be used to treat even the most severe cases of sexual abuse. We use the strategy for spontaneous regression in the holistic healing of patients with incest and rape traumas (8). The patient was treated in accordance with the 10 steps of the advanced holistic toolbox (9).

Anna was a student aged 22 years, who had completely repressed over 100 episodes of sexual abuse, incest and rape throughout her early childhood (10). She now seems to have recovered completely, inclusive regaining her full emotional range, though holistic existential therapy, individually and in a group. The therapy took 18 month and more than one hundred hours of intensive therapy. In the beginning of the therapy, the issues were her physical and mental health, in the middle of the therapy the central issue was about her purpose of life and her love life. In the end of the therapy the issue was gender and sexuality.

The strategy was building up her strength for several months, mobilizing all her hidden resources and motivation for living, before the painful old traumas were confronted and integrated. The therapy was philosophically based on quality of life philosophy (11-18) and theoretically based on the life mission theory (19), the theory of ego (20), the theory of talent (21), the theory of the evil side of man (22), the theory of human character (23) and the holistic process theory of healing (24-26), all of which she became familiar with during the therapy.

The clinical procedures included conversation and philosophical training and the group therapeutic tools. Extended use of therapeutic touch, holistic pelvic examination (27) and acceptance through touch (28) were used to integrate the early traumas bound to the pelvis and scar tissue in the sexual organs.

She was processed according to the general plan for clinical holistic psychiatry (29,30) and the steps she went through are described by the scale of existential responsibility (the Responsibility-for-Life Scale) (30).

The four fundamental steps of healing her were: 1) loving her (or in other words intense care for the patient), 2) winning her trust, 3) getting permission to give her holding and support and 4) re-parenting, allowing her to be a child again, to feel, understand and let go of literally hundreds of negative, life-denying decisions (19,31,32).

Her case is a fine example of the power of healing with the holistic existential therapy. It describes the dangers and problems of working with love and intimacy with the sexually abused patient, but also the huge value of holistic gynaecology and sexology in this situation (4,28,33).

Modern holistic medicine and sexology

The life mission theory (19-23,34,35) states that everybody has a purpose of life, or huge talent. Happiness comes from living this purpose and succeeding in expressing the core talent in life. To do this, it is important to develop as a person into what is known as the natural condition, a condition where the person knows himself and use all efforts to achieve what is most important for him.

The holistic process theory of healing (24,25,36,37) and the related quality of life theories (38-40) states that the return to the natural state of being is possible whenever the person gets the resources needed for the existential healing. The resources needed are holding in the dimensions: awareness, respect, care, acknowledgment and acceptance with support and processing in the dimensions: feeling, understanding and letting go of negative attitudes and beliefs.

The preconditions for the holistic healing to take place are trust and the intention for the healing to take place. Existential healing is not a local healing of any tissue but a healing of the wholeness of the person, making him much more resourceful, loving and knowledgeable of himself, his own needs and wishes. In letting go of negative attitudes and beliefs the person returns to a more responsible existential position and an improved quality of life.

The philosophical change of the person healing is often a change towards preferring difficult problems and challenges, instead of avoiding difficulties in life (11-18). The person who becomes happier and more resourceful is often also becoming more healthy, more talented and able of functioning, mentally, emotionally, physically, sexually and spiritually (26,41,42).

The Story of Anna

The struggle of an abused young girl for love and sanity

Sometimes there is a particular chemistry between the patient and the therapist enabling the patient to get released from even very serious circumstances. The story we are going to tell is one of the most intense and dreadful ones we have yet experienced in the Research

Clinic for Holistic Medicine in Copenhagen and at the same time the most beautiful and accomplished treatment we have given.

There were three major difficulties in the cause of the therapy. In the beginning it was extremely difficult to win the trust of this patient and only after month of therapy this was accomplished. Then, since her resources were so small and only after she was supported by a whole group of people (the group level (26) or the “level 5 of holistic medical tools” (9)) could she confront the real cause of her mental and emotional problems, namely the repression of years of brutal sexual abuse in her childhood by three different men at age 2-7 years.

We are not able to tell for sure, if these events really happened to Anna, since she decided not to confront her family with her findings in the therapy. But from the emotional intensity of the traumas and from the immense healing she got from integrating them there can be little doubt that these events actually happened or that something quite similar happened to her. The time for the onset of the abuse could be much later than the age of two she recalls, but again seems the state of mind she entered during the therapy to be the state of mind of a very little child, so while we cannot put an exact objective date on the events, there is congruency between her rapport and our observations during the therapy. All in all we find reason to believe that the story of Anna is a true story, and that her recollections of violent and sexual abuse from her early childhood were accurate.

When trust and intimacy finally was established in the group setting the patient was regressing so intensively into old painful wounds of sexual abuse that she almost lost her mind and entered into a psychotic paranoid state, which took intensive resources over a month to heal with extensive use of the strategies for healing mental disease with holistic therapy (29,30). In the end of the therapy, separation between patient and physician was emotionally difficult and in the end she felt somewhat rejected. To help this extraordinary wounded patient most of the more complex concepts of holistic medicine, including holistic rehabilitation, holistic sexology (4,28) and holistic psychiatry were used. Surprisingly, there were no traumas, even the most brutal, that could not be healed seemingly completely in the holistic existential therapy.

Physician rapport

The patient was a beautiful, slightly chubby 22 years old woman of average height, that we will call Anna. When she came to consult our clinic the first time, she was a student at the School of Education. She had started to get uncontrollable weeping outbursts for which she could not give any reason herself. Furthermore, she suffered from a low back condition, possibly a slipped disc of earlier date, which caused her much pain. She had also sexual problems. It was as if her life was going to overturn mentally, her zest for life diminished more and more and had nearly disappeared. Her confidence in other people drastically diminishing, her contact to the outside world became more and more moderate and her thoughts got ever more strange. Most of all it seemed beginning schizophrenia. It was not easy to say into what her illness would have developed, if not treated. Her condition was not steady and worsening fast.

At the close of treatment the therapist (SV) could conclude her as a happy, healthy and natural young woman with renewed appetite for life and love. In this connection I received

permission to use her story for publication, as well as her own description of how she had experienced the treatment, also for this use. She gave me both (10). Her case sheet is the purpose of this paper, while her own description of the treatment according to our diary will be in another paper.

Medical chart

Female, 22 years old, suspected borderline/schizophrenic after physical maltreatment, incest and multiple rapes in early childhood

First quality of life (QOL) conversation: Student at a School of Education. Prior history of slipped disc, of stable type and not in need of an operation. Has been painless for some years, now again problems with the back. Skin eruption on neck and chest of nettle-rash type. Come because she is very sad with uncontrollable weeping episodes. Feels as if she weighs 3,000 tons and now it has to come out, she cannot hold it back any longer. Hard for her to show me confidence, but it gets better along the conversation. Would like to attend a process here and I offer to work at her feelings as well. I presume that the low back/slipped-disc problems, which are probably due to tightening in the back, can be solved. New appointment in one week. Objective examination: Very hesitating, very skeptic, very "sweet" and self-sacrificing. Holistic medicine is explained. At the end of the consultation she allows me to touch her back where it hurts. She does not allow me to touch her stomach during the physical examination. EXERCISE: Life story. Write the episodes you remember, where you had emotional problems. What happened, what did you feel, what did you possibly conclude? New appointment in one week. EXERCISE: Keep private all what we talked about here.

Second conversation: Tightening in the back for which physiotherapy does not help. Has written her life story, which we discuss. Topic: lack of care and outrage, violent by father, as well as dysfunctional family. Cries and is glad for the intimacy for which I also thank her that she is opening up. On the plank bed we work at the feelings in the shoulders, breast and stomach. She allows me to get deeply. Talk about the centers and our resources. EXERCISE: Find your problematic life topics - trust/distrust, infringement/escape. Sexuality: control. EXERCISE: Write incidents with emotional contents; circumstances that are relevant for the topics.

Third conversation: Process: "I am not important". Her pattern was that only her father was important, and she used a huge amount of energy to look where her father was. Since last she has had some new sensations as if something has healed. Had brought an action against a colleague about sexual harassment, which she won. It was brought up by the managers. We talk about sex, she is not dating her fiancé anymore and has no desire. When with him she did not think of herself or her own needs. EXERCISE: Do not compromise with yourself on sexuality; do only consent if you really want to. EXERCISE: Write about all the sexual defeats and see how they are actually connected with "I am not important".

4th conversation: Has been in touch with the psychiatric system where she received a tranquillizer. She had a very violent weeping episode, could not stop crying and her fiancé was worried. She was lying on the kitchen floor and could not stop weeping. We talked about containing the feelings and get her fiancé to contain them as well. May call me on my mobile, if new troubles arise. May come weekly. EXERCISE: Works at containing the feelings. The

feelings are OK. It is OK to feel sad, afraid etc. - and the feelings always stop again if only you get care, respect and give yourself the opportunity to sense.

5th conversation: Has had a hard time for six days. Stayed at home from school, but I ask her to go there again, be sensitive and strong in the feelings. If people want to judge her weak because she is sensitive, it is their problem. On the phone, she put her father in his place. Told him a few home truths and it have been really nice. Sex: She is doing a little better, but not good at just being there and enjoying it - and expressing lust and pain through sounds. She is used to perform sex. Conversation about just being present and letting him enjoy you when he wants and in the way he wants - and expressing no and yes sincerely and continuously. EXERCISE: Express no and yes when having sex, generally say to and fro.

6th conversation: Arrive in a poor state, weeps and is sad. Tells me she is such a softie and has so little to give to others. However, she seems to be much more attentive, she fills up the space better now, so in my opinion she is making progress. She is doing fine with the no and yes exercise together with her fiancé, apart from yesterday where she felt she had to serve him as a reward for his being always so sweet to her. Had been feeling fine the first three days after she had been seeing me. Thursday had reported sick from school and is now at home again. This was very good because this way her fellow-students could see that she was physically ill with vomiting, so she has peace to heal her grief without having to account for them. We talk about that she is so perpetually self-extinguishing, devoted to duty and pleasing. She has to become an adult and make sure to know her own needs and get them fulfilled. On the plank bed we work at the time line in order to return to the original condition of being, pleasure and direction (zygote condition), and the patient manage to find this inner condition of tranquility and balance. The patient has now got this as a resource point. The patient suffers from /residual urine/ with several earlier cases of /pyelitis/. Has achieved orgasm only once with her fiancée; she is simply not so confident "south of the navel". The uterus is "cold" and we work at it through the stomach.

7th conversation: Has chosen to postpone her imminent tiresome examination. She is very satisfied about this. We talk about that it is fine that she admit her desire. On the plank bed we work at the stomach and talk about what the stomach represents - existence, luck, desire and bliss. She still does not get so much advantage from sex. We talk about the G-point, and I ask her to explore herself and her sexuality. Mission/Exercise: We talk about love. I think of enneatype 9. Read "Maitri: The spiritual dimensions of the enneagram" (43).

8th conversation: Has been emotionally very unbalanced with many problems on the home front (father) and does not feel to be able to manage her studies. I understand her difficulties, which I find temporary. On the plank bed we work at legs and back; discs in connection with slipped disc are being manipulated in their place.

9th conversation: Is very well for the time being after her crisis. However, she was very sad yesterday. Her shoulder hurts and is being relaxed, whereupon she cries. There are troubles with fiancé, who wants to have children with her and to move together, but she does not want. It seems as if she wants something else with the relationship than him and the question is whether they are suited to each other. On the plank bed we work at the stomach, which is obstreperous along colon descendens. I give: EXERCISE: When going to the lavatory, let go instead of pressing. May come back again in 14 days.

10th conversation: It went fine at her birthday. Nobody argued and everything was nice and quiet. She cried a little, because she wanted so badly to get love from her mother and father, but she did not get it. She has become much better in putting her father in his place.

Dreamed she scolded him so much that he bled. Now he had truly got what he deserved. Her much older fiancé would so much like to have children of his own, narrowly she did prevent it. - He had already thrown her pills away, and then ... We talk about his motives. She has got no desire for him, but on the other hand for her former fiancé. Nevertheless she stays with the new fiancé because she depends on him. In my opinion it is a mess, and I say: "You must carefully look at what your needs are, be kind to yourself and fulfill your needs - in a completely selfish way. Stop thinking of him and his needs, think of your own". OLD EXERCISES: It did not work well. She is not good enough with herself. She does not deserve it. "You are simply not worth it", I say provokingly, and the tears squirt again. EXERCISE: Be good with yourself! If you want something - be sure to get it!

11th conversation: She arrives with a lot of power and determination today. We work on the plank bed at the stomach and breast regions. She contemplates to become a veterinary and we talk about this. Cries a little: I guess I cannot make it out. "Why not?" I ask. We also discuss her relationship and her fiancé writes: I admire you because ... I love you because..." and we go into the issues and it seems that the patient would like to be loved. I see trouble ahead. EXERCISE: Say what you need. EXERCISE: Write more on your story. Childhood.

12th conversation: Has attended my courses Philosophy of life that heals II and III[10]. Has spontaneously relived many episodes of sexual abuse by her father at the age of 2-4 years, possible because of the fine support of a large group of participants. Has found her life purpose[19,35]: "I bring life and happiness". She is doing very well and evolves exemplarily. Today we work at the stomach, which is tense. She has become massive and present, quiet and balanced. Her low back/slipped disc problem has on the whole disappeared now. A huge crack in the back today brought her vertebral column back in normal order.

13th conversation: Problems regarding her sexuality. The patient tells me it feels like a thousand knives around the vagina aperture. Gynaecologic examination: Nothing abnormal apart from 3 cm long scar corresponding to left labia minor at introitus [the vestibule]. At touching it, the patient goes into a dramatic gestalt with sexual abuse by her father - incest with full vaginal penetration - at the age of 4 years where she conceal herself in her hand. "I hide myself". The scar is compatible with the incest episode taking place and the reliving of the episode is very intense. The patient has no longer low back/slipped-disc inconveniences, especially no pain. No nettle rash apart from a few elements occasionally. The uncontrollable episodes have disappeared. She feels like a healthy, natural and standard weighing young woman and does no longer weigh 3,000 tons. Her big problems connected with trust are now solved. The incest trauma was apparently the cause. Can be concluded if her condition is steady now.

This is one of the most difficult situations you may face as a holistic physician: that the patient goes directly into process (come direct to expression) during the gynaecologic examination, when old scars in the sexual organs are physically touched. It is extremely important to have one's own ethics and sexual borders in place as a holistic physician, otherwise one can easily get into trouble in situations like these; it is even better to have a safe procedure for handling this situation, which we therefore developed (called acupressure through the vagina, see below). When we have a suspicion that a patient has been exposed to sexual abuse, we adopt a particularly careful and thorough procedure that gives both the patient and the physician the safety required. The procedure involves training in backing out, visualizing of the whole procedure in anticipation and support by an experienced nurse during the process.

14th conversation: Come with slight, fresh bleeding from rectum, which has lasted for a while. Rectal exploration: This examination provokes contact with the gestalt where father had anal coitus with the patient as she was about 2-3 years old. The feelings are very violent and mental projections very powerful with projections that I am "nasty" and "like them". The assisting nurse at the clinic is called in and the contacted gestalt is dealt with together with her.

15th conversation: Home visitation in the evening together with the nurse after being called acutely, since the patient has experienced episodes of paranoid psychosis-like type where she did not dare to go out shopping because she was afraid - in mortal fear - to be assaulted and abused every time a man passed by. Did not at all dare to look at the shop assistant, who was a man, in the eyes or touch his hands. Was horror-struck to be sent to psychiatric department. Timeline therapy is adopted and I work at the scar in the mouth which derives from the patient having bitten herself during the infringements - there are distinct 1 cm big scars in each cheek corresponding to reiterated bites, and one very hard 5 mm big scar in the lower lip just at the left from the middle corresponding to a bite. Timeline therapy is processed with about 100 accomplished intercourses with father and two other men mentioned below. Patient says "I don't want to" "I can no more" "I don't want any more". About five accomplished intercourses with uncle as she was 2-5 years old, she tells. "He is so disgusting" "He is so cold". He says "So, here you are, now you shall have it" - this made the patient very furious as she did not want it - and "This is reckless" "I cannot feel it". And a little later - "Then he says: Now, nobody will want to have you". She is clearly awfully afraid they will leave her alone now. It was most traumatic when her uncle took her alternately in anus and vagina in a very quick assault where the patient could not at all manage to find her bearings, carried out with huge violence. She explains: "He takes me alternately in one hole and the other. I cannot stand on my feet after that. I'm afraid to get ill as one may only dry oneself one way. I cannot touch it. - It is as if, if I touch, it bursts. The whole is going to pieces." He took her three times in the bathroom and twice earlier in the shop. About five accomplished intercourses with grandfather in the basement, she tells: "He says: "This is a "lamb thigh". "It is not a lamb thigh." - and later the patient says: He says afterwards: "I will kill you if you tell anybody." The patient is emotionally affected, with massive shame and guilt. Strongly agitated for many hours. Afterwards very relieved. We are processing the whole time track hour by hour and about 100 incest infringements are exposed, with coitus at the age of 2-5 years with the three above-mentioned perpetrators (father, grandfather and uncle). It seems as if the three men have shared the patient sexually, with her father's knowledge and approval, but this is my interpretation based on details from the progress of events: The father comes with the patient to his elder brother, who is allowed to take her to the back of the shop alone where the infringements took place. The father comes with the patient to his own father who is allowed to take her to the basement alone, where further infringements are performed.

16th conversation: I work at the scar in the mouth, which arouse new memories of infringements.

17th conversation: Fit of paranoia again; I suspect that she gets bad in order to insist on care. Has to see a psychiatrist if paranoia continues.

18th conversation: "I have not felt like this before. I have always been uncertain. Have always let others control me. Now it is totally different and now only I myself am at the helm.

And then, I am happy." Is evaluated to be through now. May come and see me again if required.

Both during the therapy and also afterwards contact has been maintained via the phone. She called several times during the following months to discuss thoughts and feelings, before she felt confident enough to definitively let go of the therapeutic connection. In a following paper the patient's own description through her diary will be presented.

Discussion

The most amazing observation from this experience is that healing even the most terrible of traumas, does not take long time, if the patient enters the very special state of consciousness we call holistic healing. Years of the most terrible abuse can be healed only in hours of such intensive therapy. The problem is to get the patient into the process, because this takes a lot of trust, which the patient did not have, since sexual abuse exactly is the situation where a person in power (a parent, employer, adult) abuse the trust and cross the line called inter-human trust. Winning the patients trust is really the art of holistic medicine and this will only happen if you love your patients, very much in the same way as you love you children (love is for some a very strong word, but we think it is the right word for the intense care that a good physician must give to his patients in order to be able to help them).

Another important lesson to learn seems to be the fact that many abused girls have the episodes of abuse completely repressed. The repression of trauma containing so much emotional charge can literally cause insanity. So when a young girl shows the signs of nervous breakdown or a borderline picture or symptoms, it is wise to take the possibility of early and repressed incest or other sexual abuse into consideration. A third important observation is that the process of healing needs an extreme amount of trust and resources. Only in a safe and loving environment can the patient heal. A fourth important thing to notice is that a psychotic episode in the middle of therapy can be taken as old emotional pains reappearing and thus a sign that the patient is healing. It is important that this natural and spontaneous process of regression is not blocked by anti-psychotic drugs, but that both physicians and the nurses of the team understand that this is a sound and natural reaction and yet another invitation to give intensive holding. Insanity in the form of acute psychoses in the course of holistic existential therapy is a sign of intensive healing.

If such infinite closeness and intimacy (or love as we call it) is possible, then the pre-condition for successful holding can be established in all the five dimensions: care, respect, awareness, acceptance and acknowledgement. The physical closeness is necessary for the healing, because without contact there can be no giving or receiving of physical and sexual acceptance, which is what the incest or sexual abuse victim, needs more than anything.

The problems of ethics are obvious and severe. All the procedures involving contact with genitals must be carried out in standardized and safe ways (9,27,28,44). As the patient with very severe repressed sexual traumas are likely to project the content of the old gestalt in the same actual moment as the physician will touch the involved area, the patient will perceive the physician/therapist and his helpers as abusers in the present moment – often at the same time knowing that this is not true, but in fact only a projection, as in Anna's case. The therapist must not use a defending attitude at any time, but must be regretful and open to all

the critique that is presented by the patient at that moment. Only by taking full responsibility the therapist can help the patient through the most painful of the traumas. Assuming responsibility as a holistic therapist for causing the patient to re-experience earlier incidents of rape or sexual abuse, even when projected into present time is called “controlled sexual abuse” in the advanced toolbox for holistic medicine (a advanced level 8 technique (9), which is a variation of the technique of acupressure though the vagina (44)). To use this high level technique takes a lot of experiences and courage. We strongly recommend intensive training in the 10 levels of holistic medical tools (9), before and supervision of the therapist during such work. It is also very important to follow the laws and regulations of the country. In some countries holistic gynecological procedures as described above might be illegal to carry out in general medical practice.

Conclusion

The nervous breakdown of a young woman was caused by the spontaneous integration of repressed severe sexual abuse in her childhood. As the repressed material manifested itself she became more and more emotionally labile and extremely vulnerable. The tools of the advanced toolbox for holistic medicine were successfully taken into use. During the holistic existential therapy the patient accumulated resources to integrate the old trauma.

After the recovery of her human character and purpose of life in accordance with the life mission theory, the theory of human character and the holistic process theory of healing, she finally was able to confront and integrate her old emotional pains and heal the wounds of her existence.

The case story of Anna is an example of how even the most severely ill patient can recover fully with the support of holistic medical treatment, making her feel, understand and let go of her negative beliefs and life-denying decisions. Nervous breakdown in young patients might often be the healing crisis and not acute psychosis and the correct treatment in our opinion is therefore holistic therapy in order to integrate the traumas and painful emotions.

The sexologist or holistic physician should aware of hidden and repressed traumas, if the patient is emotionally labile for no good reason in present time. Early sexual traumas are often carrying the strongest emotional charge; making it especially important to look for such traumas in the therapy of the mentally unstable patient.

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Patient Diary as a Tool in the Treatment

In spite of extreme childhood sexual and violent abuse this 22-year old young woman, Anna, healed during holistic existential therapy (see chapter 23). Traditional, highly confrontational therapeutic tools were used to help this patient (like the Hippocratic sexological tools of acceptance through touch and acupressure through the vagina).

Her vulva and introitus were scared from repeated brutal rape, as was the interior of her mouth. During the therapy these scars were gently contacted and the negative emotional contents released. The healing was in accordance with the advanced holistic medical toolbox, using 1) love, 2) trust, 3) holding and 4) helping the patient process and integrate the old traumas.

The case story clearly revealed the philosophical adjustments that Anna made during treatment in response to the severe childhood abuse. These adjustments are demonstrated by her diary. Sentences containing both the feelings and thoughts of the painful present (the gestalt) at the time of the abuse, was integrated. These sentences thus contained the essence of the traumas, and they made the repression of the painful emotions possible, through the change in the patient's philosophical perspective.

Anna's case gives a unique insight in the process of traumatization (pathogenesis) and the process of healing (salutogenesis). In the end of the healing Anna is reconnecting her existence to the outer world in a deep existential crisis facing her choice of life or dead. She decided to live and in this process assumed existential responsibility, which made her able to step out of her mental disease.

The advanced holistic toolbox seems to help patients heal even from the worst childhood abuse. In spite of the depth of the existential crisis, holistic existential therapy seems to support existential responsibility well and thus safe for the patients.

Introduction

Many forms of therapy have been tried with rape and incest victims, but the therapy has often been less than effective and sometimes even counterproductive (1). The more severe the

abuse, the more difficult it has been to reestablish a normal emotional range and a positive philosophy of life.

Victims have been treated with cognitive-behavioral and existential therapy, reality therapy, group therapy, and also with family therapy, analytical psychotherapy, supportive group therapy and couple therapy (2-15). With these methods it still seems to be extremely difficult to facilitate a process of existential, emotional, mental and sexual healing that takes the patient all the way back to a normal state of mind.

Quite surprisingly we have seen this process of full healing with holistic existential and sexological therapy helping a patient so severely abused both physically and sexually that such a recovery was highly unexpected and therefore worthy of publication, even though the patient diary is long.

Anna (16,17) was a 22-year old patient severely sexually abused most of her childhood by her father and two other men, who blackmailed her father to lend them have the girl for sexual exploitation with the threat to report him to the police, if he refused.

Her story is as terrible as they come and we have presented the case record (17), as well as her own patient diary below to illustrate what it actually takes to get well again after such abuse. The most amazing thing about the story is Anna's full recovery, now a successful university student with a boyfriend today, several years after the treatment ended. It is suspected though that she recurrently will have to face philosophical, spiritual, emotional and sexual problems in the years to come, because of the abuse.

We believe that her physical and mental problems have been solved. Only a strong and persistent relationship with her particular partner based on love, care, acceptance and respect will give her the holding she will need in these difficult periods. Her challenge now is to use her knowledge from the therapy to build a satisfactory life.

We render Anna's story in its full length, as it is important to show the huge, persistent cleaning work, which had to be done by the patient herself in order to recover, when adopting the medicine of consciousness. It is particularly interesting to notice how many negative decisions have to be found and released before a severely existentially and mentally ill patient does indeed recover.

The story also shows how the traumas available for integration in the therapy contained still bigger and more unbearable existential pains, as the patient gradually got more strength and more resources to go deeper into the "inner refuse bin", drawing still nearer to live her own purpose of life. This is a very important sign of the patient healing existentially. Her story starts just before she had her first break-through recalling the sexual abuse. The relation between the patient and her physician (SV), who together with the principal nurse and other nurses of the Research Clinic of Holistic Medicine in Copenhagen gave both individual therapy (18) and the holistic group therapy (19-21) she attended in the start of her diary.

This therapy is very much as the relationship between a caring father and a little daughter around four years old due to the fact that she had a long course of individual therapy (see the case report (17)) and the abuse started, when she was that age. Please be warned that some parts of the story are very gruesome indeed.

As sexual assaults and rape are among the life events with the most dramatic negative effect on quality of life the physician must take these traumas extremely serious. In most of the world sexual abuse of young woman is still very common and studies from different western countries indicate an incidence of about 15% of girls being assaulted sexually in childhood (2,22,23). These patients are also more likely to be physically abused later by

husband and partners (22,24) and even the therapist who is supposed to heal and protect them. A reason for this is the sexual openness and the lack of normal sexual borders of these patients, making them easy targets for abuse, in combination with a high degree of suppressed emotional pain making them highly projective.

These high numbers are disputed though. A problem with the sexually abused patient is that it is so difficult for the physician to be the one opening the old painful wounds of abuse, because he will inevitably be the projection screen for some the worst things that happened to the patient. As the patient cannot contain the overwhelming emotional pain of the earlier events it will be projected out on the surrounding world, and the therapist/physician will be the one most likely to get these projections.

Any impurity of this kind in the therapist himself will then be dramatically energized and brought into experiential focus and without the strict professional ethics in this situation it is practically impossible not to be "a part of the game". When this is happening, one reasonable theory for explaining the high occurrence of "professional incest" seems to be that many therapists themselves have a background as victims of abuse. The rationale for "professional incest" comes from an unconscious longing for healing of the therapist's own painful wounds on body and soul.

With a keen awareness of ethics and ethical behavior, allowing intimacy and not sexuality between the therapist and the patient, with sufficient supervision, training and therapeutic processing by the therapist, this problem can be handled (1,25-28). In this case a therapist who was abused him- or herself might be the most wise and helpful of therapist, as abuse fully integrated turns into a huge gift of understanding and accepting life in all aspects, even the darkest and most difficult.

A therapist who does not know the evil side of mankind (see chapter 4) (29) is often not capable of helping patients treated as badly as Anna was. Only very few patients have an experience to the absurd degree of sexual violence that Anna has to recover from, and she did project very strongly, giving a good example of the above mentioned problem.

The principles of existential holistic therapy and the process of holistic healing have been presented elsewhere (18,19) as the use of it on mental and sexually abused patients (26,30) and all these strategies were used here. Most of the tools in the advanced holistic medical toolbox have been used to heal Anna (27) and the difficult (level 8) technique of acupressure through the vagina and anus was partly developed for use in this case (28). The core tools of the following process are found at the group level (level 5) (20,21).

The patient's diary is a very important tool in holistic existential therapy. It allows the patient to confront all the things that appeared in the therapy including the medical consultations. It also allows the patient to place the emotionally charged material in a safe place, until it can be processed in the therapy. It also gives an important record of the process, so that track is kept of the often very extensive process of healing hundreds of gestalts. Most importantly, it allows the patient and the physician to identify den negative sentences, the life-denying decision, from the gestalt, to help the patient integrate and let go of all negative beliefs and attitudes accumulated though the painful life events.

When reading the patient diary, it is important to understand that this text arises from a highly systematic and therapeutically well-supported exploration of the patient's subconscious material, with a strong focus on confronting the repressed negative feelings of the gestalt. The patient is encouraged to dive into these negative emotions and enhance them. As this is done,

the old feelings of wanting to die, going insane or wanting to commit suicide appears in the patient's mind.

These states of consciousness are not born out of the present moment, but out of the painful past, and thus they cannot and should not be avoided in the therapy. They must be understood as difficult, but necessary phases of the therapy. In the beginning we had the fear that the severe existential crisis described in the diary could actually someday lead to the suicide of the patient, which would make this kind of intense therapy unsafe for the patients.

We have now closely observed hundreds of patients going through deep existential crisis, and quite remarkably, to our knowledge not a single one of these have ever tried to commit suicide, neither during nor after the therapy. This is in a way highly surprising, as psychiatric patients like Anna are known to often attempt suicide.

The reason for the intensive holistic therapy being safe, in spite of the dark content of the stream of consciousness, seems to be that what really makes a person insane is not the content of the consciousness in the present now - we can dream the most horrible things and still be sane - but our level of existential responsibility.

Choosing to confront the old traumas in existential holistic therapy in close contact with the therapist with the intent of healing reflects this high degree of existential responsibility. So the patients can go really deep into their existential choices, and choose "to be or not to be", and still be completely sane, and therefore not at risk for committing suicide, because of the spontaneity of a psychosis.

There seems to be three fundamental themes of the existential crisis in the course of deep existential healing: 1) The loss of the old ego - the identity crises: Who am I? 2) Confronting the nature of the real self: what am I? and 3) Choosing life: Why am I here? What is my purpose and mission? The metaphor of the personal transformation, so well illustrated by Anna diary, is the transformation of the butterfly's larva: first it must lose its old self, to go into the transforming pupae; second it must remember its true nature and transform through this remembrance; and finally it must choose to be the butterfly, to get out of the pupae into the world.

Please notice that Anna became a student of holistic medicine, and her unique talents of understanding the process of healing and her own needs in the therapy was an important reason for using the traditional, but highly confrontative tools like "acceptance through touch", and "acupressure through the vagina" (26-28).

Diary of Anna

Monday of the group course

Yesterday evening Søren (SV) arrived when nearly all of us were sitting at the fireplace. I was very insecure. I was just thinking of how afraid of everything I was and how much I wanted to go home, as quickly as possible. Søren came over to me and was extremely considerate, most affectionate and nice to me. He hugged me a lot and said warm words.

Evening. Already this first day I feel it as a hundred days. Søren appears to be at his best today, and I have been glad to be here. Today we should get to know each other further, shake

hands, hugs and a few words; and I noticed all the other participants. Actually, there are many lovely people here, and even those whom yesterday I thought would tire me, I do contain.

Afterwards we should choose a partner. A young man, Peter, came over to me and told he felt kindness towards me. At first he scared me; then Søren comes over to help me to sense, and yes, I felt kindness towards Peter too. So we became partners. Later we made exercises where we showed each other attention in turn, care and respect. I think Peter and I were doing some fine exercises – and now I am very glad that he is my partner. He seems very affectionate and nice.

Later on that day my abdominal pains and shoulder pains worsened, and I got headache. Søren helped me and backed me in giving myself away to Peter and not being afraid to both give and receive physical care; thus we talked about trust.

Peter and I talked about wanting to break through, finding out what we needed, and making sure to get our needs fulfilled. I am quite convinced this is the way it will turn out. I so fervently wanted that, although I try to hold back, to be the nice girl, and therefore I hide the fear in my abdomen. I want, indeed!

Tuesday

I work at finding negative resolutions:

- I trouble other people
- I am troublesome
- I am a burden
- I am impossible
- It's my fault
- I am not good enough

Wednesday

It's in the afternoon and I am sitting at the fireplace together with Søren. I tell him that I am frustrated and scared as well as that I don't deserve to live and that I don't deserve life. Søren takes me on his knee and let me nestle close to him like a little child. I tell him that I have timed out. We talk a little about containing the feelings, and what strikes me isn't so much what Søren is telling, but it's the nearness, his holding me close and containing me, while I didn't thought I deserved to live; and there I was sitting on his knee and got slowly better.

Later the same day, in the evening, we are a few from the center, who have gone to the beach. Last only Søren and I are left. I feel sad, as I have started remembering ever more difficult episodes from my childhood, all with the topics of abuse. A fire is lit, and I am lying on a rug, while Søren is sitting beside me. He asks me to go into my feelings. His presence and attention, which seem one hundred percent directed towards me, makes me calm, and I am not afraid to go into the feelings; I feel confident in his company. Furthermore, I feel such

a trust in Søren, which I have never experienced in any person before, and therefore it is very important to me that we are alone as I am a very private person.

So I was lying there on the rug near the fire and I experienced how my body began to shake, almost in jerks, and how these jerks increased in intensity and how the intervals between them became shorter and shorter. Along the way Søren is meta-communicating and tells me that I shake, because of the energies, which my gestalts have bound and now are in the process of releasing.

I tell Søren in detail, which episodes are coming up from my sub-consciousness, and we have got many pauses en route, which I experience as most tactful by Søren. It should thereby be possible for me to come into something very profound and difficult. The sentence “this is unreal” comes up. Now I experienced, while telling Søren what I saw and sensed, that I spoke with a mechanic, strange voice, and I realized that the voice was not mine. Parallel to this, I experienced that I was standing at the end of the fire and was undergoing all those things, I was telling about mechanically while laying down. In other words, standing I sensed the feelings and the pain connected with the abuses and infringements, and laying down my framed body talked about them.

This experience was real and very “physical”; I could distinctly feel that I was shifting between the two bodies. When life was hurting it got unreal to me and thereby I was able to hold on being alive again. Down on the beach I let go of the sentence “this is unreal”. It was like having received my first revelation.

Søren told me, after we have worked, that previously I was borderline which makes me terribly sad. It aches so much inside myself; and to think that I should be psychically ill! His stressing that I am ex-borderline now helps. He holds me close, gives me some of his warmth, and I can feel that he cares for me although I am a strange one, and it feels indescribably nice and at the same time almost incomprehensible to me.

Here are some episodes from the last few days I have come to think of. Spankings: My father often punished me by giving me a spanking on my naked behind. Once I was spanked, because I was eating too slowly (a dish with chops and tomatoes); as I was drawing with my green lettering pen outside the paper onto my blue velour track suit. Sometimes I got spanked if I did not eat quickly enough at supper and then again after having sat at the table for three hours. Actually, it was accidental whether I got spanked for not eating fast enough. I guess it depended on my father’s mood.

Communication: For days my father could be angry and not say a single word to us, and we knew that in any case we should not say a word to him either, nor should we do anything wrong at all. However, the problem here was that I never did know what was wrong, because there was never something for sure. If he needed to beat or yell, he just did so. Beaten and yelled at, I was never told why. Therefore, there was never anything for sure because there was never an explanation why he did as he did. I dreaded by father, and was mortally afraid of him and his violent changes of mood. After being beaten I was always sent to my room and was only allowed to come out, when he told so. There I would cry, silently, so he should not hear me.

Constipation: As a baby I ate the foam-rubber mattress in my cot, toilet paper in the bathroom and paper from the newspaper if accessible. Later on I very often got constipation and I remember that last I got it at the age of 7-8 years, when my mother had to “dig the shit out”.

Thursday

I have got a new life and a new face. I can easily sense how terrified I am. Talked with my partner Peter about it. We had become interdependent. I went into him because I am not able to be in myself; this is unreal. By going into Peter I get out of reality and so I am timed out. It was so tough for me when timing out as a little child.

- I am empty
- I am hollow
- I want to go away
- I want to live (14 days old: I fight for living, I am in trouble and through my will, I do survive)

Friday

Today I have had quite an experience. A real, beautiful and loving experience with Nete. All my kindness went to her and it was reciprocated tenfold by her. I was blissful. Never before have I experienced wanting to give love with so much devotion; it made my head swim. I am eternally grateful to Søren for having arranged this totally unique and fantastic love background, which I feel we have got here at the course, where we are giving and receiving love freely and without any restraint, either in the form of words, physical care or in the mind.

It was during this totally fantastic and very beautiful experience that I got a full comprehension of many aspects of Søren's holistic medicine. I was deeply moved and am indescribably happy I had testified that love can be the door to a genuine meeting between two persons, who were so far away from each other to start with.

I can sense that love is constantly flowing here, and I myself have never believed that I should experience so much warmth and kindness by other people. I have started believing much more in love as a medicine, and I can feel this gets myself closer to the trustfulness, and actually this is a much greater gift to me. And how could it possibly be different? Søren is the first person that I have really trusted, i.e. pure trust, so of course he is also the one who opens me for that trust in other people as well. This is one of the greatest gifts I can get: to regain the trust in other people!

Sunday

At a time I choose to lie down as my stomach ached strongly, much more than usually, and Søren searched on my stomach for the place aching. He found the place, pressed at the spot, and then I felt the pain; a lot of pain. I cried violently and did really manifest myself. Søren asked me various things, while touching that place on my stomach, but I was not able to reply to his questions. The convulsions/jerks I had experienced on the beach together with Søren started again, and soon they turned worse than that night. I got cramps in my head and in my legs as well, and the cramps were more and more intense. Now Søren supported my

head, and I began to feel a burning pain coming from the inside of my head. It ached so much that it felt like an imminent explosion. Søren told me that these were fever cramps from when I was a little baby and from which I almost died, my mother and father not being there for me. I liked that Søren was meta-communicating meanwhile. It reassured me in the situation.

The cramps grow even more intense, and soon I am beating myself, exactly like at the time my brother and I played when we were younger (a play where I pretended to be mentally handicapped). It grew ever more intense, I shake all altogether, and it was completely wild. I suffer unresistingly. Then the sentence “I want to live” turned up, the sentence being thus connected with this situation, this gestalt.

I almost screamed the sentence, and my voice reflected huge and intense pain. On having said the sentence, I got relieved. Soon bliss itself washed over me; never before had every single fibre been relaxed so much. Afterwards I released the sentence “I want to live”, and again I shivered a little. Harsh.

Søren hugged me, and I can feel he is there for me; no matter what. I am so blissful! This is my second revelation. At the time I decided I wanted to live, I did very nearly die. I am surviving exclusively based on my will, and ever since have I been feeling as if I did nearly die. I have not been living, but did very nearly die. Release – bliss. One gestalt poorer.

Monday

In the evening I am manifesting myself again. I am in my room. Something big is underway. As many participants of the course are manifesting themselves, Søren has to leave me at regular intervals. This I am able to contain, and I am constantly feeling he is together with me in the mind; the mere idea of this preparing myself to pull through.

The manifestation initiates where I am in my mother’s womb. I move a lot, but I have the impression that she does not want to feel me. So I move ever more. My body shivers; writhes and soon I fling body and head backwards and forwards. Søren back me all along and ask what is happening and what I am feeling. I feel his care for me, which makes me going direct into the pain.

I manage to get all the way around my mother’s womb, I rotate, and soon I begin to feel a sort of rope round my arms and chest; I got wrapped up in the umbilical cord. I get the impression I should split; the umbilical cord feels like a straitjacket. I get water, amniotic fluid, in the throat, and I cannot swallow it. I get strangulation sensations. However, my mother still cannot feel me, she does not want to feel me, and I decide NEVER MIND. Soon afterwards my body become quiet and something else turns up.

I am back lying with my baby brother. My mother and her new partner have sex, and I say “She does not want to.” Now I am on the track of the sexual assaults. After having said “She does not want to”, I now hear and see the arousal and say: I DON’T WANT TO HEAR IT – OVER. Then comes: I DON’T HEAR IT. I start saying THIS IS BAD, repeat it many times and do not really want to proceed. I am strongly maintaining that THIS IS BAD, and Søren tries in different ways to proceed. He is very tactful and extremely delicate in the situation and handles my situation so gently. Now comes the sentence I DON’T WANT TO KNOW IT, then I DON’T WANT TO SAY IT, and this while I am crying and incredibly frightened. Søren back me up and let me know that he is taking good care of me. Then comes the sentence IT’S NOT MY FAULT, and here I can sense that I mean it is not my fault that I

am arousing him (the perpetrator) and that the event is taking place. Then comes the sentence THIS ISN'T OK, and here I am uncovering it, I guess. Then comes the sentence THIS IS SECRET and the sentence YOU SHOULD JUST KNOW THAT YOU WILL BE PUNISHED, HARDER THAN EVER, IF YOU TELL IT.

Again Søren try to encourage me to proceed and to go deeper into the episode. I trust Søren one hundred percent, and I know he can help me and he wants to back me up through anything tough. Now I sense that the door is being opened, and I can hear the noise of somebody trying not to make a sound. It is my father coming in. He sits down on the edge of my bed, hold of my waist and place me, my back turned, onto his penis. He hives me up and down over him, has an orgasm, and lay me back in all the blood and sperm. While this take place and during most of the process, my body make twitching movements, in jolts, like during an intercourse.

Then comes the sentence IT'S NOT ME, and I say this because here I go outside myself and fly, I jump from an aeroplane and float in the sky, but I know I will hit the soil again. I am floating painlessly and land on the soil with a crash. Then come the sentences I DON'T WANT TO and then IT IS MY FAULT, and then YOU WILL GET PUNISHED, and I DON'T WANT TO HEAR IT.

While this happens I am back, 4 year old, talking with a very mechanical voice, almost in twitches, and the voice only disappear the following day in the afternoon.

Several things come to me as memories the next day: How my father had punished me, because I tempted him. How my hair was cut, how I was dressed and brought up like a boy to reduce this temptation. How I carried on with this, when I myself started buying clothes: men's clothes, businessman shoes and the like. I looked like a grown-up man in my clothes. How also my mother was feeling guilt; therefore she shut herself into the bedroom, unable to take care of me and love me, even when I tried to encourage her. How finally I had to leave the bedroom, because I could feel she hated me. Maybe she punished me by her ill treatment; maybe it was her payback?

The food. How I was not allowed to eat what was supposed to be my father's filling for his packed lunch. Therefore, I ate roasted onions, macaroons and raisins for lunch after school. I was hungry, but there was not any food for me.

Tuesday

I still talk mechanically, am a little 4 years old girl who is very scared of other people, whom I believe will punish me, every single one of them. I feel as if I am in day care now, where everyone will be after me. Søren is incredibly nice and endlessly affectionate towards me. He is like, often before, my father, however it is completely different this time. Now I feel he is the only one, who really can protect me from all the evil people, and I prefer to stay near him. At breakfast he makes funny puppet dances with his fingers, which make me laugh a lot. I feel how I am only 4 years old and I am really not older. Søren's dancing like that with his fingers make me happy and warm inside; he meets me as the 4 years old girl I am, and he does it with consideration and affection.

Later down in the hall I do not dare at all to look at any of the other participants, and I am sitting safely besides Søren. He asks them, at my request, to take good care of me and let me be alone for a while. After a short while the twitches, the intercourse movements reappear. I

am sitting beside Søren, I am totally confident because of his presence and I just go into the feeling. I suffer unresistingly. Now I do not care whether the hall is full, whether everybody is watching; because the hall is full and yet it is empty. Only trust and care are here. I do dare, and therefore I suffer unresistingly. The movements become more hefty and powerful. I can feel it is happening/I am getting raped many times indeed. Just as I am sitting there I get ever younger, and at the end I have got no language. Am I 3 years? 2 years?

The following sentences turn up: I CAN DO NOTHING, IT'S MY FAULT, I DON'T WANT TO, and I CAN'T STAY ANYWHERE. Together with Søren I return to the episode, where my dad had sex with me and afterwards he turns me round so he can spank my behind: everything is wet in the bed, and my whole body is aching, and I cannot be in the bed. I can stay nowhere and in the morning my mum clean up.

Thursday

Yesterday everyone from the male group found their purpose of life, and we had a wonderful evening together on the beach. We from the female group had arranged entertainment, including belly dance and songs, food including coffee, wine, chips and cake, and then we served them. Our mantra during this was: no control, no criticism and no claims. Well, I must admit that actually I enjoyed a lot just being allowed to do anything so they should feel comfortable. And they were much greater, when meeting us there at midnight; they were bloody men, indeed!

So this morning we should find the female's purpose of life. While meditating to music, the men went about whispering gifts to us women. At a point Søren come to me and whisper in my ear something basic about my purpose of life. I got so touched that I started weeping. It felt like so incredibly great words, and I can hardly believe that the words he told were about me.

Friday

I find my purpose of life: "I bring warmth and joy". I find this as the finest and most valuable gift I have ever got.

Tuesday

Sunday I came home after two fantastic weeks at the summer course. Yesterday I was 11 years old and wished for a fancy pink school bag. I am in flow, it feels so nice. Today I have turned 12 and have got the first period. It was a mixture of relief (I am like the others), sadness (because I should have it for the next 40 years) as well as a dislike about growing up. Ironically, as at the age of 12 I was already a little adult. I played a lot with my doll I had bought and took it for an evening walk. I felt I was back to the time, when I played with my big dolls house, something I was completely crazy about. Today I wish for a doll's house of

my own. Again I think of the nice words Søren whispered in my ear about my purpose of life. It warms.

Wednesday

Today I am 13 years and wish for a dress.

Thursday

Good night 14 years and still without the dress. Sigh.

Saturday

I dream a lot for the time being, and Thursday night had a particular dream. I dreamed that I confronted my dad with the sexual assaults, that in the dream he got scared, and that the accusation was exact. He could not really answer back. Heavy artillery indeed I had been driving in position.

I was at a really nice concert, and at long last I had bought a super fancy dress, which I was wearing, and I felt simply so dishy! I felt smashing indeed, and it was really a fantastic sensation. Hurray!

Later I went dancing in the nightclub. It was divine and even a little better than usual. I did it to my heart's content, and it was fantastic!

Medical consultation at the clinic run by Søren (the Quality of Life Research Clinic)

Ever since the assaults I have regularly reverted to them by myself, on the hard bathroom floor, where I at the age of 7 years made quick and hard masturbating movements with three fingers, which took me back to the rape. I reverted because, although this was foolish, it was a form of contact between my father and me, the only contact we had besides when he hit/punished me.

I also did revert when having sex with my boyfriend. The brutality/fierceness was nearly always part of it, as I would prefer to be taken from behind quickly and hard, be pinched and bitten on my nipples.

Søren helped me to feel first the pain in my vagina aperture, my uterus, then my whole inner pelvis. He contacted the scars in my vulva and vagina; tactfully, balancing on a knife-edge. (The techniques of holistic pelvic examination, acceptance through touch and vaginal acupressure was partly invented to be able to heal the existential, mental, emotional and genital scars of this patient (26,27,28,31)). He brought me home to my uterus. He had been healing something inside me; this morning I saw my body as rounder, smoother and much more feminine. My psychosexual development is no longer like that of a four year old. I am

on a fair way to become a woman. I got an enormous gift from him, and I am very grateful to him.

Søren dealt with healing the scar on my right labia, which was continuously chapping. It got better while he was healing it and en route the pain was very close to unbearable. At first came the physical pain, which was almost unbearable and then I enter into the emotional pain. There is a huge and intense gestalt, and my hands are completely clenched. I feel an enormous rage and can also feel that I am not able to release the rage although the sentence “NOW IT’S DAMMED ENOUGH” is swimming in my head like a mantra. Afterwards I get in dialogue with my inner little girl after having found the sentence “I HIDE”; thus I have been hiding in my own hand, when getting abused. It prevents an adult life, where I can react and be present in myself. I let go of this sentence, and now the rage changes. By the way I had a splitting talk with that little girl. As Søren asked me to release the sentence she tells me: YOU DON’T KNOW WHAT YOU ARE DOING and IT’S DANGEROUS. Then I tell her that we cannot play hiding the rest of our lives and be lying under a blanket without saying anything and without moving the rest of our lives. We must live instead, I tell her; thus I am able to release.

Afterwards the rage can get out, and at first I chat, then hit, then beat and hammer with clenched fists on two pillows, while I am saying: “Now it’s dammed enough!” That helps. It’s nice to let go of the rage, and that ease me a lot.

Sunday

New negative sentences:

- I am ugly
- I am afraid of men
- I feel sorry for myself
- She is too much
- I am getting punished

Saturday

Now I realize that my dad did often assault me in the morning before my mum was awake.

Wednesday

The sentences:

- I don’t need you
- I need nobody

- There is nothing to come after turned up in connection with my getting stock of something, a gestalt, in which I suffer and which makes me very sad. I am talking with Søren, and more than anything else I need affection and care, I distinctly feel that, and still I do not need anyone/you. It was so obvious that what I needed most was somebody. Then appeared the sentences. And the reason why I do not need anyone/you is that there is nothing to come after. Nevertheless, I am not able to get anything.

Thursday

Over the breakfast I phone and talk with Søren about how I am doing. We talk about my sentences, and he says to me that he is there for me if I should need him. I just have to tell him I need him. This is a good and extremely important thing for me to learn; it is a way of letting other people in. It is a way of approaching others. Presence. This opening is primarily due to Søren, as I feel I may “practice” on him. I can practice needing him and then learn to contain either his being there that very moment or having to wait for a better opportunity. It is safe to practice with Søren.

Tuesday

The sentence I AM IMPOSSIBLE turns up.

Wednesday

Two sentences appear:

- IT'S ABSURD
- WHEN I COME, I AM DYING

New memories came to the surface after that; about my aunt's treatment of me during the summer holidays at her place. I did everything wrong. I was always in the way. And about my father: I am seven years. The night is a hell. I do not sleep at all. I remember how I simply did not dare to sleep on my back, when I was younger. When my dad came into my room at night to have sex with me, I was always sleeping on my stomach. And when he had finished with me, “his screw doll”, I would always return lying on my stomach, in the blood and sperm, and pull my arms completely under my body trying to give myself a little care. I almost see the whole episode like in a movie; how he sneaks up onto my room, gets hold of my waist, takes off my pyjamas trousers and briefs, and places me down over his stiff penis, my face turned off him. He moves me like it pleases him, all the while my small doll legs are kicking. He does not care whether I am completely dry, whether he gets crooked up inside me, whether I am suffering, whether skin may be trapped, whether I am bleeding, whether I get cuts and wounds. Sometimes he also laid me on his thighs taking me up and down over his penis.

Medical consultation at the clinic run by Søren (quality of life research clinic)

I have been bleeding a little from the intestines for a while. Søren examines my rectum. I have the impression of getting filled up two hundred percent and it is tremendously uncomfortable for me. It feels as if a refrigerator is crammed into me, and I say I CANNOT STAND HAVING IT INSIDE ME. I do not feel there is any room. It turns ever more unpleasant, worse and worse. I would like to run away screaming. I cannot be there at all; it gets worse and worse. I CANNOT FIND MY BEARINGS AT ALL, I said, and now I am in the space with planets passing and stars hanging and shining. And I want to go home. I feel there is something completely wrong and that I am not myself. Now the disorientation takes over completely, and I am totally gone on. I do not know at all where I am. I would like to say to Søren, he shall be careful not to become like them (my dad and mum), but I cannot get myself to tell it. I say, "This is the worst thing you have done to me".

Afterwards I apologize for my projection. I cannot accept him in any way at all. I think "HE IS A PIG, HE DISGUSTS ME" and at the same time I am awfully ashamed of myself. The dislike is too heavy, the shame too overwhelming; I am not in me, I am not at home. I can feel I am beside myself, and this scares me terribly. I cannot find my bearings at all. Shame and pain. HE SCARES ME, HE IS LIKE THEM, I think. Søren says that the pain I am experiencing now is too intense for me to contain, and therefore I am projecting it onto him. I know he is right. I know I am projecting big time onto him. I am not able to have it inside me; I feel I cannot contain it, not at all. The following sentences come: I am hiding, I am in the space, he is disgusting, I am cooping up, I don't care, he doesn't care, there isn't any room for it.

I feel bony and thin, skeleton-like. Søren asks whether I was thin as a child. At first bun fat, then thin, I answer. At our place there was actually no food. I often ate roasted onions or half a bag of macaroons, when coming home from school. Usually there was not any real food for me. The fillings available were for my dad's packed lunch; the rye bread too, so I was not allowed to take from it, or one slice at the most so nobody could see that I have taken some. Søren says lack of care, and while he is saying the word I chant in my head: I DON'T CARE.

I stay at home from work. We get hold of Marianne (the nurse) and asked her to assist in conveying me holding. She would like to. I am just sitting in Marianne's arms while we are listening to some nice music. I almost fall asleep there in her arms. As Søren arrive we deal with my time line. Marianne wrote down everything that did happen.

The notes by the nurse about Anna

Anna is back in time, about 2-3 years old. They should remove her nappy. She could not really speak yet. Both her mother and father did harass her; the mother abused her violently, her father sexually. The father was the one doing it at night, while the others were sleeping or in the morning when her mother was still sleeping. He did not care if there was blood on the sheet. Anna experience that all this fills her up, it fills her whole stomach. The mother used a spoon in order to make her bleed, so her father should not abuse her. Anna experienced that

the mother did it to be nice to her and to protect her from the father. She has got the feeling that her sister was been abused as well.

The contents of the gestalts: She (the mother) hates me. He (the father) hates me. My sister hates me. The mother did not want to give Anna prunes, as asked for by the father, when Anna was constipated. They called her a particular pet name, when carrying out the ill treatments. When calling her Anna they could not do that. It was as if the mother and the father knew what the other was doing. Anna also thought there were other people who knew something about what was going on. Many different people had baby-sat her. They should have seen there was something wrong, when changing her. The father stopped, when she was about to enter school, but the mother carried on and Anna remembered how the mother laid her on the changing table as she was 7-8 years old. At that moment Anna wished to die. Was sent outside, did smash a rough plate hoping she could cut her wrists. She also tried to run away and hide. The sentence I HIDE. The little hand is completely squeezed and unapproachable. Extremely slowly Anna opens her hand again.

Monday

I talked by phone with Søren about revenge and rage. I am totally, terribly angry. I feel as if my rage stretches thousands of kilometers; really far! First I do not really want revenge, but then the vindictiveness comes to me. I say a lot of angry and confronting things to my father at that moment, and as soon as I have said them, my back is feeling better.

Thursday

I read in the newspaper today that a 53 years old father, who received 2 or 3 years of imprisonment and paid twice DKK 35,000 damages to his two daughters that he had abused over a four year period. The girls were 7 and 12 years old. [The legal issue was discussed many times with the patient during the therapy; the focus of discussion was the best interest of the patient. We agreed that she was not strong enough to confront her offenders in the court. After the therapy she could go to court, if she wanted to. From a holistic medical perspective the patient's interest is above the general interest of society; justice is less important than the health and well being of the patient].

Sunday medical consultation at the clinic (quality of life research clinic) with Søren and Marianne, the nurse

As Søren and Marianne arrived I was in the paranoid psychotic condition. [It is important to notice that this psychotic episode seemed to be a natural part of her healing and she was not drugged during the days of mental crisis]. The first time I noticed that I was paranoid was on Friday. I was walking in town shopping and I got scared on the road. It is difficult for me to find the words for it, but I was aware that I was getting hot flushes, becoming dizzy, nausea and a huge desire to run home. In fact, this happened again the following three days when out

for a walk. I get afraid when people walked in groups. I was especially scared of men on the road; I thought they wanted to snatch me and take me along. I thought they were able to jump inside me, like invading me and taking what is mine and in a way occupying me. I thought there was nothing I could do and they could do whatever they wanted, for instance violate me, beat me and rape me. They might pour boiling water and ice water into my vagina, stuff tins up inside me and tie me.

The rest of Saturday I did not go out. Again panic after having been outside for a short while; I could barely take the receipt from the man, who brought me a pizza. This was to be too close to him. I feared he should catch my whole arm and just drag me along. Again things are running about, I got hot flushes and feel terribly unwell. I feel almost as if I am chocking. That sensation I got earlier today as well, when a friend, Peter, called. We were eating so I told him I would call him back, but as I had put the receiver down everything in me shivered and trembled, and I told my friend they now could also come in through the telephone. I felt invasion, thought there was no refuge for me; that they could come and hurt me also through the telephone, as if Peter could actually come out through the telephone and be physically in my room.

As Søren and Marianne came, Søren made in clear to me that if I was not willing to put the lid on my “inner waste bin”, if not now then after having processed, he would have to get in touch with a psychiatrist, a good friend of his. This made me completely terrified, and I got terribly afraid he was going to do that and that they will fill me with drugs. Through our conversation I realized that Søren could not have me walking about being psychotic, because I am his responsibility. Furthermore, I saw how I have neglected my own responsibility in this situation. I have continuously carried on opening forever more stuff although I had not managed to come to terms with and integrate well what I had just been processing. I behaved like a too eager little girl who, because I got unlimited love when working with tough things, just unrestrainedly kept on opening new and more hideous things. I realized that it was connected like this, and then we proceeded.

Next Søren dealt with healing the scars inside my mouth [the standard procedure described in (32)], similar to healing genital scars described above]. First he touched on the left side of my mouth. I cannot feel anything at first; some time passes by, and then I begin to cry. I tell how much I have been thinking of my paternal uncle the last few days. I have always had an image of him as most arrogant, evil, indifferent and indescribably cold; terribly cold. I feel an indignation/rage towards him, while I am lying here; he did always feel above all of us, and in fact he is just so small, such a small shit. While Søren is dealing with the scars, more and more images come to me. They concern my paternal uncle, who had raped me totally five times. I shall give a more detailed description of them tomorrow. The episodes in question are particularly connected with the scar I have got in my lower mouth, which is so striking that its surface almost feels like a tooth. As we are dealing with it, I feel like going to scream, and we try this in the duvet. It's as if I don't know at all what screaming is about. How do you scream, I ask Søren and Marianne. It's difficult for me to catch the feeling behind the screaming. It becomes a very half-hearted attempt. I would very much like to try again, at another moment.

Notice that this work with the patient's scar tissue is probably the most direct application of the formula: “Feel, understand, let go” (19,25,31-33). The gestalts are picked up directly from the tissue and processed on the spot. This implies the patient's full collaboration and

easier, when one or several persons are present to give holding. Interestingly, the scars do often disappear subsequently.

As Søren dealt with the right side of my mouth, I get a lot of images from my paternal grandfather. When I, at the age of 2-4 years, visited my paternal grandparents along with my family on Sundays, he always had to finger my “lamb thigh”, meaning that with his enormous fist he took hold of my right thigh and grasped very hard. Then he moved his hand higher and higher up to my lap. Everyone saw and heard it on Sundays.

From time to time I visited them. Every day they were taking a nap after dinner, and sometimes when my paternal grandmother slept, or pretended to be asleep, my paternal grandfather took me on his arm, as I myself went too slowly and took me to the basement. Down there he dragged and raped me. I feel that he just stood, then grasped my waist, my face turned to him, taking me up and down over him. It didn’t take so long, and then he dragged me upstairs again, to my paternal grandmother who was waking. Then she would have me go with her to her work, to take me along in a very noisy machine hall without putting the ear protector on, telling there weren’t any left and that I just should stop my ears. It was indescribably loud inside that hall, very loud indeed. At other times my paternal grandfather took me along outside and raped me out there. The basement episodes I do see most distinctly, and I remember the fear to go to the basement or just approaching it.

Wednesday session at the gestalt therapist [anna received support from both our medical team and a gestalt therapist connected to the clinic during this period]

I established contact with my strength. I must pay attention to my needs: I have to allow both to receive and to make demands towards Søren and towards my friends. In the future we shall establish contact between my inner child and my outer woman. Plan: I am in a psychological crisis, and the following three weeks shall pass by having a nice cozy time with relaxation, the coloring book, women’s magazines, TV-serials, good food as well as sleep and rest.

Sunday

I can feel/sense that my dad was not allowed to have me for himself. He was the first, who committed an offence against me, but although I was his daughter, he did not own me. That is, my father could not have me for himself, this my paternal grandfather and my paternal uncle would not allow. My father should share me with them, otherwise they would punish him, hurt him badly. So, in order for my dad himself to be able to carry on his assaults he had to share me. I do not know which punishment they would adopt on him; maybe they would report him? That is unclear to me. My dad was very much and sincerely sorry about having to share me with them. He could hardly make himself to do it, anyhow not to begin with. I guess my dad was perfectly aware they would not be treating me like he did; I guess he knew they would be violent and brutal towards me. Nevertheless, my dad did that. Here

come the episodes with my paternal uncle, which turned up while Søren was massaging the scars in the corners of my mouth:

The first time my dad took me along to my paternal uncle's shop, he let him take me to a coal black room, while he himself was passing the time chatting with the shop assistant, while his big brother was raping me, I believe I was about 4 years old.

The second time my uncle raped me was not in the same room, but in the shop itself. He placed my hands on a long wooden top, and then he had sex with me, apparently in my rectum. I am getting the sensation of being held round the throat, the chin and the mouth. It is as if I am actually screaming all I can; I am kicking, flapping my little legs. I am struggling, however his hand is so large that it covers throat, chin, and mouth as well and absolutely no sounds escape from me. My scream does never get out, but drowns in my throat. My legs are not allowed to run across the floor, escape from him; they are just hanging in the air, kicking.

The third time my uncle raped me is no doubt the worst and most sadistic one. He is lying in his bedroom and is waiting for me to go to the bathroom. I am at their place playing with my two cousins. He just snatches me, so I am kicking and he holds his hand before my throat, chin and mouth and says to me: "I bet you will get it!" and then he places my hands on the bathroom tub, uses his other hand to grasp my waist, after which he has brutally sex with me, in the vagina and the rectum by turns. He shifts so quickly between the two that I get very muddled. I feel completely confused. The following sentences turn up: He is cold, he is disgusting, he doesn't care, he is so violent. After he has raped me, I cannot at all touch myself at the bottom. I cannot at all wash the blood and sperm away, because if I touch it, my vagina, my rectum and everything "at the bottom" will go to pieces or explode. The pain is unbearable and makes me completely dumb and paralysed. Before my uncle leaves me, he says: "If you tell it to anybody, nobody will want to have you." The fourth time he raped me is also in their bathroom. Here he is sitting on the edge of the bath, and again he holds one hand before throat, chin and mouth, while his other hand is round my waist. I am turned away from him. He is penetrating my rectum. The fifth time, again in the bathroom, like the fourth time, except that now he is sitting on the toilet instead of the edge of the bath.

The night between Friday and Saturday I experienced getting serial raped while sleeping. I wake up at the first rape, at 3:00 hours in the night. Then follow three subsequent rapes, totally four times. The sentence "I have got nobody" turns up. It is connected with my father lending me to my paternal grandfather and paternal uncle, and as my mum was like she was, I had got nobody to watch me. After these four times I feel like going to stop with the consultations with Søren, 100 percent. The note from the night I wrote en route reads: In a moment he is going to hurt me, very much indeed. A little later I get raped for the fifth time. I am so unhappy and have now got so terrible pains in the stomach and the abdomen that more than ever I am about to take a tranquillizer. Then come two more rapes; they are connected. The sentences: It's really bad, I want to die, I want to go away, and I cannot have this, turn up. And it is really bad. I call Søren, but he does not answer the phone. A little later follows a serial rape of five, so at last I got at total of 12 times. My last note from the night reads: "Unbearable pain".

A moment later something particular happens. The above sentences are striving in my head, so I do as follows: I clench both hands so hard that it actually feels as if I am locking them. I think: Now they cannot open again, and now it will stop. The sensation this time of being hidden is totally new. It is not like I have experienced it earlier. This time it is like towering walls of black armor plating are rising round me, and I think that absolutely nothing

and nobody will be able to penetrate. Nobody. These high, black armor plates thus surround me and actually I am calming down remarkably quickly now, because nothing and nobody, indeed, can trespass on me. When waking up in the morning I am very unwell and I feel very sad. Furthermore I am angry with Søren, because he did not at all phone me on Friday, and I find he was mean. When getting hold of him, he says I shall get in touch with my gestalt therapist and talk with her, as she is my therapist now. I feel a confusion inside myself and think that maybe Søren is withdrawing from our therapy relationship. During the night I got a nightmare: Søren and I are going for a ride in the car. He starts scolding me, because of my irresponsibility and he is terribly angry with me. I wake up from the dream, just as he places his hands round my throat and is about to strangle me. I remember now: My mother asked once my father to kill me. I am asking out in the air: "Why didn't they just kill me? Why didn't they kill me?"

Then the next morning I talk with my gestalt therapist on the phone and we discuss my relationship with Søren; I have to find out what it is about, and if I can phone him and when.

Tuesday

Last night I dreamt that Søren gave a tough message for me: "Spread your legs and get it over with!", implicitly that the way ahead of me was the way through the pain from the numerous assaults. No time for pity!

So Sunday night my attitude was quite a bit different. I told myself that I could easily make it, that I was strong and that I shall be doing all right. Then I am on my stomach and let the thoughts come to me without struggling.

Assault: Just before I fall asleep, my father comes in my room. He penetrates me, my vagina, and it is quickly and non-violently. He is doing it almost gently and appears sad.

Assault: It is in the morning: my father is in the bathroom and I have to pee. My mother says: "Just go in there" and I do it. My father takes me to the shower cabinet and has sex with me. Again non-violently.

Abuse: My mother has taken me to the bathroom. Again I am not able to get rid of the stools; in any case not at the pace and at the moments my mother wants. She places me my hands and legs on the floor, and my behind up, like when she had to wipe me. She uses a spoon, and to start with it doesn't go so far up because I tighten and work hard against this. Then she puts me with my stomach on her knees and starts. She says: "You bet I'll get it out". She keeps on digging, and this time she gets much deeper. However, there are no stools, and she keeps on saying she will get them out for sure. She is so eager to get something out and tries with the spoon to get in my rectum as deeply as possible. It is as if she has broke down, as if she is completely lost in the situation.

Assault: My paternal uncle. I guess it is in the bathroom while he is sitting on the bath. He penetrates my rectum; it's most brutal, and I feel a huge pain. I feel it is something corresponding to a very hard pipe, which drives up and down in my rectum. It hurts far up, to the very end in front of the navel.

After all this I feel rather exhausted. Most of all I felt like being held close. Incidentally, I must add that I feel very comfortable with coloring in my recently purchased coloring book. I color with crayons and I am perfectly aware this is as creative as I can possibly be, now that I am not more than four year old; so that is the way it should be.

Yesterday night

I am on the point of sleeping, and my mother is in my thoughts. Again I go into the episode from the previous night, the one where she told me she wanted to get it out for sure. Her whole energy in that situation is coal black and evil. Now I see her more as a sadist, so she appears; she didn't cease while digging about in me; she just carried on, got ever deeper in my rectum as if she should get that out, no matter what – and she went on and on. She herself decided when to stop, and that didn't depend on what and how much stools she got out of me; it was completely independent of this. Apparently, she didn't even do it in order to get the stools out of me, because there weren't any in that episode. She did it for the simple reason of doing it! A sadist, I guess, is an appropriate word indeed...

I also think of my nightmare from Friday night where she asked my father to cut me away and off his life. What is that woman's agenda? It seems as if, only to a certain extent and maybe not at all, she is the victim in the home. The story has always been that she was the poor one, the one who was being oppressed. It rather seemed as if this story doesn't really hold. I get the impression that my mother actually was ruling at home.

Poor me! I do know what I find most difficult and disgusting. I lay down on my back, in my bed. It's terribly unpleasant, and also it doesn't take long before I start crying, then sobbing. I'm sad. It's tough!

Assault: my paternal uncle. Now comes the sensation of a piston up inside me. With the sensation follows the piston sound. I can hear it: "dunk, dunk, dunk". With my fingers on my stomach I feel exactly how far up the pain goes. It reaches up to the left of the navel; and then I am gone. It's as if I am hearing the whirr of wings. I have got the impression, and more than that, that I am actually flying high up in the air. I am a bird, and I hear the wind blowing while I am flying about up in the air.

Again I lay down on my back, now with my fingers and legs spread. I think; I cannot do that, and then I do it nevertheless.

Assault: my paternal uncle. Again he knocks up inside me, brutally, and I feel again that the pain goes as far as up to the left of the navel. He simply hammers up in me, and the sound follows: "dunk, dunk, dunk".

Assault: comes in series. Exactly the same situation, exactly the same contents. Just like that, again. It can only be my paternal uncle the second and third times!

Assault: my paternal uncle. I sense he presses and presses his too huge penis into my rectum. He presses and works hard, and slowly it gets deeper and deeper. It gets as high as to the left of my navel, and then I can sense that he has got an orgasm; he empties himself up there inside me. A second later I get an uncomfortable nausea. I get dizzy. His sperm is up inside me, and it feels as if it's completely up in my throat; as if, if I vomited now, I would be able to vomit the sperm.

Rape: paternal uncle. The piston sensation, the sound: "dunk, dunk, dunk" and again pain till left side of the navel.

Rape: They press forward up in me like worms, it's difficult indeed, but they just carry on like dry worms without any slime just waiting for the friction resistance to disappear. They slave away, persistently. Nausea again.

Now I lay down, my legs spread and my arms above the head, the fingers free. Terrible. Rape: paternal grandfather. This time I am completely paralyzed with fear, totally paralyzed, and I do not make a single movement. The pain goes to the left of the navel. I get the

impression I am going to be killed if I do anything wrong, and I sense my paternal grandfather's energy. Now I am gone. Now the wind is howling and I am out in a storm; there is snow everywhere. Am I on the Antarctic? I guess so. I have to stop here, the sentences "I get smashed up" and "I go to pieces" appear.

Again I lay down on my stomach, and I can feel a huge pain. I am aching unbelievably, corresponding to the rectum and up to the left of the navel. Now I embrace myself, hold myself close, like I did just before all this happened tonight. I hold myself; it feels so nice and safe. It's okay. In the evening, in the bath: I feel warmth inside, it's lust, I know. I don't feel like touching myself at the bottom, so I massage and caress my breasts. I do it in a completely new way, and it's really nice. It makes me glad.

Tuesday night

Rape: father. I am supposed to sleep in the evening. He reaches halfway up towards the navel; it hurts, but he doesn't do it so violently. He says to me: "I will ..." and doesn't complete the sentence. I guess he wanted to say: "be careful/do it carefully" or something like that.

Rape: father. He presses himself up in me. When up there, he makes stubborn pushes with intervals. He gets to the very bottom, but it isn't violent. He takes me obliquely off the navel. I think "It isn't so bad" and sense there might be some lust for my part.

Rape: paternal uncle. He slaves away, again with his huge hard pipe. I have got the impression it isn't himself, rather an object; maybe a candle, it feels very thick. He reaches higher than the navel this time. Then it's as if there is a shift, and now it's he himself who is penetrating me. He enjoys this, and it's the first time I hear him moaning. It takes much longer than usually and it isn't violently now compared to earlier and with less hammering and beating. Now I get the sensation that my labias are forced apart, and that something is penetrating me. My vagina feels now huge and extended, like a hand; a whole hand is inside me. Then appears the sentence: "I don't want any more".

Then I consider how I will get my productive and hard working subconsciousness shut down ...

As a solution I place myself in the doorway of an imaginary shop and say to the numerous "assaults" appearing and impatiently standing in front of the shop wanting to enter: "Sorry, the shop is closing now. I am sorry that I have to disappoint some of you. – You may come again tomorrow. Good night and sleep well everyone". I didn't want to make any of them cross, but wanted to admit that they are here and show them that it's quite okay with me; however, that I am the one having the last word with respect to the shop's opening hours! It was totally super cool that actually it did succeed! The shop closed indeed! It felt really good to wake up in the morning, on Wednesday; I got the sensation of controlling the situation. It was indescribably good!

Wednesday morning Søren came, because I had asked him to come and hold me close. So he did, and it was really nice. Wednesday evening in the bath: Again I feel the warmth and lust after having watched myself naked in the mirror. I observe my behind and the region round the asshole. I find it has become prettier and can look at it and feel that I am more present in that region, especially round the asshole. Its former flat appearance, the death, seems decreased. My breasts too have become prettier than they were earlier. Tonight I feel

like touching myself at the bottom, and I am feeling myself, touching where it feels nice, and am thinking then: “It’s not so bad”; consequently, there must have been a lust aspect with my father! It feels good what I am doing. Again I massage my breasts and think they are wonderful. Yes indeed! It’s really nice to caress them and feel them as whole breasts. While I am doing this, something happens, which I regard as curious. I touch my breasts and at the same time I dream wearing my fine, blue summer dress; it makes me feel so super feminine. Curious! But it’s great, and today I feel that my breasts are perfect and that I am gorgeous. I go to bed. Suddenly the sentence “Nobody likes me” turns up.

Wednesday night

The sentences “I hate her, she is nasty, she is disgusting, I loathe her” turns up. Afterwards I stand on the shop’s doorway. I tell everyone that I am very tired, angry and not at all in the mood for more. I say that I don’t care whether they get cross, as I am the boss, and that I am really very tired and am going to close the shop. Full stop! They do not even protest, on the contrary it’s as if they are mumbling they understand all right and wish me sweet dreams. Too wild! But I was simply done in; I was a totally flat battery yesterday as I went to bed at last.

Thursday

The following sentences appear:

- It’s odd
- It’s really curious
- (I’m not good, am I?)
- (I’m worthless, am I not?)

Friday

Yesterday afternoon I released myself “I hate her”; it was so extremely violent that I doubted whether I would stop crying again. I sensed how the earth disappeared under my feet, and I almost put myself across the table in order to hold on, have the connection. It was almost a revelation, I felt. “I loathe her, she is nasty, she is disgusting” – these sentences gave me such a heavy nausea that I hurried up to the kitchen to release above the sink. I was very close to vomiting. Two new sentences turned up: “I’m good for nothing” and “I’m a failure”. As “I’m a failure” appeared, it was so terribly violent that it sends me direct into space, without any earth connection, floating about between the planets. This made me dizzy. “I am out in the space”. While at home and in bed, I think again of “I hate her” and “I am a failure”. The sensation of being a failure, as well as my own self-hatred is the things that right now are worse than the rape. I write: “I cannot be in myself” and “I want to leave”. Then follow:

Rape: my paternal uncle. The bathroom; he sits on the toilet. It goes so extremely fast, so quick up and down, in the vagina, I sense. So fast, so if I said a sound it would go like me sitting in a shopping trolley, driving across an uneven surface. The pain reaches the navel. Having my back to him, it's unclear to me whether he is holding his hand over my throat, chin and mouth, I guess so, and actually it doesn't bother me. I feel unbelievably like making fun of him, I really would like, while he is slaving away in me, puffing and blowing, to say that sound like when me sitting in a shopping trolley ... I just think he is so ridiculous, and that it would be great fun to say that sound, as his wanting to hurt me so much would be such a marked contrast to my just making that sound, which is so funny indeed. That would thwart his sadistic agenda! When finished he said to me: "You are worthless"; and now I can feel that I understand no more. I did acknowledge it: "I am worthless".

- 4:35 - still awake, the garbage workers arrive outside
- 5:01 – still awake
- 5:30 – still awake

Friday

Today something is different. I have got appetite again and have eaten quite a lot today, about 6-7 times! That's really good! Talked briefly on the phone with Søren tonight; he said that he is with me all the time, and I find I can feel that. He said to me that I have broken through! My eyes filled with tears, while he told me that, and it's also what I am feeling inside myself, I guess. Oh, this is fortunate! He said that I was not any longer in my dark side. Imagine I should break through! I am feeling really fine too! Actually, really fine indeed.

Saturday

It was a wonderful evening yesterday; I just enjoyed staying at home together with myself. I watched the movie: "It's me talking" from I don't know when, and it made me laugh a lot. Old and entertaining it was great. I slept very well tonight and had two dreams.

1st dream: Where I was sexually together with a gorgeous girl; wonderful breasts, warm lap, and it was fantastic. I gave her quite a lot of compliments and enjoyed her a lot. At the end, in the dream, her labias broke; she was bleeding and showed me them. They were bloody, torn, and she looked badly knocked about. Then she said I should better be checked up for venereal diseases... (I found her gorgeous). 2nd dream: About me rescuing my sister from an evil man battering her.

Søren told me later, as I told him about the dream, that I was the one raping my sister. I can see that all right and told him about the time, where Marie (my sister) fell in love with me and I subsequently fantasized about wanting to throw her down on the bed and doing with her whatever I pleased. He said that it was good I did not get hold of her. I must agree. He also said that most likely I would not do that today.

Saturday

A friend of mine talked to me about the relationship between Søren and me. That it is a unique doctor/patient relationship and I explained how he has been able to support me in very difficult times and open up for things that I had hidden, even from myself. She said she had been waiting for me to tell her about it. She said I could trust her. The amazing thing was that she did not condemn me at all; on the contrary she listened so carefully, respected me and acknowledged me fully. It was amazing how pure her intentions were. She respected me, acknowledged me and let me know that she wished me all the best, respectfully offering me that if I wanted I could discuss whatever I wanted with her. However, I feel I am doing fine now. As I said, it was an amazing conversation! At one point she began to cry; I told her that indeed I have a deeply based problem with trust and that in the future I will do my best towards a trusting friendship. Further she said that she knew I would succeed in this and she was looking forward to it, and meanwhile she was there for me. At a point, as we were discussing trust/lack of trust, I said: "I suppose you have guessed that I have been sexually abused", having hinted it earlier. She nodded affirmatively. She felt having to protect me/spare me any evil, including Søren, as she asked: "Could he think of anything sexual?" She mistrusted him, but I answered no.

Later, during the night, I begin processing. I am in a completely white room; there are no walls, no floor or ceiling. It is white and infinite. While I am there, two sentences appear: "Nobody is there for me" and "I am miserable". That is a true sentence, "Nobody is there for me", it fits fine on me, and I felt it so clearly that it made the sentence "I am miserable" appear. I release them during the night by means of the roll. "I am miserable" turns up again. At a quick pace follow: "I can do nothing, I know nothing, I am not good for nothing, I am always so foolish, I want to die".

Søren called me by phone, before I went to bed to ask, whether I was okay, and I answered that I will make it. However, while in bed with the wish to die and wishing for it so intensely, I became afraid of staying alone and called my ex-boyfriend, who came to hold me close the whole night. He stayed the following day until the afternoon, where I had an appointment with my gestalt therapist.

Sunday Night

This is the night, where my boyfriend held me close.

Sunday

My mother and I are in our bathroom. She has been digging for a very long time, and suddenly she says: "Now it's enough!" She placed both her thumbs on my throat, in that small cavity and now really she wanted to kill me. She squeezed and the sentence "She is going to kill me" turned up. She carried on until I am lying unconscious on the bathroom floor. Maybe she thought I am dead now, or even a practical aspect turned up, where shall

they put the body? How shall she make it seem an accident, when having been strangling me? I know, that I am not in the present time, and therefore I stay and wait.

Thursday noon

I took a bath, and it was a really unpleasant experience. I experienced I was sitting in our own bath together with my father; I was about six years old, and my father had sex with me. This time it was completely different. I was facing my father, looking at his chest and the relationship between us had changed. My sensation was that my father in a way accepted his lust for me and that he preferred having sex with me, rather than with my mother. I was his mistress; there was some equality, some acceptance. My father enjoyed me more than ever, and in a way I liked it too. In the bath at my friend's place, now I am suddenly heavily pregnant and am going to give birth. I think and say out aloud: "I cannot give birth to my child like that. – It will be a trauma for the baby." This comes up, while I am sitting in the position for a pelvic exam. I cannot manage to do it at all. I can now see the situation with my father in the car again: he hardly can have himself do it, to kill me, but my mother has ordered it. First he drives like a fool to subsequently stop the car in order to strangle me. The sentence "He is going to kill me" turns up. As I release it, also the physical aspect comes in. I cannot breathe, my trachea is choking, and I struggle for breath. I keep on struggling and manage to breathe before losing consciousness. However, he did it so hard that I can still feel, half an hour later, how my trachea is choked and there is no free breath passage. Experiencing both my father and mother trying to kill me makes me indescribably sad. I find it difficult to believe that this is true, not in a denial way, but in the naïve way, which is my way of surviving my parents' evil.

- One side
- On the other side
- A repair: Black side:
- Naive, simple-minded towards
- Believe people are worse than they actually are
- People's evil intentions
- He and she are going to kill me
- When I told Søren on the phone he suggested I work at these disequilibria with my gestalt therapist.

Friday evening

The sentence "There is no room for me" comes to me. The sentence "I am nothing" re-appeared.

The night from Saturday to Sunday

Dream: I am in a garden together with two girl friends and another girl. We are two couples; we are chatting, going for a walk and having fun. At a window a women with her companion are making fun of the four of us and find we are very much “out of fashion” as lesbians, it’s just so “out”. They are making fun of us. Up in the apartment, the home companion is going to bed, and the women find that her companion is foolish and narrow-minded. As she looks uphill she sees her own father observing her from a big balcony. She herself is in her room, and he is looking down at her. Suddenly I am in her apartment, and we are lying together naked in her bed. It does not bother her that her father is disappointed that she is not giving him grandchildren. She wants to stay together with me and does not care about him. I am enjoying her; I am enjoying looking at her, touching her. She is just gorgeous, like a dream.

Sunday

I have got a particular sensation, I am in a special situation. Never before have I been experiencing so massive, so intense, so deep a gestalt. “She is going to kill me”, “He is going to kill me”, “They are going to kill me” are some really cruel gestalts. A moment ago, as I was talking with Søren on the phone, the sentence, which also came to me at the movie yesterday “It’s really serious” turned up. It contributed towards making the situation enormously heavy to me.

Søren said that the decisions we are making become our wishes as well, which – if not carried out at that time - will remain our wishes, which we want to carry out. Consequently, I wished to be killed, and this makes me attract people who wants to kill me. I attract the perpetrator. Right now I am feeling sorry for myself. Yuck, do release that too! I am releasing: “It’s really serious, I feel sorry for myself, she is going to kill me, he is going to kill me, they are going to kill me”. Søren told me that the universe is gracious and allows us all to commit mistakes once.

After supper, on Sunday

- 1) Rape: my paternal uncle in the bathroom. He holds me in a new and unpleasant manner, I almost hang, my head down, while he is shifting between the holes. It aches up to the navel; I am dizzy and have got nausea. Meanwhile I think that I will be going to the sink afterwards and vomit. He gets his orgasm in my mouth, and next I am squatting at the sink. The sentence “I feel so bad” comes up. At a point I am out of myself; I am going to faint and this because the pain is unbearable. I don’t know where I am; it’s dark. I am older, maybe 5-6 years.
- 2) Rape: my paternal uncle. The pain is completely unbearable. He is hammering and humping like a fool. It hurts indescribably. At a point he hits something up inside me, and it almost says “klonk”. What does he hit? It hurts so much! I am not able to scream, he is holding me. I cry from pain.

- 3) Ill-treatment: my mother in the bathroom. She is digging me out; huge pain. I almost jump every time she digs inside me. The movement is totally different than that of the men's; she gets much more aggressive and is everywhere inside me. I can feel how the spoon is scraping up my rectum. Now I go to the toilet, have diarrhea, and I tell them: "its fine you came, and now you must leave". Afterwards I am getting better.

My ex-boyfriend came in the afternoon and while we are doing the dishes, I told him that both my father and mother have tried to kill me, and that several of my family members have abused and raped me. He becomes terribly angry, because it is unbelievable that I am telling him this and that he is here, while I am reliving the three above episodes. I think that is why I relived such a huge pain; he loves me and backed me. I appreciate that. He is an invaluable support for me. I guess his purpose is: "I am good, warm and affectionate". The sentence "I am miserable" appeared during the conversation with Søren.

Monday

I am useless, I can nothing, I am so foolish. I feel like lying like a little baby in a cradle, being rocked, fed, changed. I want to be taken off. To be nothing and yet to be everything for myself, that makes me crazy. The black painting with the light stroke. You must paint it, Søren said. It represented how I was inside my mother's womb; she was coal-black, then I came and was lying in her uterus like a snow-white stroke.

Friday

I told him how my father had often been saying that my mother was a schizophrenic. Søren said that I had taken that in, and that my sentence was "She is a schizophrenic". That sentence did hardly want to leave my fingers! I had been taking it in so well that I had to make an effort, and I got easily short of breath when having to release it.

Earlier I had been talking on the phone with a friend, who was also grumpy, and I had told her that it felt as if I was at the bottom of a mash; muddy and turbid. After having let go of "She is a schizophrenic" Søren said I should let go of "I am a schizophrenic"; then indeed I started struggling. My defense had been moved into position; I told him that the sentence was not like that, and I resisted a lot. Of course, it proved to be the completely right sentence, and probably much more difficult to release than the earlier one. On releasing it, something fantastic happened. Suddenly it turned completely bright behind my closed eyes, and then followed a light. It became so wonderful inside me; it felt so indescribably well to be inside myself. Fantastic! And then I could say: I WAS a schizophrenic.

My friend was still cross and lovely at the same time. I briefed her on Monday's processing with Søren. I told her that I had been a schizophrenic, and it was so indescribably nice to share this with her. She did not become frightened or run away from me. She could easily have done that.

Wednesday evening I am dining out with my best friend and later we watched a movie at his place. It was a very tough movie on abuse. Afterwards I told him about Monday's

episode. Damned if I did not tell him that I had been a schizophrenic!!! Well, I really did so, and while telling him I realized that his purpose of life was probably: I do contain.

Thursday

The following sentences turn up: I am getting ill now, I am useless, I don't care anymore, let me die, you don't care, I am ashamed, you must leave me alone, they must leave me alone, I am dying now, I am very scared. Suddenly I feel I get completely cleared inside of any struggle, discomfort and unpleasant feelings whatsoever. I suspect I jumped out of myself; how can it be so silent, quiet and nice inside myself? I simply cannot at all see or sense where I should have jumped. Therefore I think I still was in myself and that the peace was due to me having won the last and decisive battle against the ultimate evil! Then I got so sleepy that I had to lie down on the floor and rest for about half an hour. Next I sat up again and started releasing. I went into them all, and "I am ashamed" and "I am very scared" (of what might happen to me; to get insane, etc.) were particularly tough. I sense, like I have been sensing the whole day that I have not even got a façade at all; that there is nothing I can use, I am completely nude. Anna was the borderline/schizophrenic girl, and now that I have released that, I feel I have got almost no personality! I have to define myself on a new, clean slate and from the beginning. Who am I? This appears a relevant question now... At home I take out the telephone. I do not know what to say to people, and I do not want to talk with Søren.

My girlfriend is visiting me, and I tell her sincerely how I have experienced not respecting her and that I want to apologize for that. I saw my lack of respect towards her expressed, because I never phoned her and took too long to reply to her messages on the answering machine, the same for her e-mails, and too many times I cancelled our appointments. Then I said that for this reason I find I have not been a friend, nor am I motivated/feel like being her friend, and that we should stop it here. Furthermore I tell her that I have the feeling of breaking a pattern of hers about always giving and not getting or wanting to receive anything in return. I say I do not want to help her maintaining that pattern of hers; neither she nor I deserve that. Although I had got red rings under my eyes after the day's massive, heartrending crying, I was feeling remarkably well as she visited me. What I said and did was feeling so right, and actually it was the first thing I felt right as an ex-schizophrenic, right indeed. It made me feel indescribably well to be so sincere towards her and conclude a malfunctioning friendship. I found it was really smart for my part.

In the evening the shame come up in me again and "I am very scared" comes also up again, and I let go of the sentence. However, it is as if I did not fully succeed in getting rid of the shame. Later I talk with my friend; she is tidying up too, and next we talk about my day's events. I told her then that I could feel in myself I had to go away for some days, to a strange place, where nobody knows me in order to be and get closer to an answer as to who I am. It feels right. I told her I wanted to go to the youth hostel in the north. She approved and said she found it felt right too. Furthermore we talked about my family name, because I was ashamed of it due to my father's family, and now I also feel Anna does not match. She asked me to think about some other names, about how I found them, and about what I find is matching. We discuss several options and it sounds great! Really beautiful and it feels right too. Yes it feels good, indeed.

Thursday night

I wake early in the morning. Friday morning; my heart is galloping, and I can feel I am afraid that Søren might get angry with me, about my reporting sick, about perhaps me not having contacted him at all for several days or him not being able to contact me. I am scared. At 5:30 am I phone him and leave a message that I am ill. Fall asleep until about 7 am and again sleep until 10 am. Then I start getting ready to leave for the north. It feels so right and as a necessity to leave for a couple of days. Now it is as if even the apartment makes me frustrated and I guess maintains me in a wrong image of myself. I was very much in a hurry to leave home today. In the train on my way up I got unwell. Thought again of Søren's probable anger; will he feel that I let him down, or will he think "All right, this was Anna, she was a schizophrenic; I am so happy to have got rid of her"? Now I am able to concentrate on the important things.

The sentence "I'm not important" comes up. Released, hmmm. I don't know about Søren; I'll see. From one train I transferred to a little train to go further and when getting off, I caught sight of the wonderful woods. My eyes filled with tears, and for a short while I was enjoying getting overwhelmed by nature's beauty. What a gift, so wonderful it is, I am thinking. I find the youth hostel and have got about one hour and a half before checking in. I go down to the sea; it smells good of seaweed, it's windy. I sit a moment on a big stone and then can feel how the beautiful forest is pulling me in. I go up there again and get completely reabsorbed and warm inside by its beauty, how differentiated it appears in all its multicolored autumnal glory and how spiced it smells. I take in all its beauty and have got to stop many times, just to enjoy the sight and the smell. I have got the feeling of being at the right place and of belonging to. I walk about and finally reach the top, up in the woods, and find (am pulled by it) a very fine spot on the colored foliage carpet, among the woods' probably oldest trees. I look at them, smiling and then sit down among them. From there I have got the view over the woods, a few houses and the sea. A perfect spot, indeed! I'm feeling so fine there! I gathered various things from the woods to decorate my room, and by the way I am enjoying to the full nature's abundant and formidable grace, grandiosity and beauty. Perfect spot!

On getting my room I settle and lie down to rest/sleep. I'm up again in the evening and go down to eat in an Italian restaurant close by. From there I call my friend. She praised me a lot for having left and said that it is so brave and strong of me, just to sit down in the train and go and stay up there by myself. It also feels tough, actually. It has been hard as well. It is difficult to be in me, especially when having to relate to other people; for what am I going to say and what am I going to do? I know it will come little by little, that it just does not come at once, and that most likely a long period with a lot of nudity is awaiting me. I will cope with that too. Afterwards I walked down to the shore, in the woods as well as up on the road. I could sense that I have almost got rid of my strained relation to darkness. I could easily be in darkness at the seashore, walk through the dark woods down to the sea, and I was feeling fine. It is not completely okay, but I believe it will become. At the youth hostel I am writing in my bed. I have written 18 pages now, and it does me good to have got this whole story down on paper. It is always a relief for me to be writing about it, as if it does not any longer haunt me in the same way; thereby I get control of it. The image of a chicken, its head just broken through the shell, peeping at the world for the first time; like this I am feeling today. Now I am looking forwards like a new-born baby-bird; I see the world once more.

Saturday

After a nice bath I dressed and got ready to go out enjoying the nature. To begin with I must say that the sun has been shining on me the whole day; so beautiful and fine that I could not help saying hallo, while warming me on the outside and on the inside. This grew into many greetings. I was down near a Castle and was sitting at the end of the avenue with the sun on my face. The place was really beautiful and minimalistic. I proceeded a bit towards the city, but it was not the right way; too many cars, houses and first and foremost, too much noise. Therefore I went back and followed the beach with my recently purchased goods in the bag: chips and white bread, uhmmm. How great an outing it had been! I could sense how I got calmed and at the same time boosted from listening to the roar of the waves. I sat down on a big stone, on the cushion I had brought along, enjoyed the sound of the water and shuddered slightly at the warm sunbeams. While sitting there I thought of it once again: that I am an unwritten leaf and that right now I am exceptionally lucky, because I have got the chance to shape my life and myself like I want it. Now I can cultivate the capacities, skills and qualities I greatly prefer to possess, and this without the usual, rotten wreckage in tow, which could prevent me from doing it. There is a huge opportunity right now! I was also thinking this means that now I will actually be capable of getting/achieving ANYTHING I want. I just have to set about getting/achieving it. I walked about 6 km, along the beach and walked back via the woods. I thought of the song “The woods around the country are turning yellow now” and changed the title into “The woods around the country are glowing now” because I find that was what they actually did. The woods are unbelievably beautiful right now, in fact my eyes filled with tears. It is indeed a huge gift for me to be up here in the beautiful nature. It was, no doubt, the completely right impulse to follow! As I returned I began to paint/color a bit in the coloring book. However, it did not really mean anything to me though, so I did not finish the drawing. It was so boring ... Then I laid down to rest. I dreamed a little, but as I did not manage to maintain the dream, I forgot it again.

Now I have been taking a bath and I want to read a little, before going to sleep again. Tomorrow I shall check out in the morning. I am curious to know whether I will wake up, having got no watch. What I have been experiencing has been right: To stay in the pleasure: going for a walk today, giving myself in to the pleasure; not holding back at all and being able to stay in it. To give myself for: the anger. The same principle as for the pleasure: not holding back, being one hundred percent in it. - This is to be alive!

Saturday night

I twist about miserably in my bed, sweat as if I had got a very high temperature. The anger is huge, and while lying here I am full of it. I beat the mattress, swear, snub them, and then begin projecting anger onto Søren. I get angry with him at the way he treated me this week; the rough way mixed with an apparent indifference as to the way he had been reflecting me. Then the suicide thoughts appear:

- pistol: too much mess and too traumatic for those who find me
- cut my throat: same thing as with the pistol

- cut the wrists: then I shall suffer too long
- liquidation: I could pay someone to do it; this seems the best, until I am thinking of:
- overdose: which would be much better. A second later I think that I would probably not know the correct dosage, but would brain-damage myself and end as a vegetable, dribbling and not even being able to communicate to people that they must kill me. Then Søren would call me, hold me close, and this would be the ultimate hell; me not being able to communicate, only dribble. Now I cry and am totally miserable. I still sweat fever. I think then: Stop – just be quiet. One day at the time. I say aloud: “I bring life and joy. I bring life. I bring life.” quite a lot of times, and this calms me; this slowly makes me relax. [Anna is here assuming responsibility for her own existence at the most deep level; she is facing the need to choose to live or to die, accepting life on its own conditions or not accepting it. This is really the deepest level of existential choice for any human being: do you want to live or do you want to die? And it is a strictly personal question; nobody can really help you out here, you need to solve this for yourself, as Anna instinctively did].

Monday

At long last I had a decent conversation with Søren. I had hurt his feelings, made him sad. He said I did it to create a distance between us. I told him that I was fond of him. He thanked and finished the conversation saying he was fond of me too.

Subjects: detachment, independence.

I slept very bad tonight, Søren and our understanding dialogue about “what did happen” the last few days being constantly in my thoughts. I even wrote a poem while shifting about restlessly.

Tuesday

I was at my gestalt therapist today. Further I am thinking that if I play my cards well I can end as something big. With my story, my intuitive intelligence and my courage I think I can become an entirely tough therapist. Watch me!

Later I talked with Søren; he was making fun of me and said I would soon be able to take my gestalt therapist in therapy. It was funny said, and I must admit that later on I will not forget her face, while telling her how I had been experiencing my therapy. Not only was she gaping, she also realized that she was facing a very intelligent girl, who had just discovered how intelligent she was. An educational experience, indeed!

Let me finish here by mentioning that my personal development will no doubt carry on. I have been releasing so amazingly much insecurity. Never before have I been feeling so confident that everything will turn out all right. I find I keep on getting ever more gorgeous, and I am sure I shall get the best boyfriend in the whole world. I am in the process of being quite happy; I am not miserable any more. I am convinced I shall become entirely happy.

Discussion

The major problem of working with incest or childhood sexual abuse patients using the four cardinal steps of holistic medicine is the extreme degree of closeness and intimacy this process involves. In this case representing the worst possible abuse over a long period in childhood, there is hardly a feeling that has not been felt and hardly a spot on the patient's body that has not been touched by the abuse.

- Love
- Trust
- Holding
- Processing

To do this in an ethical way, a strict ethical code must be followed (1,25,26,31-33), but actually more than this, a deep ethical contemplation is needed to adapt existent ethical theory to the holistic medical clinic. Today, there are three main lines of ethics:

- Normative ethics, setting the fundamental standards, is a most important subject for medicine and the physician and when it comes to the holistic medicine ethics it is not only a means for securing that the patients is not suffering any harm – the first Hippocratic demand to the physician was: do no harm – but it is also a primary condition for the holistic medicine to work in the clinic. The reason for this is, that only a totally focused intent to help the patient and to be at his or her service can make the changes in the patient's existence and consciousness correlated to the holistic process of healing. So, in a way, the ethical perspective, the goodwill and intention of being at service for the patient is what helps. In a way it is a much more simple task in bio-medicine, when it comes to quality control, because if the examination is done correctly, the diagnosis right and the medication with advise according to the book, then the "pneumonia" is optimally treated. In consciousness-based medicine it is not so simple. If you meet a patient without respect, you lose the trust of the patient, and the cure will not work. It is as simple as that. So if you are not intending respect, you will fail. You will also fail, if you are not aware, careful, accepting, or acknowledging the true nature of the patient. And you will fail, if you are not able to support your patient in feeling, understanding or in letting go of negative beliefs. So actually, holistic medicine is an art based on ethics, while bio-medicine to a large extent is a skill based on mental knowledge and intelligence. How does the ethics of holistic medicine fit to ethical theory? This is not a simple question to answer.
- Teleological ethical theory, the one of the philosophical main ethical positions, focused on consequences and claim that what is obtained by an act is the essential. The deontological position, on the other hand, is about duty and claims that the intention is what really counts. It is very interesting, that because we are dealing in a way directly with consciousness and experiences, the teleological and the deontological position are both true at the same time, in holistic medicine. The intention creates the result, and actually the result mirror the

intent. This is fairly true, when it comes to holistic healing, but it is not true in absolute terms. If I intent to help a patient mortally ill with cancer and I prolong the sufferings without creating any good for the patient, I have had good intensions, but my results were bad. Sometimes this problem is solved by asking the patient what he or she wants, but the duty-ethical position is that deep inside every life has the wish to live; the patient might take the position of the ego, not his true self and so he is tricked and the physician, following this patient's verbally expressed choices, is tricked as well. Therefore suicide is not a good idea. Interestingly, the two different approaches to ethics can be seen as either a preference for power – what can be obtained - or a preference for love and purpose. But there seems to be one more fundamental dimension in human existence, and that is gender, or sexuality, and the balance between these two.

- The feministic ethics arise from the third position, claiming that the two genders carry two different sets of values: It is necessary to be conscious of these two very different sets of human values, for if you happen to exclude one set, you will pull or push reality out of balance, and the intended value cannot be realized. In holistic medicine this argument seems to be extremely important, in that the classical female values – represented by the qualities of holding – is to be complemented by the set of classical male values – represented by the qualities of processing. It is important to understand that these qualities are not bound to sex or gender in a simple way and the holistic physician can provide both male and female qualities. He can be “the good mother” for a patient, who never had one, to heal the early wounds of failure, scolding or neglect. A core idea for the Jungian inspired holistic medicine is that everybody contains both the male and the female, and only if both parts are understood, accepted and integrated, can the human being – patient as well as physician – be a whole, healthy, talented and happy person. Interestingly, many of the “bad” things physicians have done in the best of intentions[34], like clitoridectomy as a treatment for “nymphomania”, can be understood as a result of the feminine values not being sufficiently represented.

Clinical work with incest and other sexually abused patients have forced us to put much more focus on gender and sexuality, as many problems are found here symptomatically, and as many more arises from the lack of joy and pleasure coming from the patient not being in balance on the male-female axis (35). Our ethical position is now a balanced view between these three extreme ethical positions. We must have the best of intentions, but we must also look carefully at our results, not harming our patients. We must be loving and powerful, but we cannot ignore the dimension of gender and sexuality, how impractical and hard-to-integrate-with-hard-medical-science such dimensions might appear.

The holistic physician is, like any other physician in any medical paradigm, free to choose any of the three philosophical positions of ethics, but maybe there is one clear ethical position that will be of most benefit to the patient. To explore this different field of ethics is an important part of the job to be done in future papers on holistic medical ethics. Some of the main arguments of Emanuel Kant, John Stuart Mill and the feministic thinkers must be discussed in this connection.

There is also the problem of normative ethics: it varies from culture to culture, so what is the universal applicability of clinical holistic medicine? For example, the use of touch and acupressure through the vagina are basically unacceptable in the Asian cultures. The universal applicability seems to be that loving care, trust, holding and processing can be a part of any treatment, anywhere on the planet. The degree of intimacy must always be adjusted to the actual culture and the local legal requirements. As some the procedures involve close physical contact between the therapist and the patient, how can we ensure that the therapist is not exploiting the patient in the process? This is one of the most important questions, but sexual exploitation is fairly simple to avoid as sexual behavior between the physician and his patient is forbidden ever since Hippocrates. But there are other more subtle, emotional kinds of exploitation, i.e. the physician wanting confirmation or admiration from his patients, treating them in ways to obtain that. The only way to avoid this is by strict supervision; the supervisor is much more likely to observe power-games and unwanted transference and counter-transference than the physician or therapist him- or herself.

Another important question is, if the more physically intimate procedures are consistent with the code of practice of the mainstream medical and counseling associations in the Western world? Many counseling associations in psychiatry, psychology and cognitive therapy prohibit counselors to have physical contact with clients of the opposite sex and touching the clients' genitals is strictly prohibited. On the other hand, there are many organizations of body workers that stress the importance of intimate physical contact in the therapy. As the clinical holistic medicine toolbox is not yet endorsed by the mainstream, we need to alert the readers that the related procedures are more or less controversial in nature, in all therapeutic fields where bodywork are not usual.

Finally, what are the limitations of using verbal reports to support the claim that the intervention is successful? It is important to understand that both the therapist and the patient must in the end feel that the therapy has been successful. Such verbal reports do not necessary prove that the therapy is going well, but at all times the therapist must follow the patient from an objective position and evaluate how the presented written material from the patient can be understood. If the patient considers life is worth living, the therapist should evaluate carefully if the patient have any tendency to commit suicide. Very often the written words in the patient's diary are expressing strong feelings and deep existential thoughts that in another context, i.e. a suicide letter from a desperate teenager, would mean the highest alert. In therapy, where the feelings are expected and the process is in full control, even expressed thoughts of committing suicide almost never indicate that the patient has such actual plans. The diary is simply about containing and integrating the unbearable feelings from the past.

Conclusion

Anna's story showed us what it takes to heal from extreme severe sexual abuse for years of her early childhood. It is really amazing that she managed to continue her process of healing even when the emotional pain get still worse. The secret was the environment with so many people that wanted to help her, her courage to open up and accept to receive the help she needed. Anna's life would undoubtedly have been a life in and out of mental institutions, if she had not done this great work of healing. It is important to stress that it was Anna, who

did the work herself; she wrote hundreds of pages of diary, she worked for many hundreds of hours on letting go of hundreds upon hundreds of negative decisions taken in the painful events of abuse.

The role of the physician is as the good and patient father, who gives the patient the love, care, awareness, respect acknowledgment and acceptance that she needs so badly, because she never received it from her own father or mother, who just did all the wrong things in one long series of extremely painful and systematic traumas.

What is to be learned from this story is that almost any patient can heal, when giving the proper support. We believe that the support must be holistic in its approach to mobilize the necessary resources for healing. The holistic process theory of healing gives a good model of this healing; a source to unlimited resources seems to be the recovery of the purpose of life (29,36-42) and working with this in the therapy seems to be what motivated Anna and kept her going in spite of all odds.

We are honored to have worked with Anna and we send her all our best wishes for the future, which we actually expect to be excellent. Because of all the existential pain, where you take responsibility, will end as learning, insight and give you wisdom to love, forgive and lead a rich, full and successful life. We believe that Anna will get much more out of life, than a normal girl who never was abused and never healed her existence from the most fundamental level. The lesson for us all is to learn from Anna's history, which she so generously has shared with us. Life is really nice, strong and intrinsically valuable that even the darkest of event and the most evil of men cannot really destroy it. As long as the body is intact the person inside can heal, but only in love.

Most importantly, Anna and many patients after her have demonstrated that in spite of the depth of the existential crisis, holistic existential therapy seems to support existential responsibility so well, that the therapy is very safe for the patients. With more than 500 patients treated with holistic existential therapy at the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine and Sexology in Copenhagen, we have never experienced a single patient, who has tried to commit suicide during or after therapy.

Neither have we seen a patient, who developed a mental illness provoked by the treatments, because the existential crisis is always temporary. This implies that holistic existential therapy is safer than standard biomedical psychiatric treatment.

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Rehabilitation of Philosophy of Life during Holistic Existential Therapy for Childhood Sexual Abuse

When we experience life events with overwhelming emotional pain, we can escape this pain by making decisions (in our mind) that transfer responsibility from our existence to the surrounding world. By doing this, we slowly destroy the essence of our being, health, quality of life, and ability to function. The case of Anna (see chapter 23 and 24) is an excellent example of such a systematic destruction of self, done to survive the extreme pressure from childhood abuse and sexual abuse.

The case study shows that the damage done to us by traumatic events is not on our body or soul, but rather our philosophy of life. The important consequence is that we can heal our existence by letting go of the negative decisions taken in the past painful and traumatic situations. By letting go of the life-denying sentences, we come back to life and take responsibility for our own life and existence.

The healing of Anna's existence was done by existential holistic therapy. Although the processing did not always run smoothly, as she projected very charged material on the therapists on several occasions, the process resulted in full health and a good quality of life due to her own will to recover and heal completely.

The case illustrates the inner logic and complexity of intensive holistic therapy at the most difficult moment, where only a combination of intensive medical, psychiatric, and sexological treatment could set her free. In the paper, we also present a meta-perspective on intensive holistic therapy and its most characteristic phases.

Introduction

In order to find a way to rehabilitate victims of childhood sexual maltreatment, many forms of therapy have been used (1-14), but not always with satisfactory results. Therefore, we needed to take the more radical and confrontative methods and therapeutic tools of the classical Hippocratic sexological clinic into use. We did this to facilitate the important

process of existential, emotional, mental, and sexual healing that can take the patient all the way back to a normal life.

We have often seen such a treatment successful in the end in spite of our deep skepticism at the beginning of the treatment, because of the patient’s very poor state of being. We therefore believe it is important to analyze and reflect over the journeys of a long and often difficult treatment process for these patients.

Anna was a borderline patient (15-17), student, 22 years of age, who had completely repressed over 100 episodes of childhood sexual abuse. She has recovered completely, including regaining her full emotional range, through holistic existential therapy (18), individually and in a group (19,20). The therapy took 18 months and more than 100 hours of intensive holistic existential therapy.

In the beginning of the therapy, the issues was her physical and mental health (21,22); in the middle of the therapy, the central issue was about her purpose of life (23) and her love life; and at the end of the therapy, the issue was about gender, character, spirit, and sexuality.

The strategy was to build up her strength for several months, mobilizing all her hidden resources and motivation for living, before the painful old traumas were confronted and integrated. The therapy was based on the quality of life philosophy (24-31) and theoretically based on the life mission theory (23), the theory of ego (32), the theory of talent (33), the theory of the evil side of man (34), the theory of human character (35) and the holistic process theory of healing (18).

The clinical procedures included conversational therapy and training in philosophy of life (36). The tools in use were the advanced holistic medical toolbox and the group therapeutic tools (19), extended use of therapeutic touch (37), holistic pelvic examination (38,39), acceptance through touch (40) and acupressure though the vagina (41) in order to integrate the early traumas bound to the pelvis and scar tissue in the sexual organs.

Table 1. Responsibility for life scale.

Degree of responsibility for your own existence (Estimated Percentage)	State of Consciousness (Many Sub-states Exist)	Behavior (Other Patterns Might Exist)
100% responsibility Mentally healthy	Present, fully aware, interpreting the world according to your purpose of life	Succeeding, playing
90–80%	Emotional pain (denying and repressing the feelings)	Fighting, attacking
66%	Emotionally overwhelmed, psychic death (denying the purpose of life)	Fighting, defending
Neurotic	Escaping from here and now	Flight, running
50%	Cannot escape, denying here and now	Freezing, helplessness
40%	Destructing the perception (wiping out, “blackness”, “closing eyes”, denying the mind)	Shocked, numb, lame
33%		
Psychotic		
20–10%	Dreaming (perception and behavior not related to the outer world)	Dream state
Hallucinating (substituting perception)		
0% responsibility Dead	Unconscious, in coma (denying the body)	Physically dying, suicidal, evil and destructive

The therapy had two phases; the first was a normal phase, where the patient was integrating old material destabilizing her mental state (21,22). After months of therapy, she broke through to a layer of repressed material revealing substantial sexual abuse. The traumas started as physical replay of rape traumas followed by the associated emotions and feelings, and finally came her insight and understanding, leading her to identify and let go of hundreds of negative sentences, the content of which is the issue of this paper.

It seems as if she worked her way up the scale of existential responsibility, from the hallucinated state in the bottom to the free and responsible state at the top of the scale (see table 1) (22). The scale describes how existential responsibility — seen from inside (the state of consciousness) and outside (the behavior) — is first lost and then found as the patient climbs the ladder of hallucination, blacking out, denial, escape, psychic death, unbearable emotional pain, to freedom of perception. To rehabilitate a psychotic patient in a hallucinatory state of consciousness, you need to help him or her confront the trauma that originally motivated the escape into hallucination. In doing this, you must carefully avoid pushing them deeper down into suicide (22).

Just before the end of the therapy, Anna had a severe existential crisis, where she confronted the value of her own life and she decided to live and accept life as it is, including the shadow of herself and the experiences of evil in her personal history. Interestingly, when she was healed at the end of therapy, she had to go to the bottom of the scale to confront death with her totality, to finally win life and assume full responsibility and her freedom, which was lost in the past.

Table 2. The most important sentences Anna let go of in her holistic existential therapy (as they appeared in the therapy).

1.	I trouble other people	40.	There is nothing to	75.	I am worthless, am I
2.	I am troublesome		come after	76.	not?
3.	I am a burden	41.	It is absurd	77.	I hate her
4.	I am impossible	42.	When I come, I am	78.	I loathe her
			dying		She is nasty
5.	It is my fault	43.	I cannot stand having	79.	She is disgusting
6.	I am not good enough		it inside me	80.	I am a failure
7.	I do not deserve to live	44.	I cannot find my	81.	I am out in the space
8.	I do not deserve life		bearings at all	82.	I have failed
9.	I have clocked out	45.	This is the worst thing	83.	I cannot be in myself
10.	This is unreal		you have done to me	84.	I want to leave
11.	I am empty	46.	He is a pig	85.	I am worthless
12.	I am hollow	47.	He disgusts me	86.	Could he think of
13.	I want to go away	48.	He scares me		anything sexual?
14.	I want to live	49.	He is like them	87.	Nobody is there for me
15.	I get relieved	50.	I do not care	88.	I am miserable

Table 2. (Continued).

16.	I decide – never mind	51.	I bet you will get it!	89.	Now it is enough! I cannot give birth to my child like that. – It will be a trauma for the baby
17.	She does not want to	52.	He is cold	90.	He is going to kill me
18.	I do not want to hear it – ever	53.	He is disgusting	91.	There is no room for me
19.	I do not hear it	54.	He does not care	92.	I am nothing
20.	I do not want to know it	55.	He is so violent If you tell it to anybody, nobody will want to have you	93.	She is going to kill me
21.	I do not want to say it	56.		94.	It is really serious
22.	It is not my fault	57.	I have got nobody	95.	I feel sorry for myself
23.	This is not OK	58.	It's really bad	96.	They are going to kill me
24.	This is my secret	59.	I want to die	97.	I feel unwell
25.	You should just know that you will be punished, harder than ever, if you tell it	60.	I cannot have this	98.	It is fine you came, and now you must leave
26.	It is not me	61.	Unbearable pain	99.	I am good, warm and affectionate
27.	I do not want to	62.	Why didn't they kill me?	100.	She is a schizophrenic
28.	You get punished	63.	You bet I will get it out	101.	I am a schizophrenic
29.	I do not want to hear it	64.	I cannot do that	102.	I am ashamed
30.	I can do nothing	65.	I get smashed up	103.	I am very scared
31.	I cannot stay anywhere	66.	I go to pieces	104.	I am not important
32.	I bring warmth and joy	67.	I will ...	105.	I bring life and joy
33.	I am ugly	68.	Be careful/do it carefully	106.	I bring life
34.	I am afraid of men	69.	It is not so bad	107.	
35.	I feel sorry for myself	70.	I do not want any more	108.	What did happen?
36.	She is too much	71.	Nobody likes me		
37.	I am getting punished	72.	It is odd		
38.	I do not need you	73.	It is really curious		
39.	I need nobody	74.	I am not good, am I?		

*While letting go of these decisions, she healed her existence and recovered from a dysfunctional state caused by about the similar number of sexual abuse events in her childhood, including rape.

The negative, life-denying decisions

Table 2 is a list of the most important negative and life-denying sentences that were released during the therapy. The sentences were the essence of the gestalts that were integrated in the therapy; they are both feelings and thoughts at the same time, making them extremely to the point of the experience. In Table 3, the sentences are listed according to the responsibility for life scale.

Treatment method

The treatment of Anna and the principles behind it are described in chapters 23 and 24 and two earlier published papers (16,17). The case of Anna illustrates the inner logic and complexity of intensive holistic therapy, when it comes to be most difficult, where only a combination of intensive medical, psychiatric, and sexological treatment could set her free. The treatment was intensive existential holistic therapy with the theories of sexuality used to structure and interpret the elements and phases of the therapy strongly inspired by Freud, Jung, Reich, and Lowen. The focus on unconsciousness and the use of terms such as “projection” (transference) is an example of the (neo-)Freudian perspective.

Table 3. The organization of the sentences of denial of her life in the many different existential dimensions (33) fits to the scheme of the responsibility scale and the degeneration of perception.

90% Responsibility		Emotional Pain (Denying and Repressing the Feelings)		Defending	
1.	I have failed	16.	I am ugly	24.	I am worthless, am I not?
2.	Could he think of anything sexual?	17.	I am afraid of men	25.	I hate her
3.	I cannot give birth to my child like that. – It will be a trauma for the baby	18.	I feel sorry for myself	26.	I loathe her,
4.	I am good, warm and affectionate	19.	It is really bad	27.	She is disgusting
5.	I trouble other people	20.	Unbearable pain	28.	I am worthless
6.	I am troublesome	21.	I do not want any more	29.	I am miserable
7.	I am a burden	22.	It is not so bad	30.	I feel so unwell
8.	It is my fault	23.	I am not good, am I?	31.	I am ashamed
9.	I am not good enough			32.	I am very scared

Table 3. (Continued).

10.	I do not deserve life			33.	I am not important
11.	She does not want to				
12.	It is not my fault				
13.	This is not OK				
14.	I do not want to				
15.	I bring warmth and joy				
50% Responsibility		Emotionally Overwhelmed, Psychic Death (Denying the Purpose of Life)		Fighting	
34.	I want to live	40.	I cannot stand having it inside me	46.	I want to go away
35.	I get relieved			47.	I cannot have this
36.	You get punished	41.	I cannot find my bearings at all	48.	Nobody likes me
37.	She is too much			49.	I want to leave
38.	I am getting punished	42.	He disgusts me	50.	Now it is enough!
39.	When I come, I am dying	43.	I do not care	51.	It is really serious
		44.	I have got nobody		
		45.	I want to die		
40% Responsibility		Escaping from Here and Now		Flight, Running	
52.	I have clocked out	55.	I don't hear it	59.	I can't stay anywhere
53.	I decide NEVER MIND	56.	I don't want to know it	60.	I am out in the space
54.	I do not want to hear it - ever	57.	I don't want to say it	61.	I cannot be in myself
		58.	I don't want to hear it		
30% Responsibility		Cannot Escape, Denying Here and Now		Freezing, Helplessness	
62.	I am hollow	68.	He is a pig	75.	You bet I'll get it out
63.	It is not me	69.	He scares me	76.	I cannot do that
64.	I can do nothing	70.	He is cold	77.	I will ...
65.	I do not need you	71.	He is disgusting	78.	Be careful/do it carefully
66.	I need nobody	72.	He does not care	79.	It is odd
67.	There is nothing to come after	73.	He is so violent	80.	It is really curious
			If you tell it to anybody,	81.	I bring life and joy
		74.	nobody will want to have you	82.	I bring life.
				83.	What did happen

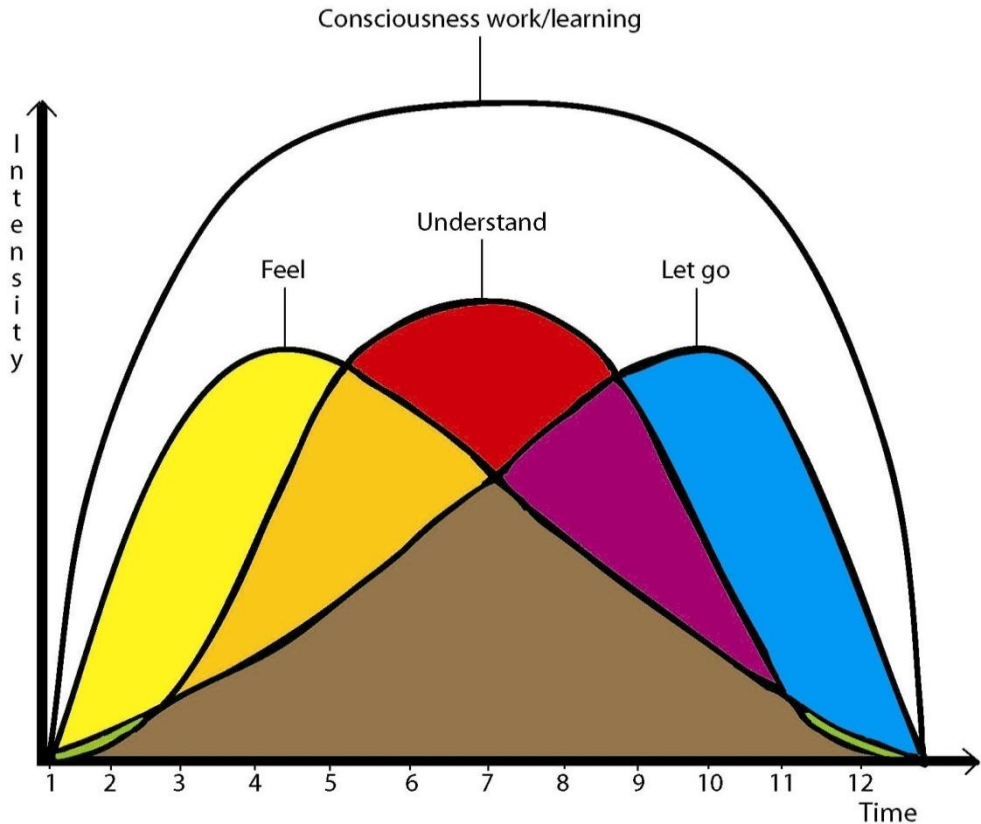
Table 3. (Continued).

20% Responsibility		Destructing the Perception (Wiping Out, “Blackness”, “Closing Eyes”, Denying the Mind)		Shocked, Numb, Lame	
84.	This is unreal	88.		89.	I am a failure
85.	I am empty		He is like them	90.	There is no room for me
86.	This is a secret You should just know that you			91.	I am nothing
87.	will be punished, harder than ever, if you tell it			92.	It’s fine you came, and now you must leave
10% Responsibility		Hallucinating(Substituting Perception)		Dreaming (Perception and Behavior Not Related to the Outer World)	
93.	It is absurd	94.	She is a schizophrenic	95.	I am a schizophrenic
0% Responsibility		Unconscious, in Coma (Denying the Body)		Physically Dying, Suicidal, Evil and Destructive	
96.	I do not deserve to live	99.	Why didn’t they kill me?	103.	He is going to kill me
97.	This is the worst thing you have done to me	100.	I get smashed up	104.	They are going to kill me
		101.	I go to pieces		
98.	I bet you will get it!	102.	She is going to kill me		

The therapy started with addressing the layer of “quality of life-health-ability”; the next steps addressed the issues of love, consciousness, and sexuality and the third, final, and deepest layer of existential coherence. The patient ran through a series of steps in her personal process of metamorphosis (see figure 1) with three severe existential crises during the therapy:

- A psychotic crisis where the content of the stream of consciousness looked psychotic, while the patient was still with a part of her consciousness in present time, still able to perform normally, stayed in contact with the world and therefore not psychotic in the classical, psychiatric sense of the word. This was a necessary, but very painful phase of the therapy, where she integrated an old psychotic state of consciousness from her tormented childhood dominated by violence and sexual abuse.
- A visionary crisis where she understood her true nature as a human being and “remembered” the collective consciousness of mankind. In this phase, she “plugged” into being human again.
- A suicidal crisis where the content of the stream of consciousness looked like she wanted to die, while the patient also here with a part of her consciousness

stayed in present time, still able to perform normally, to stay in contact with the outer world and therefore neither psychotic in the classical, psychiatric sense.



The phases of adult human metamorphosis

- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1) Philosophical opening phase | 7) "Suicidal" crisis |
| 2) Therapeutical beginning | 8) Integrative phase |
| 3) Therapeutic "pre-psychotic" phase | 9) Philosophical integration |
| 4) "Psychotic" crisis | 10) Secondary breakthrough |
| 5) Visionary phase | 11) Re-entry |
| 6) Primary breakthrough | 12) Re-adjustment of life |

Figure 1. The process of holistic healing seen as three phases of feeling (yellow), understanding (red), and letting go (blue) of negative beliefs, attitudes, and decisions. As an end result, the process was improving the patient's philosophy of life and thus allowed the patient to rebalance existence and to assume responsibility for life. During the process, the patient's will re-established quality of life, health, and existential coherence, along with the ability to love, understand, and enjoy the whole spectrum of feelings and emotions, including sexuality. Many patients in intensive therapy experience the healing as a series of phenomena or breakthroughs and existential crises with characteristic content. The most intense crises are metaphorically called the "psychotic", the "visionary", and the "suicidal" crises. They include feelings of going insane, not knowing the world or oneself, and wanting to die. Knowing what is coming next in the course of therapy is of great help to the patient, making it much easier to confront and integrate the often extremely intense, painful emotions and states of being, arising from integrating the early childhood traumas. The 12 steps (see figure) are some possible steps in the process of healing and human transformation; understood though an ancient and powerful metaphor as the steps of "human metamorphosis".

The intensity of her therapy followed a bell shaped curve (see figure 1) with a lot of minor arches rising and falling though the therapy. Interestingly “the tone or melody” of the processes changed during the process, from being dominated by painful emotions in the beginning, to understanding and revelation in the middle of the therapy and a focus on philosophy and “letting go” of negative beliefs in the end (see figure 2).

There are several methodological problems in using the Responsibility of Life Scale. First, the best way of operationalization has not yet been fully explored. Second, it would be necessary to know the inter-rater reliability of the scale before the scale could be meaningfully used in the clinical context. Interestingly, this pattern of “metamorphosis”, taking the patient from being like “the butterfly’s larvae” into the transformations state of pupae, finally into being the butterfly she was originally meant to be, seems to be so characteristic that the dominating quality of “feel-understand-let go” indicates where the patient is in the course of the therapy. This is very important as we often need a clue to find out, if there is more important, hidden material in the subconsciousness of the patient, so that therapy can be terminated. To create table 2 and table 3 was not so easy. Basically, we still need a systematic coding system to categorize the responses and we also need to prove that the responses have been coded in an objective manner. The presented meta-perspective of the therapy of Anna is therefore still a qualitative approach to understanding the process of intensive, holistic healing.

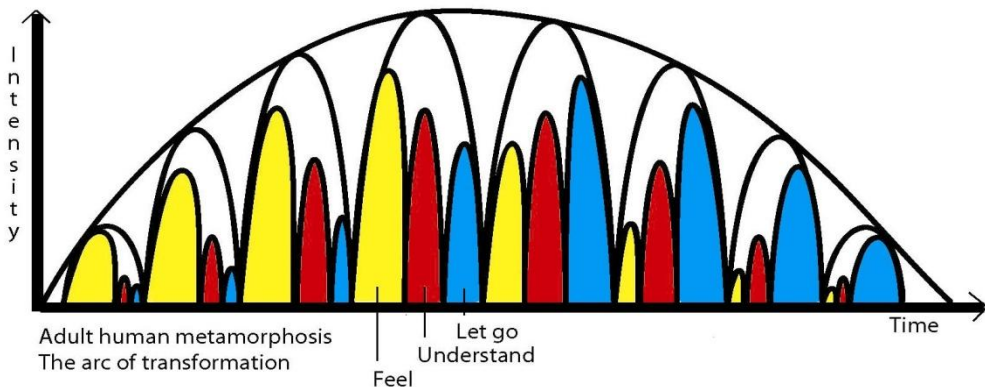


Figure 2. The arcs of transformation. The intensity of emotion, mental learning, and philosophical development follows a typical pattern in intensive holistic therapy (we use the metaphor “adult human metamorphosis”).

Discussion

The findings of these negative decisions and the content of these seem to be in agreement with the holistic process theory (18) and the holistic theory of mental illnesses (21,22). The organization of the sentences according to the steps of the Responsibility for Life Scale was less successful, but still doable.

The decay of existence seems to happen somewhat chaotically; the timeline of the appearance of the sentences in the therapy did not reveal much structure, as sentences with all

kinds of content revealed themselves as disorderly and chaotic. It seemed that the destruction of life was done extremely creatively in every situation as a reduction, which then solves the problem in every case. It is very interesting that many different sentences can coexist and that the person has the resources to come back again and again, while still carrying the destructive sentences in her unconsciousness.

It seems fair to assume that the load of negative beliefs revealed by the therapy could have the effect of making Anna severely mentally ill, even schizophrenic, and that the integration of this material saved her mental health and general well being for life. When we experience life events with overwhelming emotional pain, we can escape this pain by making decisions in our mind that transfer responsibility from our existence to the surrounding world. By doing this, we destroy our being, our health, our quality of life, and our ability to function little by little. The case of Anna is an excellent example of such a systematic destruction of self, done to survive the extreme pressure on her existence from three men sexually abusing her systematically during many years of her childhood.

The most surprising aspect revealed by the study of Anna's case is that the damage done to us by traumatic events is not on our body or our soul, but on our philosophy of life; the way we see and describe our world, life, our self, other people, and the world at large.

The important consequence of this understanding is that we can heal our existence by letting go of the negative decisions taking in the painful and traumatic situations. By letting go of these life-denying sentences, we come back to life and to our natural responsibility for our own existence. We do not come back as a weak and wounded person; no, the real magic of life is that we seem to heal completely and in an absolute sense. We are able to wash all dirt from our bodies and minds, we are able to recover our character and our purpose of life, we are able to return to the brilliant state of being a free soul, and everything that happened, when fully integrated, will not affect us anymore.

The holistic healing of Anna's existence was done by existential holistic therapy. Although the processing did not always run smoothly, as she on several occasions projected very charged material on the therapists, the process ran all the way to full health and a good quality of life, thanks to her own will to recover completely. She wanted to be happy, she decided to take the process all the way to her personal happiness, and this was what made her keep working, until the day she could leave the clinic as a whole and renewed woman.

In our clinical experience, the advanced holistic medical toolbox has the tools needed for integrating even the most horrible of life events and traumas. The combination of holistic psychiatry, sexology, and rehabilitation was successful with even the most difficult and damaged of patients. Even when the patient was mentally ill and severely abused both violently and sexually during many years of her childhood, she could recover fully when she found love, trust, support, and holding enough to heal her existence and in this process, identify and let go of all her negative life decisions and systematically improve her philosophy of life.

A "psychotic crisis" in the middle of the therapy seemed to be a good sign of healing and a "suicidal crisis" at the end of the therapy seemed to be a sign of the patient taking responsibility over her own life.

It is important to underline that in spite of the dramatic metaphors of "psychosis" and "suicide", these metaphors address the content of her consciousness, not her general state of being; she was thus not psychotic in the classical psychiatric meaning of the word at any time during the therapy.

After Anna, we have taken dozens of patients through similar processes without seeing any of them being endangered or harmed. This is very important, as this is the primary reason why even the most intensive, holistic existential therapy is completely safe for the patient, in spite of confronting the most horrible of feelings.

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Advanced Tools for Holistic Medicine and Sexology

According to holistic medical theory the patient will heal, when old painful moments, the traumatic events of life often called “gestalts”, are integrated in the present now. The advanced holistic physician’s and sexologist’s expanded toolbox has many different tools to induce this healing, some which are more dangerous and potentially traumatic than others.

The more intense the therapeutic technique, the more emotional energy will be released and contained in the session, but the higher is also the risk for the therapist to lose control of the session and loose the patient to his or her own dark side. To avoid harming the patient must be the highest priority in holistic existential therapy making sufficient education and training an issue of highest importance.

The concept of "stepping up" the therapy using more and more "dramatic" methods to get access to repressed emotions and events, has lead us to a "therapeutic staircase" with ten steps: 1) establishing the relation, 2) establishing intimacy, trust and confidentiality, 3) giving support and holding, 4) taking the patient into the process of physical, emotional and mental healing, 5) social healing of being in the family, 6) spiritual healing – returning to the abstract wholeness of the soul, 7) healing the informational layer of the body, 8) healing the three fundamental dimensions of existence: love, power and sexuality in a direct way, using among other classical techniques “controlled violence” and “acupressure through the vagina”, 9) mind-expanding and consciousness-transformative techniques like psychotropic drugs used by most medicine men and shamans of the pre-modern cultures, but only rarely by contemporary therapists and 10) techniques transgressing the patients borders, and therefore often traumatizing, like the use of force against the will of the patient.

We believe that the systematic use of the staircase will greatly improve the power and efficiency of the holistic medicine and sexology for the patient and we invite a broad cooperation in scientifically testing the efficiency of the advanced holistic medical and sexological toolbox on the many chronic patients in need for cure.

Introduction

In principle, holistic healing of a person is a simple thing: an old and frozen “now” or “gestalt” containing repressed and painful emotions from past life events need to merge with the present and when this process of integration of denied parts of existence is successfully done, the healing is completed (1-4). In practice the merging is often everything, but simple.

One of the strongest reasons is that the patient really does not want to suffer again (because he has to deal with old “hidden” pain). So the most fundamental principle in clinical holistic medicine is working with the patient’s resistance towards feeling, remembering and confronting the content of the sub-conscious (5). In principle the holistic physician or therapist can do this work in two opposite directions and either go with the resistance or go against it.

In therapeutic practice this is always “a dance”, one step in the one direction and one step in the other (compare with chapter 17 on the often problematic decision making in the holistic medical and sexologic clinic). When you go with the resistance you comfort your patient and win sympathy, when you go against it you raise the patient’s consciousness, awareness and presence. When you go with your patient’s true self, you go against the resistance and when you go with the resistance you go against the patient’s true self.

Unfortunately, because of the patient’s repression of the true self, going with the deepest emotional layer of the patient is often going against the more superficial layer of the patient’s existence and paradoxically this is often experienced by the patient as going against him or her – hence the dance.

As the therapy progress successfully, earlier experiences for the patient’s personal history– the still old repressed painful gestalt – are appearing in the therapeutic sessions. As therapy goes back to earlier in life, more and more abstract existential problems are confronted and the philosophy of life of the patients are gradually turning more positive and responsible (4), while the negative attitudes serve the purpose of justification of displacement of responsibility from self to the outer world.

As the patient often spontaneously moves back in time during the therapy, integrating more and more of the repressed material, the “energy” of the gestalts is normally raising. The reason for this paradoxical situation is that the patient will confront still stronger emotional pains as the therapy goes deeper due to the level of arousal and the intensity of emotions, which is generally higher if the traumas were from childhood.

When the patient is back in early childhood, the emotional intensity is normally quite extreme (compare to Janov’s “Primal Scream”) compared to the emotional intensity of adults and as the regression progresses further into the re-experience of the life in the womb (6). These well-repressed traumas are often so intense, that it takes several persons to support the patient to give enough holding for him or her to fully confront the extremely intense both pleasant and unpleasant subconscious material (7).

The dark side of therapy

To get a patient, who is in need of care and attention, to work in therapy is often quite easy. Physicians often work as therapists after only a few weeks of training, as we know it

from young physicians entering psychiatry. Working with biography and personal history, perception of self and reality, and similar issues are also often quite easy with a motivated patient.

As the therapy goes deeper the patient will reveal a higher and higher degree of resistance and the competence of the physician or therapist must rise accordingly to match the needs. When the therapy takes the patient into the deepest layers of the consciousness the experiences often get quite disturbing for the patient.

The emotional pain will often be overwhelming and the therapist will then meet the dark side, the shadow, of the patient and in this meeting the therapist will often also meet his own shadow. In some cases this shadow can materialize as directly evil towards the physician and others (8).

This can be shocking for the therapist, when the patient suddenly turns with evil intentions towards the therapist, who is only trying to help the patient from the best of intentions. When the therapist uses strong therapeutic techniques to confront the shadow side of the patient, the patient cannot escape and all the negative aspects can then arrange itself around an abstract centre of evil, which in many ways are similar to the good essence of the person, which is his purpose of life, or life mission (9).

Confronting the patient in his negative, evil intended side can take form as the classical ritual of “exorcism” (8), where the patient is completely obsessed with “the devil” or the patient can enter into a psychotic state of mind lasting for minutes, hours or days (10,11). If the therapist is not experienced or confident with the holistic treatment of insanity, the therapist can be overwhelmed as the resistance of the patient “wins the game” and then the holistic therapy can be turned into traditional psychiatry with the danger of creating further trauma and without healing of the patient’s existence, which was the purpose of the therapy.

If the therapist is caught unprepared in the process of meeting the shadow side, which we call negative transference (often happening after a period of positive transference, where the patient has been into strong admiration or even secretly in love with the therapist) and working into the dangerous trap of counter-transference and suddenly being the weaker part, instead of staying strong, balanced and in control of the session, the therapist can also be deeply hurt emotionally.

If the therapist goes completely out of control and into emotionally driven, highly irrational behavior (it can happen when the therapist is strongly hit by what is happening), very unfortunate things can happen. Sometimes the patient will fight to leave the room, while the physician will physically hold him or her back. Afterwards the patient might complain that the therapeutic contract was violated, or even accuse the physician of violent or sexual abuse. Such an experience can be so embarrassing, that it can tempt even a trained therapist to drop his whole carrier as a therapist.

So “the dance” of therapy, as it grows in intensity can turn into a fight and a true nightmare, where the therapist loose all control and the patient’s dark side take over the session. What normally happens in this situation is from a depth-psychological perspective, that powerful gestalts of the therapist himself – his own inner conflicts - materialize during the therapy. The better the therapist knows himself, the farther the therapist has come in his own therapy, the farther into the depth of the ocean of consciousness the therapist himself has penetrated, the farther he/she can also take the patient.

But everybody has their repressed emotions and every therapist must learn in order for severe errors, mistakes and failures not to happen. Constant supervision and personal therapy

is a must and lifelong supervision strongly recommended. Over time the therapist will normally step by step be more confident and competent and able to use still stronger tools from the advanced holistic medical toolbox.

The holistic therapist or sexologists should therefore not expect to be able to use the most difficult tools for the first several years, since it takes a lot of time and experience to learn to lead the session at that speed and intensity; the maturity of the therapist must also be taken into consideration here.

When regular therapy is not enough

The holistic physician and sexologist normally work with love, trust, holding (awareness, respect, care, acceptance and acknowledgment), therapeutic touch, conversational therapy and exercises intended to upgrade the philosophy of life of the patient, combined with the standard medical or sexological assessment and examination (12,13) (see also chapter 27).

Except for a modest risk of verbal abuse and physical intimidation, these techniques must be considered safe for the patient, if they are done correctly and according to a previous therapeutic contract. But these rather risk-free techniques are not always enough to make the patient heal. And failure is not really an option, as failure normally means the patient's gradual or sudden loss of health, ability, and quality of life.

In the many cases where a mental or physical disease is not disappearing in spite of more superficial therapy it is sometimes necessary to use techniques, which helps the patient to match the high levels of neural arousal and emotional intensity of the early traumas. Some patients with a more reflectory nature will need a deeper process and some diseases like cancer often needs a deeper process, than a less severe disease like arthritis.

To fully rehabilitate the three most fundamental dimensions of existence, which according to our thinking is: love, power and sexuality (14-16), the therapist will need to guide the patient into the deepest corners of the soul, mind and spirit or life itself. This journey goes into the famous underworld and inferno of Dante (Dante Alighieri, 1265-1321) (17), which will take the patient through the most intense emotional and spiritual pains.

Life is suffering, as Gautama Buddha (563-483 BCE) taught, and deep existential therapy often reveals this fundamental truth. Only when we let go of what we cling to, Buddha also said, the suffering will disappear. Letting go of what we cling to in our mind and life is essentially what existential holistic therapy is about.

In the situation where the patient is not healing because deeper existential layers need to be integrated, the physician is obliged to take the art of healing a step further. A "radical new cure" must now be invented for the patient and the means must be judged against the risks. The physician must deeply consider the old Hippocratic saying: "First do no harm".

It is true that no physician can be expected to cure all patients, but still it is the duty of the physician – as long as the patient himself insists on fighting for his life - to do his best and continue to do so, until the day the battle is either definitely won or definitely lost. The physician must judge in every case, if it is possible at all to cure the patient, and if this is really within his reach as physician.

As the outcome of any treatment is really unknown beforehand, because it is strongly dependent on the patient himself, the physician must also estimate a likelihood that the intended cure will help in order not to waste time and resources on a hopeless case.

When everything else has been tried, but the healing has occurred and the physician still sense that there is more to be done, the holistic physician can – if he has the necessary qualifications, such as training in medical ethics and in the different treatment techniques, combined with a sufficient level of personal development and sufficient courage - use the advanced tools of holistic medicine.

The advanced holistic physician's expanded toolbox contains powerful tools, which can be organized into a staircase of the intensity of the therapeutic experience that they provoke and the level of expertise they take to master (see figure 1 and table 1).

									10 Border transgressing techniques
								9 Mind expansion	
							8 Existential work		
						7 Energy work			
					6 Spiritual healing				
				5 Social healing					
			4 Emotional healing						
		3 Support							
	2 Intimacy								
1 Relation									

Figure 1. The staircase of advanced tools for holistic medicine.

The more intense a therapeutic technique, the more emotional energy will normally be contained in the session and the higher the risk for the therapist to lose control or lose the patient to the dark side, which can make the therapeutic session very traumatic and damaging.

These induced problems can almost always be healed, if the patients stay in the therapy, so the real risk is losing the patient, because he or she completely drops out of the therapy.

Table 1. The staircase of increasingly intense and potentially traumatic and dangerous holistic medical therapeutic tools: 1) love, 2) trust, 3) holding, 4) healing, 5) group therapy, 6) life purpose-character-coherence, 7) “energy” work, 8) cathartic work, 9) mind-expanding/ego-transformative techniques, 10) extreme (often traumatizing) techniques (see text).

1 Relation	2 Intimacy	3 Support	4 Emotional healing	5 Social healing
Love and	Winning the	Giving holding:	Taking the pt.	Active work with projections.
Acknowledgment	patients trust,	Awareness,	into the process	Mirroring good and evil in the pt. Working
Talking about	music and	respect, care	of healing by touching,	visibly with and against the pt’s resistance
Pt’s biography	art therapy	acceptance and	talking and setting	Group therapy, psychodrama,
	Dance and	acknowledgement.	perspective.	body dynamics
	movements	Coaching	Intentional work	Sharing circle (native social rituals)
	Massage	Time line therapy	(Sweat lodge ritual)	
6 Spiritual healing	7 Energy work	8 Existential work	9 Mind expansion	10 Border transgressing
Rehabilitation of life purpose,	Rising energy circles	“Controlled violence	”Psychotropic drugs	Sedating drugs,
character and coherence	Holistic breath work	Acupressure through	Substitute partners	antipsychotic drugs. NCE.
Acceptance through touch	Painful provocative	the vagina and anus.	Death-rebirth rituals	Use of force against patient’s
Soul-body-body-soul	body work	Direct sexual	Mitote ritual	will.
Deep coherence between	Sexual polarity	stimulation	Ritual life burial	Institutionalisation
patient and therapist	work	“Controlled sexual	Killing and revival	Surgery in general
		abuse”	Sundance ritual	Mutilating rituals like
		“Exorcism”	Shamanism (i.e.	hanging in the chest muscles
		“Controlled fail of	materialization)	(native American
		the patient”		procedures).
				[Direct sexual involvement]

As demonstrated throughout our many papers on clinical holistic medicine (10-13,18-49), almost everything can be used as a tool, since only the imagination sets the limit. To induce the state of consciousness we call “being in the process of healing” (4) the physician according to Yalom (50,51) needs to invent a new cure for every patient.

This ability to be imaginative, creative and use whatever is necessary to induce the healing is the hallmark of the excellent therapist. Good intent, balanced action, and good results are definitely needed in holistic medicine. Giving up on your patient and not doing anything at all might in many cases be a bigger sin, than doing your best as a holistic physician and still lose your patient.

Still you need to use any tool only after careful consideration, respecting the golden rule never to use a tool more powerful and dangerous than necessary (compare that both in surgery and with chemotherapy the patient is risking death as a result of the treatment).

Almost everything in the world can be used as a tool, but as the physician’s line up his tools, some tools are naturally to use before others and some might be painfully out of reach, because of lack of expertise or due to the laws of your country. The ranking of tools after intensity, danger, and needed expertise of the physician gives a “staircase” of advanced tools of holistic medicine; its function is to help the holistic physician to “step up” in the use of the techniques one level at a time.

Let us admit that holistic medical and sexological therapy often is a little “messy” with the combination of a number of classical and modern tools and techniques (see chapter 17). To think of therapy as the clear-cut process of “walking the staircase” is too simple. Often many of the steps are used in subtle and symbolic ways of the skilful therapist, i.e. hidden in jokes and ironic remarks. So this staircase is meant for education, training and treatment strategy, not to limit the flexibility and spontaneity of the therapy.

The concept of “stepping up” in the therapy using more and more “dramatic” methods to get access to repressed emotions and events, has lead to the common notion of a “therapeutic staircase” with still stronger, more efficient and more dangerous potentially traumatic methods of therapy (see figure 1).

We have identified 10 steps of this staircase: 1) is about establishing the relation, 2) is about establishing intimacy, trust and confidentiality, 3) is about giving support, 4) is about taking the patient into the process of physical, emotional and mental healing, 5) is about social healing of being in the family, 6) is about spiritual healing – returning to the abstract wholeness of the soul, 7) is about healing the informational layer of the body (from old times called the ethereal layer), 8) is about healing the three fundamental dimensions of existence: love, power and sexuality in a direct way; 9) is mind-expanding and consciousness-transformative techniques, and 10) are techniques transgressing the borders of the patient and therefore often traumatizing, like using force and going against the will of the patient.

When the holistic physician, sexologist or therapist masters one step, he can go on to training and using the techniques of the next step of the staircase. As step 10 is often traumatizing for the patient even with the best of physicians, it is generally advised that the holistic physician or therapist do not go there.

When well mastered by the physician step 5-8 (9) can be used, when step 1-4 does not help the patient sufficiently. The tools must be used one level at the time and each step imply an increasing risk for traumatizing the patient. Level 8 and 9 often takes many years of practice to master.

Level 1: relationship/love

Loving (caring for) your patient is the first step of helping, since only with love can you be at service in an unselfish, ego-less way and love is the strongest resource in the art of helping another fellow human being. If love is not there it cannot be forced or willed; maybe there is kindness and care, maybe an interest in the other person, which can be turned into a relationship. Just establishing a relationship is a powerful thing to do and in the acknowledgment of the other person's personal history will you be able to help many wounds to be healed. It is important to say that love in our understanding originates from the urge to use your personal talents and give what you need to give to the world. Love is about living your personal mission.

Level 2: intimacy/trust

When there is love, the patient's trust can be won, often little by little during time. With trust comes intimacy – physical, emotional and mental closeness. Then many things are possible, like massage, dance, art therapy etc. Just learning how to trust and be intimate is a giant step forward for most patients, and their quality of life and self-esteem can be radically improved by the techniques of this level.

Level 3: support and holding

When the patient trusts you, you can get permission to give holding; the five dimension of this crucial existential support is 1) awareness to the mind, 2) respect for the patient's emotional space, 3) care for the body, 4) acceptance of gender and sexuality, and 5) acknowledgement of the soul and personal character. In giving these five qualities in a rich blend you can help almost everybody to feel good and right.

Level 4: physical, emotional and mental healing

When the holding is there, the patient can get the support in the actual moment, which empowers him/her to go back to the old, emotionally painful and confront the repressed content of the traumas. Getting help now to process the old trauma is the secret of healing. To take the patient into the state of mind, which we call "being in the process of healing" is what holistic medicine basically is about(4). To get the patient into this state is really a question of intention; both the physician and the patient must intent the healing and "the bobble" the patient is isolated in must be open from inside and from outside at the same time, as the shamanistic tradition claims(52).

Level 5: social healing – healing the being in the family

This level is about healing the relation with the group and the family, where using a group for this kind of healing is a must. The native Americans had their sharing circle and the talking stick, today we have the holistic existential group therapeutic process (7). In the group everybody can watch everybody, and one great advantage of this kind of work compared to individual therapy is that the process of working with or against the resistance becomes obvious to every member of the group.

This makes it possible to help the member to watch his own projective mechanism of the consciousness, helping him or her to assume responsibility for the unconscious attitudes, the “color of the glasses of the spectacles” so to speak. This makes it possible for the therapist to effectively mirror the patients in the group, effectively helping the patients to realize their own idiosyncrasies, blind spots and neurotic survival patterns.

Level 6: spiritual healing - healing the abstract wholeness of the patient

On this level the therapist must use his ability to sense the purpose of life (6,9) and the physical, mental and spiritual character of the patient (7). The purpose of life, or the life mission, is the core talent of this person, and happiness is about using this talent to be of value to the world. Other supporting talents surround the core talent and when claiming them yet another series of tertiary talents comes into use.

Being gifted and contributing to the persons dear to him or her and to society at large rehabilitate the existential coherence, the deep feeling of connectedness and belonging, which we long for deepest in our hearts. Rehabilitating the spiritual side of the patient is really allowing the patient to dig deeply into the hidden resources for healing him or her.

Unfortunately, the ability to use the abstract sense necessary to master this level takes a lot of practice and time, often years. It develops as you obtain coherence with the outer world yourself, as a product of your own successful personal development. As you find this coherence you will notice that you can connect soul to soul with you patient through your body and the body of the patient. When you take this skill into the sexual area and give acceptance to the body, the organs, the gender and the sexuality of the patient, you master the technique called “acceptance through touch” (13); the touching may simply just be placing your hand on the patient’s body.

Level 7: healing the informational system of the body (ethereal healing)

Consciousness meet the body in a peculiar way, creating what is often experienced as “circles of energy”, the different qualities of the body and mind being sensed as circulating sexual, emotional, mental and spiritual energy [see (16) for an overview of the qualities]. Raising these subjective circles of “energy” is called “working with the energy” and it really is difficult to describe what is going on in this work, as it is about supporting the patient in exploring all the hidden qualities of body, mind and spirit.

Often breathing is involved in this work with holotropic breath work (53) as a fine example of this kind of energy work. It often helps the patient to integrate very early gestalts and spontaneous regression into the womb is normal in this kind of work. Some patients recall earlier incarnations, especially if the physician is open for this.

Working with the energies of the body often leads to recollection of extremely painful memories from early life. Also intense sexual energies are often awakened and training the patient to be a male/female pole in the universe is a part of the successful balancing of the patient's energy.

This level of biological information is poorly understood by contemporary science and for the last two centuries occult research has been carried out referring to this layer of the human being as the "ethereal body" (54).

Level 8: direct existential healing of love, power, and sexuality

According to the theory of talent, there are three fundamental dimensions of existence: love, power and sexuality. These dimensions can be confronted en bloc, which gives overwhelming and extremely intense experiences in the therapy. When all the evil sums up to the essence of the shadow, the person manifests his evil alter-ego and it really looks like he is obsessed by Satan; hence the name "exorcism" for this tool (see chapter 4).

When a person has been violently violated throughout his childhood, anger can be so repressed that only hitting him again can release it. This can be used as the therapeutic technique originally developed by the famous founder of gestalt therapy, Perls (3) and we call this method for "controlled violence".

Actually every time the therapist goes against the resistance, there is an element of controlled violence toward the patient's emotions, who often reacts hurt and offended. Every time the therapist goes against the patient's true self, there is an element of controlled violence against the patient's soul. But violation of emotions and the soul is often not seen and is widely accepted. Violating the body physically by beating it (with open hand not to cause any harm though) is seen as many people as unacceptably violent. From a theoretical analysis there is really no difference, it is all controlled violence.

Another set of very strong and efficient techniques at this level is the technique's relation to sexuality. The therapist can work against the resistance and with the patient by directly stimulating the patient sexually, which is a seldom-used technique. More often the therapist will use a formalised technique like the classical Hippocratic method of acupressure through the vagina, to rise the energies in the pelvic area (55) or to confront repressed material connected to sexual abuse or neglect by stimulating the relevant tender-points in the genitals and deep pelvis reached through the anus and the vagina.

The last technique has an aspect related to controlled violence, and this kind of work is called "controlled sexual abuse", as the patient in this kind of healing often will find the old painful emotions from the trauma in the present moment, not in the past (see chapter 21). This seems to be a general rule of all high-energy traumas: the higher the energy and the more intense the emotional pain, the higher the likelihood for the trauma to manifest itself in present time during life or in therapy.

This means that you as a therapist should not always expect a child rape trauma to be presented to the patient as a child-rape trauma, but sometimes as an – initial - experience of

the patient of being abused in present time in the clinic by the physician, because of the transferences.

The only way that the therapist can survive this legally is to address the problem directly and to make a therapeutic contract of “controlled sexual abuse”, for the trauma to re-appear in the session under controlled conditions and not allowing the patient to get away with the transference of the old, extremely painful material (47-49).

This kind of work takes a high level of expertise and years of practice to master. It must always be done with supervision, to be completely sure that the physician or sexologist is not involving his own shadow in this kind of work. If the physician subconsciously is engaging in counter-transference here, it can be very traumatic for the patient.

The most painful and difficult of the tools on this level is the controlled fail of the patient. There is hardly a patient, who has not extremely severe wounds on their soul from early childhood, as it really is impossible to be a perfect parent, since just 30 minutes of mental distraction or physical absence in some cases can be experienced as a complete loss of both parents, by a sensitive and vulnerable child.

Some patients are worse off, as they as children had experienced systematic fail from their parents. Often they had the role as parents for their own parents from early childhood and to compensate for this, they developed a tendency to cling and adhere to finally obtain the love and contact they needed. In theory this failure should be easy to alleviate, but as love is what is most important for us as human being, systematically not getting the love we need and fight for throughout out childhood is giving such a traumatic series of emotionally painful wounds, that the moment the therapist intent to give his love, the resistance of the patient will be so intense that no love can be received.

So going with the resistance is the only way to proceed and this means ignoring and abandoning the patient, while he or she is in the therapeutic session. This really is a paradox: the patient is paying for therapy and nothing is happening, no, less than nothing! Only the philosophically highly developed patient will understand what is going on and even this mental understanding will not help. This is as terrible as it gets, since this is sheer hell raised once again, but it is not really happening in present time in the therapy, as a normal sound person will not enter into deep process of holistic healing feeling emotionally completely destroyed, just from being ignored by another person. But these patients will. As the therapist can easily feel the transference he must now avoid getting into counter-transference and starting to feel evil himself.

The technologies on this level are highly efficient, yet they are just drills derived from the inner logic of the therapeutic process of holistic healing. In the hand of an untrained and poorly developed therapist, these are the cruel tools of torture and abuse that finally gives him the dark power over another person that his own evil shadow side has longed for a whole life. It is really easy to be tricked into the dark side using the tools of level 8, so never start using level 8 tools without intense supervision and coaching by an experienced holistic physician mastering this level himself.

Level 9: mind-expanding and consciousness-transformative techniques

If level 8 was difficult, then level 9 is an art that really cannot be mastered without perfect mastery of the tools of level 8. One of the techniques of this level is being a substitute

partner. To give yourself to this process of pairing up with a sexually dysfunctional person with the only purpose of healing their sexuality takes a rare kind of devotion. When it is done professionally and according to a contract – which normally implying only seeing each other for 14 days or so - it really works wonders for the patients (56,57).

Some of the techniques in this group are so difficult that in the pre-modern societies it took a shaman or high priest, one of the highest developed persons in the tribe, who had devoted their whole life to this kind of practice and service. This is very much still the case. You can only develop the mastery of the skills of level 9 by being completely devoted to this kind of work for decades - unless you have a very special gift for it, as a few students have. Gifted or not, you need to be trained by a master in these techniques for years, before you can do them on your own.

Some of the tools that demand this kind of mastery are the healing rituals, mostly carried out by Native Americans and other pre-modern cultures as extremely intense rituals, taking you all the way down to the core of your existence. One ritual takes you through a subjective experience of death and rebirth, while others makes your worst nightmare come through in the form of a life burial, to (almost) die from suffocation alone in darkness (used for integrating some of the most terrible foetal experiences, compare Stanislav Grof's BPM2) (6) and thereafter miraculously coming back to life as your true self that you felt you had lost forever.

To master such rituals takes the most loving and empathic of therapist, who minutely can read the state of mind and observe all changes of the patient's consciousness accurately enough throughout every moments of the whole ritual to meet the needs for the healing of the patient. It takes a therapist, who is completely familiar with the whole range of experiences of ego-death and personal transformation. This competence is only slowly developed though supervised training and personal experience throughout years.

Other tools of the ninth level that take similar mastery are the use of psychotropic drugs in therapy. In many ways this is a lost art, but it has been extremely widely used, as most pre-modern cultures have used them for millennia. The word for medicine is the same as the word for the peyote cactus in many native North American tribes (58-60).

Other tribes have used the fungi of the species *Psilocybe* (containing psilocybine) and the cactus called San Pedro (*Trichocereus pachanoi*), which like peyote contains mescaline as its major active substance. The liana called ayahuasca (*Banisteriopsis caapi*) has been used in the South America, while other cultures like the old Egyptians used an LSD like alkaloid derived from the Ergot of Rye, a plant disease caused by the fungus *Claviceps purpurea* (61).

All these drugs contains psychotropic (mind-expanding, active placebo) drugs or the hallucinogens, but with a different profile from the recreational drugs in popular use among young people all over the world today (62), like ecstasy, cocaine, and amphetamine, which has a strong CNS-stimulating effect in addition to a more modest, mind-expanding quality.

The purpose of the use of the mescaline-cacti among native Americans is to bring the patient to a state of consciousness, where he can realize how he makes himself ill by not living in accordance with the deep self (58) or in our interpretation with the true human character and the purpose of life (63). This makes the fairly mysterious native medicine, often completely incomprehensible due to the use of massive symbolism, very difficult to understand.

We are proud to say that the consciousness-based medicine we have developed these years normally do not use any kinds of drugs, as this has not been necessary, because of

highly efficient therapeutic techniques and strategies, many inherited from the classical Hippocratic tradition that does not use pharmaceutical drugs at all.

Level 10: techniques that transgresses the patient's personal borders (often traumatizing)

It is obvious from figure 1, that many of the level 10 tools are in frequent use in modern day medicine. When the use of moderate power does not work, more powerful tools are frequently used; this is techniques like brute force against the patients will, sedating drugs, institutionalisation, and in some countries even imprisonment and severe invalidations of basic human rights, even though most researchers agree that they are often severely traumatizing the patient. The reasons why they are in use are of cause the failure to help the patients with less radical means, or the failure of confidence in the lower steps, making the physician skip the try, jumping directly to level 10. Most of the steps of the staircase are not taken into use by many modern physician in the western world; sadly in many highly developed countries often only level 1 techniques are tried before going to level 10.

It seems that the art of holistic healing using the first nine steps are sadly lost in many countries and instead of practicing love and healing the patient, brute force is in use. We hope that re-introducing the therapeutic staircase will inspire many physicians and therapists to use less powerful and less traumatizing means of the lower steps to heal their patients in the future.

One other potent tool, which is often used by modern day therapists, sometimes motivated by love, sometimes motivated by abusive intentions is direct sexual involvement with the patient. While such endeavor has been talked strongly against ever since Hippocrates, it seems that there has been a constant decay of some therapist's ethics throughout the last century. One female patient around 25-years old with a personality disturbance could tell us about at least four different therapists, who had abused her sexually.

The reason for not having sex with a patient is that this behavior completely disturbs the relation, turning it upside down, giving the power to the patient and making therapy impossible. As the patient often love and admire the therapist this can also be seen as abuse of the power of the therapist and all too often the girl is left behind as the therapist moves on to abusing yet another patient and thereby failing the patient and their profession.

Direct sexual involvement with the patient are rarely the right thing to do from a therapeutic perspective, except in one special occasion: when the patient and the therapist has fallen mutually in love; when the therapy has gone definitely stock; and when none of them has obligations towards others, which forces them to fail each other at a later occasion. As the laws of almost all countries forbid the physician to have sex with a patient, the therapy must then be formally ended, there must be an appropriate gap in time from ending it to engaging sexually, and the relationship must also be successfully re-defined, before direct sexual involvement is possible.

Because of the negative view of such a relationship from the society, it is still recommended to keep such an engagement within the frames of the tool of substitute partner. Direct sexual engagement with a patient is a good example of a level 10 tools often having a traumatizing effect. The level 10 tools are in general so traumatizing in spite of all good

intentions that they cannot be recommended in the holistic medical clinic; although the use of them cannot always be completely avoided.

Using the staircase for training the holistic physician or sexologist

The training of the holistic therapist is difficult, since the only way to learn is to practice and doing it. Learning by doing means that the student in the beginning will make every possible mistake and error and the coach must be very involved and close to correct the errors and mistakes, before they lead to any serious consequence. In practice it is often very easy for a skilled therapist to correct the errors; if the student loses control of the session the senior therapist will take over and reinsert the student very much the way a new driver learns to drive a car.

Interestingly, in therapy the situation with the patient is as a rule better after a failure and a recovery than before the failure. This happy situation is a result of the mutual learning of the patient and the physician or student. Not being willing to learn from mistakes, and therefore hiding them for oneself or others is the most dangerous behavior a trainee or physician can have.

Unfortunately many university hospitals have little mercy with physicians and students making mistakes, which create an environment of fear and of hiding. The most important thing in good training is the rule that all mistakes are allowed, but only once. In biomedicine, when a mistake with drugs and surgery is often fatal, this kind of freedom is more difficult to give students, while in the holistic clinic the most difficult of tools are hardly ever fatal.

Complete familiarity and mastery of one level of techniques leads naturally to the next and after many years of training and practice all the levels can be used. Using the level 10 tools is something even the most skilled holistic therapist only will do hesitatingly. It is of utmost importance to know how to use these tools to use them wisely and avoid traumatization.

If force is necessary or if the use of strong sedatives and antipsychotic drugs are necessary (i.e. because the patient is trying to kill somebody or trying to commit suicide), the physician must know exactly how to react concerning force or drugs used.

If the physician or sexologist has fallen in love with a patient bringing therapy to an end, he or she must know how to deal with this extremely difficult situation, by finding a supervisor for support, avoiding sexual contact before the roles are sufficiently re-defined and the relationship balanced, so that this can be considered safe for the patient.

Not knowing how to use these tools can be very dangerous for both the patient and the physician. Let's underline that we most strongly do recommend that a sexual relationship between a physician and his patient are to be avoided at all times, also after the treatment is formally terminated.

Discussion

One of the most important principles in medicine since Hippocrates has been "first do no harm". The medical ethics is therefore every holistic physician's primary concern, when using

advanced and emotionally intense tools of holistic medicine with the potential to afflict further traumas instead of helping.

Often in the clinical practice even a severe mistake can fortunately be corrected, as traumas induced by therapy can be healed in the same way as every other trauma. On the other hand it will take a therapeutic session of similar intensity as the damaging session to heal the wound and sometimes this is not possible as the patient is not willing to give it another try if the first session was very painful and scary.

In daily practice this means that every procedure must be justified in two ways: 1) No procedure should be carried out, when one with less risk and less intensity of the impact/emotionally, physically and otherwise - can do the job. 2) What is likely to be won for the patient by using this procedure should be much more that will likely be lost. The patient must always be informed of the risk involved in the treatment and must give his or her consent after this information.

The basic principle for holistic healing (4) is to reverse the pathogenetic process, by taking the patient into a holistic process of healing, which has been called salutogenesis by the great Jewish thinker Aaron Antonovsky (1923-1994) (1,2). In the holistic clinic this is done by giving the patient the love, support and holding (awareness, care, respect, acceptance and acknowledgement), which was so intensely lacking in the original traumatic events, which caused the loss of inner balance, the disturbances and the inner conflicts and being the cause of the disease for which the patient now needs healing. The trauma was caused by the repression of unbearable negative emotions and the healing must be the reverse process of the pathogenetic process according to Antonovsky. This can only happen when the patient confront and integrate these painful emotions.

The characteristics of the state of consciousness in which patients heal (which we normally call "being in the process of healing"), is the same emotions and neural arousal as the original trauma. Because of the extreme intensity of emotions connection to certain traumas, especially from violent and sexual abuse, and especially if this happens in early childhood, is often difficult to get these patients into the state of healing.

Often lengthy therapy is needed, and patience is a must with these patients, but sometimes the therapy comes to a seemingly dead end and only more drastic and intense methods will yield the result of taking the patient into the old traumas again.

In general, what gives the holistic physician the ability of use a tool of a certain level is the complete mastery of the tools of the former steps of the staircase. Many fine books have been written on most of the techniques and level 7 and level 9 have been intensively researched, while research done with the tools at level 8 have been modest. The reason for that seems obvious: both sex and violence is taboo in our culture, while being among the best selling commercial products (i.e. in movies and pornography), medical science in its attempt to be clean and pure has avoided working seriously with these issues.

The problem by excluding level 8 tools is that without mastering this level, the next level 9 becomes very difficult to handle for the therapist. Only a few contemporary therapists have used psychotropic drugs successfully, like the LSD therapy pioneer Stanislav Groff, while most often drugs has been seen as a fast route to enlightenment, the most prominent example being the drug guru Timothy Leary.

More reflective people like the brilliant philosopher Aldous Huxley and Hoffmann understood perfectly well the potential of the drugs, but could not really tell how to use the

drugs in therapy. The Native Americans have undoubtedly done this for years using many different drugs derived from plants and mushrooms.

The rationale for the techniques found on the therapeutic staircase [originally introduced to us by Gormsen (68)] is the most simple of all: healing happens when the present moment or now of the patient, and the old repressed and emotionally painful now are taken together and integrated. Healing is thus the opposite of cutting your existence into parts as you do when you repress a trauma.

You heal when you in present time get what you could not get and needed in the past traumatic old now. So the art of holistic existential healing is really keeping the patient in the present moment giving him or her everything needed, and at the same time taking him or her back in time into the old painful now, confronting what happened when the fundamental needs was not met. If the trauma was less intense, just talking about personal history might do the job (biography work).

With more intense feelings, trust and physical contact is often needed; massage is a fine example of this level 2. With more severe trauma, as neglect in early childhood, re-parenting is necessary, giving the patient the care needed but not received in childhood (level 3).

Level 4 takes care of deep wounds in the existence, so this is the first level of holistic existential healing. It involves a mysterious dimension of intent, and all higher level of healing work is dependent of this. Often the trauma happened in a group setting, taking us to the logic of level 5: working with the patient in a group, re-creating the sound family, healing trauma from dysfunctional families.

Level 6 is rehabilitating the character and purpose of life (the soul); these deeper layers of existence are often wounded already in the womb and without the art of deep coherence between physician and patient, allowing for an energetic imitating the connection of the foetus and his/her mother these wounds cannot be healed.

Level 7 takes care of the body and of deep and early wounds in sexuality and gender. Level 8 integrates trauma with severe sexual and violent abuse. Direct sexual stimulation can be necessary to awaken a deeply repressed sexuality, although we strongly recommend that a patient is not stimulated into orgasm, to avoid the risk of the relationship turning into a sexual relationship.

Level 9 awakens the deepest layers of consciousness; the psychotropic drugs destabilizes the old patters of perception making a breakthrough possible, where the patient leaves a mental survival perspective (being in the head) to experience life fully. This project has been described as "no mind" by the Zen Buddhists.

The holistic physician only uses level 10 in exceptional cases: when nothing else has worked, or when time or other serious conditions does not allow for trying many different things, i.e. with terminal and suicidal patients. Direct sexual involvement with the patient will often harm the patient and cannot be recommended.

The concept of controlled violence is somewhat disturbing, and it is very important that the beating is done only with open hand and extremely carefully, symbolically. The ethical problems using the holistic medical tools in general and especially the level 8, 9 and 10 techniques has been researched intensively by our team the last several years.

The tool of controlled violence is highly efficient to provoke anger in patients, who are so damaged by violent abuse that they no longer are able to feel and express anger, but it is difficult to avoid strong transferences of the therapist being the violator instead of the original

violation from the patient's past, making controlled violence a very dangerous tool to use for the therapist, if the patient chooses to complain.

Most often the patients in need for this tool will be severely repressed and they often live in chronic fear, or complete emotional numbness, socially isolated from the world. The danger of this treatment is obviously not to get them sufficiently into healing to be whole and well functioning, but sufficiently into their old material to be projecting the anger towards the therapist, in worst case complaining or even suing you for malpractice.

Another unwanted side effect are in rare cases temporary psychotic episodes normally followed by recovery within hours; happily such episodes do not seem correlated to any negative effects of the treatment. Having a legal system in most countries not accustomed to the level 8,9 and 10 techniques make the use of these tools somewhat difficult; we must recommend that you always comply rigidly to the laws of your country to avoid compromising yourself or holistic medicine and sexology in general.

In spite of the dramatic qualities of the therapeutic tools we know from large reviews of the literature that side effects of holistic medicine and sexology are very rare (NNH=64,000) (69).

Conclusions

The patient will be able to heal, when old painful moments, the gestalts or trauma, are taken into the present and integrated. The holistic physician has many different tools to induce this kind of healing, some of which are more dangerous and potentially traumatic than others. Using the less powerful tool is of utmost importance to live up to Hippocrates principle of "first do no harm".

The more intense the therapeutic technique, the more emotional energy will normally be contained in the session and the higher the risk for the therapist to lose control or lose the patient to his or her own dark side, which can make the therapeutic session very traumatic and damaging to the patient.

The concept of "stepping up" in the therapy using more and more "dramatic" methods to get access to repressed emotions and events, has led to the common notion of a "therapeutic staircase" with still stronger, more efficient and more dangerous potentially traumatic methods of therapy (see figure 1). This advanced expanded toolbox contains powerful tools, which can be organized into a staircase of intensity of therapeutic experience, both according to the effect they provoke and the level of expertise they take to master.

We believe that the systematic use of the staircase will greatly improve the power and efficiency of the holistic physician and sexologist and encourage governments and medical communities to work to make the whole toolbox legal for the holistic physicians and sexologists of their country, as many therapists are not free to use it today, which is sad for the many chronically ill patients desperately needing more efficient holistic therapy.

We hope that eventually even patients with metastatic cancer and similar diseases will benefit from the use of the advanced holistic medical toolbox.

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Section 7: Practical Sexology

Five Tools for Manual Sexological Examination

Manual sexology is clinical, holistic medicine focused on sexual healing. Sexual healing occurs, when the patient understands and assumes responsibility for the disturbances in her psychosexual development. The tools can be categorized as small and large tools of manual sexology, with comparison to the pelvic examination. Before starting to work with manual sexology, the therapist must be well trained in the general use of therapeutic touch (see chapter 26), and must have a thorough understanding of the dynamics of erotic transference and counter-transference (see chapter 19).

This chapter reviews five classical tools for examination and the simultaneous treatment of the patient (i.e. clinical medicine):

- “Acceptance through touch” is therapeutic touch in sexology, where the therapist give acceptance to the patient on a sexual and bodily level that she needs but did not get from her parents
- Vaginal acupressure (Hippocratic pelvic massage) is massage of the organs of the pelvis through the vagina, which helps the patient to get present in the lower parts of her body and integrate repressed negative feelings and emotions often related to sexual traumas. Hippocrates and his students used this method 2,300 years ago for the treatment of hysteria
- The pelvic examination is itself highly therapeutic but only if the sexologist, physician or gynecologist addresses the emotions it provokes
- The holistic pelvic examination is the pelvic examination done in an empathic and therapeutic way
- The sexological examination, often called the “educational, gynecological, sexological examination” is a yet more complicated and time consuming and also more therapeutic procedure that involves the exploration of the patients sexual energies, character, sexual problems, sexual history and also use the large therapeutic tool of direct sexual stimulation of the patients clitoris and vagina. This tool can often bring a chronic, an-orgasmic patient all the way back to orgasmic potency in short-term therapy. It has been used for sexological

research, but has so strong curative qualities that it potentially could help many patients, who are not sufficiently helped with the smaller sexological tools.

The ethical and legal aspects of the manual sexological tools are discussed.

Introduction

The pains and discomforts and problems related to the organs of the female pelvis like the female sexual pain disorders, vulvar vestibulitis syndrome, dyspareunia and vaginismus have been variously classified through time as sexual disorders, pain disorders, psychosomatic disorders or urogenital disorders (1) (see also chapter 33).

The ambition to create a precise diagnostic system for these pains, discomforts and dysfunctions have largely failed (2,3) and the complexity of the matter remains basically a mystery for both the clinician and the researcher.

The fundamental lack of scientific understanding of the female problems has lead to a severe lack of sufficient treatment. About one third of the women in the western work have in spite of seeing their doctor on a regular basis, recurrent complaints or chronic conditions related to the organs of the pelvis, especially the genitals, bladder and muscular system, which are obviously not cured or even helped much by the standard biomedical examination and treatment (4).

The problems of the female patient have been important issues from the beginning of medicine; the famous physician Hippocrates and his students used pelvic massage and similar treatments for a vast number of such female illnesses and health conditions, which were already at that time related to problems with the sexual energies of the womb and the general psychosexual development of the mature female character and sexuality (5).

Since the development of modern sexological science around 1950, such manual sexological procedures as pelvic massage (often called “vaginal acupressure” and “physical therapy for the pelvic floor”) have again been acknowledged by physicians and sexologists as efficient medical tools for a number of sexual problems, pelvic and genital pains, and other dysfunctional conditions in the pelvic area (6-13).

Since Freud and Jung repressed libido and sexuality has been seen as a primary cause of many mental and physical problems (14,15); quite surprisingly these researchers seemed to be in accordance with the Hippocratic tradition in their understanding of sexuality and its fundamental importance for human health.

In contrast to this holistic medical tradition, we have the biomedical science that does not see sexuality, but biochemistry and genes as a leading cause to the patient’s mental and somatic health problems; this understanding has lead to a large number of pharmaceuticals, which most unfortunately does not seem able to help most of the female patients with problems related to sexually and the energies in the pelvic area.

While Freud’s psychoanalysis uses only talking (14), manual sexology much inspired by Reich (6) often used bodywork, often focused on the genitalia, to free the repressed sexuality and painful emotions that have caused the problems. Reich therapy was in its direct, genital approach close to the classic Hippocratic physicians, also using genital massage as one of the

standard tools for most female conditions, including the female, mental disorders (called “hysteria”).

Many pains and discomforts of the pelvic organs are not well understood today. It is a fair guess that repressed emotions related to sex (including the oral and anal aspects described by Freud) also causes many of the most common problems like the urinary tract infections (UTIs) and the genital tract pseudo-infections, that mimics the UTIs, but has no bacteria (or insufficient bacteria to explain the symptoms). 50% of women have these symptoms at some occasion and it has been estimated that half of the GTI are actually sterile inflammations caused by something else than bacteria (16). Most likely the inflammation is simply caused as a somatisation of the sexual blockages caused by difficult repressed sexually related emotions.

The general practitioner or gynecologist will therefore be well advised to always look for a psychosomatic, sexual cause for recurrent or chronic pelvic or uro-genital pain or discomfort. The most efficient way to look for this is by using the combined exploration and treatment known as the classical “sexological examination” (6-13). Most unfortunately this examination is highly complicated and takes 30-90 minutes even for a trained physician.

To make sexology more ethical, rational and also more customized to the needs of each individual patient, and to make it possible in the future to treat the many female patients with such conditions also in a general practice with more limited time for such procedures than the sexological clinic, we have during the last 10 years developed smaller and faster tools than the thorough, traditional sexological examination.

During this period of research at the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine and Sexology in Copenhagen we have found, that about 40% of the female patients with problems in the pelvic area can be cured just with the smallest of these tools, acceptance through touch (17), and about 60% can be cured with vaginal acupressure (also called Hippocratic Pelvic Massage), where the patient's resistance is addressed and analyzed (18,19).

Most interestingly we found that the pelvic examination has a large therapeutic potential in itself, if it is used wisely, and its healing potential is exploited (20), but the strong traditions of this procedure make this somewhat difficult. A therapeutic element can after the patient's consent be added to this procedure, which we have found to be a great help for patients, who need a more empathic style of pelvic examination, i.e. because of sexual traumas.

Finally, the large full-scaled sexological examination can be used to help the patients that cannot be helped by these smaller tools; this procedure includes the provocative tool of direct sexual stimulation of the female patient (6-13); the use of this dramatic tool is justified by a curative rate of about 90% of the patients with chronic conditions like anorgasmia (21).

The ethical principle of using the smallest tool that helps the patient must always be remembered. It is also important to discriminate the different tools accurately to get the consent from the patient to exactly the planned procedure. A smaller procedure makes it easier for the patient to participate, making sexological therapy possible even for the patients that have been severely traumatized sexually, i.e. by rape or incest.

It should be mentioned that a substantial fraction of the patients – we estimate one in three – who realize that their problem is related to a disturbed, psychosexual development, can be helped without any manual sexological treatment, but just with a combination of conversational therapy and customized exercises (22-24). This is easier if the patient

already has a sexual partner to do exercises with, the lack of which is often an important part of the problem.

The use of non-sexological bodywork in clinical holistic medicine and sexology will often speed the treatment up also of sexological problems, and reduce the number of sessions it takes to help the patient, and it might also increase the fraction of patients being cured to about 40% (25). Research has shown that psychotherapy in general is less efficient to cure sexual dysfunction than sexological therapy (26).

Five tools for manual sexology

The five tools for manual sexology are listed in table 1. Before a manual sexological tool is used it is wise to get written consent, and also not to be alone with the patient during therapy. It is important to measure the state of sexual dysfunction or pain with a simple questionnaire like the QOL10 (27) or a visual analog scale, to document the effect of the treatment, and also to know when to step up and use a larger tool because the one in actual use is not working.

Table 1. The five tools for manual sexology. These tools should only be used when conversational therapy, anatomical education, sexual biography etc. have failed to solve the problem, and then the smallest tool that can cure the patient should be used (28).

1. Acceptance though touch
2. Vaginal acupressure
3. Pelvic Examination
4. Holistic Pelvic Examination
5. Sexological examination

1. Acceptance though touch

This procedure of accepting therapeutic touch (6-13,17,30,31) is the most basic tool of sexology, as it just gives acceptance to the patient’s body. In principle the accepting touch can be applied everywhere; just holding the patients hands with great acceptance is highly therapeutic. To make this tool more efficient it can, after consent made before the session starts to avoid that the patient feeling overwhelmed, or even exploited or abused, be used directly on vulva; it is wise to start by putting the patient’s own hand on her vulva and the sexologists hand on top of hers; it is also wise to start by doing it with the clothing on and having a nurse in the room also. If this does not help the patient, the patient is asked to undress, and the vulva can be treated in a quiet, calming manner. In this process the therapist take the role of a caring parent and give as much as possible his unconditional love and acceptance to the patient, her body and her sexuality.

Just the experience of finally getting the acceptance that she never got from her parents can make small miracles happen; if the patient suffers from a sexual aversion disorder or low

sexual self esteem, this procedure will often be experienced as a very strong intervention, in spite of its minimal size as a therapeutic tool, and the effect can be surprisingly large.

To understand the therapeutic value of acceptance through touch one should remember that the patient did not get the acceptance of her body, gender, genitals and sexuality she needed for not repressing her sexuality and sexual feelings; the traumatic repression happened in childhood every time she was overwhelmed by negative emotions that she could not contain. These sexual traumas are often not connected to physical abuse, but they can be. Almost all international studies made during the last decades have documented that about 15% of females have been sexually abused in their childhood (see 30). Therefore such traumas are not uncommon at all and must be expected with one in two or three of the female sexological patients, as the traumatized patients are much more likely to have problems in the pelvic area.

The reason for the strong therapeutic effect of such a simple tool as acceptance through touch is that it gives resources to the processing and integration of sexual traumas, also when these are not caused by abuse, but simply by sexual neglect, which often is equally traumatic as abuse (31). The surprisingly simple tool of “acceptance through touch” thus often opens up for a constructive and therapeutic dialog about the patient’s sexual history. A sexual trauma that comes from the dramatic events of incest or rape are often more deeply repressed, and take time and often also larger tools to cure like the sexological examination (see below).

2. Vaginal acupressure

This intervention is actually the classical Hippocratic vaginal massage; it is most simply done as the explorative phase of the normal pelvic examination with a focus on the feelings and negative emotions associated to the different places, anatomical structures, tissues and organs in the pelvis, including the muscles and the outer and inner genital structures. The penetration of vagina symbolizes the intercourse (14), and the patient’s subconscious will often react to the digital penetration similar to the reaction to penile penetration. Therefore just penetrating the vagina with one or two fingers already put the female patient in a position, where all the difficult and painful emotions connected to sex can be exposed and processed.

A few dysfunctional patients react with sexual arousal on this procedure, but most react with resistance. About half of all sexual problems and genital pains can be cured just by addressing and processing the repressed emotions and feelings behind this resistance, as already discovered by Reich (6). Sometimes the procedure needs to be repeated, while layer after layer of repressed material are integrated (32-34). Again a nurse should be in the room also.

3. The pelvic examination

It is well-known that female patients with sexual traumas often react negatively to this procedure (35); many of these patients complain that they feel the pelvic exam as humiliating and traumatic in itself. If that is the case, a smaller tool must be used, until the resistance towards the pelvic examination is reduced to a manageable level. The negative emotional

reaction is coming from the strong similarity between the pelvic examination and many sexually charged and traumatizing elements, like being controlled, being looked at, being penetrated in a vulnerable position, being penetrated with a large, hard, physical object (the vaginal specula), being tortured (pain from the procedure, both from penetration and different sorts of tests taken). The deep exploration of the uterus including the visual inspection of the portio vaginalis cervicis uteri is often extremely provocative, as “nothing is left uncovered”.

This is in essence a complete exposure of the patients, and it demands a high level of trust and a complete emotional and behavioral surrender of the patient to the physician or gynecologist making the examination. Using the therapeutic value of the pelvic examination is not difficult at all; all it takes is an honest talk with the patient about what the different aspects of the examination procedure symbolizes, and what this does to her emotionally. The problem here is that the patient often has been to gynecologists with some in denial about the provocative and potentially traumatic dimension of this procedure; she will be very surprised to finally meet a therapist that acknowledge the emotional aspects of it and cares to explore the emotional roots of her reactions to the procedure. As the emotional response to the standard pelvic examination often is a rather large and actually somewhat hard to integrate emotionally for most patients with sexual problems, it is wise to start with a smaller tool, if the intent is exploring and curing issues related to sexuality. Again a nurse should also be in the room during examination.

4. Holistic pelvic examination

Instead of using a smaller tool like acceptance through touch or vaginal acupressure, the pelvic examination can be done in a slow and emphatic way, where the patient gets the time she needs to accustom to every step of it. If this is done with patients with sexual traumas it can be extraordinary therapeutic, but the session can take one or even several hours, and this is often not possible in a busy clinic with limited professional resources. We have found that this procedure can change the patient's biology at a very profound, even hormonal, level, so it sometimes even cures involuntary infertility of psychosomatic origin (20). Basically what makes this intervention “holistic” is the “love and care” for the patient that allows her to take part in everything that is happening in the consultation hour.

The pelvic examination can according to our experiences when used in this therapeutic way help patients with sexual desire problems, sexual arousal problems, lubrication problems, lack of sexual pleasure, negative feelings about sexual interaction, genital arousal disorder, lower genital arousal associated with intercourse, pain due to psychosocial factors, deficient pelvic muscle control etc. A nurse should be present during the examination.

5. Sexological examination

There are various kinds of sexological examinations, but the following is often used and it was created in 1965 by Hartman, Fithian and Morgan (8,10,12) and inspired by Reich, Hoch and Kegel (6,7,11,12). The sexological examination was designed to evaluate and assess the various components of human sexuality (e.g., perception, feeling, arousal, and response patterns) present or absent in varying degrees in research and therapy populations.

The examination was a supplementary to the examination given by a gynecologist or other medical specialist. The objectives of the examination include (8,10,12,13):

- Providing a learning experience in physiological psychology for a husband and wife, committed partners, or singles.
- Dealing with the self-concept of women who want to know, "Am I normal?" "Is my clitoris/labia too big or too small?"
- Teaching women specific vaginal exercises.
- Giving the therapist a clear picture of the response patterns of the subject through verbal reports of sensations to stimulation in each area of the vagina.
- Identifying, where present, causes of dyspareunia and pain in the female. Some pain or discomfort may be psychological.
- Giving genitalia their correct anatomical names.
- Making the individual more at ease with her sexuality and sexual functioning.
- Enhancing communications between couples about genitalia and functioning.
- Overcoming the reluctance by some individuals to have non-intercourse genital contact, such as touching the penis or putting a finger in the vagina.
- Helping the patient to intimately explore own (and partners) genitals.
- Teaching the use of other techniques to be used later during treatment, in privacy, where they may be carried on to fruition. This, for example, might include the squeeze technique.
- Explaining other sexual options where, in private, the partner may stimulate the spouse to climax without the use of the penis.
- Observing psychological conditions and responses to be treated during the therapy.
- Acquainting the female with her own body to dispel some of the feeling that the genital area is a special place forbidden for all but physicians to see.
- Checking the clitoris to see that it is free of adhesions. Women typically say their physician has never examined it.
- Searching for areas where nerve endings come together in a systematic way, suggesting that this may develop positive feelings.
- Assisting women in determining areas of perception, feeling, and awareness in their vagina. Pointing out areas in the vagina that tend to be more sensitive and responsive for many women (i.e., 12 o'clock, 4 o'clock, and 8 o'clock positions).
- Determining a woman's response and arousal patterns. Indicating to her whether or not she lubricates well and vasocongests when she does.
- Locating areas digitally that may be producing pain, discomfort, or problems with sexual arousal or intercourse—such as separation of muscle in the vaginal wall; long labia minora; scarring, which may be tender or fibrous—and to pinpoint the source of "pain" when present.
- Identifying, where present, reasons for vaginismus, which are not only physiological but psychological.
- Teaching a male partner how to caress the female's vagina.

The most radical aspect of the sexological examination and what makes it different from the other manual sexological procedures is that it involved the technique of direct sexual stimulation. "Direct sexual stimulation of a client toward a high level of arousal is not, and never has been, a part of the sexological examination conducted at our Center. Still, some women do become aroused, and occasionally a sex flush will be observed in the process practice of the vaginal caresses according to Hartman and Fithian (13).

The sexological examination is also examining the clitoris: "More important than the stimulation of the clitoris in the female sexological examination is the determination of whether or not clitoral adhesions are present. This is a condition where the prepuce is stuck or adhered to the glans clitoris. For pre-orgasmic women, the inability of the clitoris to withdraw as part of sexual arousal may prevent particular women from full response. Even though some women are orgasmic with clitoral adhesions, freeing them usually results in easier, quicker orgasms and less discomfort due to calcified, trapped smegma" (13).

The sexological examination is explicitly sexual, and it addresses all relevant issues of sexual nature, and the female patients sexual responses are tested in the clinic directly by letting the patient feel sexual desire, arousal and pleasure, and report on it. The sexological examination can be taken all the way to instant sexual healing of the female an-orgasmic patient who cannot by herself get an orgasm. This technique has been used for 30 years by sexologists like Betty Dodson in the USA and Denmark and is still considered highly controversial in spite of its extreme efficiency, allowing therapists like Dodson to cure about 90% of the female patients with chronic anorgasmia, in only 15 hours of intensive therapy (21).

Ethical and legal considerations

The major concern that professionals have about the sexological examination is that untrained or unethical therapists might use it unwisely (6-13). Manual sexology must therefore be performed according to the highest ethical standards. The holistic sexological procedures are derived from holistic existential therapy, which involves reparenting, massage and bodywork, conversational therapy, philosophical training, healing of existence during spontaneous regression to painful life events (gestalts), and close intimacy without any sexual involvement.

The general ethical rule is that everything that does not harm and in the end will help the patient is allowed ("first do no harm") (27), but we understand that the more radical, manual sexual procedures are not accepted in many countries due to the sexual taboo. But no culture has the power to forbid the physician to touch his patient, and every time there is a touch, acceptance can be given. So every physician and therapist in every culture of the planet can use the smallest of the manual sexological tools. The physician or therapist is well advised to adjust his practice to the laws of the country.

To perform the sexological techniques, the sexologist must be able to control not only his/her behavior, but also his sexual excitement to avoid any danger of the therapeutic session turning into sexual activity. The necessary level of mastery of this art can only be obtained through training, supervision, and the presence of a third person. We recommend the ethical

rules of the International Society for Holistic Health to all practitioners of sexology, bodywork, and clinical medicine (27).

We will ask the reader of this paper who is left with the feeling that manual sexology is unethical and potentially abusive, because it allows the physician or therapist to touch the patients genitals, which potentially could be done for the therapists own pleasure and not for the benefit of the patient, to take into the consideration that the patients that seek sexological assistance are doing this consciously, with full consent, and often because they are chronically ill and severely tormented by their sexological health issue. Many of these patients are not able to find a sexual partner and their situation in life seems often pretty hopeless; many of them have been dysfunctional and incurable for many years (we found a mean of 8.9 years in our study of vaginal acupressure (19)), often with chronic pains, and they are depressingly aware that they are suffering from a condition for which there is no efficient biomedical cure, because they often have tried every possible treatment, sometimes even including genital surgery for the pains!

Many of the patients are also unaware of body memory or repressed memory due to earlier traumatic stress (30) and some patients only open their mind up for their earlier sexual abuse through the sexological examination, because the touch becomes the trigger that reconnect body and soul and recovers the patients sense of coherence (36,37). Therefore manual sexology has a unique healing potential in a time where sexual abuse and repressed sexual traumas are frequent.

We are aware that manual sexology is still not legal in some countries and find it important for the many sexually traumatized patients, and also for the many patients who got their psychosexual developmental problems for other reasons, who potentially could be cured by the aforementioned five sexological tools, that every country in the future will allow its physicians and therapists to practice these five tools of manual sexology.

Discussion

The primary purpose of sexological therapy is to improve the global quality of life and secondary to improve health and ability, which often happens when sexuality is improved (5,6,14,15). The severe conditions of the patients and the chronicity, and the high efficiency of the sexological procedures, are what ethically justify the much more direct, intimate, and intense methods of manual sexology.

The sexological intervention is ideally a holistic procedure also addressing the patients mind and spirit, not only the body; it integrates many different therapeutic elements also from psychoanalysis and short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy (22-24); it works on many levels of the patient's existence and personality at the same time, including spiritual aspects like the character and the meaning and purpose of life (the life mission) (38). We find it therefore correct to call these abovementioned procedures for "holistic sexology" or "holistic existential therapy", and include them in the concept of clinical holistic medicine.

Sexual problems are not only very distressing for the patient; they are also an integrative part of a psychological developmental disturbance that affects the personality of the patient at its roots. Reich wrote about the "genitally mature character", or the "genital character" for short (6), and we have often seen that healing a patient's sexual problems lead to the

subsequent healing of the patients mental and existential problems also, indicating that a major reason that many mentally and existentially troubles patients never recover might be the constant repression of their sexuality and libido, as already suggested by Freud and Jung (14,15).

Sexuality is still one of the strongest taboos we have in our western culture, and only if all physicians and health professionals work in concerted action will we be able to do something about this within a few generations. It might be the missing link to a more healthy population at large.

Psychotherapy must be considered as an alternative to sexological therapy, but there seems to be a general acceptance of the fact that many sexual dysfunctional states are not cured by psychotherapy alone (24), and that sexological procedures are necessary for patients that are non-responders to psychotherapy. Clinical holistic medicine that includes philosophy of life and bodywork are often efficient with sexual problems and seems to be able to cure 40% of these patients only by use of therapeutic touch including acceptance through touch (25).

In psychology, psychiatry, and existential psychotherapy (39,40), touch is often not allowed, and this might be the reason for these treatment methods not being very efficient with sexual dysfunctions.

Conclusions

The toolbox of manual sexology is so varied that there are tools for any occasion and any patient with sexual problems or uro-genital pains and discomfort. If there is not an obvious reason for a problem in the pelvic area, the general practitioner or therapist is well advised in thinking of sexual problems and repressed feelings and emotions relating to sexuality, as these has a strong tendency to become psychosomatic.

There are a lot of different disorders and sufferings that often can be helped or cured by manual sexological procedures: Sterile urinary tract infections, chronic pelvic and abdominal pain, pain and discomfort in the vulva, introitus or vagina, dyspareunia, vulvodynia, anorgasmia, sexual aversion syndrome, infertility patients, sexual desire problems, sexual arousal problems, lubrication problems, lack of sexual pleasure, negative feelings about sexual interaction, genital arousal disorder, lower genital arousal associated with intercourse, pain due to psychosocial factors, deficient pelvic muscle control etc.

Some of the five tools of manual sexology might be too advanced for most general practitioners and therapists and luckily most problems can be solved with the small tools. Just working with awareness and giving acceptance every time a patient is touched is already a huge step forward towards sexual health of our patients.

Physicians and therapists who have general concerns about pelvic floor physiotherapy should know that over 50 randomized clinical trials has shown vaginal physiotherapy to be rational and efficient for incontinence, pelvic and genital pain syndromes, etc. without any significant side effects (41), but when it comes to sexual dysfunctions the physiotherapists recommend the sexological examination to improve efficacy.

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Holistic Pelvic Examination

All treatment in a health clinic should start with talking. Only when conversation therapy is unable to solve the patient's problem, should the therapy be taken to the next level, where the patient's body is directly addressed. The standard tool for examination in the pelvic area is the pelvic examination. In the physician clinic this is often done fast and efficient with the purpose to examine for STDs, dysplasia or for example cancers.

The patients that enter sexological therapy have often been through a series of standard pelvic examinations. The patient will usually only come to the holistic therapist after the gynecologist has made sure that the pain, discomfort and other problems related to the pelvic area are without an organic cause. The intention of the holistic pelvic examination is different from the standard medical pelvic examination, because in the holistic pelvic examination the therapist supports the patient's own exploration of the pelvis and its organs. The understanding is that non-organic problems most often are of psychosomatic origin and only self-awareness and self-insight will help.

In clinical holistic practice it is therefore recommended to spend ample time with the gynecological or pelvic examination, especially in cases of women with suspected old emotional traumas following early childhood cases of incest or sexual abuse.

The holistic principles of holding and processing should be followed with the purpose of healing of the patient, re-establishing the natural relationship with the body, sexuality and reproductive organs. Sexual violations are often forcibly repressed. It appears that the tissues that were touched during the violation often bear the trauma. It is characteristic of these patients that their love lives are often problematic and do not provide the necessary support to heal the old wounds in the soul and therapy therefore indicated. When this is concerned with the reproductive organs, it poses particular difficulties, as the therapy can easily be experienced as a repetition of the original violation, not least due to the risk of projection and transference. There is therefore a need for a procedure that is familiar to and safe for the patient for all work that involves therapeutic touching of sexual organs over and beyond what is standard medical practice.

This chapter presents one case story of earlier child sexual abuse and one case of temporary infertility. We have established a procedure of slow or extended pelvic examination, where time is spend to make the patient familiar with the examination and accept the whole procedure, before the treatment is initiated.

The procedure is carried out with a nurse and 1-3 hours are set aside, depending on the patient's needs. It includes conversation on the present condition and symptoms, concept of boundaries, about how earlier assaults can be projected into the present, establishment of the therapeutic room as a safe place, exercises on when to say stop, therapeutic touch, visualization of the pelvic examination step by step beforehand, touching on the outside of the clothes with repetition of the "stop" procedure if necessary, pelvic examination paying special attention to traumatized (damaged/scarred/blocked) areas with feel, acknowledge and let go of the traumatized areas, post-processing of emotions and traumas with finally healing.

The patient cannot be healed until negative decisions are found and dropped with a tour back to the present, to let go of negative sentences and ideas and planning for further positive progress.

Introduction

The pelvic examination is a common examination performed in general practice. Whenever a woman complains of pain in the abdomen, the general practitioner is in principle obliged to carry out a pelvic examination in order to rule out ectopic pregnancy, acute inflammation of the lower abdomen or something else that can seriously affect the patient. The patient is examined in the traditionally gynecological position with her legs in stirrups, after which the physician can inspect, examine, explore and take samples.

When we speak to women about their experiences in this situation, a surprisingly large number of women report that they have felt humiliated and devaluated by the procedure that is normally followed. They often find it insulting to be put in positions in which their reproductive organs are exposed, without being in any way able to look after themselves. They often feel incapable of protecting themselves against an examination that may be insensitive, rushed and not leave space for them as human beings, the sole intention being to perform a physical procedure as efficiently as possible.

When there is an actual sexual trauma the situation is even more complex. The purpose is the healing of the patient, to re-establish the natural relationship with the body, sexuality and reproductive organs also in patients with acknowledged or suspected sexual violations. For integration of presumed traumas following incest and sexual assaults it is recommended to carry out a slow pelvic examination, based on the holistic principles of holding and processing. On top of the normal examination in such cases all the legal aspects according to the law in the specific country must also be followed.

Many gynecological problems like involuntary childlessness or infertility seem to follow problems in the woman's relationship with her body, gender and sexuality, which might be alleviated by a holistic approach to the woman and the gynecological procedures. It is important that the woman experience to be seen and acknowledged as a whole person, where she feels herself and all parts of her body deeply accepted. This approach can change the often quite provocative pelvic examination from a fearful to a peaceful or even healing experience. Sometimes a few hours of work can change the woman's perception of herself, her body, her gender and her sexuality, but this is usually not done in a busy general practice.

Modern holistic medicine and sexology

The life mission theory (1-6) grants that everybody has a purpose in life or a talent. Happiness comes from living out this purpose and succeeding in expressing the core talent. To do this, it is important to develop as a person into what is known as the natural condition, a condition where the person know himself and uses all his efforts on achieving what is most important for him. The holistic process theory of healing (7-10) and the related quality of life theories (11-13) states that the return to the natural state of being is possible, whenever the person gets the resources needed for the existential healing. The resources needed are, according to the theory, holding in the dimensions: awareness, respect, care, acknowledgment and acceptance with support and processing in the dimensions: feeling, understanding and letting go of negative attitudes and beliefs. The precondition for the holistic healing to take place is trust with the intention of the healing to take place. Existential healing is not a local healing of any tissue, but a healing of the wholeness of the person, making him much more resourceful, loving, and knowledgeable of himself, his own needs and wishes. To let go of negative attitudes and beliefs the person returns to a more responsible existential position with an improved quality of life (QOL). The philosophical change of the person in healing is often a change towards preferring difficult problems and challenges, instead of avoiding difficulties in life (14-21). The person, who becomes happier and more resourceful, is often also becoming more healthy, talented and able of functioning (22-24).

The pelvic examination

It is a worry that the numerous physicians and gynecologists around the world subject women to examinations, which in themselves may be stressful and perhaps even traumatic experiences. Part of the problem is obviously due to shortage of time, but another important part of the problem appears to be due to misunderstood respect for the woman's sexual boundaries, which means that the physician feels more secure in reducing the female patient to a pure object of examination. It is considerably easier to examine a set of organs than to relate to a living person, with feelings of shame and desire and a sexuality that can threaten to end the career of the physician, if he so much as relates to it.

Mere suspicion that the physician may assault the woman, who is placed in what is a very vulnerable position can cause the physician to entrench himself behind this clinical facade in a way that is in itself dehumanizing. Instead of being present, the physician almost tries to avoid being there, and becomes an excuse for himself. Paradoxically, this gives rise to another type of violation – being rummaged around in the woman's most delicate parts, as though one was something rather like a car engine. Pushed to its extreme, it is as though the medical profession has decided once and for all that it is difficult to show human respect and care in the situation, where the patient's reproductive organs are exposed. Instead, it is necessary to make do with showing the craftsman's respect that a skilled clockmaker displays with a sophisticated timepiece.

We have ourselves faced ethical problems in putting women or young girls who have previously been subjected to sexual assault, through the general examination procedure, because this procedure can bring back memories of assault. Nor is it possible to solve a

problem of that kind by simply passing the buck on to the gynecologist, who although he has more experience generally has far less knowledge of the patient.

One of the emotionally most difficult aspects of the pelvic examination is the physical touch itself, which the gynecologist tries to make less dangerous by using rubber gloves and instruments. Due to a strict professionalism with often a brusque silence (because the physician is afraid of saying the wrong thing) the women can sometimes be reminded of up-tightness, bad sexual experiences with insensitive lovers, or even insulting sexual touches, rough partners, attempted rape or in the worst case assault in childhood.

Where sexually harmless situations are concerned, the physician generally does not have any objection to calming the patient through touch, for example by putting his hand on the arm of a woman who is upset. This often causes difficulties in the gynecological context, because if the situation is misunderstood by the woman, the entire medical career of the physician can be finished in an afternoon. It is important that both the patient and the physician realize that instead of avoiding any human touch in connection with a pelvic examination, the physical touch can and must also be an entirely natural constituent element here too. As in any other emotionally difficult situation, supporting physical touch may help the woman to feel acceptance and support, and in that way promote her sense of security in the situation and not least her confidence in the physician and the treatment.

Many male medical students at first have serious problems with the pelvic examination (as an example one student became impotent for months, after spending a period of time in a gynecology department). We also often encounter patients, who clearly hated the pelvic examination, because it reminded them of unpleasant things from their past. There we must consider whether it might not be possible to turn the unavoidable touching of the woman around, so that it becomes not an evil that has to be minimized, but a therapeutic resource that can be drawn on or in other words instead of masking the touch using it to express respect for and care of the woman in the examination situation.

The holistic pelvic examination

Due to the fact that we had a patient with a need for a considerate procedure of this type, we arranged for a very thorough, careful and well-planned procedure, which specifically tried to avoid turning the patient into an object and instead to treat the woman as a woman. The idea was to make the pelvic examination slow – very slow, in fact, so slow that the physician could be sure that the patient was entirely there at all stages of the examination, indeed in everything what was done with her. We also went through the procedure with the nurse, who approved it. We found, to our surprise, that the pelvic examination was in fact healing and therapeutic for the patient, when it was performed in this slow and attentive way. The physician (SV) also discovered that it was not unpleasant to be present in the examination situation. The new and more relaxed attitude and new acceptance of this unavoidable physical touching of the woman's reproductive organs led to a surprising change in the patient's experience of the examination.

With this new approach women started to say that it was nowhere near as bad as it used to be. In contrast to what might have been imagined, the empathic and physically present form of examination also becomes less sexually provocative for the physician than the

normal, rapid gynecological procedure. Since that time we have allowed ourselves an extra amount of time, when we have had female patients with sexual problems, who perhaps have been subjected to sexual assault – the truth of which, however, it is never possible to know for sure - but who have been very vulnerable, sensitive and perhaps even full of shame and self-condemnatory in relation to their sex, reproductive organs and sexuality.

If sexual assault is suspected, we use the slow procedure with preparation of the patient, where she is thoroughly informed about it beforehand, so that we can be sure of her complete acceptance and assistance throughout the procedure.

In the medical literature it is normally recommended that a nurse or other person should always be present when the physician performs gynecological or sexological procedures. This is not for the sake of the patient, as some people perhaps think, but to protect the physician, because this way there is a witness, if a patient one day wishes to lodge a complaint about sexual assault. In Denmark, where it is extremely rare for cases to come to court, there are many general practitioners, who never have the nurse with them for a pelvic examination and the physician gradually adopts a natural and relaxed attitude to this. Today in our holistic practice the nurse is brought in, if the patient needs extra holding, but the nurse is not brought in if an extra person would disrupt the examination. A case history of sexual assault follows below.

A case story

Female, aged 28 years with pain in lower abdomen, sexual problems and suspicion of incest is seen for the first quality-of-life (QOL) conversation. On the couch we work (through conversation) on her 12 years of problems with her failure and loss of confidence. She still has pain in the right side of the lower abdomen and a pelvic examination should be performed, but in view of the delicate mental state of the patient it is deferred.

Second QOL conversation: Talked about boundaries – being below the line in relationship with her father, above it, having completely disappeared and taking up the whole space = taking responsibility for everything. Exercise for next conversation: Find and describe situations where there are good examples of this.

Third QOL conversation: She had problems in her anus, which tore and she felt a large cavity in her abdomen together with constant problems in the lowest part of the large bowel. She suspects, with horror, sexual assaults in the anus, but cannot remember anything. “It would fit in well with what I feel,” she said. She related that her first intercourse broke her hymen. There was no way of knowing what trauma lied within her and they will not emerge, until she has had enough confidence to accept the holding. She has had desire for her boyfriend three times, but the last time she had to stop, as the desire did not last.

Fourth QOL conversation: We talked about her anxiety about coming here, about going into therapy, about meeting me (SV) as a man, about the anxiety, which she suffers from frequently. We talked about philosophy of life. We talked about access to feelings, sex and love by noting what is hidden in the body. Exercise for next conversation: Feel all the emotions you have. Stop and feel them. Write down what you feel on a piece of paper.

Fifth QOL conversation: Things have gone well, she said. “What did you think about on the way to see me?” “It’s a bit like school – as though I have to perform well,” she said. “I

find the situation with you today very stiff,” I answered her. We talked about this. She has felt alone, avoided trust and closeness. She has done her homework: she would like to have desire for her boyfriend, but does not, just hopes he will not come and take her. We talk about this. While she is on the couch, we work through the conversation to get into her feelings. It becomes very sensitive, and it appeared as though she was about to be suffocated in the gestalt and feelings that came to the surface. She cried and said “It does not matter to me” and “I do not care”.

Sixth QOL conversation: On the couch we work on being present in the body, she lies on her back with her legs spread out and feels hard pressure across her chest and lower abdomen; I support her on the thigh and across the top of the head. She cried silently therapeutic tears and afterwards she was better. No exercise for next time, it is going the way it should without.

Seventh QOL conversation: Wanted to get to the couch straight away and does so. We talked about taming her like the little prince - she understands that well. We work on tensions in the low back, lower abdomen, pelvis and thighs. The sartorius muscle [which runs across the thigh] in particular is extremely tense and is very sore, when she spreads her legs. We talk about her being chronically tense to close her lap and hide her sex. She was also very sore in the left knee “because I hide myself [i.e. her reproductive organs] by pushing my pelvis backwards”. Exercise: Stop and feel, when you feel something. Allow space for your emotions. They are your life energy, regardless how difficult they are.

Eighth QOL conversation: ... She cries a lot and does not think anything is happening at all. She has come to a standstill. On the couch we work on her abdomen; she is still sore, corresponding to the large bowel on the left side. Pelvic examination still indicated, but not urgent, since it is difficult to obtain permission to approach the regions without her having the sensation of being assaulted and this must be respected. We talked about the paradox: the more she goes into the gestalt, where she has emotionally “died”, the more she feels she is not getting anywhere, but that is a good sign therapeutically. Exercise for next week: accept that you have come to a standstill. Spend time being at this standstill. Do not force yourself to do anything. Just be at a standstill.

Ninth QOL conversation: Has been very, very far away and sad. On the couch, we continued to work on joining her two halves above and below the navel. It is as though she runs away from feeling everything below the navel. Being together with her boyfriend has returned the trauma with focus in the area of her lower abdomen and she felt suffocated. She needs to do the same exercise as home-work, since she had not done it for this time. Pelvic examination still indicated. We agree that next time there will be a long session with our nurse, where we perform an extended pelvic examination with respect to identifying traumas in the tissue. We make a by establishing a safe place or point. The whole procedure is visualized. Everything takes place very slowly, and after practicing the stopping procedure. We are to talk about projections of the assault into the present. A plan is drawn up, with which the patient associates herself fully before we start. Three hours are set aside.

Tenth QOL conversation and session with the nurse: We run through the case report together and it adds up to suspicion of sexual assault. Following acceptance by the patient, we implement a slow pelvic examination for integration of presumed traumas following incest and sexual assaults. The purpose is re-establishment of the natural relationship with the body, sexuality and reproductive organs in the patient, who has problems due to acknowledged or suspected sexual violations.

Sexual violations are often forcibly repressed. It appears that the tissues that are touched during the violation often bear the trauma. It is characteristic of these patients that their love lives are often problematic and do not provide the necessary support to heal the old wounds in the soul, and therapy is therefore indicated. When this is concerned with the reproductive organs, it poses particular difficulties, as the therapy can easily be experienced as a repetition of the original violation, not least due to the risk of projection and transference. There is therefore a need for a procedure that is familiar and safe for the patient, but it involves therapeutic touching of sexual organs over and beyond what is standard medical practice. We establish the following procedure, with which the patient is familiarized and accepts, before the treatment is initiated. The procedure is carried out with a nurse and ample time allocated (three hours). The procedure includes:

- Conversation about the present condition - relationship to body, sexuality and reproductive organs, including investigation of problems in sex life such as pain and painful memories are recapitulated.
- Conversation about the concept of boundaries, so that the patient understands fully where her own sexual boundaries are in order that the examination is not experienced as an assault.
- Conversation about how the assault can be projected into the present. How do the patient and therapist act, if the patient finds the therapy a violation? It is important to say so immediately, if something feels unpleasant or wrong.
- The establishment of the therapeutic room as a safe place.
- Stopping exercise - touching of the body and reproductive organs on the outside of the clothes, where the patient says stop and the hands are removed at once.
- Contact: Physical touching of the body – from the head down to the stomach, pelvis and lower abdomen, slowly and in suitable steps, so that the patient is present and secure throughout.
- Visualization of extended pelvic examination, where the therapist runs through the steps of the examination thoroughly, so the patient can imagine them before they are due to happen.
- Touching on the outside of the clothes with repetition of the “Stop” procedure if necessary.
- Pelvic examination paying special attention to traumatized (damaged/scarred/blocked) areas.
- Feel, acknowledge and let go of the traumatized areas. If there are areas, that appear blocked or “the patient not present”, has pains or other discomfort, we then give special attention with regard to their integration. This is not fundamentally different for example from the treatment of growing pains in children by touching the areas that are sore, for example around the knee. If the sick areas are attended, they are also usually healed.
- Post-processing of emotions and traumas. The work with blocked places in the body often release painful gestalts from childhood and adolescence, which must be talked through, in the same way that the patient’s painful feelings must be supported and accommodated by both physician and patient.

- Healing is only possible, when negative decisions are found and dropped. The patient has to come back to the present, let go of negative sentences or ideas and plan for further positive progress.
- These points above are printed out, signed and approved by the patient as a formal contract.

This procedure was carried out with success in this patient. The gynecological and rectal examination was normal except for a lesion of blockage type (3x1 cm in size) with brownish, folded skin between labium minor and labium major on the left side (which is processed with partial success) and tenderness in the vagina 5 cm up on both sides, but nothing abnormal discovered. There were problems with the “stop and start” safety procedure, which we have to repeat 20 times in four series before she could say yes and no. She was happy and at ease after the procedure, but a little disappointed at not having broken down/having achieved a breakthrough.

Eleventh QOL conversation: She has felt lighter and freer, since last time. She has not menstruated, but pregnancy test is negative. She must test again in three weeks, if menstruation does not arrive. She feels pressure over her lower back, as though it is on the way, but it does not come. This is a normal body reaction and that she to be calm, but remember that the most common reason for a period not to occur is pregnancy in her age. She has started to say stop in relation to her boyfriend sexually, when she does not feel desire. She relates that he respects this, but then she herself has great desire. She needs to say no sometimes during intercourse and we discuss how they must practice this together.

This conversation was a very moving experience for the three people present (the patient, the physician and nurse). The patient was shaking with nervousness, when she arrived, but quickly adapted as she got on very well with our nurse. It was clear that the patient found it very difficult to say no or stop to others. In our preparatory training procedure she had to say stop about 100 times, before she could continue the session. For us as physicians it is hard to comprehend, how someone can become an adult without such a fundamental skill, because she will constantly be in conflict in relation to men or sex, since she is not able to set boundaries.

So, although the patient felt disappointed after the extended pelvic examination, that she had not “broken through”, in fact she had. This treatment became a turning point in her life and in the therapy. After that session she began to let go of what she was clinging onto and what limited her. So in fact that session was a very important and moving session. The patient did not like the look of her external reproductive organs, because of the dark and blocked area between the labia on one side. Nothing was noted if one did not look for blockages, but the area was clearly in the patient's negative focus. It was found to be very important for her sexual self-esteem to have the problems confronted here. The important aspect is that after the procedure in which the physician finds such an area of embarrassment he is forced to touch the very place of which the patient is most ashamed. It is there that she is confronted with her own self-condemnation, which can then be processed and integrated. The nurse had a very important role as the supporter as she held the patient in her hands, while the physician carefully gave contact. It is also important to note that the patient's concern about pelvic examination afterwards has largely disappeared.

So we do not just need attention, respect and care – and acknowledgement of our soul – we also need something bodily, physical and down-to-earth, namely acceptance of our sex.

When it is possible as a physician to meet the patient with respect and within boundaries to recognize her as a woman, then we can help her and give her our full acceptance. Many problems related to sexuality then appear to decrease, as they are probably due to self-condemnation and lack of sexual self-acceptance.

Involuntary childlessness, infertility and personal development

Sometimes, when a relationship is not working the result can be unwanted childlessness or infertility. It frequently happens that couples previously unable to conceive have a child, when one or both partners start on self-development. The physician can initiate this process of healing by a holistic approach, as shown in the following case story.

A case story

Female, aged 30 years with involuntary childlessness and the first QOL conversation. Involuntary childlessness or infertility for several years. Investigated by her gynaecologist, who found everything to be normal. Social history taking revealed that her mother had disappeared, when the patient was four years old. She had gotten sleeping problems, which began when she found her mother again two years ago and afterwards died of heart disease one year ago. Evaluation after the conversation: The patient does not appear to be a giving person, was a neglected child with a “closed heart”, who is only able to receive which is even a problem. We discuss responsibility for one’s own life, know yourself, your needs and make sure that you have them fulfilled, then you will be able to have a good life. Plan for next conversation with two exercises: Make a complete list of all the problems in your life (working life, social life, family, sex life and friends). Make a list of everything you want for yourself, of your deep, genuine needs and what would make you completely happy. What do you long for? Come back in 14 days.

Second QOL conversation: The patient broke down after the last time she came to see me, and has had a hard time since. We talk about what feelings surfaced. She felt immense grief with a feeling that the world simply came to a standstill. During the weekend she became completely hysterical, unable to understand why her friends could be able to chat about trivial matters, when an acquaintance had just died. She became the unreasonable little child sitting in the car again. She was told during the conversation that “You must not anticipate becoming pregnant for the first three years” to which she was shocked, but later accepted and bought a cat instead. Concerning the exercise she came with four pages of problems and one page of wishes. Most important was her statement that “I am not satisfied with myself and not happy either”, followed by “I have not had a child yet by the age of 30 years and “I do not know what I want, I do not know my wishes”. Her most important wish was to have a child, followed by becoming happy and able to be something for other people. Her needs were “to get to know myself - to find out what I want to do”. Exercise for next time: Come with a deeper and more true version of the same lists – so that you can fold out

and go further in your growth and development, because now you seem to have come to a complete stop. New appointment scheduled in two months.

Third QOL conversation: Has finally become pregnant – just like that. She feels fine now. We talk about relaxing in relation to the pregnancy – taking things as they come, since everything looks fine now. She should do everything she is good at in terms of work, travelling and experiencing the world with her own family. Has re-discovered some decisive confidence in life and found her surplus. Exercise for next meeting: Read some books (suggestions given), which will give her “food for thoughts” and ideas to think about. Come back in two months.

This patient is going through a painful process, in which she is letting go of her compulsory need to become pregnant here and now. From a biomedical point of view it is completely unreasonable to torment the patient and burden her with all the strenuous exercises. From a holistic perspective, this is necessary for her awareness, growth and drive in life. Maybe there is a very often a good reason for temporary infertility, as not all women are ready to become mothers and give constantly care for the next 12-18 years, which children need them to do. Nature is wise and very often it is better to rely on the deep wisdom of the body, than mechanically to force a solution. If the woman is not ready to have a child, it is hardly good for the child to be born now either.

It appears as though people, who wrestle with their existential problems, find it more difficult to have children than people who do not. It is as though body and soul know well that now is not the time to have children. The unfortunate aspect is that these same people in their daily life do not have access to this deep wisdom.

Discussion

It is important to notice that we introduced a slow pelvic examination with a therapeutic element, relevant for a wide range of psychosomatic disturbances related to gender and sexuality, from infertility to gynecological and sexual psychosomatic problems and the long-term consequences of child sexual abuse. On one hand this opens up for a clinical practice with many beneficial and healing qualities for the patient, because it allows a much closer and more intimate relationship between the patient and the physician that has been the traditional practice, but on the other hand this procedure has several disadvantages.

In many cultures this cannot be practiced due to cultural or religious reasons and the sexual taboo being so strong, that the female will experience the process as overwhelming or even insulting. In the United States it might be practically impossible to follow our recommendation in many cases, because of the time consumption, economics and reimbursement issues of this culture and the heavy “malpractice culture” in that country.

The most difficult problem of this procedure seems to be that it makes it very difficult to be sure that the procedure and all the involved steps are always necessary and rational. This procedure and the cultural issues involved means that it has a high potential for malpractice, but this can be minimized dramatically by the following steps: 1) Before the procedure is done, the patient must read about it with at least one case study like the one in this paper, to fully understand the emotional and existential implications of the procedure, so she has time to contemplate and make her decision of whether to accept the physicians offer or not; 2) The

procedure is also orally presented by the physician to the patient before she signs the contract; 3) The physician must be in supervision to discuss the problems if any about borders, intimacy, emotional and sexual issues. Close supervision and full inter-collegial openness is the best prevention of malpractice, as malpractice often occur with physicians without a network and without openness about what is going on in their clinic.

Conclusions

The holistic pelvic examination is designed for solving gynecological and sexual problems of psycho-somatic origin. It is a recommended alternative to the standard procedure whenever there is a suspicion of a history of sexual assault or sexual abuse, even when that abuse took place many years ago. It is often more time-consuming and can involve strong emotions on the part of the patient, as earlier unresolved traumas are contacted during the examination.

In the holistic pelvic examination this is not a problem, but quite opposite the release of suppressed emotions might be healing to the patient, if the physician knows how “to hold” (meaning to care for) the patient and how to process the problems and emotions in order for the patient to heal.

A holistic approach in general can help the woman not to feel humiliated or devalued by the pelvic examination procedure, but instead respected, acknowledged and accepted as the woman she really is. Sometimes this is all it takes to solve even more severe medical problems like involuntary childlessness, as shown in the presented case.

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Existential Therapy and Acceptance through Touch

Sexual problems are found in four major forms: lack of libido and desire, lack of arousal and potency, pain and discomfort during intercourse, and lack of orgasm. It is possible to work with a holistic approach to sexology in the clinic in order to find and repair the negative beliefs in the mind, the repressions of gender and sexuality in the body, and lack of love and purpose of life in the spirit, which according to holistic philosophy of life and understanding of man are the root causes of the problems related to desire, arousal, orgasmic potency and sexual pain.

It is important not to focus only on the gender and genitals in understanding the patient's sexual problems. It is of equal importance not to neglect the body, its parts or the feelings and emotions connected to it. Shame, guilt, helplessness, fear, disgust, anger, hatred and other strong feelings are almost always an important part of a sexual problem and these feelings are often "held" by the tissue of the pelvis and sexual organs.

The patient with sexual problems can be helped both by healing existence in general and by discharging the old painful emotions from the tissues. The later process of local healing is often facilitated by the simple technique of therapeutic touch: accepting contact soul to soul via physical touch.

This is a very simple technique, where the self-acceptance and bodily and genital self-esteem of the patient is to be developed and encouraged. One way of doing this is by asking the female patient to put her own hand on her stomach and upper part of mons pubis (over the top of uterus and ovaria), or over the vulva (clitoris, vagina, uretra, lower part of the uterus), after which the holistic physician puts his hand supportively on top of hers.

When done with care and after obtaining the necessary trust and consent of the patient, this aspect of holding often releases the old negative emotions of shame, hopelessness, disgust, despair etc bound to the touched areas. Afterwards in following sessions these emotional and existential problems are the subject for conversational therapy, further holistic processing and healing.

Primary vulvodynia is one of the diseases that seemingly can be cured after only a few successful sessions of working with acceptance through touch. The technique can be used as an isolated procedure or as a part of the pelvic examination. When touching the genitals with

the intention of sexual healing a written therapeutic contract with the patient is highly recommended and a strict ethical code necessary to avoid malpractice.

As about one woman in two or three in the western world suffer from severe sexual problems, many of which according to the statistics (NNT=1-2; see section 3 and chapter 26-28) can be efficiently alleviated by the simple holistic techniques of “holding and processing”, it is very important that the holistic physician is trained to work in the sexual sphere in order to be able to support his patients fully.

Introduction

Sexology is the medical specialty concerned with sexual dysfunctions. The major breakthrough in this field was made by pioneers like Reich, Masters and Johnson in the middle of the last century with the mapping of the human sexual functions and dysfunctions (1,2). When a sexual problem cannot be solved together with the physician in his practice, the patient is often referred to a sexologist, still using the techniques developed by these pioneers. As so many people have minor sexual problems, it is not possible to refer everyone. Most problems should therefore be treated in general practice and minor problems can most likely be solved just by conversation. There remains a residual quantity that apparently cannot be “talked away” (see chapter 11) (2) and for these we recommend the methods of this section of the book.

It appears as though some children have developed a sexuality that is greatly impaired and destroyed by the lack of sexual acceptance, condemnation or merely failure in physical contact, because a child needs accepting touch (2,3), which of course must not lead to sexual abuse of the child. Intimacy is not sexuality, as every parent will know. Accepting the child’s sexuality is not the same as encouraging sexual activity, but just acknowledging it as a sexual pole, either male or female (3-5).

The sexual problems resistant to conversational therapy are typically problems with acceptance of one’s own sex and sexuality, which as originally suggested by Masters and Johnson can be a result of not having received the loving acceptance and touch needed in childhood (2,6). If one is a girl, there is a need for her father to think she is lovely, delightful and “good enough to eat” (6). It is obviously important that borders are not violated, but it is just as important that the father does not withdraw from physical contact, as he may for example, if he is afraid of his own sexual feelings or if he has repressed his own sexuality, so that he does not feel any physical interest in his daughter at all. The same applies to mother and son. Most parents show their acceptance or lack of acceptance through closeness and physical contact - ranging from warm, nourishing care to mental and physical violence. Regardless how good one is at talking, the conversation does not (at least according to our clinical experience) reach as deep as touch.

In Denmark today the common understanding is that repressing a child’s sexual activity can be traumatizing, while in other cultures and especially in the past child sexual activity was not allowed and such behavior were seen as abnormal. At the times of Sigmund Freud, children were sent to the physician for masturbatory tendencies, but as times goes by and the subject has been studied scientifically, child sexuality has been more and more accepted as a normal and even necessary aspect of normal child development (7).

As adults, repressed childhood sexuality, can be observed in physical behavior, where the person does not act with a sexual character. Either the person is acting sexless, or the person concerned is virtually behaving like a person of the opposite sex – far too masculine, or too feminine.

That poses many problems to many people, who experience not having sufficient sexual attraction, not being sexually delightful, being sexually inadequate – e.g. lacking physical or orgasmic potency - and not having the desire for sex. Sexual problems seem in general to be related to physical and mental health problems, existential problems and poor quality of life (8).

Repression of sex and sexuality appears to happen through a decision that sex is wrong and shameful, or that one is not as delightful, as feminine or masculine as one ought to be. Early in life denial of one's sex can be done very effectively by deciding that one is of the opposite sex, in order maybe to meet the wisher of the parents, as we shall see in an example below. Based on our clinical observations, this results in some strangely unmanageable sexual problems, which are difficult to understand.

Existential healing or healing of the wholeness of the person on the deepest level of his or her existence is needed for the “abstract” sexual problems not related to a concrete physical problem. Before we continue, let us take a look on holistic medicine and the concept of existential healing.

The scientific basis for modern, holistic medicine and sexology

The life mission theory (chapter 3 and 4) (9,10-13) is based on the philosophy that everybody has a purpose of life or talents. Happiness comes from living this purpose and succeeding in expressing the core talent in life. To do this, it is important to develop as a person into what is known as the natural condition or a condition, where the person knows himself and uses all his efforts to achieve what is most important for him. The theory of talent (12) states that we have three major talents in life, called purpose, consciousness, and gender. In relation to this paper these dimensions may simply be: love, power, and sex. Gender and sexuality is a fundamental dimension of human existence, which must be in a sound, natural and un-denied state for the person to live and function naturally and in full power.

The holistic process theory of healing (14,15) and the related theories for salutogenesis (16,17), meaning of life (18), and quality of life (19-21) state that a return to the natural state of being is possible, whenever the person gets the resources needed for the existential healing. The resources needed are holding in the dimensions: awareness, respect, care, acknowledgment and acceptance with and support and processing in the dimensions: feeling, understanding and letting go of negative attitudes and beliefs. The preconditions for the holistic healing to take place are trust together with the intention of the healing taking place.

Existential healing is not a local healing of any tissue, but a healing of the wholeness of the person, making him much more resourceful, loving and aware of himself, his own needs and wishes. In letting go of negative attitudes and beliefs the person returns to a more responsible existential position with an improved quality of life. The philosophical change taking place, when the person is healing is often a change towards preferring difficult

problems and challenges, instead of avoiding difficulties in life (22-29). The person who becomes happier and more resourceful is often also becoming more healthy, more talented and able of functioning (30-32).

Sexual problems are found in four major forms: lack of libido, lack of arousal and potency, pain and discomfort during intercourse and lack of orgasm (2). It is possible to work with a holistic approach towards sexology in the clinic in order to find and repair the negative beliefs, repressions of love and lack of purpose of life, which seemingly are the core to problems like arousal, potency and pain, with repression of gender and sexuality (33,34).

The theory of talent (12) thus seems to be relevant for understanding human sexuality. It is highly important not to focus on the gender and genitals in understanding the patient's sexual problems, because many problems related to sex can be solved on the level of the whole person (2,33,34). But as important as it is not to focus there, it is also essential not to neglect the body and the feelings connected to it. Shame, guilt, helplessness, fear and other strong feelings are almost always an important part of a sexual problem (2).

Acceptance through touch

Acceptance is one quality of "holding" that is more related to the healing of human existence in the sexual dimension than others. Acceptance has to do with the biological fact that we were not rejected from the womb, even when we were not syngenic with our mother, a marvelous biological fact still scientifically unexplained. Acceptance in early life has to do with close physical contact and touch, where the child needs touch almost more than anything. Sometimes our needs for touch and acceptance of our body, energies and functions were not fulfilled in early life, which can give us severe problems accepting ourselves as adults (2-5). One of the areas of existence most vulnerable to lack of acceptance seems from our clinical experiences to be our sexuality.

As physicians, we have discovered in our practice that some of the problems related to gender and sexuality can be tackled by a simple technique: accepting contact via touch. It is possible to extract this simple, but essential aspect of the holistic pelvic examination (34), where it is a central feature and use it outside the primary medical pelvic examination.

The following case is an example, where the patient did not reveal her actual problem from the beginning, although she had been circling around her sexual problems with shame and embarrassment from the first conversation. Once we got a hold on the actual problem, progress was quick. We applied a very simple sexological technique, where self-acceptance was to be promoted, by asking the patient to put her hand on her own reproductive organs with the physician having his hand supportively around hers.

The position of the physician's hand mirrors exactly the position of the patient's hand, so that the vulva is only touched directly by the patient and indirectly by the physician. The applied pressure is adjusted to the situation to optimize the therapeutic effect as described by Marion Rosen (35). The indication for using this procedure in the holistic medical clinic must always be the physicians understanding of the patient's need for physical acceptance. An attending nurse will give "holding" to the patient.

The procedure needs to be performed according to ethical standards. The holistic sexological procedure is derived from the holistic existential therapy, which involves re-

parenting, massage and bodywork, conversational therapy, philosophical training, healing of existence during spontaneous regression to painful life events (gestalts), and close intimacy without any sexual involvement.

In psychology, psychiatry and existential psychotherapy (36,37), touch is often allowed, but a sufficient distance between therapist and client is always kept, all clothes kept on, and it is even recommended that the first name is not taken into use to keep the relationship as formal and correct as possible (38). The reason for this distance is to create a safety zone that removes the danger of psychotherapy leading to sexual involvement.

In the original Hippocratic medicine (39), as well as in modern holistic existential therapy such a safety zone is not possible, because of the simultaneous work with all dimensions of existence, from therapeutic touch (40) of the physical body, feelings and mind, to sexuality and spirituality. The fundamental rule has since Hippocrates been that the physician must control his behavior in order not to abuse his patient.

The patients in holistic existential therapy and holistic sexology are often chronically sick, and their situation is often pretty hopeless, as many of them have been dysfunctional and incurable for many years, or they are suffering from conditions for which there is no efficient biomedical cures or therapies. The primary purpose of the holistic existential therapy is therefore to improve quality of life and secondly to improve health and ability.

The severe conditions of the patients and their chronicity is what ethically justify the much more direct, intimate and intense method of holistic existential therapy, which integrates many different therapeutic elements, and works on many levels of the patients existence and personality at the same time. Holistic sexology is holistic existential therapy taken into the domain of sexology.

The general ethical rule is that everything that does not harm and in the end helps the patient is allowed. An important aspect of the therapy is that the physician must be creative in practice, because no patients are alike, and invent a new treatment for every patient, as Yalom has suggested (36,37).

To perform the sexological technique of acceptance through touch in the genital areas of the body, the holistic sexologist must be able to control not only his/her behavior, but also his sexual excitement to avoid any danger of the therapeutic session turning into sexual activity; the necessary level of mastery of this art can only be obtained through training and supervision. After the case stories we will come back to this important issue of ethics.

Case story

Female, aged 33 years with vaginismus

The patient arrived by her own choosing to the clinic, presenting her vaginismus still not sufficiently cured after 16 years of consultations with both physicians and alternative therapists. As nothing else seemed to work we found it acceptable to offer her the experimental sexological treatment of “acceptance through touch”, to which she consented. The six first consultations were used to prepare her for the treatment.

Seventh conversation: The patient related that immediately when intercourse begins she experience pain. When she was 17 years old she tried “a thousand times” to have intercourse

with her boyfriend, but was unable to do so. The physician diagnosed vaginismus, which she still suffers from, although today she is able to have intercourse, most of the time with only modest discomfort. EXERCISE for the patient: Do not accept him, until you really have desire. Caress in all other ways first. On the couch, we worked on serious chronic tensions in the part of the adductor brevis muscle [one of the femur adductors], which inserts on the pubic bone. Along the way, she related that when she was 14 years old, she would lie in bed masturbating for two and a half hours at a time; she was sure that she was the only one from school who did it. Her very strong desire was then suppressed so that she did not even feel desire during petting, until her boyfriend made her go and see the physician, when she was 17 years old. We talked about such strong enjoyment being a great talent, which must be administered consciously. It is a great gift, but induces great resentment if it is not controlled (= condemnation as cheap, a “tart” etc.). We worked on her shame, guilt and self-condemnation, which were very marked, and slowly the muscles loosened. [The authors would like to point out that encouragement of sexual activity at such ages is not allowed under laws in the United States. The age of consent is 18 years in Arizona, California, Delaware, Florida, Idaho, Maine, Massachusetts, N. Dakota, Oregon, Tennessee, Utah, Virginia, and Wisconsin and 17 years in Colorado, Illinois, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, New Mexico, New York and Texas. In Denmark sexual debut at the age of 13 years is not uncommon and it is legal if the partners are both under 15 years (but not legal if one partner is 15 years or above); in spite of this a teenager can get contraceptives from his/her physician and the physician will treat his/her sexual problems in very much the same way as an adult. In many countries the practice is different, so please adjust your practice to the law and culture of your country].

Eighth conversation and sexological procedure: acceptance through touch. It is going really well for her – everyone notices that she is well. Had her period last Saturday - regularly now for the third time in a row 29/5 with normal amount of menstrual bleeding instead of blood “pouring out”. Was “dumped” just after the last session by her boyfriend, which was not much fun. She is advised to let go of the boyfriend. On the couch we worked on acceptance of her sex - her hand right down against the vulva, mine (SV) supportively on top. We discussed that perhaps her purpose in life was to bring joy and happiness – and that made her completely desperate and unhappy. If she could choose a talent, it would be to be leader of large gatherings. “It’s so unfair that I did not become a man”, she says. She related that her mother and father thought she was a boy and she was to have been called Peter. There was a terribly great charge at this point of the conversation, which was then released.

We can here see a very great effect of this extremely simple technique. The sudden, completely spontaneous recognition that she was to have been a boy, with the serious consequences this has had for her in the form of unconscious self-condemnation and suppression of her own sex. The technique is traditional in the Hippocratic holistic medical tradition but unusual in modern biomedicine, because there is direct focus on her own acceptance of her physical sex.

Because of the sexual taboo, she has apparently never received this acceptance previously. We often see, as is also the case here, that menstrual periods become far more regular and there is far less bleeding, when the woman has her relationship with her genitals and her sexuality normalized. Menstrual pain can also disappear. These findings are in concordance with the old tantric tradition of sexual yoga (5).

The next case is about a female, who had seen the physician (SV) many times and slowly gained her confidence. This enabled him to come close to her and give acceptance of her female side. It is the same treatment as above, but taken a step further. Note that although this holistic treatment with a focus on contact is rather unusual from a traditional medical perspective the professional border is well defined and sharp. Instead of avoiding touch, the physician uses it as a therapeutic resource and a way of helping the patient. As usual, we use the principle of minimal intervention.

Case story

Female, aged 30 years saying "sex is not me"

Tenth quality-of-life (QOL) conversation: Has been very sore in the lower abdomen, corresponding to the ovaries, she herself thinks. The discharge is normal and white. She still finds it difficult to accept physical contact, touch and care from her boyfriend. She feels nauseous, if he kisses her when she is not in the mood for it. On the couch, we work on the problems in the lower abdomen in the form of muscle tension on the inside of the pelvis, probably the psoas muscle [the "loin" running from the inside of the vertebral column to the femur], mostly on the right side. Her pelvic area appeared to be more cohesive and less blocked, but there was still severe tensions corresponding to the spina iliaca anterior superior [the anterior, superior tips of the pelvis].

Eleventh conversation and sexological procedure: acceptance through touch. I (SV) tell her that she looks so beautiful, fine and sensitive and like a pure innocent consciousness, but at the same time she looks to a great extent completely dead. She reacts positively to this acknowledgment and to the statement of my subjective impression of her problem. We have agreed that today I will play the role of the good father she has never had. She lies on the couch crying, and I hold her and kiss her neck and tell her that she is the apple of my eye. [The technique of re-parenting can only be done, when the holistic physician allows him/herself to behave as if the patient was his/her little child; it is of course extremely important that this is done with full consent and after making an explicit therapeutic written contract of re-parenting. The kiss in the neck with no sexual intention given completely relaxed and another therapist or nurse present cannot be taken as a sexual act and will not be experienced as such by a patient in such therapeutic setting. Please notice that working with this degree of intimacy requires an experienced holistic, existential therapist with another person present, and despite of all these precautions, this is still unacceptable in many countries]. We talk about what type she is: social, sexual or survival and it is in her judgment as though all her problems are concerned with gender and sex. I agree with this. We therefore agree to work on her acceptance of her own gender and her own sexuality through accepting touch: Supportive acceptance through contact. She first holds herself on the outside of the vulva (on the outside of her briefs), with my hand supporting around hers. Afterwards I place my hand on her vulva (outside her briefs), while she holds her hand on top of mine. The reason for this step was for this patient to confront and process the shame bound to her genitals. The physician's hand did not move during the procedure, it was resting for as long as she needed to confront the repressed feelings, which was called forth by this procedure,

allowing her to enter the first phase of the holistic process of healing (14) If she holds harder, I hold harder; if she holds more softly, I hold more softly; if she lets go, I let go too.

In that way she controls the session, according to her need for support. [The patient response to the therapy was spontaneous regression to a very early age, judged from the way she spoke, moved, and from her non-abstract pattern of thinking combined with the characteristic expression in her face indication the regression, where she seemingly needed more contact and support than could be done by the indirect touch of the vulva normally used. Touching the patient's vulva when she is in deep regressive therapy does not call on any sexual reaction, but is reacted to in the same way as a baby react to touch. Of course this further step requires a holistic physician being able to discriminate carefully between intimacy and sexuality to be able to hold and respect the sexual borders of the patient]. Conversation: In the meantime we talk about how her boyfriend only wants to do it right for her sexually, while she only wants to do it right for him. She is reading a book about women's orgasms – mostly for his sake. And when they are together, from his side it is only about her desire. The relationship has completely gone off the rails in my opinion, but because she feels completely devoid of value, she cannot allow herself to feel any joy or desire at all. It is a Gordian knot. Here she hits the "wall", and sees far more clearly than before how ill she is and what has to be done to cure her. She sobs inconsolably, lies on her side and asks me to hold her.

Twelfth conversation and sexological procedure repeated. Since last time: things have gone very well, success at work by working for her own sake, organized a family birthday etc. ... She has been really like a teenager. We talk about her still being developed psychosexually like a big child. Sexually she made her breakthrough with her boyfriend last Friday and has since felt blissful. First vaginal orgasm together with him and first orgasm during intercourse. The feeling spread first to the whole vagina, then to the whole pelvis, then up into the abdomen and down into the thighs. On the couch, sexological procedure as last time is repeated. All in all, the patient is making fine progress and today looks like a really delightful woman. Confrontation in front of the mirror reveals that she hates the appearance of her own labia – shame and guilt. We must continue working on that.

Vulvodynia and acceptance through touch

Vulvodynia is a condition of unexplained chronic vulvar-vestibular pain with the etiology extremely illusive (41). It is important to underline that vulvodynia can be primary vulvar discomfort, or secondary to a wide range of dermatological diseases, vulvar infections, inflammation, vulvar cancer and vulvar dysplasia (42), so it is of extreme importance to examine the patient for such an often hidden etiology, before giving the patient the diagnosis "primary vulvodynia".

A study including 4,915 American woman aged 18 to 64 years showed that 16% of the women had experienced vulvodynia that lasted for at least three months and 7% had it at the time of the survey (43). As it is known to be much more prevalent with the young adult woman (44) with a prevalence of 7%, making vulvodynia one of the most common hidden problems for young women. Only half consult a physician and the condition is very often misdiagnosed (45), but even with the correct diagnosis a variety of treatments are used, like

muscle relaxing training, surgery, electric stimulation, biofeedback therapy, (46), tricyclic antidepressants (46,47), topical nitroglycerin (48), steroids (49) or spinal cord stimulation (50). Only about half the women got more than half the pain relieved (43) and that at the very best clinics, making the problem a vast unsolved problem for 5-10% of young woman. Often the chronic pains end in surgical procedures, giving some of the patients an immediate relief in their vulvar discomfort (51), but also giving many of the girls severe side effects like scarring and mutilating the vulva. CO2-laser treatment is sometimes used, but seems often to give scarring and severe mucosal atrophy (52). One sad fact is that while most women with or without treatment will feel less troubled by vulvodynia over time, but most of the women will not experience, what deserves to be called “a cure” (43).

Interestingly, work with the pelvic floor muscle using electromyography-assisted rehabilitation seems effective in many cases of vulvodynia (53), illustrating the complex, presumably highly psychosomatic, dynamic of the sensations of the vulva and the whole pelvic region. Vulvodynia seems also to be correlated to QOL (quality of life) (54,55), shame seems to be highly correlated to vulvodynia (56), and shame and self-condemnation is exactly what the holistic procedure of acceptance through touch is intended to heal. Acceptance through touch, used alone or as a part of the holistic pelvic examination[34] seems to be an alternative strategy to alleviate the problem.

Case story

Female, aged 24 years with primary vulvodynia

Holistic gynecology. Known with /primary vulvodynia/ and sharp pain, when touching the vulva and introitus, as well as pains when inserting a finger into the vagina. Has always felt very uncomfortable, when touched, especially if the man uses a rubbing movement from the vagina towards the clitoris. Cannot touch herself with her fingers without being in pain and feeling uncomfortable. She thus never masturbates using her hand, but uses a teddy bear or another soft object. We discuss that she is generally very inhibited sexually and she would like to do something about that. /Sexual abuse?/

Slow gynecological procedure following therapy contract (34). Vulva, vagina in natural condition. Last menstruation took seven days, no PMS. Due to the pain, no instruments in vagina. Exploration for tenderness, which gradually wears off through the session. We work with the painful areas, which send the patient into a deep feeling of humiliation, an unbearable feeling of shame and helplessness, a feeling of being held down and not being able to escape. As she works through the feelings, the pains in vulva-vagina disappear and at the end the patient can touch herself without further problems and feel good about caressing herself. A two-hour session well completed. EXERCISE: masturbate using your hand; give yourself room to experience everything difficult associated with it. Write down what pops up and let us talk about it next time.

The problems of this patient did not come back. She described that it felt as if her vulva was “completely reorganized” during the session and after the session she noted that it now felt as an integrated part of her body for the first time in her life. She reported in the next

session that she had no problems doing the exercise and that she was convinced that her vulvodynia was cured.

Discussion with ethical considerations

The holistic process of healing starts with the physician “caring for his patients”. This care or maybe, in other words, professional love invites the trust of the patient. Treatment or “holding” that should result in a process of healing can only take place, when the patient fully trusts his or her physician. Holistic healing is not so much a technique, but rather a gift of caring in an unselfish support of the patients. Touching the genitals of a patient in the intention of giving acceptance cannot be successfully accomplished without the combination of care and a high ethical standard. To say this very clearly, only the physician who has a heart and care can touch the patient for the sake of healing the patient. Without such loving care, confidence and skilful holding (12,33,34) the procedure will not work.

In holistic sexological work with patients, where the physician tries to be present as a human being, the physician often has qualms and concerns. We have been extremely cautious and conscientious, but we have been painfully aware that the sexologist in the Kegel tradition is “being on thin ice”, when breaking one of the toughest taboos of the (medical) world, namely sex. It is severely frowned upon for biomedical practitioners to touch the female private parts, if it is not in connection with a standard pelvic, biomedical examination.

In the traditional sexological clinic (going all the way back to Hippocrates) there is place for what we as sexologists intuitively feel to be especially important for the patients sexual healing, namely the natural accepting touch. A holistic physician or sexologist may hold his patient in the same way that a father or mother supports his or her child through care or touch and have physical contact with precisely the area that is affected by problems. This is also the case where the most sensitive and difficult areas of the body are concerned.

It gives pause for thought that there are a large number of alternative therapists who sell these sexological services, for example in the form of vaginal acupressure, the sexological examination, and even direct sexual stimulation (see chapter 8 and 9), which is increasingly commonly practiced and accepted in for example Denmark.

Vaginal acupressure have made a living by massaging acupressure points in the vaginas of women, who typically suffer from diminished libido (57). This should put our fine senses as therapists and sexologists into perspective. The traditional sexological methods like vaginal acupressure and the sexological examination makes sense, since they are thorough and persistently repeated confrontations of all the points in the lower abdomen that normally carry the sexual blockages. People who offer the most controversial and radical of these sexological services (like the Dodson method described in chapter 9) typically have roots in Indian yoga (tantra) (5) and not in western medical science.

It is clear that we as sexologists are battling against our absolute professional fear of confronting sexual problems in society in general and in the entire health service in particular. We may conclude that when blocked or traumatized areas of the body generally react positively to touch and the laying-on of hands, it is not so surprising that sexual areas do so too. As long as it is ensured that the patient is in full control and is not violated – and that the therapist does not have sex with the patient in any form (in other words does not seduce her or

manipulate her into a sexual relationship, what sexologists very strikingly call “professional incest” and otherwise refrain from any sexual behavior in relation to the patient) - such a treatment can never be unethical in our opinion. It is an important thing for a physician or sexologist to be able to support his patients fully, including within all aspects of the sexual sphere.

The subjects of sexual healing and of ethics have been of utmost importance to the physician since Hippocrates (460-377 BCE) and whenever the physician touches the patient the ethics of the action must be considered. The problem of touch is more of an ethical than a legal problem: Why do you touch the patient, what is the intention? If the intention is for the physician to enjoy his patient – what we do most of the time with people in private - we consider this unethical, even if this is just holding hands (see chapter 36 and 37).

As often pointed out in the writings of Hippocrates(39), the physician should have the healing of the patient as his sole focus, and if the intention of the physicians is wholehearted and rooted in deep medical expertise to heal the patient, his life and existence (and in this intention touch any part of the body including the genitals), this is ethical. This kind of expertise is the expertise of the experienced holistic physician, who can take his/her patient into the state of consciousness we know as the process of salutogenesis (16,17), or holistic existential healing (14,15). We believe, as did Hippocrates, that the physician’s ethics seem to be proportional with his results with his patients (39). Only the clearest of intentions can bring us outstanding results.

Let us conclude by saying that as far as men are concerned, our experience from the clinic is that sexual problems are often more mental and psychological. It is our experience that the deep, existential conversation on its own is sufficient to solve most of the problems, which do not have a physical cause (somatic/organic etiology).

When this is said, it is likely that a small fraction of men only will be helped by an understanding partner, making good reason for the famous and somewhat controversial use of substitute partners in the sexological clinic (2,58). We believe that the technique of acceptance through gentle and respectful touching, (including when necessary the direct touch of the genitals possible when combining the technique of therapeutic touch with the pelvic examination) (34), followed by the existential conversation and further processing is sufficient to induce the holistic healing of most patient in the sexual realm. The next logical step in sexological research is to take the above mentioned holistic methods into controlled clinical testing in the hope that a great number of diseases can be cured with the sexological tools (see chapter 33). In such research we believe that the patients should be used as their own control (we have found the “square curve paradigm” to be a useful research design) (59).

Conclusions

Sexual problems are found in four major forms: lack of libido and desire, lack of arousal and potency, pain and discomfort during intercourse, and lack of orgasm (anorgasmia, orgasmic dysfunction, lack of multiple orgasms in women). It is possible to work with a holistic approach to sexology in the clinic in order to find and repair the negative beliefs, repressions of love and lack of direction in and purpose of life, which according to holistic philosophy are causing the problems with desire, sexual excitement and potency, sexual and

genital pain, and repression of character, gender and sexuality. The tradition of psychoanalysis, positive psychology (60-62) and modern theories like the life mission theory (theory of talent) (12) seem relevant for a thorough understanding of human sexuality.

Shame, guilt, helplessness, fear, disgust, anger, hatred and other strong feelings are almost always an important part of a sexual problem. These feelings are often directly connected to the tissue of the sexual organs and related areas of the body. In order to initiate the process of healing the patient in the existential aspects related to gender and sexuality, we have discovered that some patients are helped by a simple technique of accepting contact via touch.

This is a very simple sexological technique, in which the patient's self-acceptance is to be developed, by asking the patient to put her hand on her stomach (over uterus) or vulva (over clitoris and vagina), after which the physician puts his hand supportively around hers.

This often releases the emotions bound to the areas, making them a subject for conversational therapy and holistic processing. This can also be an integrated part of a pelvic examination, if the procedure for this is followed (34). This method is a classical method for sexual healing used by European physicians since Hippocrates and it has been described in many of the classical medical sources and textbooks of medicine (63). The way this process was rediscovered by our group was actually the intentional use of acceptance during the gynecological standard procedure, with the somewhat surprising observation of a result of sexual healing, as described in (34).

The ethical aspects in holistic sexology is of extreme importance (34,40). As long as the physician loves and cares for his patient, gets the trust of the patient, gives holding flawlessly and as long as it is ensured that the patient is in full control and is not in any way violated, such a treatment can never be unethical. The physician must also follow the ethical rules of the country, where the practice is performed and many countries have restrictions to such a holistic practice.

It is important to understand that this contact is not and shall not be a sexual contact, and the most important qualification of the physician trained in the bodyworks of holistic medicine is his/her ability to control his own intention and level of sexual excitement to ensure that this contact never turns into a sexual contact.

Many young women suffer from sexual pain and discomfort, and 10% of all young women are found to have vulvodynia, a painful state with no biomedical cure. Such conditions can often be cured by discharging the shame from the sexual organs with existential holistic therapy and acceptance through touch. As one patient in two or three has a serious problem related to sex and gender (8), which is likely to be related also to the persons level of psychosocial development (12) it is important for the holistic physician and sexologist to be able to support his patients fully, including all aspects of the sexual sphere, for the patient to develop and heal both gender and existence.

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Acupressure through the Vagina (Hippocratic Pelvic Massage)

Many gynecological and sexological problems (like dyspareunia, urine incontinence, chronic pelvic pains, vulvodynia and lack of desire, excitement, and orgasm) are resistant to standard biomedical treatment, but classical sexological procedures like the sexological examination seems to be efficient (see chapter 8 and 9).

In our work at the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine and Sexology in Copenhagen we have found that many problems can be helped by vaginal acupressure, or Hippocratic pelvic massage, which is a smaller technique than the classical sexological examination. Technically it is a very simple procedure, as it corresponds to the explorative phase of the standard pelvic examination, supplemented with the patients report on the feelings it provokes and the processing and integration of these feelings. Sometimes it can be very difficult to control the emotions released by the technique i.e. regression to earlier traumas from childhood sexual abuse, but the techniques is much less radical and confrontative than the traditional sexological examination itself. The vaginal acupressure seems to be the first part of the sexological examination and if this smaller procedure can solve the patient's problem, there is no reason to use the bigger tool of sexological examination, with direct sexual stimulation of the patient (see chapter 27).

This chapter discusses the theory behind vaginal acupressure and ethical aspects with presentation of a case story. This procedure helped the patient to become present in her pelvis and to integrate old traumas with painful emotions. Holistic gynecology and sexology can help the patient to identify and let go of negative feelings, beliefs and attitudes related to sex, gender, sexual organs, body and soul at large. Shame, guilt, helplessness, fear, disgust, anxiety, anger, hatred and other strong feelings are almost always an important part of a sexual or functional problem as these feelings are "held" by the tissue of the pelvis and sexual organs.

Acupressure through the vagina/pelvic massage must be done with great care by an experienced physician or sexologist, a third person present, after content and obtaining the necessary trust of the patient. It must be followed by conversational therapy and further holistic existential processing.

Introduction

Sexology is the medical specialty concerned with sexual dysfunctions with the major breakthrough in this field made by Reich, Masters and Johnson in the middle of the last century, mapping the human sexual functions and dysfunctions (1,2). William Howell Masters (1915-2001) was a gynecologist and Virginia Eshelman Johnson (1925-) a psychology researcher. They teamed up in 1957 to study human sexuality. Before them, in the late 1940s and early 1950s, Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957) had mapped the sequences of the human orgasm in four phases (“the curve of orgasm” with the *excitement phase*, the *plateau phase*, the *orgasm phase* (to be repeated in women) and finally the *relaxation phase*) and Alfred C Kinsey (1894-1956) had published two surveys of modern sexual behavior, “Sexual behavior in the human male” and “Sexual behavior in the human female”, which founded the groundwork for Masters and Johnson's work.

Instead of asking people about their sexual activities, as Kinsey had done, Masters and Johnson observed sexual activity in the laboratory. They developed tools and techniques for accurately measuring the physical responses of 700 men and women during masturbation and intercourse. They published their findings in the book “Human sexual response” in 1966 (1). This book was well received by the general public, even though it was intended for the medical community, since the mechanics of sex had so far been a mystery. Masters and Johnson based their findings on these observations in the laboratory and were the first to accurately identify and describe the anatomy and physiology of the Reichian human sexual response cycle. This opened up for more effective treatments of all the sexual dysfunctions. Dissatisfaction with sexual activity was presented as a natural and healthy human trait.

Masters and Johnson afterwards published “Human sexual inadequacy” (2), which discussed common problems, such as impotency and premature ejaculation and how to treat them. Of almost a thousand treated patients about 85% were cured for their severe sexual dysfunction (NNT=1). No side effects were reported from intensive, sexological therapy (NNH>1,000). This work was the key in the development of sexual therapy and together they opened a clinic in St Louis for the treatment of sexual problems.

Holistic sexology

The most profound theory for sexuality seems to be the theory of the anima and animus – the inner man or woman – of Carl Gustav Jung (1875-1961) (3,4). Holistic sexology is aiming to take the established knowledge on sexology into an existential perspective, including the sphere of existential dimensions and problems (5,6) in the treatment of sexual and gynecological problems (7). Existential dimensions are needed in this work, because the sexual and gynecological problems are symptoms of unsolved existential problems, where the patient's inner potentials for healing own life, body and existence are not mobilized. The reason that standard treatments do not work on some patients is not obvious. Often there are hidden and severe traumas from violent or sexual abuse in the past and these negative emotions are held by the pelvic tissues and organs. Studies from different western countries indicated an incidence of about 15% of girls being assaulted sexually in childhood (8-10) and many of these girls are likely to demonstrate severe pelvic problems in their youth. Sexual

and gynecological problems resistant to standard therapy are typically problems with acceptance of own sex and sexuality, which do not have to originate from abuse. As originally suggested by Masters and Johnson they can be a result of not having received the loving acceptance and touch needed in childhood (2,11). It is obviously important that borders are not violated, but it is just as important that the father give the contact and acceptance the child needs, as part of her infantile and undeveloped sexuality (7).

The Hippocratic (Hippocrates, 460-377 BCE) physician was aware of these diseases and his treatment included different physical procedures focused on the female pelvis, like smoking the vagina and massaging the pelvis (12). The reason why these treatments were later condemned are debated, some authors finding it a form of sexual abuse of the woman by the medical profession with an insufficient ethics (13). Maybe there have been a regrettable crisis in the ethical standard of the average physician upon entering the modern day commercial medicine, where power and money often seem more important for the physician than care for the patient. In holistic medicine the physician and his patient are almost always very close and ethics are a subject of utmost importance (see the discussion). When it comes to the practice of pelvic massage we might be at the essence of medical ethics and the ability to perform this procedure might have been the very reason, why Hippocrates invented his strict medical ethics in the first place.

The technique of acupressure through the vagina has been tested and developed at the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine in Copenhagen and discussed with members of the International Society of Holistic Health on several occasions at international meetings. The comments and critique has been integrated in the present chapter.

Many chronic patients need holistic existential healing or healing of the wholeness of the person on the deepest level of their existence in order to become better. Before we continue, let us therefore take a look at holistic medicine and the concepts of existential healing.

The scientific basis for modern holistic medicine and sexology

From the days of Hippocrates the development of human character and purpose of life has been the key to healing. We have put this classical knowledge in a modern formula: The life mission theory (5,11,14,15,16) is based on the philosophy that everybody has a purpose of life or talents. Happiness comes from living this purpose and succeeding in expressing the core talent in life. To do this, it is important to develop as a person into what is known as the natural condition or a condition, where the person knows himself and uses all his efforts to achieve what is most important for him. The theory of talent (5) states that we have three major talents in life, called purpose, consciousness and gender. In relation to this paper these dimensions may simply be: love, power and sex. Gender and sexuality is a fundamental dimension of human existence, which must be in a sound, natural and un-denied state for the person to live and function naturally and in full power.

The holistic process theory of healing (18,19) and the related theories for salutogenesis (20,21), meaning of life (22) and quality of life (23-25) found that the return to the natural state of being is possible, whenever the person gets the resources needed for the existential healing. The resources needed are holding in the dimensions: awareness, respect, care,

acknowledgment and acceptance with support and processing in the dimensions: feeling, understanding and letting go of negative attitudes and beliefs. The preconditions for the holistic healing to take place are trust together with the intention of the healing taking place.

Existential healing is not a local healing of any tissue, but a healing of the wholeness of the person, making him much more resourceful, loving and aware of himself, his own needs and wishes. In letting go of negative attitudes and beliefs the person returns to a more responsible existential position with an improved quality of life. The philosophical change taking place, when the person is healing is often a change towards preferring difficult problems and challenges, instead of avoiding difficulties in life (26-33). The person, who becomes happier and more resourceful, is often also becoming more healthy, more talented and able of functioning (34-36).

Sexual problems are found in four major forms: lack of libido and desire, lack of arousal and potency, pain and discomfort during intercourse and lack of orgasm (anorgasmia, low orgasmic potency) (2). It is possible to work with a holistic approach to sexology in the clinic in order to find and repair the negative beliefs, repressions of love and lack of purpose of life, which seemingly are the core to problems like arousal, potency and pain with repression of gender and sexuality (2,6,7,37,38). The theory of talent (5,6) thus seems to be relevant for understanding human sexuality. It is highly important not to focus on the gender and genitals in understanding the patient's sexual problems, because many problems related to sex can be solved on the level of the whole person (2,6,7,37,38). But as important as it is not to focus there, it is also essential not to neglect the body and the feelings connected to it. Shame, guilt, helplessness, fear and other strong feelings are almost always an important part of a sexual problem (2,7).

Acupressure though the vagina

The method that we call acupressure though the vagina has also been called holistic physical therapy for the pelvic floor, Hippocratic pelvic massage, the holistic pelvic examination, and vaginal therapy. It is basically the first introductory phase of the traditional sexological examination. The name acupressure comes from the Asian tradition of tantric massage and acupressure. The most basic acupuncture point in the classical acupuncture system are the first points on the sexual meridian (Conception Vessel 1,2 and 3), which all are placed in the vulva or close to the vulva. The idea of acupressure is to press on the tense spots to release the accumulated tension ("energy") here.

Thousands of women have problems related to their pelvis and its organs, dominated by sufferings of the sexual organs, problems of the urinary tract, the locomotor system, and the intestines (39). Another large group of patients have "non-anatomic" pelvic pains and discomforts of presumably psychosomatic nature, which often are very difficult to treat with biomedicine, but which seems to react better to psychosomatic treatments (40,41). The classical sexological tool, the sexological examination, is time consuming, difficult and in many cultures of today also too radical to be used by the physicians or physiotherapists (see chapter 27); only the classically trained sexologist will use it.

We therefore urgently need new, less radical but still efficient treatment tools for this broad range of female problems, from urine incontinence, bleeding and hormonal

disturbances, unwanted childlessness, sexual problems like pain during intercourse, primary vulvodynia, or low ability to feel desire, sexual pleasure, sexual excitement and/or to reach sexual climax (orgasm), to an-inflammatory perineal and anal pains and discomforts like idiopathic aches (primary pruritus).

These problems are from a holistic medical and sexological perspective often caused by unsolved emotional and sexual problems, which have been repressed into the pelvis and its organs. The emotional problems are related to negative beliefs about self, gender, body, organs and sexuality.

We have tested the hypothesis that sexual and existential healing (salutogenesis) can be done with the much smaller tool of vaginal acupressure instead of using the sexological examination. Judged from clinical experience from the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine and Sexology in Copenhagen treating 20 patients with a majority of the 10 different problems mentioned above with holistic sexology (acceptance through touch and when necessary vaginal acupressure but not the sexological examination) we believe that the model can be of help, but we are aware that the sample is small. Such problems can often be solved through healing the old wounds on body and soul in holistic existential, gynecological and sexological therapy.

The healing process has as in all other holistic therapy three obligatory steps, which we sum with the words: feel, understand, and let go (see chapter 2) (18,19,42). First the emotions have to be felt again: we call this phase “putting feelings onto the body”. Then the patient have to find words, verbalize the emotions and understand where the problems are coming from: we call this “putting words on the feelings”. Last but not the least the person healing have to let go of the negative attitudes and decisions that were made, when the trauma happened: we call this “putting consciousness in the words”. In the clinical work we use the therapeutic staircase, which give us the best assurance that we do not use a more invasive and potentially dangerous technique than necessary (43). Acupressure through the vagina always builds on earlier sessions of acceptance through touch, which again come after sessions of emotional healing, trust, holding and to begin with always “love and care” for the patient.

This knowledge of healing life – improving health, quality of life and ability in one integrated movement - is well known and described in a number of books from the cradle of medical sciences on the island of Cos around 300 BCE, known as *Corpus Hippocraticum*. Hippocrates (460-377 BCE) was held to be the best physician of his time and father of the first scientific system of holistic healing described in numerous books. It is interesting that massaging the pelvis through its openings was an acknowledged method in ancient Greece (12) and in use throughout Europe for centuries (13). This necessitated the very stringent medical ethics that was founded by Hippocrates, probably as mentioned above with the purpose that he himself and his many pupils could give this kind of treatments. Massage of the pelvic structures of a woman through the vagina and anus could among other things heal disturbances in the woman’s energy system, known as a disease called “hysteria”, from the Greek word for uterus, *hystera*. The treatment was in use in most of the western world until the industrial revolution, where it was condemned as pornographic and hence no longer an acceptable medical treatment.

Today after the sexual revolution in the sixties and seventies we have a more relaxed attitude to body and sexuality and some therapists work again through the vagina and anus with this kind of therapy, either by using their hand to cure sexual and other problems (44), or by using a vibrant penis substitute (a “dildo”) to cure incontinence (45) or orgasmic problems

(46). The Danish physiotherapist Birgitte Bonde reports that one to six sessions with the vibrator can help many incontinent woman, who are not sufficiently helped by the standard program of training the pelvic floor (45). The rationale for the use of the vibrator is that the woman cannot get in contact with their own pelvis, as they “cannot find their pelvic floor”, presumably because they have completely eradicated some of the pelvic structures from their inner description of their own body.

There are several different forms of pelvic massage/vaginal acupressure (see Table 1) used for different purposes with as many philosophies about its mechanisms. Most therapists intent to raise the energies in the meridians after the Chinese system(44), hence the name “vaginal acupressure” for the technique, often used for healing chronic pains in the pelvis or genitals and treating the highly inconvenient pattern of frequent re-infection of the urinary system. Other therapists intentionally liberate the sexual energies with sexual stimulation according to the old Indian Tantric tradition, in order to teach the woman to contain and handle her sexual energies(47). We find it here important to note that the physician under no circumstances should attempt to stimulate the woman to an orgasm in order to avoid a sexual situation. Others work with confrontational therapy to heal traumas of incest and rape by integrating the bio-energetic system of Lowen(48), Reich’s sexual therapy(49) and the gestalt therapeutic tradition(50) to be able to release all negative emotions and other problems caused by the prior sexual violation - or neglect. In our clinic in Copenhagen we have also found it useful to help women heal what we call the “sex – love split”, making them having two partners, one for sex and one for love and being unhappy with not being able to have love and sex with the same person.

All the above mentioned practices have in common that they seek to help the patient notice the tensions and blockages in the pelvic region and the parallel attitudes fragmentizing the patient’s life. When the patient confront and integrate the repressed painful feelings that created them, they develop a new more positive understanding of life, love, feelings and sexuality.

It is clear that elements of acupressure through the vagina must be adjusted to the needs of the patient. A patient with chronic bladder infection and a patient with chronic pain in the pelvis or the sexual organs (primary vulvodynia) should be treated differently. It is important to always go for the lesser level of treatment that can solve the problem and the least provocative or painful of methods must be tried, before more “embarrassing” methods are taken into use. We recommend that simple antibiotics are used to alleviate some of the problem and only problems that cannot be efficiently treated with such drugs should be handled with the emotionally challenging procedure of acupressure through the vagina, except in the cases where the patient for personal, political, religious or other reasons does not want to take the drugs. If the physician believes several methods to be equally efficient he should always tell the patient about the alternative treatments and respect the patient’s choice. Holistic existential therapy will be more work for the physician and in the end less money paid by the patient, as health problems are often solved permanently with holistic existential therapy.

Table 1. Different forms of pelvic massage/acupressure through the vagina organised according to the emotional core problems. The therapy must always be followed by thorough conversational therapy for full integration and performance must be according to ethical standard (see text). Interestingly both classical western medicine, Chinese medicine, and Indian medicine seem to have used related techniques.

Dominant emotional problem	Style of work	Corresponding chakra	Primary inspiration
Anxiety, insecurity, Physical pain related to kidney and urinary tract and intestines, Incontinence, shame	Acupressure through the vagina, pelvic massage Meridian work Use of vibrator	Root Root, All Root, Hara	Chinese medicine Hippocratic med. Modern sexology
Sexual and hormonal Problems Pains during intercourse Problems with lust, joy, excitement, and orgasm, shame. Low self esteem, Polarity problems, Sexual energy work	Pelvic and anal massage/ acupressure through the vagina and anus Use of vibrator Raising energy circles	Hara, Root Hara, All	Hippocratic medicine, Indian tantric tradition, Chinese medicine Modern sexology, Jung's theory of anima and animus
Relational problems, Problems with men after incest, rape and other violations, hate, anger, shame, guilt	Pelvic and anal massage, acupressure through the vagina and anus Controlled sexual abuse[43]	Solar plexus Solar plexus, All Solar Plexus	Hippocratic medicine Chinese medicine Gestalt therapy
Problems with integrating Love and sexuality, "Sex love split", Adultery Prostitution, Sexual domination/submission	Pelvic and anal massage, acupressure through the vagina Direct sexual stimulation[43] Use of role-plays	Heart, Root, Hara Hara, Heart, 3. eye Heart, All	Hippocratic medicine Chinese medicine Indian tantric tradition Gestalt therapy

If a sexual problems can be solved with just giving acceptance to the body, there is no reason to approach the sexual organs. If just giving acceptance to the outside of the vulva is enough to solve the problem there is no rationale for penetrating the vagina (7). Often the feelings of guilt and shame that is the cause of the problems can be solved by the smaller process we call “acceptance through touch” (see chapter 29) and in this case it would be unethical to start with acupressure through the vagina.

If conversational therapy can do the job, touching the vulva will be unethical. In every case the physician must treat according to his or her best judgment. Medicine will always be an art and only the trained physician knows which tool to use with a patient as both intuition and experience is necessary for the decision.

The procedure of vaginal acupressure

Vaginal acupressure is technically the simplest procedure, as it corresponds to the explorative phase of the classic pelvic examination, except that the purpose of the digital penetration is treatment and not examination. Vaginal acupressure is performed by placing the woman on the physician table in a relaxed position with free passage to the vagina (see figure 1). The physician penetrates the vagina with one or two fingers and press systematically on the sore and tense areas in the pelvis. Most organs are accessible to the trained therapist. The position of the physician’s hand must be so that only the structures, which need to be touched are contacted (it is important that the clitoris is not touched unintentionally). The applied pressured is adjusted to the situation to optimize the therapeutic effect, as described by Marion Rosen (51). The indication for using this procedure in the holistic medical clinic must always be the physician’s understanding of the need of the patient for contact with the structures inside the pelvis. An attending nurse or another person must be present and give “holding” and support to the patient.

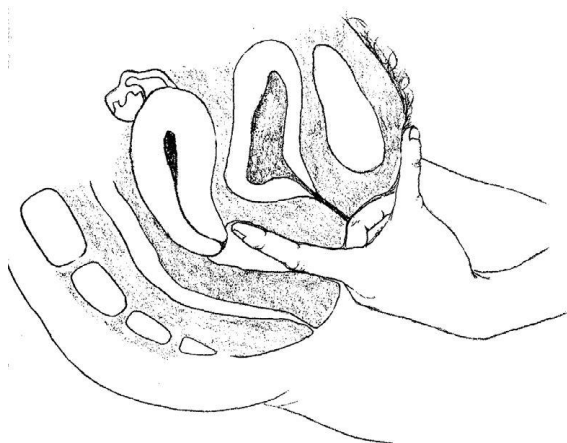


Figure 1. Sexual healing through the vagina by pressing on the tissues and helping the patient to identify and process the repressed feelings and old traumas held by the pelvic organs (47). The vagina is penetrated with one or two fingers and all the structures of the pelvis are systematically worked through. The patient is invited to open up to the feelings hidden in the tissues and these feelings are then processed in holistic existential therapy.

It is important to understand that the procedure of acupressure through the vagina, is the same exploration part of the standard pelvic examination by a gynecologist, but in this case done so slowly that the woman can feel the emotions held by the different tissues contacted by the finger of the physician (38). It can be used in combination with the pelvic examination and as the woman always will contact some feelings while examined in her vagina, the situation is really that every pelvic examination contains an element of acupressure through the vagina. Often the awakening of unpleasant feelings is very emotionally painful for the woman and if not taken care of by the physician/gynecologist it will make the standard pelvic examination difficult for the woman, as many women actually experience. Just ignoring the fact that the woman is a living human being reacting emotionally to the pelvic examination is not going to help the woman not to feel.

Ethical aspects

The procedure of acupressure through the vagina must be performed according to ethical standards. The holistic sexological procedures are derived from the holistic existential therapy, which involves re-parenting, massage and bodywork, conversational therapy, philosophical training, healing of existence during spontaneous regression to painful life events (gestalts) and close intimacy without any sexual involvement.

In psychology, psychiatry and existential psychotherapy (52,53), touch is often allowed, but a sufficient distance between therapist and client must always be kept, all clothes kept on and it is even recommended, that the first name is not taken into use to keep the relationship as formal and correct as possible (54). The reason for this distance is to create a safety zone that removes the danger of psychotherapy leading to sexual involvement. In the original Hippocratic medicine (12), as well as in modern holistic existential therapy such a safety zone is not possible, because of the simultaneous work with all dimensions of existence, from therapeutic touch (55) of the physical body, feelings and mind, to sexuality and spirituality. The fundamental rule has since Hippocrates been that the physician must control his behavior, not to abuse his patient. The patients in holistic existential therapy and holistic sexology are often chronically ill, and their situation often pretty hopeless, as many of them have been dysfunctional and incurable for many years or they are suffering from conditions for which there are no efficient biomedical cure.

The primary purpose of the holistic existential therapy is to improve quality of life, secondary to improve health and ability. The severe conditions of the patients and the chronicity is what ethically justify the much more direct, intimate and intense method of holistic existential therapy, which integrates many different therapeutic elements and works on many levels of the patient's existence and personality at the same time. Holistic sexology is holistic existential therapy taken into the domain of sexology. The general ethical rule is that everything that does not harm and in the end will help the patient is allowed ("first do no harm"). An important aspect of the therapy is that the physician must be creative and in practice invent a new treatment for every patient, as Yalom has suggested (52,53). To perform the sexological technique of acupressure through the vagina, the holistic sexologist must be able to control not only his/her behavior, but also his sexual excitement to avoid any danger of the therapeutic session turning into sexual activity. Most physicians can do the

classic pelvic examination after their standard university training, but the vaginal acupressure we are discussing here in this paper can only be obtained through long training and supervision in order to reach a level, where such a procedure can be performed.

Side effects of the treatment can be soreness of the genitals and periods of bad mood, as old painful repressed material are slowly integrated. We have seen acute psychosis as a sexually abused woman confronted her most painful experiences, but she recovered in a few days without the use of drugs and this episode was an integral part of her healing. In fact it was her therapeutic breakthrough. As it is possible that the patient can feel abused from transferences, it is extremely important to address this openly to prevent this situation. We recommend that the patient is contacted or followed for 1-5 years, to prevent and handle any potential long term negative effects of the treatment. In spite of these problems we have found the treatment with holistic existential therapy combined with the tool of vaginal acupressure to be very valuable for the patients.

The following case story from the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine in Copenhagen and also the case of Anna (see chapters 23-25) (56) made us re-invent the method of vaginal acupressure. This cancer patient did not heal in the therapy, although level 1-7 of the therapeutic staircase (43) had been taking into use for several months, so instead of giving up on her, we re-invented the level 8 technique of acupressure through the vagina. The patient was part of our cancer project, where we try to induce spontaneous remissions in metastatic cancer (57). She had opted not to receive surgery, chemotherapy or radiation therapy, as she was dissatisfied with the less than 30% chance of surviving her cancer with biomedicine (this was the option given to her at the Department of Oncology at the University Medical Center, where she was diagnosed and offered treatment).

Case story

Female, 39 years, multiple sexual trauma in childhood and now metastatic breast cancer (excerpt from our chart)

20th session at our clinic: The cancer is not healing judged from the size of the tumors. Her tumors in the right breast and in the armpit are still growing. The patient is remarkably difficult to get into the emotional process of healing, presumably because the repressed emotional pains from the childhood sexual traumas are too strong. We agree to try to send her back into the gang rape traumas from her youth by using tools of the next treatment level. After written consent we decided to use acupressure through the vagina. We combined the level 5 and level 8 of the therapeutic staircase by having several nurses present to optimize holding. Immediately after the penetration of the vagina, she regressed into being in one of the rape situation and she suffered unbearable emotional pain, which she this time succeed in confronting. For the first time she was able to confront what happened on an emotional level. Conversational therapy.

After the above session there were several sessions of integrative conversational therapy. For the first time she was able to enter the holistic process of healing in the sessions. The uncontrolled growth of her tumor stopped after the session above. It thus seemed that there was a connection between the emotional pain from the rape trauma with the growth of her

cancer (which is in accordance with the holistic theory for cancer) (57,58). Acupressure through the vagina did in this case what less intense holistic medical tools could not do for her. The acupressure send her into the old emotional pain, helped her to integrate it and thus heal her existence and maybe also her cancer. If she will survive the cancer it looks like this session was the turning point.

Discussion

In all work with clinical holistic medicine ethics is of utmost importance and when the physician penetrate (with his finger) the vagina of a patient with the intention of healing, we are at the most critical of situations. Hippocrates said: "First do no harm", and acupressure through the vagina is potentially extremely harmful and we judge it to be one of the most difficult of the holistic medical tools to master. Three aspects of the physician's behavior must be taken under careful consideration before the therapy begins:

- What is the intention of this treatment? Can the result be achieved in other ways? Does the physician have the required skills to perform the therapy? Is there a (written) content from the patient? Have the all steps of the procedures been discussed thoroughly so that the patient knows exactly what to expect? Have there been taken care of prevention of later interpretation of the treatment as a violation of the patient? Does the physician have the proper insurance for this kind of work?
- During the therapy, it is of utmost importance that the physician and the patient remain in contact at all times, the physician must look the patient in the eyes in a relaxed way to ensure the patient that everything is going as it should. The nurse must give holding to the patient. Balance and contact is the key word for smooth and trouble-free therapy. If the patient gets into emotional pains this must be taken care of right away; if the patient unintentionally gets sexually exited, the physician must be trained to contain that without getting into sexual excitement him or herself. The physician must be trained to be able to control his own sexuality to such a degree that the healing of the patient is the sole focus of the physician's intention, and acupressure through the vagina must always be done under proper supervision.
- The effect of the therapy must always be measured. A small quality of life and health questionnaire like QOL1 and QOL5 (59-61) administrated to the patient before, after, and years after the therapy is a must in this kind of therapy, so that the physician can be sure that he actually helps the patient, also long-term. It is easy to believe that the patient has been helped immediately after the completion of the therapy, but what is important is that the patient also finds that the therapy has been helpful years after it has ended. After each session it must be thoroughly discussed with the patient what happened, and the patient-physician relation must be cleared whenever there is a retraction or an emotional issue in the relationship.

It should always be remembered that holistic existential therapy and healing is not really a technique, but rather a gift of care or in essence love in an unselfish support of the patients. Touching the genitals of a patient with the intention of (sexual) healing cannot be successfully accomplished without the combination of love, or intense care, and a high ethical standard. To say this very clearly, only the physician who has a heart and care can touch the patient for the sake of healing the patient. Without love, confidence and skilful holding (5,38,39) the procedure will not work.

In holistic sexology working with patients the physician must always be present as a human being. Often the physician doing this kind of work will have qualms, concerns and must be extremely cautious and conscientious, when breaking one of the toughest taboos in the medical world, namely sex. It is severely frowned upon to touch the female private parts, if it is not in connection with a pelvic examination. There was no real place for what we intuitively felt to be infinitely important, namely supporting the women while confronting the emotions contained in their most private part of the body, the pelvis and its organs.

It gives pause for thought that there are alternative therapists who sell not only the service “vaginal acupressure”, which is increasingly commonly practiced and accepted in for example Denmark, but also methods even more radical than the sexological examination, i.e. the Dodson method. Vaginal CAM acupressors have made a living from massaging the acupressure points in the vaginas of women, who typically suffer from sexual dysfunction (44) and urine incontinence (45). These treatments seem to be popular. They are according to observation research efficient (see section 3: NNT=1-2) and have surprisingly few reported side effects (NNH>1000), but for ethical reasons we believe that such procedures are best done by educated, trained and supervised health professionals, preferably physicians and sexologists.

It is clear that we as physicians are battling against our absolute terror of sex in society in general and in the entire health service in particular. We may conclude that when blocked or traumatized areas generally react positively to touch and the laying-on of hands, it is not so surprising that sexual areas do so too. As long as it is ensured that the patient is in full control, not violated and that the therapist does not have sex with the patient in any form (in other words does not seduce her or manipulate her into a sexual relationship, which we see as “professional incest” and a criminal act that is not acceptable), we believe that such a treatment cannot be unethical. It is an important thing for a physician to be able to support his patients fully, including in the sexual sphere.

The subjects of sexology and of ethics have been of utmost importance to the physicians since Hippocrates (460-377 BCE) and whenever a physician touch a patient the ethics of the action must be considered. As often pointed out in the Hippocratic writings (12), the physician should have the healing of the patient as his sole focus. If the intention of the physicians is wholehearted and rooted in deep medical expertise in order to heal the patient, his life and existence (and in this intention touch any part of the body including the genitals), then we believe the treatment is ethical. This kind of expertise is the expertise of the experienced holistic physician or sexologist, who can take his/her patient into the state of consciousness we know as the process of salutogenesis (20,21), or holistic existential healing (18,19). We believe, as did Hippocrates, that the ethics of the physician or sexologist seem to be proportional with his results with his patients (12). Only the clearest of intentions can bring us outstanding results.

We believe that the technique of acupressure through the vagina, followed by the existential conversation and further processing is sufficient to induce the holistic healing of patient's in the pelvic area and the sexual realm. It is rarely necessary to use the full procedure of the radical sexological examination. The next logical step in our own research is to take the smaller sexological tools we have described into controlled clinical testing to document the efficacy of them on a variety of female, clinical conditions. We believe the square curve paradigm to be useful here (59-61).

Let us end this discussion with a serious warning. Many (23%) incest victims have felt that their therapist abused them sexually during the therapy (62) and they have often developed this feeling long after the therapy has ended. This is presumably due to the mental reorientation necessary for re-repression of the painful emotions emerging during therapy, which in the end of therapy is not sufficiently integrated.

It is extremely important to contact your patients sufficiently long after the closure of the therapy to be sure that the patient is not building this kind of idea, which will be harmful, both to the patient and to the physician or sexologist.

As it often is incest victims reporting this experience, it is extremely important that you process all incest traumas to the end, before closing the therapy. It is important to make the patient agree to be in therapy for sufficiently long time to this thorough integration to happen. We recommend that the therapy last for about two years, and we recommend the physician to follow up five years after the closure of therapy to prevent "implanted memories after therapy" and sudden accusations of sexual abuse based on these.

Conclusions

Pelvic massage or acupressure through the vagina is mind body medicine, or a sexological bodywork technique. It seems to have been used by physicians ever since Hippocrates. The larger tool called the sexological examination that includes direct sexual stimulation has recently been condemned by some physicians as pornographic, but such methods still seem to be very much needed to cure chronic patients suffering from a wide range of problems resistant to standard treatment and related to the structures of the pelvis: urine incontinence, tensions and chronic pains, and a wide range of sexual problems and dysfunctions.

The rationale behind acupressure through the vagina is that this procedure of moderate size and intensity can help the patient to confront old painful emotions held by the local tissue, identify and let go of negative beliefs and decisions from the traumatic life events, and do this more elegantly than the larger tool of sexological examination.

The vaginal acupressure (VA) procedure is a more patient and less radical way to free the patient and their pelvis from the repressed feelings, love and purpose of life. When the patient feel their repressed emotions, understand their message and let go of the negative beliefs, which have repressed them, she will heal her whole existence, including the body, its organs, energy and sexuality at large.

The ethical aspects in holistic sexology are of extreme importance. As long as the physician love and care for his patient, gets the trust of the patient, give holding flawlessly and as long as it is ensured that the patient is in full control and not in any way violated, such

a treatment can never be unethical. The physician must certainly follow the ethical rules of the country, where the practice is performed and many countries have legal restrictions to such a holistic practice. It is important to understand that this contact is not and shall not be a sexual contact. The most important qualification of the physician trained in the bodyworks of holistic medicine is his/her ability to control his own intention and level of sexual excitement to ensure that this contact never turns into a sexual contact. The ethical problems of the vaginal acupressure are similar to the ethical problems of the traditional pelvic examination

As one patient in two or three has a serious problem related to sex and gender it is important for the holistic physician or sexologist to be able to support his patients fully, including in all aspects of the sexual sphere. Acupressure through the vagina seems to be a valuable and sufficient tool for helping many women, but further research is needed to document its clinical value in a wide range of clinical conditions.

In every pelvic examination there will be an element of acupressure through the vagina and the physician always need to be aware of the repressed feelings that are released by this procedure. If the physician ignores the emotional pains re-experienced by the woman during the pelvic exam, this procedure will become more and more difficult and the woman will soon hate this examination, which unfortunately is a constant part of every modern woman's life. We therefore recommend that every physician be well acquainted with the method of acupressure through the vagina. If the method of vaginal acupressure does not cure the female patient it is recommended to use the traditional sexological examination, but local legal restrictions may make the use of this much more radical sexological procedure impossible.

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Section 8: Medical Sexology and Sexual Pain

Psychosomatic Reasons for Chronic Pain

We have often seen a connection between earlier sexual abuse and chronic pain, both related to sexuality and genitals and not related to these issues. We believe that the pain comes from strong negative emotions repressed into the body and the unconscious by the person in the emotionally painful moment of abuse. In holistic therapy, where the focus is on integrating body, feelings, and mind, we often find such feelings “hidden in the tissues and organs of the body,” causing not only pain but also actual disease, even though the person him-herself have not been aware of the connection or even repressed the earlier trauma. In a multidisciplinary treatment of a patient with chronic pain, it is therefore necessary to remain open to the possibility that the cause may not be visible initially and that it may indeed be the expression of earlier childhood trauma.

Introduction

Some research has shown that “college students with chronic pain yielded a history of abuse (physical and/or sexual) in 43.5% of the females (275 subjects) and 23.8% of the males (151 subjects)” (1,2). We suggest that as many victims of sexual abuse repress their memory of the incident(s), the actual number of those with chronic pain, who have been abused may in fact be even higher.

The most likely reason for this connection between abuse and chronic pain is the notion that strong negative emotions are repressed by the person in the emotionally painful moment of abuse. In holistic therapy, where the focus is on integrating body, feelings, and mind, we often find such feelings “hidden in the tissues and organs of the body,” causing not only pain but also actual disease (3–7). In a multidisciplinary treatment of a patient with chronic pain, it is therefore necessary to remain open to the possibility that the root cause may not be visible initially and that it may indeed be quite ugly.

One important conclusion reached (1) was that “clinicians should routinely ask chronic pain patients about any history of past or present abuse.” This inquiry is correct and very important, regardless of the presence of chronic pain. As severe cases will often be buried in

shame, however, the physician is not likely to obtain this knowledge without first attaining a mutual level of trust and confidence with the patient(8).

Personal development, improvement of the quality of life, awareness of deep existential dimensions and purpose of life are all concepts that need to be addressed in the empowerment of the patient and that will subsequently help him or her deal with the pain (9).

There is also the need for a new language for pain. The often-used expression “nonanatomic pain,” for example, is impractical, as most pains is diffused throughout the patient’s internal body image, even when the cause is indeed somatic. When physically exploring the cause of the pain, the physician needs to help the patient understand the location, quality, and nature of the pain. Such an understanding often transforms a diffuse, chronic, “nonanatomic” pain into one that is well defined and localized. When presented to the patient, the pain may even change in quality and location as the psychological significance and meaning are addressed. This process of “confronting the pain in the body” is an important aspect of healing chronic pain in a holistic/multidisciplinary clinic (8). Indeed, it is therapeutic in its own right, because a local, focused and “understandable” pain is much more manageable for the patient than a diffuse pain. Because it is possible that a psychosomatic, emotional element is present in many diseases, we would therefore like to propose a new distinction in the linguistics of pain; pain that cannot be localized and attributed to an organic origin should be termed “primary,” whereas those pains that can be identified and associated with an organic source should be labeled “secondary.” The issue is complicated, for an organic pain, such as a chronic infection, may well be caused by trauma, which thus “blocks” the region of the patient’s body and duly disturbs immune system regulation.

Processing the patient’s complicated and repressed feelings of guilt, fear, and shame is often very helpful in alleviating chronic pains in the holistic medical and sexological clinic. What are urgently needed are tools that will help general practitioners and other therapists and sexologists address this suppression; this processing is especially important in the treatment of adolescents and young adults. We believe that a holistic approach to both existence and sexuality will help us, as physicians and sexologists, heal many pains and problems of psychosomatic origin in the future (10).

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Pain and Pleasure in Sexuality

In order to understand sexuality from a psychological point of view, the positive sexual experience must be analyzed into its components of desire, excitement and pleasure. The three components melt together in the experience of climax that can be orgasm, where tension is released. Another perspective on the same is focusing of the ecstasy that rises where there is an inner meeting between the male and the female pole of the person (compare with Jung's theory of anima/animus).

The three above-mentioned dimensions of sexuality fits well into the holistic model of *body, mind and spirit* with *desire* arising from spirit and intention, *excitement* from power and mind, and *pleasure* from the dimension of gender and body.

Sexuality thus seems to be flowing through all aspects of the human being. Sexual pain seems to be the most intense suffering possible, and sexual humiliation like rape and forced sodomy are often used tools of torture. *Sexual pain* can be understood as the inversed experience of orgasm.

In this paper we present sexual theory and sexual motivations and try to shed light on problems related to desire, excitement, pleasure/orgasm, sexually related pain, vaginismus, vulvodynia, impotence, premature ejaculation, adultery, the use of prostitutes, pornography, homosexuality, incest, pedophilia, child pornography, rape, sado-masochism, and sexual torture and murder.

Introduction

Sexuality is known to be the most intense source both to pleasure and pain, but why is sexuality so potentially painful? A possible answer is that sexuality is the source of the most intense pleasure a human being can experience; therefore by reversing the experience it can be turned into the most intense of sufferings.

The scientific breakthrough in understanding human sexuality came with Masters and Johnson's brilliant work in the middle of the last century (1,2). The most famous curve in sexological research is still the Reichian curves of the male and female sexual reaction cycles, explaining the four phases of the normal sexual intercourse: the excitement phase, the plateau phase, the orgasmic phase, and the relaxation phase.

Since this work, most clinical sexologists have recognized a pre-phase of desire and lust, where one of the most dominant problems of our time is the lack of sexual desire in females (3-8). In spite of this excellent description of sexual experience and behavior, we still lack a sufficient theory of sexuality that can serve as guidance in sex therapy, especially when we in the holistic clinic want to treat the whole person and view all the relevant dimensions of sexuality and existence (9-11). A most important fact seems to be that the sexual part of us carries most of our repressed emotional charge, which must be integrated in the treatment with holistic medicine (CHM) and sexology.

As sexual and existential problems often goes hand in hand, and as both existence and sexuality is theoretically difficult issues, the two maybe most fundamental questions of the research in human life and quality of life are: “what is existence?” and “what is sexuality?” Often the first question are left unanswered, and the second met with theoretical answers from evolutionary theory and psychosocial models (12) difficult to use in sexual education (13,14) as well as in the sexological clinic.

In this chapter we want to make up for this lack of comprehensive theory of sexuality by introducing an existentially oriented theory of sexuality based on the life mission theory (15-22) of human existence, and using this to explain sexual pain and pleasure. The useful thing of having two strongly related theories for both existence and sexuality is that it becomes easy to work with both sexuality and existence at the same time in the holistic clinic, as the physician often must help the patient with both the sexual problems and the existential problems.

Before publishing this theory we tested its clinical usefulness and found that 14 one hour sessions of holistic sexual therapy as outlined in this paper (see also 23-25) can help 41,1% of patients, who experienced severely compromised sexual functioning (26). An alternative, intensive therapy also based on the presented theory could help 56% of the chronic patients, who did not respond to other treatments (27-29).

The theory of existence and the theory of sexuality

According to the theory of talent (18), mankind has three fundamental dimensions of existence:

- Purpose of life – giving meaning, happiness, existential and spiritual satisfaction
- Gender and sexuality – giving joy and sensual pleasure, sensual satisfaction
- Power in mind, feelings and body – giving fun and success, mental satisfaction

Most interesting it seems that sexuality is so closely connected with the fundamental energy of life that sexual energies are circulated though all layers of our existence, body, mind and spirit. Because of the integrative nature of sexuality, existential suffering and sexual pain is very closely connected, as is existential joy and sexual pleasure.

The dimension of purpose of life, also called love, or primary talent, arise due to human choice according to the life mission theory (16,18). The life mission theory (16) is a theory of the purpose of life, which according to one researcher integrate neo-freudian, existential and

transpersonal models (30). It explains in general the loss of health, quality of life and ability of human beings. This theory states, that our human nature provides us with a choice or freedom to an autonomous intention and our first intentional choice becomes our purpose of life. This intention of our wholeness, or soul if you like, sets the fundamental perspective of the person, which again gives birth to the personality and a consciousness mind, that is the structure of interpretation of the world (see how the consciousness is based on intention in (31-37)).

The fundamental differences in worldview give human beings their fundamental difficulties in understanding each other. We all have a very personal perspective on reality, and only when we realize how deep down this goes, to the bottom of our totality, or soul, can we understand the other, patient or peer. Only when we know ourselves to the very bottom of our soul, including all aspects of our character (21) and purpose of life (18), can we know the other.

When we rehabilitate the purpose of life and character, we rehabilitate the person's ability to be coherent with the world at large (22,38,39). Or in other words, our ability to love, our ability to exist on a spiritual level – to be on an abstract level of existence – and to use our central talents to be of value to others. All happiness arises according to this theory from realizing ones purpose of life and all suffering arises from not being able to do so.

The dimension of power comes from the biological fact that we all have a mind, feelings, and emotions, but rehabilitating this dimension is important, because of the sad fact that we often need to modify our self and restrict our own power to be tolerated and accepted by our parents. If we are too powerful and dominating we are meeting with rejection, neglect, violation etc, so we have to deny our own intelligence, feelings, bodily presence etc.

While these two dimensions with the presented theories are fairly well understood, we have yet to explain the third dimension of gender and sexuality, which is the aim of this paper. We will also explore how the dimensions of love and power must relate to the dimension of sexuality, for us to lead a whole, balanced and successful life.

What is sexuality?

Sexuality is believed to arise from the polarity of our gender. The quality of our sexuality, the mental impression of it, the structure of the desire and patterns of behavior, seem to be defined by our biology and is closely connected to our gender, and only slightly modified by our culture. The male sexuality is often said to be outgoing, and aggressive, as the male biological nature is to spread his semen, and the female sexuality is receptive, and limiting, as she has to choose the right partner for her offspring. From a biological perspective this makes good sense. Later in this paper we will discuss this in more details, as these considerations are of a more speculative nature.

We suggest to analyze the nature of sexuality from the qualitative perspective of motivation, and we thus find the following nine reasons for human beings to engage in sexual activity:

- Reproduction: To have children or to give children
- Sensual enjoyment

- Love: As an expression of love, including spiritual and developmental reasons.
- Fun (power games): either to give or receive it, or not to give or not to receive it, as an entertainment, reward or punishment.
- Dependency of sex (substituting meaning in life and love, often after incest or sexual abuse in childhood) (40)
- Prostitution: To trade it for material or immaterial values (money, food, accommodation, drugs, safety, protection, and more)
- Manipulation: social pressure, seduction (abuse, group pressure, societal prestige, incest, and professional incest)
- Rape: to exploit the of lack of resistance (lack of mental, emotional or physical power)
- To do evil (to consciously or unconsciously revenge wrongdoings towards self, or just to materialize an evil intention) (20)

Only the first two are directly related to the existential dimension of gender and sexuality. The enjoyment is obviously closely related to the intent and behavior of reproduction and it is normally suggested that this activity is rewarded by the organism releasing morphine-like substances in the brain (41). While the objective meaning of reproduction is easily understood, the subjective dimension of joy is much more difficult to comprehend. The joy can be understood as a biological reward system connected to reproduction, but as the female interest in and enjoyment of sex often starts long before and continues long after the menopause, this is not a very good explanation. The real mystery about sex obviously lies in understanding the biological and existential source of the sexual pleasure, which seems to be connected to all living being, going all the way down the eukaryote cell's path of evolution to the bacteria's strong interest in foreign genes (please see the discussion below).

What are the dimensions of sexual enjoyment?

The sensual enjoyment in sexuality is traditionally described to have the following dimensions (1,2,6-9):

- Desire is basically an expression of the wish to have sex, which is the intention of sex.
- Excitement is basically the mind, feelings and body getting involved with sex.
- Pleasure is the enjoyment coming from the female and the male pole meeting.

Orgasm is lust, excitement, and pleasure culminating in a peak (peak orgasm), which can be prolonged into a plateau of intensity (silent ecstasy, plateau orgasm); the multi-orgasmic experience, which is natural with women and obtainable for more men with tantric exercises, is a somewhat dynamic combination of these two. The orgasm can, depending on the person's level of sexual development, be local, located to the genitals and pelvis, or more global, or all including, often deathlike, and transcendent experience. It is now generally believed that women can have a male extrovert-type clitoral orgasm sometimes with squirt, and a female,

introvert type, called vaginal orgasm, depending on the orientation of her sexual flow of energy in the body.

A person with frustrated desire is basically not succeeding in having sex, which is failing the intention of sex. Lack of excitement is basically the mind, feelings and body not being able to get involved with sex. Lack of pleasure is not enjoying the female and the male pole meeting. Sexual pain, disgust, and humiliation arises from abuse and repression of sexuality

Orgasmic potency is the ability to get a high level of intensity, prolonged orgasms, more orgasms, and all-including, transcending orgasms. Interestingly, for women orgasmic potency seems to be the inverse of the time needed in the Master and Johnson's plateau phase; the more orgasmic potent, the less time you need to spend in the plateau phase before you reach orgasm. For men it is actually the same, but orgasmic potency is also directly proportional with the time the man can hold his ejaculation back, as he can build a high intensity of pleasure/orgasm without letting go of the "tension" (the sexual polarity), this being the secret of the multi-orgasmic man.

Tantra. The orgasm has two components of pleasure, one is the sensual pleasure rising to its peak, and the other is the existential satisfaction of reproduction – giving and receiving the semen and thus making a baby. When consciousness develops to a certain level, the existential satisfactory part of the normal, re-creative and non-reproductive sexual act is seen to be balanced with an existential frustration a moment after, when it is realized that reproduction does not follow the intercourse. The conscious person will then let go of this part of the sexual pleasure, reorganizing sexuality into the classical tantric path.

Correspondence of dimensions. Interestingly, the three above mentioned dimensions of sexuality fits well into the general theory of talent (18): lust arises from intention, excitement from power (freedom and liveliness of mind, feelings and body), and pleasure from the dimension of gender. Orgasm comes from the combination of lust, excitement, and pleasure, but only if the individual can let go of the mind and transcend into being fully alive.

Sexual health depends thus on the ability to allow oneself to experience the maximal level of sexual desire, and in the same time to completely control your level of sexual excitement and behavior. This is rehabilitated together with the ability to know and be your true self in the course of personal, existentially oriented development.

Sexual health is easily measured by the four questions of the "Sexual Health Scale", rated on a five point Likert Scale (1: very good, 2: good, 3: neither good nor bad, 4: bad, 5: very bad; Comp. QOL5 (42)):

- 1) How would you rate your ability to feel desire these days?
- 2) How would you rate your ability to get sexually excited these days?
- 3) How would you rate your ability to enjoy sexual contact these days?
- 4) How would you rate your ability to obtain orgasm these days?

Sexual health is easily calculated as an average of these four questions. The questionnaire has not yet been validated, but has shown its usefulness in the holistic sexological clinic as a tool for screening for sexual problems and opening for the therapeutic conversation.

The ability to feel desire is rehabilitated together with your general purpose of life, which is your fundamental source of lust for life. The ability to get a high level of excitement is rehabilitated, when your full personal power is rehabilitated, so you can involve your mind, your feelings and your body a 100% in the sexual act. Sensual pleasure is rehabilitated when

the ability to sensual enjoyment in all areas of life is fully rehabilitated, together with your general self-esteem and your ability to embrace a strong sexual polarity, being fully the male or the female sexual pole. Orgasmic potency is rehabilitated, when lust, excitement, and pleasure are rehabilitated, together with the ability to let go of the ego and transcend.

What are orgasm, sexual enjoyment and enjoyment in general?

Wilhelm Reich explained orgasm as the pleasure of releasing a tension build up under the sexual act (43). This theory is widely accepted today, but it is not easy to understand this theory if one goes deep into the mechanisms: why is a “sexual tension” build in the first place and why is the release of this so emotionally rewarding? Normally tension builds in the body to avoid pain, and the release of this tension reveals the pain hidden in the tension. It is true that most people experience a lot of tension associated with sexuality in general and sexual activity specifically. When the energy of the person by a sexual intention is canalized onto the sexual realm, it takes the form of polar sexual energy; a kind of potential energy is thus build, and the enjoyment comes from this polarity.

But when reflected upon deeply, the pleasure is not a result of its release as Reich suggested, because the moment the man ejaculate (and thus accomplish his often unconscious existential goal of reproduction) and releases the accumulated sexual energy, the orgasm is over; actually most of the sexual enjoyment is immediately gone. If the man as suggested in the old tradition of tantra let's go of his intention of reproduction and therefore keeps his ejaculation back, the un-released energy will cause him to have yet another orgasm in a seemingly unlimited series (44).

Women are thus “tantric” from birth, while men have to learn it. Interestingly, many Danish women of today have a neurotic and “tense” sexuality with an unsatisfactory, extrovert, “male”, and mono-orgasmic pattern. The less emotionally tense and shameful the woman becomes during the existential or sexological therapy, the more multi-orgasmic she will become, sharing the same pattern as men: deeper relaxation means more enjoyment and deeper sexual satisfaction.

From a holistic medical perspective the tension in Reich's sexual theory is thus more likely to be neurotic, than to be natural and healthy. Deep sexual pleasure seems to need deep relaxation, transforming the person from being in the head and mind to being centered in life and existence; the sexual experience is thus in itself salutogenic, melting the persons ego, and sending him/her into the ecstasy and sweetness of life and finally beyond that into transcendence, into the spiritual and religious realm: the loving realm of the free soul.

Interestingly, from our subjective experience, it seems that the sexual transcendence goes so deep that it even transcends the purpose of life, taking the person back to the first now of conception, before the purpose of life is decided, all the way back to the creation of the zygote from the egg and semen. Thus the fully transcendent orgasm takes the person as deep into life as theoretically possible.

Jung's theory of sexuality claimed that every man and woman are essentially whole, carrying the opposite sex within themselves, as an “inner” man or woman, and the more natural and relaxed the person becomes, the more double-sexed will the person be. This idea

or concept fits much better into the general theoretical framework of scientific holistic medicine (45-49). The sound person will always be in contact with his inner self, and therefore also in contact with either anima or animus inside. So by nature we are, Jung said, orgasmic or double-poled beings. As a consequence of this all sexuality is in some way masturbatory, so that when we have sex, we project our inner man or woman into the partner, making this person sexually attractive to us.

This projective theory seems from an epistemological perspective extremely sound, because how can we perceive something that is not within us, as a part of our nature already? If so, the problem is the nature of this inner man or woman. Going back to the question of how biology is to be understood (34) we see, that any levels of the organism represents all other levels; the level of our totality represents the level of the cells. This gives an explanation of why it is that we on an organismic level can feel good about biological functions like eating, urinating, defecating, moving, etc. Our experience simply reflects the joy of the constituent cells.

This is what we normally call our “biological needs” (46), and these needs are something that we seemingly cannot chose to have or not have, but we can repress them to some extent, and many people have repressed their sexuality to some degree in order to be socially acceptable individuals.

Most religions have recommended people to control their behavior connected to the biological needs, especially to sexuality, as the focus on sexuality is taking the focus away from the spiritual dimension. We have the number 666 of the beast in the bible (from the Book of Revelation of the New Testament of the Christian Bible) and we have Satan, which is opposite of God. In the Kabbalah (Jewish mysticism), the number 666 may be considered mystical and holy and may represent the physical universe. Seen theoretically this gives meaning, as the dimension of love and purpose of life arises directly from the wholeness of the person, while the joy of sexuality arises from the level of the cell. Going deeply into sexuality takes us down to earth, while going deeply into our abstract and spiritual dimension takes us all the way to meeting the totality of the world, that is into the experience of God. Fortunately these two often-conflicting perspectives can be united in one.

What is joy at the cellular level? This is an extremely difficult question; the cell is motivated for eating and reproducing, but how is this motivation organized on the global level of the cell? The most appropriate ideas from contemporary science to explain this, is a quantum field, which integrates all the molecular orbitals of the cell molecules into a true whole, and this field must then acts as a holder of information, consciousness and qualia, like pleasure on the cellular level (these speculations have been presented elsewhere (50-54)).

To conclude this paragraph, joy of being – enjoyment - arises directly from the level of the cells, fun arises from using the power of mind, feelings and body, while meaning and love arises from the global level of the human being, the totality, or soul, living its purpose of life; happiness seems thus to be a successful, balanced synthesis of fun, joy, and meaning, and a fulfilling sexual life must in the same way come from a balanced synthesis of lust, excitement and sensual enjoyment, allowing for full orgasmic potency.

Most important for sexual pleasure and orgasmic potency is the ability to relax deeply and allow our inherent double-sexed and thus ecstatic nature to manifest itself; the more our consciousness is allowed to let go of the structures of the mind and transcend, the more it can resolve itself into our fundamental biological material and we can experience our innermost

and divine nature. The full and deep relaxation and the total freedom from emotional and other tensions in mind and body is thus the central aim of holistic sexological therapy.

Relevance to holistic therapy and sexology

Nothing is as practical as a good theory, and this theory supports the intervention on the sexually dysfunctional male or female, in the way that what needs to be done is always rehabilitation of lust, excitement, sensual enjoyment and orgasmic potency, together with the processing of tensions and aches giving pain and discomfort, often caused by the feelings from negative life events related to sex and gender, which are at that time repressed and placed in body and mind as blockages, specifically in the pelvis and the sexual organs and tissues (1,2,4,5,14,24,25,27).

The four standard steps of holistic existential therapy: love, trust, holding and healing are used. Holding consist of awareness, respect, care, acknowledgement and acceptance, and when it comes to sexual problems acceptance is often the most important of these five. The lack of self-acceptance is primarily felt as shame and low self-esteem. The most efficient procedure in holistic sexological therapy to solve problems with shame seems to be acceptance through touch (24).

In general sexual problems cannot be solved without a partial focus on existential issues. Many young patients will present existential problems as sexual problems, as sexual dysfunction where lack of lust and orgasmic potency is often the most noticeable subjective symptom of poor quality of life and low self-esteem.

In elder patients this pattern is reversed; often they do not expect to function sexually, but they complain of lack of lust for life in general. Often the rehabilitation of sexuality and character (21) is the path to insight in self and the purpose of life, the essence of self (16).

Relevance to sexual ethics and medical/sexological ethics

With the mapping of the three experiential dimensions of sexuality leading to the transcending experience of orgasm, it is possible to analyze what is necessary for a high sexual ethics. As most people are unaware of their most fundamental intentions, most people cannot control desire. The holistic physician uses re-parenting, that is the clear intention of being there for the patient in the same way as a good parent, as a means of controlling intention, making the intention of helping, healing and supporting the patient his/her sole focus; to accomplish this to a degree, where sexual desire and other unwanted intentions does not appear anymore is one of the signs of mastery of the holistic medical clinical practice.

As the sexual polarity is an innate quality, the sensual enjoyment connected to the mere contact with a person of the opposite sex can be diminished by repressing sexual poles (male or female); as the repression of your own gender in the clinic often will be somewhat irreversible and therefore leave a degree of permanent sexual inhibition, this strategy of

controlling sexuality is damaging to sexual health, and to your character in general (21), which cannot be recommended.

Interestingly, as according to the presented sexual theory, sexual excitement comes from investing mind, emotion and body in sexuality, excitement is completely controllable. This means that instead of just controlling ones sexual behavior, a person or a physician/sexologist can chose not to get sexually excited, even if the lust cannot be controlled. After some practice sexual excitement can easily be controlled in the holistic medical clinic, making it possible to obtain extreme intimacy without getting sexually involved (25,27).

The interesting consequence on this is that sexual ethics can be taught, and we suggest that this ability of getting intimate with the opposite sex without getting sexually excited should be an obligatory part of every physician's medical training, as physical intimacy is a natural part of the job of a physician. The physician or sexologist still needs to carefully control his behaviour too, as the patient still will interpret the behaviour of the physician, and a patient should never feel sexually abused. In our experience any person, man or woman, will normally take an appreciation, when expressed verbally or non-verbally without any sexual excitement, as a compliment, while the same appreciation, when expressed with such an excitement, often will be taken as a flirt and invitation to a sexual relationship, or as a sexual harassment or even a sexual violation.

The highest degree of responsibility that a physician can take is the responsibility for the experience of the patient. In holistic existential therapy and sexology where painful old emotions are confronted and integrated, an important competence is the physician's mastery of the patient's experience, calling old painful moments into this present moment, while letting the patient clearly know and experience, that the intention of this is solely the healing of the patient.

The physician/sexologist being completely relaxed and without any sexual excitement and emotional tension, giving the patient an honest appreciation the feeling of being a well-respected, autonomous, precious and whole, is an important precondition for this kind of therapy.

Rehabilitation of existence

Working with sexual problems in the holistic clinic almost always includes existential dimensions (18). In the same way working with existential problems will almost always include some rehabilitation of gender and sexuality.

From a modern scientific perspective of holistic health, it is necessary for a person to be free and alive on all levels of his or her being, that is being present and optimally functioning on the axis of existence. Engaging in sexual enjoyment is a path, which connects us deeply to our life within going all the way down to the cells. As we fundamentally are a colony of cells, a sound sexuality is from a theoretical point of view also extremely important to health. This is also our statistical finding, that people who can enjoy a rich sexual life are also having a high quality of life, a good health and high ability on other areas of life (3). In holistic existential therapy it is the patient himself or herself, who deliver the material to be worked with, as the problems to be solved are the problems presented by the patients. Normally there are three steps of the rehabilitation of the patient's existence:

- Rehabilitation of power: mind, feelings, and body – out of boredom, passivity and low self esteem (18)
- Rehabilitation of sexuality and character (21) – out of pain and invisibility
- Rehabilitation of self and purpose of life (16,17) – out of unhappiness and meaninglessness

Interestingly, it seems that human character cannot be fully rehabilitated without the rehabilitation of gender and sexuality, and purpose of life cannot be fully rehabilitated without the rehabilitation of the human character, and most patients have both their character and their sexuality at least somewhat repressed. This makes rehabilitation of sexuality a necessary step in the holistic medical treatment of a majority of patients to obtain a complete existential rehabilitation.

The reason for the above order of rehabilitation is quite simple: love-issues are much more painful to us than sexuality-issues, which again are much more painful to us than power-issues. This is why patients, who have had severe problems in their life (threatening their survival) often only functions in one aspect of life, say mentally, emotionally or physically. A sound sexuality and ability to love will only appear after personal development and long therapy. Most people in this world are actually fixed in a mental survival position, so the normal path of development in holistic therapy with people from the western world seems to be:

- 1) Awareness of being “in the head”
- 2) Coming back in the body (centering in the bodies physical centre, which is often called the “Hara”-centre, in the middle of the stomach five fingers below the navel)
- 3) Opening the heart – contact with all the feelings
- 4) Accepting the body, its organs and energy, and finally the gender: Rehabilitation of sexuality and physical character
- 5) Discovering your true self: rehabilitation of mental and spiritual character, purpose of life, intentionality, and talents

Problems with sexuality in the clinic

Many patients are hesitant to open themselves up to this difficult area of existence and sexuality. This because of the intense feelings of shame, guilt, worthlessness and shyness related to sex in their personal history. In the same way many physicians do not know how to work with sexuality, because of their own alienation towards their body, gender, and emotions, and are thus often unconsciously avoiding this important area of existence. To avoid working with sexuality in holistic medicine might be harmful for the patient, as the progress of the patient is easily arrested at level 4 in the above list of steps. This is still far from the healthy position of being able to love yourself and others, and far from knowing and living the purpose of life.

It is therefore of great importance that the holistic physician is able and well functioning in all aspects of sexuality in order to help the patient to confront any problem in this sensitive

area in order to heal. The intimate re-parenting that is needed in much holistic therapy demands, that the holistic physician is keenly aware of the border between intimacy and sexuality, to be able to be completely intimate with the patient, without getting into a sexual relationship (like flirting, circulating sexual energy, having sexual behavior etc.). As sexuality starts with the intent, it is only a question of training the physician to be able to be intimate without having a sexual relationship; the solution is that the physician at all times is aware of his or her own intent, to keep the healing of the patient as the only intent during the treatment. The physician must strictly avoid all kinds of behavior, like flirting, which can be misunderstood as a sexual intention. As all physicians know that it is unethical to abuse their patients, and most physician's comply to the ethical roles of their community, complains from a patient about sexual harassment or sexual abuse often comes about the physician not sufficiently understanding the sensitiveness of this issue, and the patient's transference during the therapy. Unfortunately there still are a large number of patients, who actually experience violation by their therapist, as for example one survey showed that 23% of incest patients reported they were violated by their therapist (55) (including both physicians and non-physicians). What happens when an incest victim is experiencing this is not entirely clear; a logic possibility of that they project the original perpetrator on the therapist. The better the sexologist can define his own sexual borders the more difficult it is for the patient to project the perpetrator on him. Training of the sexologist is therefore extremely important in order for him to develop the ability to keep the sexual border, while being intimate with the patient in the process of healing.

This leads to another extremely important principal question, the fundamental ethical question related to sex: when is a sexual experience good and harmless, when is it healing and developing the person, and when is it damaging to the person?

Although the issue of sexual ethics has gotten more attention in medicine than any other ethical issue and in traditional medicine the ethical rule regarding sexuality is quite simple: do not engage in any sexual relationship with the patient. In holistic health care this simple rule is more relevant than ever; but as sexuality is often much more subtle and much more present in the holistic therapies – i.e. in psychotherapy and in bodywork - the issue of sexual ethics needs more clarification. The first researcher to struggle with the problem of how to deal with sexuality in the holistic clinical setting was Sigmund Freud (1856-1939), who in his famous paper "Transference love" gave his clever advice to his fellow psychoanalysts [56]:

"It is, therefore, just as disastrous for the analysis if the patients craving for love are gratified as if it is suppressed. The course the analyst must pursue is neither of these; it is one for which there is no model in real life. He must take care not to steer away from the transference-love, or to repulse it or to make it distasteful to the patient; but he must just as resolutely withhold any response to it [i.e. avoid acting out]. He must keep firm hold of the transference-love, but treat it as something unreal, as a situation which has to be gone through in the treatment and traced back to its unconscious origins and which must assist in bringing all that is most deeply hidden in the patient's erotic life into her consciousness and therefore under her control. The more plainly the analyst lets it be seen that he is proof against every temptation, the more readily will he be able to extract from the situation its analytical content. The patient, whose sexual repression is of course not yet removed but merely pushed into the background, will then feel safe enough to allow all her preconditions for loving, all the phantasies of her state of being in love, to come to light; and from these she will herself open the way to the infantile roots of her love."

Freud became famous for his realization of the importance for the patient's health by healing her sexuality. He had also realized that while working on releasing the patient's sexuality from suppression, the female patient frequently felt in love with her male therapist and he also noticed that this transferred love could reach extreme intensity. Most disturbingly Freud also noticed the impact of the transference-love on the therapist, since it often gave a strong sexual counter-transference as an involuntary response.

This was a serious problem to psychoanalysis in its early days. Freud had two main concerns here: How could the therapy continue in spite of the seemingly locked situation, where therapy turned into a love affair? And how could the therapist help himself to avoid getting sexually involved with his patient? Freud ingeniously realized that the mutual sexual attraction was unavoidable in the psychodynamic therapy and he also realized that it was a most useful artifact, if the therapist had a sound response to the sexual interest of his female patient. Freud's solution was that the therapist's reaction should neither be so cold that her sexuality was re-repressed, or so hot that it resulted in acting out on the sexual desire.

On one hand, the therapist should give his full acceptance to every aspect of his patient's sexuality and also actively encourage the patient to go deeper into it; and on the other hand the therapist had to completely resist the temptation of a sexually interested woman totally in his power. The therapy should be done in a loving, accepting and caring way. Freud always advocated honesty with his patients in analysis. In this case honesty would mean the therapist letting his patient know that he also felt attracted, but that he managed to firmly resist any temptation. Since 1912 this well-tempered response has been the solution to this severe therapeutic headache. With this said, the complexity of the matter must be underlined: In the above mentioned paper Freud recommended a "neutral" response to the patients sexual interest; it is not so clear from Freud's writings how such a response really looks, and how sexual "neutrality" goes along with honesty in the case of a strong sexual counter-transference.

Holistic health practitioners are often dealing with patients that are chronically ill with no improvement from standard treatment, including psychiatric and sexological treatment. Today's intensive holistic therapy with these patients often include bodywork and here every kind of sexual reactions are found, from the patient entering catharsis from remembering early sexual abuse – and sometimes even projecting the abuser on the therapist to avoid the emotional pain of the traumas - to the patient re-discovering her own sexuality in the therapy by sometimes having "unprovoked" orgasms, which happens suddenly, uncontrolled, and without any warning, often resulting from only a light touch on the patients non-erogenous zones of the arms or back. The enhanced difficulties of sexual transference, when working directly on the body makes the discovery of Freud's solution more actual than ever, and every student of holistic therapy must be trained to have a firm, proper and constructive, therapeutic response to the patient's transference of love.

It is important to remember that what happens in the therapy must always be done with the full consent of the patient. There are very different views on the value and significance of a patient consent in different countries and cultures. In Denmark, which value patient-autonomy and very liberal when it comes to sexual issues, the patient consent is what makes a medical procedure legal and acceptable. In many countries outside Denmark the mere suspicion that consent to a procedure has been given under the influence of transference would weaken the significance of the consent and raise suspicion of the patient being exploited by the therapist.

In the Nordic countries, when there is consent, the therapy can contain even the most radical elements like direct touch on the genitals, or agreed upon elements of symbolic failure or abuse, of other rough and provocative therapeutic elements meant to facilitate the patient's re-experience of traumatic life events in order to enter the state of existential healing (salutogenesis) by use of the famous "principle of similarity" (57-63). In principle, there are no limits to what can function as a tool for healing in holistic therapy and the excellent therapist continue the treatment as long as there is progress, by continuing to invent original new steps of the therapeutic intervention.

Since Hippocrates it has been of crucial importance that the patient is never harmed, and this is even more important for the holistic practitioner today. It is also necessary that the holistic therapist always respect the laws of the country. National laws might set severe limits for what can be done in the holistic clinic, even with the presence of both a written and an oral consent of the patient, and the holistic practitioner must be continually engaged in awakening the public awareness of any need of changes of the actual laws, in the best interest of his patients.

Explaining sexual difficulties and abnormal sexual behaviors

The lack of one of these three: lust, excitement and pleasure/orgasm, or the presence of the opposite of pleasure, which is pain, are traditionally described as the most common sexual problems, together with the emotional problems of anger, hate, shame, guilt, disgust, helplessness and other difficult feelings. Vaginismus (40), vulvodynia (41) and other sexual dysfunctions seems to be caused by the repression of such feelings into the body and its organs and tissues, and these problems are normally solved, when the old, painful emotions are processed and integrated during holistic existential therapy or holistic sexological therapy (40-43). Repression is according to the life mission theory (16-22) a consequence of negative decisions taken in emotionally difficult moments (called gestalts) to escape the responsibility and thus repressing the emotional and existential pain. Sexual problems react easily to holistic existential therapy addressing the negative decisions, and therefore many different problems can be solved using this kind of therapy.

Vaginismus, vulvodynia, impotence

Vaginismus (tightening of the vagina during or before having sex) and vulvodynia (chronic pain in the vulva without a physical course) are in our clinical experience almost always caused by repressed emotions like shame, guilt, disgust, and helplessness connected to earlier sexual experiences; the proof of that being the fact that most of the patients can be cured by the simple procedure of acceptance through touch (24). Impotence can be caused by physical defects in the penis; much more often the reason is lack of lust, excitement and pleasure/orgasmic potency; the cause according to the present theory is the repression of the patient's sexuality by negative decisions throughout life. Holistic existential therapy therefore can rehabilitate potency in most cases without biological tissue damage. Temple goddesses

has seemingly had this function in India for millennia, but the first scientific attempt of this kind was made by Masters and Johnson (1,2) using substitute partners in the middle of the 20th century, and most of the dysfunctional men could be cured in only fourteen days.

Adultery and use of prostitutes

Most people of the west acquire early in life a sex-love split, which seemingly makes it almost impossible for them to be fully satisfied sexually with the person they love (see discussion below on the healing of this split). This split is caused by the reorganization of the life energy of the organism in several separate circuits, to protect the person from being destroyed by rejection from the opposite sex (mother/father). Adultery and the use of prostitutes are thus a normal behavioral pattern, unfortunately often harmful, but difficult to regulate by law. The sex-love split is also a normal reason for therapist's to have sex with their patients. The healing of the sex-love split of the therapist is thus a precondition for the ability to manage your own sexuality and respect the sexual borders of the patient and only a whole therapist can sufficiently help the split patient to heal in the sexological clinic.

Pornography and lack of satisfactory sexual partners and orgasmic potency

The market for pornography has exploded through the last decades as most people in the west have now accepted pornography and many normal people use it for sexual stimulation. The market for internet pornography is said to grow at an astonishing rate of 100% each three month. The reason for this need is either a lack of a sufficient sexual partner or an obvious lack of orgasmic potency, making the normal sex boring and unsatisfactory. When the natural faculties of lust, excitement and orgasm are rehabilitated, the need for artificial stimulation like pornography disappears. The problem of getting a sexual partner will normally also disappear with this rehabilitation, as the sexually attractive woman is a woman who likes sex, and the sexually attractive man is a man who can relax in his contact with the female energy.

Homosexuality

One percent of the Danish population is homosexual (3,64). A complete theory of sexuality will also solve the mystery of homosexuality, which cannot be an effective biological strategy of survival. Freud had his spacious idea about the child being polymorph perverted, and homosexuality rising from the child not learning to turn sexuality towards the genitals of the opposite sex. Our understanding is in line with this view: sexuality is directed by intention; therefore a person can choose – consciously or subconsciously - to direct his/her sexuality towards any gender or any item for that sake. The reason for choosing homosexuality could be neurotic; in this case a normal sexual flow of energy and interest is for some reason blocked, and homosexuality seems to be a possible solution to a hard existential problem: how to relate satisfactorily to the other sex. We have seen women in the

clinic who turn lesbian after rape in childhood, and who turn straight when this trauma was integrated, in support of such a possibility. In theory homosexuality could also be a genetic determination, but judged from our clinical findings we find this possibility to be more unlikely. According to the present theory homosexuality will be reversed to heterosexuality, if the person let go of his/her decisions of projecting sexuality towards the same sex. According to our clinical experience decisions causing homosexuality can be a product of sexual abuse, like one of our clients, who presented as a lesbian, but during therapy it was revealed that four older boys raped her repeatedly at the age of 4 to 8 years, which changed her object of sexuality.

Incest

Members of the family almost always inherit the sexual pattern of incest via sexual abuse of the violator. The best cure is taking the whole family into therapy, which can be extremely difficult, because of the intense emotions connected to the severe taboo of incest. Years of holistic existential therapy and holistic sexological therapy are often needed for the incest victim for a full rehabilitation of self-esteem, ability to feel, and sexual health (65). The position of Freud was here again spacious, claiming in the theory of the Electra/Oedipus complex that all small girls have sexual fantasies about her father, and vice versa the boys.

Paedophilia and child pornography

The simplest way to understand paedophilia is to look at it as an arrested psychosexual development, the person sexually attracted to children being of the same developmental age as the desired child. The only cure for this is to facilitate the sexual development and maturation of the paedophile patient. Feelings like shame and guilt, disgust and hopelessness/helplessness are most likely to appear in the therapy, often caused by sexual violation of the person, when he/she was a child of that age him/herself. This kind of paedophilia are always friendly, kind, peaceful and seeking the full acceptance from the child, as if the patient him/herself had the age of the violated child.

A more twisted and violent version of paedophilia is when the patient has lust for inducing pain, fear, shame, guilt, disgust or other negative emotions in the child victim for sadistic sexual pleasure. This behaviour comes from the patient subconsciously choosing to be evil (20), and is often disguised as a tendency to justify punishing children. This dark pattern often reflects the violent nature of the patient's own traumas. According to the theory of the evil side of man (20), this kind of behavior can even in an more evil version be a direct consequence of a conscious choice to do evil (see "rape" and "sexual torture" below). The way to treat this is to let the patient be as evil as possible in the therapeutic session, and then confronting him/her with the good (the light), the therapist coming from deep and unconditional love for this tormented soul. Of course this kind of holistic existential therapy can only be practiced, if the therapist can truly love his patient, which can be very difficult with patients suffering from this kind of severe pathology.

Rape and sado-masochism

The phantasm of rape is common with both sexes, woman often dream of being raped and men about raping. The logic of this is clear when the nature of the masculine and the feminine sexuality is taken into consideration. The male urge is to spread his genes in all directions, and the feminine urge is carefully to select the best genes for her offspring. The strongest, healthiest or most intelligent male must be preferred and this is the man she cannot in the end resist sexually, so she must melt, give up her resistance and receive him. And vice versa: this woman is forced to acknowledge his sovereignty and therefore she finally melts into his strong arms and finally surrender and give her body to him. Unfortunately this simple sexual scheme that in dreams and fantasies are the most natural thing can almost never be realized in the form of rape with a pleasurable feeling and good outcome for the woman. Rape and violent sexual domination often leads to severe traumatising of the woman, and also often of the involved man, who never intended to do her any harm.

Men who rape are often simpleminded and severely damaged existentially. They are often poorly integrated in the culture and society they live in. In principle they can be helped by holistic existential therapy to get a meaningful and emotionally satisfying relationships with a woman. In principle it could be done if the perpetrator understands the need of existential rehabilitation and an expert therapist, who must be able to truly love them as souls and accept them exactly the way they are. The game of sado-masochism is very popular in most large western cities, but the effect of this in sexual health is not clear.

Sexual torture and sexual murder

Snuff pornography where girls are raped, abused and even killed are on the market. We are posing the question why sexual violence has pornographic value. The explanation is likely to be that many people carry an intense hate towards the other sex linked to the gender, because of neglect or violation from the parent of the opposite sex. Many patients experience, in holistic therapy with spontaneous regression to the age of one, two, or three years of age, that they actually wanted to kill their mother or father, because of very painful early events with violating or emotionally dissatisfactory interaction. The intensity of emotions of small children reappearing in the therapy is really overwhelming (as described by Janov in his book on the primal scream (66)), and the intentions of the small children reacting in an attempt to survive the experience are often extremely evil, although they do not have the power to materialise them at that age.

After 20 or 30 years, the person has become an adult in full power, but fortunately a normal person will have matured and in this development he/she has released the immature and childish evil intentions. If the person has been arrested in the psychosocial development, the evil intentions can be intact, and now materialised with the full adult power. This is the scary scenario of destructive rape, sexual torture and sexual murder. Many sexually repressed people carry in their dark side such evil sexual fantasies, which are seldom shared, not even with their therapist after many years of therapy. The degree of trust it takes to open up for an honest conversation on these matters is extreme; therefore these people live amongst us without anybody knowing what kinds of dark secrets they carry. And without the integration

of the dark side, the patient will forever remain sick in his/her soul, and potentially a sexual violator the day a possibility opens up.

Intimacy, love and trust is the only road to healing the existence and the only way to prevent such evil deeds. If a patient reveals an interest for evil rape or snuff porn or murdering woman in his sexual fantasy or similar matters, this must be taken as a serious problem in the therapy, and the patients must, if possible at all, accept to work with and process the original traumas giving birth to the evil sexual intent.

Discussion

As every human life starts as a unification of the egg and the sperm, it seems that this fundamental set up with two poles, a male and a female, is at the root of all human life. From the beginning we are sexual beings and all the fundamental driving forces in life seems to be of a similar energetically structure, the two poles are always there, when a movement is done or a change is wanted. The highly abstract nature of the two poles makes it problematic for us to understand sexuality.

Sometimes, when we want to make a difference through time in society or in business, we do not conceive such an endeavour as sexually motivated, but deep down it is about power, and all power is conceived and motivated by the fundamental driving force in our life, which in its essential form is bodily and sexual. Freud called it “sublimation” of sexuality into the mental and intellectual area. Aldous Huxley (1894-1963, an English writer) is told to have said that “an intellectual is someone who have found something more interesting in life than sex”, and in a certain way this is absolutely true, because wanting sexual intercourse is only the most physical and the most concrete presentation of the sexual polarisation in our life. The closer we come to grasping the abstract and all including concept on living with and carried by to two fundamental poles, the more powerful we are in our own experience and the stronger is our impact on our close and distant world.

Power and excitement is fundamentally about finding this polarity within ourselves and taking it into use as cleanly and focused as we can. Interestingly sex and power are often seen as dirty in our culture and condemned, but in our culture it seems that we use a lot of energy to control others and ourselves. The motivation of this repression of sexuality is found early in life, as we need to repress our own sexuality to the same degree as sexual repression that exists in our family in and between our parents. This down adjustment of our own fundamental power seems to start already in embryonic life, judged from the experience of being extremely sexual that often follows therapeutic regression late in the holistic existential therapy, where the patients often go all the way back to the early fetal periods (the first weeks after conception).

This is a complex situation difficult to understand, when two abstract poles are our life's fundamental motivational force, driving all the sexual, emotional and psychic energy of our life. Many layers of adaptation have lead to repression of so many different aspects of bodily, sexual, emotional, mental and spiritual functions. Actually these repressions are the backbone of our personality (ego), and only by letting go of the negative decisions are we able to repress these aspects of our true self and return to our true human nature.

Holistic existential therapy is therefore, as psychoanalysis and Jungian therapy, highly focused on supporting the patient in finding these two abstract inherent sexual poles, setting them free for use on all levels from sexuality to brainwork and spirituality in the human being.

That the nature of the poles is abstract means that the poles are bound to our totality, our wholeness. The way the poles are held by the cell is determining the whole motivational and energetic set-up of the organism, so let us explore this difficult and unclear issue. We start as two cells fusing into one cell and just before conception the poles are the creative force making the embryo. When it is created the two cells are gone and one remains, carrying the two poles within it on an abstract level. If we accept the idea that the cell remembers the fertilized egg and will remember its creation from two cellular poles. As there is no structural evidence of the egg being a double being, the polarity is seemingly internalised. How is this done? One obvious answer is through the memory itself. Interestingly the embryo as a gender, making only one of the sexes manifest in its own biology, and in the beginning there is no known structures making any sexual discrimination. The zygote is thus with regards to energy and information both male and female, except for a tiny chromosomal difference to be expressed much later in the morphogenesis, when the embryo finally expresses one sex.

So early in foetal life, it seems that the organism holds the sexual poles in its wholeness, in what we call the conscious or “spiritual” level of the organism. How is this done? Well, how is consciousness and wholeness organised in the zygote, and in the cell in general? The most fundamental aspect seems to be through wholeness, giving the light of consciousness, and through representation of the inner and the outer, that is memory and perception, giving the content of consciousness. To understand that, we have to realize that the cell is a part of the web of life, the coherent matrix of energy and information that all life is a part of (22). The cell is part of the flow of life, the flux of energy and information is running through it and it contains its history as a personal memory to be used through life. Where are the sexual poles? They are represented in the consciousness of the cell through personal memory and also the web of life, having built the poles into all life, represents this set-up.

While the foetus expresses only its one gender physically, the other is still there on the abstract level, in the wholeness and in the memory, and in the web to be used by the organism in sex, an intellectual endeavour etc. Thus we are energetically two-poled beings. The sound sexuality is built around a circuit of sexual energy running within each individual integrating the manifest gender and the opposite only manifest in consciousness; sex is in a way masturbatory as pointed out by Osho (67), and all sex is about aligning the two separate sexual circuits of the two lowers. When this is done the other represents the inner man and the inner woman of the counterpart. Being in love is often highly projective, and the projections often binds the sexual energy and locks it in neurotic patterns and thus becomes a hindrance to the natural and sound experience of desire, sexual excitement, pleasure and orgasm.

Healing the sex-love split: a challenge for every man and woman

Interestingly, we are also one-poled beings, in that love creates unity, within us and with other people around us. The most fundamental problem in adult life is how to deal with both love and sexuality in the same time. Love brings closeness and unity; sexuality needs distance and polarity. Love is a surrender, abstaining from all power and all conditions in the service

of the other, while what turns sex on in us is about meeting the unknown, dominating or being dominated, closing a distance between us, being separate beings. The relationships with our mother and father were so loving and close by nature that sexuality had no place in it. First in adolescence, when the child separates, starts the sexual play so crucial for psychosexual development. In the lack of intimacy, the relationship between parent and child can turn sexual, leading to the problem of incest, severe psychosexual development disturbances and pain with repression and condemnation of sex and lust, nymphomania (personal value connected psychologically to sexual attention) among others.

The sound sexuality is integrated in human life, so the love, the strength and the gender and sexuality are aligned in the person, and sexuality becomes an expression of physical love. When two whole people have sex they come from everything in themselves and accept that. This sound sexuality is unfortunately a rare and highly advanced human state. Every man and woman on planet Earth needs to heal his/her own sexuality, and for this project we urgently need physicians who are able to assist the population in this area.

On the positive side of all the sad things related to dysfunctional sexuality is the paradoxal posttraumatic growth, seen after rape and other violations. This important phenomenon reminds us that not all is lost, even after the worst case of abuse and pain, if we understand to help the victim to learn from what happened and develop as a person. Fine therapy can seemingly fully compensate for the harm of even the most evil trauma (68-74).

Conclusions

The present theory describes three dimensions of sexuality: 1) desire, 2) excitement, and 3) sensual enjoyment and when combining these three, transcending into orgasm. The theory also describes the inverse experience in sexual pain, disgust and humiliation.

The most common sexual problems, like impotency and anorgasm, can be understood as the lack of one or more of these three positive elements, or as presence of the negative dimension of pleasure, which is pain (intentional failure, emotional frustration or physical pain). The reason for lack of desire, excitement or pleasure is the specific repression of the corresponding dimension of sexuality, or the general repression of the patient's purpose of life, gender and personal character, and general power of mind, feelings and body.

Other problems like premature ejaculation, vulvodynia and vaginismus are caused by repression of the emotional problems of shame, guilt, disgust, helplessness connected to sex, vulvodynia and other dysfunctions seems to be caused by the repression of such emotions, and these problems are normally solved when the old, painful emotions are processed and integrated during holistic existential therapy or holistic sexual therapy.

Full orgasmic potency is the ability to obtain desire, excitement and sensual pleasure culminating in a peak (peak orgasm), which can be prolonged into a plateau of intensity (silent ecstasy/plateau orgasm), repeated into the multi-orgasmic experience, and finally expanded from the genitals to an all-including, transcending experience.

The three dimensions of sexuality fits into the theory of talent, in the way that lust arises from intention, excitement from personal power, and orgasm from the dimension of gender and sensual enjoyment. Accordingly, the ability to have the full desire and full control of excitement and behaviour is rehabilitated together with the ability to know and be your true

self. The ability to get a high level of excitement is rehabilitated when full personal power is rehabilitated, and orgasmic potency is rehabilitated when the ability to enjoy fully is rehabilitated.

This theory predicts that holistic sexology or holistic existential therapy can rehabilitate most cases of sexual dysfunctions, including vulvodynia, vaginismus, impotency, and tendency to rape, child abuse, and other sexual violence.

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Section 9: Ethical Aspects

Genital, Sexual and Non-Sexual Pain and other Health Problems related to the Female Gender

The many different health issues related to the vulva takes an interdisciplinary and holistic approach as medical, psychological, sexological and existential aspects are intimately interwoven. Often vulval problems are chronic and the patients have them for many years. In this paper we suggest holistic sexology to be an important intervention for a long series of vulval health problems. We argue that the vulva carries immense symbolic meaning making it a focus point in the body of the most difficult feelings and emotions, making the vulva more exposed to psychosomatic problems than any other organ of the body. We recommend as an important tool what have been called “clinical medicine” - curing the patient through the growth of self-insight coming from the physicians and the patient’s common exploration and investigation into her life, body, gender, sexuality, and feelings associated to her inner and outer genitals. A surprisingly number of different diseases and disorders can be cured in this simple way: Vaginal infections (non-STDs), skin problems such as lichen sclerosus, lichen planus, and lichen simplex chronicus, vulvovaginitis/inflammation/chronic infection/vaginosis of the vulva and vagina, chronic pain, (burning, irritation, pruritus), vulvodynia and pelvic pain syndromes, sterile and non-sterile urinary tract inflammations, PMS, amenorrhea, and sexological dysfunctions including sexual aversion syndrome and psychosexual developmental disturbances, lack of genital self esteem. NNT=2 estimated from the literature. Tools are talk therapy and therapeutic touch including five tools of holistic manual sexology i.e. including the sexological examination. Finally the ethics of the vulva clinic is discussed.

Introduction

The vulva clinic has a long and complicated history with a large number of unclear and overlapping diagnoses (1). There are problems related to sexuality, like dyspareunia, which

are closely related to the sexual dysfunctions, like lack of desire and excitement, anorgasmia, sexual aversion disorder and low genital self esteem.

There are also problems seemingly not related to the dynamics of coitus or the psychosomatic and psychosocial aspects of sexuality like chronic infections (vulvitis, vaginitis, vaginosis, STDs), chronic sterile inflammations (vulvar vestibulitis syndrome (VVS)), irritated clitoral prepuce, and more, and pain for no “anatomical” reason, like vulvodynia (vulvar pain with no visible organic cause), dysplasia (Lichen Simplex Chronicus, Lichen Sclerosis, and Lichen Planus) and vulval cancer. These clinical conditions are often in the biomedical clinic seen as more “organic” and of less psychosocial origin.

There are the problems related to the muscles of the pelvis (the pelvis floor, the deep (long) skeletal muscles) and the diagnoses associated with this (pelvic pain syndrome, possibly also vaginismus etc). Finally there are referred pains and discomforts from the low back, uterus, uteral ligaments, intestines, kidney, bladder, urethra etc. On top of this we have a whole class of somatisation, hysteric, and hypochondriac mental states often involving the vulva, vagina, uterus, ovaries, anus etc. Often the woman fears to have cancer although vulval cancers are rare.

The pains are a study in itself. There are deep pains and superficial pains, pains associated with the mucosa and pains associated to the muscles, there are provoked pains as in dyspareunia, and non-provoked constant pains as in most cases of vulvodynia; there are allodynia where a light pressure from a cotton bud (Q-tip) provokes the pain, and then there are wandering pains that shows up here and then another place, and there are infrequent pains that only comes sometimes. Then there are sharp cutting pains, there are itches and discomfort going all the way to psychological factors like low genital self-esteem and even strong shame, disgust, and repulsions connected to own genitals, the last often somatisating into one of the other types of pain and discomfort.

When it comes to the objective findings from the pelvic examinations there is a similar spectrum of infections, vaginoses, variations of flours, inflammations, and unspecified irritation and visual redness, mucosal thinning, and then again very often nothing pathological to see at all, or a pathological finding not at all explaining the reported symptoms. The explorative phase often reveal some tenderness, and if you are lucky the exact pain or feeling that the patient complains about.

Often there is a strong emotional reaction to the pelvic exam that is known to be stronger if the patient has been sexually traumatized or abused. The whole abuse aspect is a complicated ting in itself, incest and sexual abuse being extremely common, as it often has been found in population surveys that at least 15% of the girls of the western world have been sexually abused.

If you use the ISD-10 or DSM-IV-TR you will end putting you patient in one of the categories of the system and treat her accordingly, but little is known about the effects of the treatments, as there has been very few controlled clinical studies in the vulva clinic. At Columbia Presbyterian Medical Center Cutaneous-Vulvar Service the most common presenting condition was diagnosed as vulvar vestibulitis (36.2%), followed by lichen sclerosus (19.2%) and vaginitis/vaginosis (14.8%) (1).

In general the most common diagnoses related to vulvar pain are vaginitis/vaginosis, vulvar vestibulitis syndrome (VVS), dysplasia (Lichen Simplex Chronicus, Lichen Sclerosis, and Lichen Planus), and vulvodynia. It is known from many population surveys now that the prevalence for vulvodynia is about 10% of young women, but most of these women are not

seeking medical attention as it is generally known that there is no efficient cure; surgical vestibulectomy seems only to give temporary pain relief, and it has almost always serious side effects and active pharmaceutical substances often do more harm than benefit.

In general the vulva clinic has been rather inefficient in understanding and healing the patients' many and complex disorders and discomforts. Recently the traditional diagnosis has been challenged, and most of the commonly used treatments have been found not to be evidence-based. We obviously need a much more integrative and holistic approach to the vulva clinic.

The holistic vulva clinic

The traditional medical and gynecological approach to the vulva clinic is the pelvic examination and in the sexological clinic this is complemented with the sexological examination (2-7). In holistic medicine and sexology the focus is not the vulva, however obvious since the symptoms come from here, but always the whole person, and her body, mind, spirit and heart (existence).

If you are a busy physician just this last sentence will already have spoiled your motivation for further reading of this paper. But this is a fact: The vulva has no life on its own, it is a completely integrated part of the woman, and from a holistic medical perspective all vulval problems, except the most banal STDs (and maybe even these), are a materialization of the women's problems with body, gender, and sexuality.

Even dysplasia and cancer, except for a few genetic cases, are from a holistic perspective often directly caused by the inner imbalances and disturbances in the biological information system that normally guides the cells to do what needs to be done in the body, including the genitals, in an orderly way. If this biological order is disturbed the cells start dividing randomly and without respect for the order of the tissue they come from, which is cancer per definition.

The genitals are a focus point of the strongest emotions and feeling in a person's life; the female genitals are psychosomatically burdened by representing the woman's ability to reproduce and her sexual attractiveness.

We doubt that no woman honestly can say that they never have felt sexually violated at some point in time. Most girls are not allowed to have the natural sexuality they are given by birth, all this giving the experience of sexuality a negative color (8). The fundamental idea of holistic medicine is that the tissues of the relevant organs hold on to the emotional pain (and joy) that cannot be accepted, contained, and integrated as natural part of life. All these repressed feelings are then disturbing the biological order.

As vulval health issues are closely connected to the personal history of sexual traumas and sexual repression, the fundamental tool of the vulval clinic is what has been called "clinical medicine": The examination and exploration of the problem and its causes together with the patient (9).

Understanding is the cure. Insight is what heals. Even cancer is from a psychosomatic point of view likely to be a materialization of chronic irritation and discomfort (10-16), so this approach might even cure vulval dysplasia and cancer (most unfortunately we still miss good clinical trials to see if the holistic approach is more effective in making the patient survive

that surgery and chemotherapy, but there can be little doubt that most women would like to keep their vulva intact if possible at all).

So the holistic cure in general, not only to vulval and genital problems, but to all health problems, is the exploration of the patient's body, emotions and feelings, mind, spirit, heart and whole existence together with the patient. There are basically two tools here, which are talk and touch (17-19). The combination of talking and therapeutic touching has been found to be the most efficient kind of CAM often called "mind-body medicine" (20).

Mind body medicine and CAM is known not to have any significant side effects (21-26), meaning that you can safely use these tools without worrying about harming your patient (the opposite situation of using drugs and surgery, where you most often induce some kind of side effect and harm).

Most interestingly is it that mind-body medicine has been found highly efficient for a long series of clinical conditions, like coronary heart disease (27,28), cancer (29), and somatic and psychiatric problems (30-35); we find it likely that all kinds of infections, inflammation, chronic pains, autoimmune disorders, and a long row of psychosomatic disorders can be cured this way, as it has been for millennia (36).

There is still too little knowledge about the efficacy of clinical medicine for each concrete disorder, including the vulval health issues, but in general research has shown that every second chronic patient with somatic, mental, sexual and existential problems can be cured in only one year with about 20 sessions. If therapy is continued another 25% (estimated) will be cured the next, in the end curing most patients. We therefore have reason to believe that holistic, clinical medicine is the most efficient type of medicine there is, also for the vulval disorders.

The practical approach

The first thing to realize, which might be pretty hard for a busy physician, is that the vulva does not live its own life; it is a part of a woman with a precious often severely wounded sexuality, and the vulva is, as her primary sexual organ, a materialization of the state of her sexuality and life energy as such.

The vulva is therefore an organ loaded with strong and often difficult emotions, feelings and sensations, and the mere approximation to the vulva as you are going to examine it, will provoke a strong emotional reaction in your patient that will tell you more than a thousand words about the reason for her vulval problems.

Never miss the opportunity to open the conversation about relevant feelings and emotions at this point. It might be emotionally difficult for both of you, as it opens up to the woman's most intimate and private secrets of her life, so be gentle, compassionate and empathic. Kindness is an exquisite art, and healers need to master it impeccably.

From a holistic perspective, a compromised immune system locally in the vulva, a dysplasia of the mucosa, a strong irritation of the introitus, or a strong pain provoked by a touch of the deep skeletal muscles have pretty much the same cause, which is a disturbance in the pelvic area of the biological information guiding the cells and tissue.

In our experience such an informational disturbance is almost always caused by emotional problems related to her sexuality, i.e. strong positive and negative feelings and

emotions that have been repressed long time ago as her childhood environment, most often both her parents, could not accept and contain her childhood sexuality. Naturally sexual abuse and self-abuse, i.e. from having sex without feeling desire and excitement, but only from a felt obligation to the man, which is extremely common, can have made everything much worse since then.

So basically, from a holistic point of view, we as physicians and therapists are sitting next to a person that has a vulval problem caused by the woman not being able to experience, contain, express, and live her sexuality freely. The idea is that if you are able to help her understand herself and return to normal sexual functioning, all her vulval problem are most likely to disappear.

So only when she is sexually healed, only when the emotional scars on body and soul causing the vulval disorder are healed, will her vulval symptoms disappear. To physicians not acquainted with psychodynamic or holistic-medical theory this might seem farfetched, but let's assure you that it is not. Many of the old physicians, and even Freud, Jung, Reich, Lowen and so many more of the greatest healers and therapists of our time has carried that conviction: The blockage of sexuality is the primary cause of physical and mental disorders, as sexuality is our primary life force. And nowhere is this psychosomatic connection seen more clearly than in the vulva clinic.

The sexological approach to vulval problems is not new of course; it has been used ever since Hippocrates invented the pelvic massage (often called "physical therapy for the pelvic floor") as cure for hysteria and other disorders of the female (36). What the Hippocratic doctors did was very simple: Massaging the genitals and other organs of the pelvis, until the emotional resistance was resolved; the female patient healed emotionally and existentially in this process and developed eventually her mature, genital character (37,38).

In the sexological clinic Wilhelm Reich and other holistic sexologists developed the concept of working against the patient's resistance to perfection (39). To work against the emotional resistance basically means to give her full emotional support and in the same time, for the sake of healing, expose the patient for exactly what she likes the least. Doing this is to use the classical Hippocratic principle for inducing healing called the principle of similarity (40-46). The principle of similarity means that you are behaving caring to the patient and in the same time, but in good intent, evil to her, to helping her re-experience and feel the original difficulty that lead to the repressed feelings that now causes her illness.

To use the principle of similarity in clinical medicine is quite an art; first you must win the full confidence of your patient, and then you must explore in a playful experimenting way what is going on inside of her. Actually you do not only need to be kind and caring, you need to be as supportive as a good parent - that is in essence fact *loving*.

You need to be a generous and loving person to be a great doctor. As very few medical doctors are relaxed, easygoing and loving people; practicing clinical medicine takes a great deal of personal development. As you practice it you will learn as much about yourself as you learn about you patient. This process always takes some assistance from a supervisor or therapist where you can explore yourself, your own feelings, you own sexual reactions etc. Only when you truly know yourself you will be able to follow your patient relaxed and confident into her most shadowish sides.

Most physicians do not like the concept of clinical medicine where the examination is the cure, because they are also touched, provoked and in the end cured by this procedure; holistic medicine might seem really strange for the biomedically trained physician and starting with

the whole person ending with the sick organ is quite the opposite of the normal biomedical procedure in the gynecological clinic where examination, diagnosing from the local findings, and treatment of the specific organ's disorder is the standard practice.

So, to come back to the essence of the situation: You are in the holistic vulva clinic sitting with a patient, a woman, who has a problem with her genitals, because she has a problem with her sexuality, because she was treated without love and acceptance of her body and sexuality in her childhood, or because she had some kind of disaster like a sexual violation or a relationship with self-abuse in her teens. If you support her to the deep insight and self-acceptance that she is missing today, she is most likely to heal her sexuality today and her vulva tomorrow.

The three steps

One of the most powerful, traditional tools in sexology that is relevant in the vulval clinic when the female patient needs to explore and investigate her sexuality and return to normal sexual function of the genitals, is *the educational gynecological sexological examination*, often just called the *sexological examination* (2-6).

To use this tool you need to have a good training in therapeutic touch and a comprehensive understanding of female sexuality and the way it is manifested in and expressed through the female genitals. If you are a man you need to support your female patient on the energetic level meeting her with your masculinity; if you are a woman you need to come from your inner male to give your female patient the appreciation and emotional support she needs to go through this challenging procedure.

We recommend that you are familiar with the literature on sexology and with psychodynamic theory, especially the works of Freud, Jung, Reich, and Searles (47). You also need to be well trained on bodywork; good systems are Reichian therapy, the Rosen Method, bioenergetics (Lowen) (48) and similar mind-body techniques.

We recommend that you complete training as a body worker and also take sufficient training in sexology; the European master of science of complementary, integrative and psychosocial health sciences (EU-MSc-CAM) is recommended if you live in Europe (40-47). On the other hand, if you always have worked with bodies and sexuality, and enjoy a happy sexual life with your partner, and have a high quality of life and a good life in every way yourself, you are most likely also to be a good doctor or sexologist, and then you do not really need more training. Still you might need a supervisor and we strongly recommend that you read the practical ethical recommendations for holistic physicians, therapists and sexologists as they are formulated by the International Society for Holistic Health (49). We also recommend the therapist to be member of a Balint group.

After these introductory remarks on qualifications, let's proceed to the procedure. There are basically three steps in the sexological examination: Recollection of her personal sexual history, visual examination of her genitals together with her, and exploration of vulva/vagina/anus to support her in exploring all the difficult emotions held by the tissues of the pelvic organs.

As most personal history is likely to be repressed as it is emotionally impossible to embrace as a child, just talking sexual history will not do much, but it is a good way to get

introduced, and to open up for confidence and intimacy. Do not expect verbal therapy to do much for your vulva patient; most likely she already had had several years of psychotherapy and often also psychiatric treatment.

During the talk session it is important to confronting her with her own sexuality. It is also important to explain how and why “the body and mind keeps the scores” (50) so that she gets the idea of healing and the goal of being a whole person experiencing a strong sense of coherence (51,52). She must be warned that in the therapy she is likely little by little to remember everything bad that happened to her, and it must be underlined to her that these painful memories related to sexuality are the reason for her vulval and sexual problems, so they must be confronted and integrated.

The second step is the first part of the sexological examination: Visual exploration of her genitals by the physician together with the woman, which is best done using a mirror. This is quite opposite of the traditional gynecological examination, where the woman is passive; in this step the woman must be the active part, touching herself everywhere during the exam and one by one naming all the parts of her genitals and telling you about their function and in the same time about all the difficult feelings this confrontation wakes in her.

This confrontation is the most difficult thing for many women, especially if they have been abused sexually, where just being looked upon by a man will induce a feeling of shame and guilt, often it will be felt like exploitation, abuse and violation. So already here the principle of similarity is active, if you notice. The only thing for you to do is to talk with her about her reactions in all details; ask her if she finds her own reactions relaxed and natural, or tense and neurotic, and if she agrees to the latter, you need to explore this emotional reality together with her.

Talk to her honestly about your feelings and reactions also, even if you got a negative reaction to her genitals, which you are most likely to have as your reaction mirrors the emotions she is holding back in her genitals. If you feel her genitals “dirty”, “disgusting” etc, these feelings are likely to be rational reactions to the energies stored in these tissues. If you are a healthy person your reaction to healthy genitals are most likely to be healthy. So don’t blame yourself for feeling what you feel, just be honest about everything and put your full thrust in the process of healing.

The last, third step is also the most difficult. In this last part of the clinical medical procedure, the explorative therapeutic touch is used as vehicle for patient’s consciousness exploration of self, sexuality, feelings, attitudes and sensations related to the vulva. In this step after verbal consent (we also recommend written consent) the physician will touch his female patients genitals, very much as in the normal pelvic examination, acting with the different purpose of educating the woman and allowing her to investigate and explore herself, her body, sexuality, genitals and related problems.

Therapeutic touch of the genitals has traditionally been done in five different ways, from the smallest to the largest of holistic medical procedures (see table 1). These tools should only be used when conversational therapy including sexual biography (step 1), and genital confrontation and anatomical education (step 2) have failed to solve the problem, and then the smallest tool of these five tools for therapeutic genital touch, that is likely to cure the patient, should be used. (53)

Often the first session or a few more will be only talking, the second general bodywork on the couch, and the third or fourth session will involve the patient’s genitals. The manual therapy often continues for 5-10 sessions over even more, over one year, before the patient’s

problem is solved. If 20 sessions during two years does not help, it is not likely that the holistic medical method works.

Some patients will need a pelvic examination on the first visit for the physician to evaluate if holistic treatment is likely to help the patient sufficiently, or if some bacterial tests, antibiotic etc. drugs, involvement of specialists for anti-cancer surgery and radiation therapy etc. are also likely to be necessary. The ethics of the treatment must be up to standard, and violating this by having sex with the patient will seriously ruin the patients' changes of getting the help she needs from the treatment (54).

Table 1. The five tools for manual sexology (53).

1. Acceptance though touch (55)
2. Vaginal acupressure (37,38)
3. Pelvic Examination (56)
4. Holistic Pelvic Examination (56)
5. Full sexological examination (2-7)

The five tools

You can practice manual sexological therapy for sexual/genital healing on many different levels. The ethical and rational physician will carefully take one step at a time, and only use the resources necessary and the smallest tools that actually will do the job.

Interestingly just a minimal therapeutic touch of the patients pelvis/genitals (mount pubis or upper vulva) is sometimes curative as the therapists intention of acceptance signified through the therapeutic touch often heal the patient who suffers from simple genital pain and discomfort caused by repressed feelings like shame and guilt (55) The next step is intra-vaginal/anal massage/acupressure, which is also the classical procedure of Hippocratic Pelvic massage (36-38) which is identical, or at least very similar, to the explorative part of the common pelvic examination. The only difference consist in the common examination of the vagina, pelvis and other parts of outer and inner genitals, which gives the female patient insight in her emotional issues and energetic blockages in this area. According to one study this procedure alone cures more than half of the patients suffering from a variety of genital problems, sexual dysfunctions and pelvic pain syndromes (38), explaining why it has been such a popular medical procedure for over two millennia.

Unfortunately about one third of patients will not be sufficiently helped by these techniques, no matter how skilful and persistent they are accomplished. In this situation it is recommended to work directly against the patients emotional resistance; this often include direct sexual stimulation, role-plays of sexual abuse etc. and according to some studies the percent of the patient helped can by this be raised to about 80-90% (57,58). Still it is quite remarkable that if only conversational therapy and non-genital bodywork was used like in standard clinical holistic medicine about 40% of sexually dysfunctional patients were still cured (32).

The therapeutic value from therapeutic touch comes from the fact that many patients need physical contact to release and integrate the painful, repressed emotions they are carrying in

their body from early traumas. Only this kind of support can help her attention to return to the body which it had planned to escape for good many years ago. It is really amazing that physical, sexual and genital healing can be done so easily – all it takes is sufficient exploration for the woman to get self-insight. The old Greek saying carved in the rock above the temple entrance in the famous temple of the oracle in Delfi, “Know Thyself” is really the key to healing, and also the core of the classical Hippocratic “character medicine”.

It is important to remember that penetration of the vagina (and anus if necessary for the patients reclaiming of own bodily space) with one or two or more fingers obligatory reminds the patient of penile penetration and sexual abuse, making this procedure extremely emotionally difficult and also extremely therapeutically efficient with sexual abuse victims. The integration of the difficult emotions and thought from traumas from rape and incest should be taken in steps also, never burdening the patient more than can elegantly be handles between sessions. Developmental crises which need intensive 24-7 care happens often with the most severely abused patients, and occasionally in patients who have very strong Oedipus complexes. Patient who have a prior psychiatric history of psychosis might experience a developmental crisis with psychotic elements, but with sufficient support this is not harming the patient (23-26). Sometimes the patients need to work with role-plays and psychodrama to get back into the painful experience of sexual abuse. Most interestingly father’s abandonment (i.e. by leaving the home when the patient was still a little child) or sexual neglect of the patient seems to be even more harmful than sexual abuse.

The pelvic exam is often highly provocative, and is as such a large tool in the manual sexology; the obvious advantage with this tool is that it is expected and generally accepted, so it is so easy to get the patients consent to this, and nobody will question you clinical practice; the disadvantage is that you risk to re-traumatize your patient as 15% of young female patient experience this examination as very painful, and 33% as a negative experience.

Many physicians and sexologists have some reluctance to use the large sexological manual tools and many holistic doctors like Wilhelm Reich have been persecuted for using them by the boulevard press, accused for sexually abusing the patients (39). While this is not likely to be true, at least not in the case of Reich, who was known by his students and patients to have a high level of integrity and ethical consciousness, this is still an important element of our culture, and any sexologist choosing to help his patients with these tools should be aware of the danger of being discredited by bad publicity in these media.

The larger sexological tools are the holistic pelvic examination, which basically are the pelvic exam used therapeutically and finally the sexological examination itself. The later is a great tool, that have proven superior in treating female sexual dysfunctions in many studies; it is a large therapeutic tool as it in its full form includes direct sexual stimulation of the patient’s clitoris and vagina. Many critiques find that as this sometimes makes the female patient have orgasm in the clinic this is too close to having sex with the patient. For this reason this treatment has not been offered in many medical clinics in Denmark, in spite our liberal attitude, but it is normal in CAM clinics. As our own Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine and Sexology in Copenhagen has been a medical clinic we have not offered this treatment to patients and our knowledge of its effect is limited.

But we have studied CAM therapists who have used similar techniques with surprising efficacy, even in the treatment of the most severe chronic anorgasmia-patients (58). So there can be no doubt that the largest of the tools for holistic manual sexology, the full sexological

examination, is highly efficient for the patients that needs this kind of explicit and direct sexological treatment.

Nudity is often helpful, but many patients are too shy to be naked on the couch for the first couple of sessions. The therapist hands are then placed on the stomach in vicinity of the vulva, and the emotions that the intimacy provokes are discussed and released. Gradually the vulva is confronted, and all the emotions processed. It is quite amazing how efficient this little procedure is with most patients. Even without therapeutic touch of the vulva much of the negative emotional charge related to sexuality can often be discharged this way.

The symbolic significance of the vulva

From a psychosomatic perspective the disorders of the vulva are likely to be connected to psychological imbalances and arrested psychosocial development related to the female patient's gender and sexuality. The psychological significance of the vulva is profound; the vagina is her symbolic (energetic) opening to the world, to the male partner, and to the divine (as man represents the spirit while woman represents earth) and also the source of her offspring.

From a depth-psychological perspective the woman is even held by herself in her own womb (59). The significance is so deep that it is hard to imagine and fully comprehend, and therefore the vulval disorders almost always carries hidden symbolic meanings that only reveals themselves after month or even years of analytic, psychodynamic or existential therapy.

On the other hand much is easy to understand immediately, without too deep reflections. Basically the vulva is about presenting her vagina and uterus to a male partner sexually, thus turning him on, seducing him, and in the end getting his semen and children. It is also about simple sexual pleasure of coitus and of receiving the penis in the vagina. This makes orgasmic potency an important issue, since the orgasmic potent woman is multi-orgasmic and reaches orgasm easily. If this is not the case with the actual patient this is a good issue to address verbally in the opening of the sexological therapy.

From a holistic medical point of view the diseases of the vulva cannot be separated from the female patient's sexuality, which means that the vulva cannot be treated separately from the pelvis and the rest of the human body. Her general attitude to her body is also an important issue to address. To heal the vulva a sexual healing is needed. But the holistic perspective takes this longer: To heal sexually, the patient often needs to heal at an existential level. The general quality of life is therefore also an important issue to talk about at the start of the therapy.

So what seems to be a small problem of pruritus of the introitus or pain related to the clitoral stimulation during sex can easily end up being the start of a long journey of psychosexual and human development for the patient.

The physician needs to teach this perspective to the patient, to allow the patient to assume responsibility not only for her genital and sexual health but also for her whole life, physical and mental well-being, relations with partner, friends and family, working life, and global quality of life.

It is so easy to carrying out a great number of traditional medical procedures, but as the many chronic vulva patients indicates these are often unproductive; many patients have been through biological tests like bacteriological analysis, blood tests, tissue samples, they have been examined with ingenious machines like kolposcopes, vulvalgesimeters etc. and they have been given dozens of drugs without curative effects. They have now come to your holistic clinic to get what they never got, which is healing from the disorder, that has tormented them for so many years, including a resolution of the deeper, existential and psychosocial causes of their more obvious vulval symptoms.

To understand the psychosomatic dimensions of health problems related to the vulva, it is necessary to consider the natural biological functions of the vulva. The vulva contains the head of the clitoris, and thus the primary center of the female sexual pleasure. As pleasure is often seen as bad and strongly repressed in childhood, most problems centered around the region of clitoris is about pleasure and repression of pleasure. Below clitoris we have the orifice of the urethra, and Graffenberg showed in his famous study in 1950 (60) that the urethra played a central role in the female orgasm (thus the highly erotically sensitive locus for transvaginal stimulation of the urethra was labeled the "G-spot"). Half of all the urinary tract infections are not really infections but only inflammations and local irritations most likely connected to problems related to the female orgasm.

Below the orifice we find the introitus and vagina; the psychosexual function of the introitus is the acceptance or rejection of the penis; the function of the vagina is first the reception of the penis, secondary the locus of pleasure and vaginal organs, and third the reception of the semen. The function of the labia minor is to protect to clitoris, urinary orifice, and introitus, and presumably more importantly from a psychosomatic perspective to present her vulva to attract a male partner. The labia major have both these functions as well, but seem to have primarily the last mentioned function.

So the female genitals are intensively charged with sexual significance and positive and negative emotions. The emotions are typically shame, disgust and the like. The tissue often carries these emotions in them giving a strong tendency to local disturbance of the biological information regulation growth and immunological activity. The lack of normal immunological resistance is a likely cause of infections and the disturbed information is a likely cause of abnormal growth of the mucosa, dysplasia and cancer. The strong emotional charge carried by the tissue is likely to cause sterile inflammation, primary vulvodynia, and dyspareunia.

So it seems that the psychosexual developmental problems that cause the different sexological problems also are causing the physical health problems of the vulva. In accordance with this it might be rational to work on solving the female patients' sexual and emotional issues instead of only focusing on the physical level of the illness. To do this we recommend the combination of conversational therapy and manual sexological tools listed in table 1 (53). The process of healing will normally take the following four steps: 1) Emotional healing. 2) Sexual healing. 3) Spiritual healing. 4) Existential healing accompanied by 5) The healing of mental and physical disorders including the vulval disorder - that was the reason for the patient visiting the doctor in the first place (see table 2) (61-63).

Table 2. The steps of healing leading to the cure of the vulval disorder.

1. Emotional healing.
2. Sexual healing.
3. Spiritual healing.
4. Existential healing accompanied by
5. Healing of mental and physical disorders

This is quite remarkable that treatment of a vulva-disorder with integrative, holistic sexology often leads not only to the cure of the genital problem itself, but also to the resolution of many other problems related to sexuality and the one-to-one relationship. But also more fundamental personality disorders and even severe mental disorders like depression and schizophrenia has been reported resolved, when sexuality is healed.

Freud and Reich seemed to agree about describing three steps of female sexual maturity: 1) the most immature called infantile autoerotism, 2) the immature sexuality only including the patient herself often called the masturbatory or clitoral state, and finally 3) the mature, genital sexual state called the vaginal state (8,39).

It is not difficult at all to identify the level of sexual maturity when you discuss these steps with your patient. If the patient is able to obtain multiple full vaginal orgasms she is likely to be sexually mature; if she can get clitoral orgasm when she masturbates or stimulated, but not a vaginal orgasm during intercourse she is likely to be at the second stage; and if she cannot make use of her sexual energies at all, she is likely to be in the state of infantile autoerotism.

Sense of coherence

The most important concept in relation to clinical medicine and clinical holistic medicine is the concept of experienced sense of coherence. This experience of being an integral part of the world is the existential core dimension that must be improved to induce existential healing or salutogenesis according to Antonovsky (51,52).

The process of healing (64) has been neglected in contemporary biomedicine, and we need to go back to the Hippocratic roots of medicine to understand healing. The patients become well again, claimed Hippocrates and his students, when the patient once again feels one with the universe (or “loved by God” in Christian terminology). In the natural and realized state of being man is able to step into character and use all talents to be of value to the surrounding world. Because of this fundamental idea of self-realization in medicine the original European holistic medicine has been called character-medicine. Hippocrates and his students knew that health come from feeling wonderful, being your natural, free and happy self. For over two millennia this has been the answer to the prayers of cure, good health, and lasting good fortune.

Character, Wilhelm Reich said, is fundamentally about gender and sexuality; and only if you integrate you sexuality into your personal character can you be you true self. Reich therefore called the mature human character for the genital character of the patient. It is quite interesting that the patients approaching the clinic with problems related to the vulva often to

an extreme degree have avoided integrating the genital sexuality into their personal character. It is the rule more that the exception that the female patient with vulvodynia, lichen planus or recidivate urine tract infections are neurotically orderly, hygienic, nice to everybody and obsessed by pleasing other people, instead of being selfish, autonomous, independent, self-confident, and focused on the talents and gifts that makes her an exceptionally valuable and alive person, who deserves the greatest of joys and pleasures humanly obtainable.

Often severe personality disorders go hand in hand with severe sexual and genital problems as already Freud, Jung and Reich noticed. If you as a physician realize that there might be a simple causal link between the immature, sexually irresponsible attitudes and behaviors of your vulva patient, you will feel the obligation to turn the patient's attention towards this hidden order. If you are not trained in psychoanalysis or depth psychology, and if you only have a little training in sexology, you might in the beginning feel it quite difficult to do so.

Healing the disorders of the vulva

The diseases of the vulva can be categories into sexual and non-sexual problems as listed in table 3. In most cases the holistic clinic addresses the chronic disorders and diseases that remain after an unsuccessful treatment by the patient's own physician or gynecologist. In general holistic medicine is effective in pain (NNT=1-2), discomfort, low self acceptance (NNT=1-2), and for all disorder where the biological order (i.e. tissues, organ structure, body form) is disturbed (NNT=2-3), or immune function is to low (recidivate or treatment resistance infections) (NNT=2). Problems caused by sexual traumas like rape is almost also successfully treated with holistic mind body medicine (CHM) (NNT=1). In general sexual dysfunctions and psychosexual developmental disturbances are treatable (NNT=1-2).

The chronic or recidivate vulvo-vaginal inflammations and infections that is treatable with holistic methods, although the NNT for successful healing is not yet know, includes a number of diseases: Lichen sclerosus, papillomatosis, seborrhoeic eczema, allergic eczema, irritant eczema, Lichen simplex chronicus, vulvar psoriasis, Lichen planus, vestibullitis, ulcerating and blistering disorder, and erythema multiforme. Patients suffering from fungal and viral infections, like *Candida albicans*, erosive vulval candidiasis, tinea cruris, genital herpes simplex, recurrent varicella zoster virus, *Moluscum contagiosum*, genital warts and human papiloma infection, and *Staphylococcus* infection (bacterial impetigo), all of which can be rather resistant to pharmacological treatment often heals or improves when immunological resistance is increased though improvement of patient quality of life in general - and genital self acceptance specifically.

Recidivant crab lice (*Phthirus pubis*) and scabies (*Sarcoptes scabiei*) often takes a life style improvement to prevent, as do multiple reinfections with gonorrhoea, syphilis, vulval chancroid, bacterial vaginosis, *Trichomonas vaginalis*.

A number of degenerative and atrophic disorders of the vulva (genital aphthae, Behchet's disease, necrolytic migratory erythema, Crohn's disease of the vulva, Bollous pemphigoid, pemphigus vulgaris, pemphigus vegetans, vulval scarring from citatrical pemphigoid, Epilation folliculitis, apocrine acne, idradenitis suppurativa, idiopathic labial oedema) have no

pharmaceutical treatment, but holistic intervention is applicable. Again, the NNT numbers for the treatments of these diseases are not known.

Table 3. The most important non-sexual and sexual health issues related to the vulva.

“Non-sexological” diseases
Vulval and vaginal infections (STDs and non-STDs)
Skin problems such as lichen sclerosus, lichen planus, and lichen simplex chronicus and other problems related to the mucosa
Vulvovaginitis (VVS) is inflammation or infection of the vulva and vagina.
Chronic burning, pain, and irritation (including pruritus)
Vulvodynia (chronic vulvar pain, most often described as a burning discomfort, whose specific medical cause cannot be found).
Precancers (dysplasia/carcinoma in situ)
Cancers, metastatic cancers
Pelvic/perineal/perianal pain syndromes
Sterile (50%) and non-sterile (50%) urinary tract inflammations
PMS, amenorrhea
Sexological dysfunctions
Desire problems including lubrication problems
Excitement problems
Orgasm problems
Vaginismus
Dyspareunia
Sexual pain (from negative emotions, tensions)
Sexual aversion syndrome
Psychosexual developmental disturbances (symptomatic eating disorders like bulimia and anoxia nervosa, self-esteem problems, lack of genital self esteem etc.)
Problems after sexual traumas like rape or incest
Female ritual circumcision
Problems related to the trauma
Problems related to self worth and self acceptance
Problems related to sexual pleasure
Holistic treatment of cosmetic problems
Problems of the breast – acceptance, size, shape
Problems of the vulva/labia – acceptance, size, shape
Problems of body shape and sex character

Holistic treatment of benign gynecological tumors like: Acrochordia (skin tags), venous varicosities, keratinous cysts, mucous cysts, papillary hidradenoma, genital syringomata, giant venous ectasia, maematocolpus, endometrioma, benign melanocytic lesions, lentigo simplex, vitiligo, Idiopathic aquired pigmentation of Laugier, are often the only alternative to surgery of the vulva, which might be rather traumatic and reduce future sexual functioning.

Holistic treatment of malign gynecological tumors, like Intra-epithelial neoplasia (Bowenoid papulosis, Bowen's disease) malignant diseases like squamous cell carcinoma, vulval lymphangiectasia, Verrucous carcinoma of Buschke-Löwenstein, Paget's disease of the vulva (intra-epidermal adenocarcinoma), Langerhans' cell histiocytosis, Basal cell carcinoma, malign melanoma is always a good supplement to biomedical treatment. When there is no documented success with chemotherapy or surgery, holistic treatment might offer some comfort in a palliative intention, and might even induce spontaneous remission of cancer in the best case, as have been seen with other kinds of cancers (10-16).

Holistic treatment of female ritual circumcision focuses on healing the trauma, and rehabilitating to self worth and self acceptance, and finally recovering the ability to sexual pleasure. Contrary to the normal belief most circumcised females can still have a normal sexual life with vaginal orgasms, in their psychological problems are solved.

Holistic treatment of cosmetic problems addresses the surprisingly frequent subjective problems related to the breasts – accepting their size, shape and other qualities – and genitals, especially the vulva. The labia minora consider a big problem for many women you cannot accept their size, shape, feel etc. Such problems are almost always efficiently solved in the holistic vulva clinic. Other problems easy to address in holistic mind body therapy are problems related to lack of acceptance of body shape and sex character in general.

Holistic treatment of low genital self esteem addresses the problems related to lack of genital self-esteem and self confidence and fear to express own sexual character due to low self-worth, shyness, repression by parents etc.

From a holistic, psychosomatic perspective, health problems of the vulva are as a rule always related to the female patient's sexuality. This fact is often quite inconvenient for both the patient and her GP. Sexuality is still a taboo and many patients do not discuss this subject easily even with their doctor. It is much more hygienic and nice, if a vulva problem just could stay a medical problem; if it turns into a problem of the patients' psychosexual development it means that the female patient must do some serious homework or even therapy related to personal development to solve her health issue.

The journey of the patient

It is quite an interesting journey to follow the female patient as she grows sexually. To grow into the mature woman all she needs to do is to get rid of the repression of her sexuality. There are two major elements here: the negative feelings/emotions, and the mental negative judgment. So she needs to shift into a sex-positive mental attitude, and she needs to confront and integrate all the difficult emotions of shame, not being good enough, being ugly, being unwanted, not being attractive, being disgusting etc.

As mentioned about major tools there is a need to take the patient through her sexual history, asking her to write her sexual biography and using this as basis for further investigative talks. Often this is not enough; the genitals and the painful emotions related to every part of them needs to be confronted. After the negative emotions have been confronted it is normal that the positive sexual feelings appears, and when this happens you know that you have done a good job clearing your patient of the layers of emotions that repressed her sexuality. Unfortunately there are many layers of this process, and when she has freed one

layer of her sexuality her whole personality starts to reorganize, making it possible to access the next layer in the next session. So do not think that everything is coming back, when the problems are getting worse; it is just worse problems appearing from a deeper layer.

After 5 or 10 sessions you will often reach a layer of spiritual depths; she will start to talk about her love life and personal relations, and you can now start the process called spiritual healing, where she can start exploring new depths of her love and meet soul to soul at a deeper level with the people in her life. After 5 or 10 more sessions she will often realize that she has talents and characters that has now been used, and when she starts being the talented, gifted and loving, generous persons she was meant to be you have reached the existential level. When she systematically uses herself to be of value to everybody in her life, she will also notice a huge transformation of her attitudes and behaviors in the sexual domain and normally, this is the time where the vulvodynia, lichen planus etc disappears. It is quite amazing to follow this human transformation, from neurotic, sexually afraid, concerned about her bad health and genital problems, into the vital, happy, self-confident, generous and loving person.

You as the holistic physician have become the catalyst for the process that we often call *adult human metamorphosis*, because it is so similar to a caterpillar transforming itself to a butterfly. It is not difficult at all to help people grow. The trick is to understand emotional healing. As soon as you do that, and start helping your patient integrate old negative emotions and change old negative attitudes, the healing journey has begun. Do not think that you need to be therapist or psychoanalyst to do this. Just be a loving person, using yourself as the tool, and be of service to your patient with everything you got.

Discussion

The use of the manual sexological tools has to be preceded by sufficient conversation therapy and careful, ethical considerations and also explicit consent after thorough explanation of the full procedure. To avoid setting the patient back physicians have for millennia accepted the Hippocratic ethics of not having sex with the patient, and we strongly recommend the sexologist to respect and comply with this ethic rule also. The problem here is really how we define “sex”. If genital stimulation is sex, then the sexological examination is sex. The wise thing is to make the definitions practical; if we define sex as coitus and oral-genital contact, we have solved the problem, but this is hardly correct. Sexuality is everywhere, and we can circulate sexual energy even without physical contact, as anybody who has flirted will know.

So the debate about sexual ethics should be reasonable; the contact between a female patient with a vulva disorder and her physician should not be seen as sexual, even if the physician manipulate her genitals and even if she feels pleasure from this manipulation. Only if we can allow the healing touch also to be pleasurable, can we use manual sexological procedures, which in the beginning will be only painful and difficult; the pleasure is the sign of the problems being solved. Every physician should put up his own borders and stick to the tools that he or she finds ethical and appropriate. The only important issue is the ethical rules of this kind of therapy that must be kept in mind at all times and written consent paramount.

To be effective in the vulva clinic as a physician, therapist, gynecologist, or sexologist we suggest that you forget all your traditional school-medicine and start being a human being sitting there with another human being that desperately needs your help and assistance to get self-insight and through this the physical, mental, existential and sexual healing offered by clinical medicine. A vulval disorder is in many aspects a severe handicap. It is a hindrance for a sexual relationship, a normal partnership, a high bodily and genital self-esteem, a good self-confidence, and a high quality of life. You will also often realize that your patient has been a chronic vulva patient for 5, 10 or 20 years, so if she is to get help at all she will most likely get it from you.

You will realize that you can only help her if you dare to involve yourself as a whole person and use yourself as a whole person as the tool for healing – the doctor is the tool (49). You might even experience the danger for your ego of stepping down from the traditional expert-role, to be just another human being helping and giving loving care and acceptance to another human being. Vulval disorders often need an integrative approach where medicine, gynecology, sexology and psychology all are important subjects needed to help your patient. Interestingly this becomes very simple in the concept of clinical medicine, where the physician and the patient in common explore the problem, confronting all connected issues like feelings and emotions, physical body and the sexual organs, the patient's sexuality and psychosexual development and in the end give the patient the self-insight needed for healing.

There are about 50 randomized scientific studies related to manual therapy and holistic sexological treatments for the clinical condition related to the vulva and pelvis, and the vast majority of these indicate that holistic treatment is efficient, as fifty to ninety percent (NNT=1-2) of all such patients normally are cured (1-7,32,38,65). As there are no known significant side effects of the holistic sexological treatments (NNH=64,000 for brief reactive psychosis (23-26)), so we believe holistic medicine and sexology are safe for the patients.

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Ethics and Holistic Healthcare Practice

The chapter aims to contribute to integrated discussion of ethics in holistic healthcare. Noting key aspects of the literature on ethics in holistic healthcare we then focus on describing the working ethical statement for holistic healthcare practitioners produced for the International Society of Holistic Health (ISHH). Ethical principles, aims of holistic practice, and ethical guidelines are presented. The relationship of ethics to quality of care is outlined. We conclude that many of the ethical principles and guidelines, as well as expectations of quality and safety, that apply to mainstream healthcare, also apply to holistic practitioners. However, the multidisciplinary contexts of whole-of-patient healthcare present new challenges of application of these familiar ethical understandings.

Introduction

Each patient carries with him his own doctor... They come to us without knowing this. We do our best when we give the doctor within each patient a chance to do its work.
Albert Schweitzer (1875-1965)

The aim is to support, nourish and remove obstacles for nature's inherent health-promoting and healing forces. Illness can be looked upon as a reaction to conditions we have placed ourselves in. Conditions inappropriate for maintaining health and well-being.
Florence Nightingale (1820-1910)

The development of whole-of-patient healthcare has brought with it new discussions about the ethical obligations of practitioners delivering holistic healthcare (1). Though complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) treatments are being used in many western countries by up to half the population, but there has not been enough dialogue between mainstream health practitioners and CAM practitioners, about many issues of care delivery, including ethics (2,3). Ethical issues for physicians and allied health providers, who practice CAM are a related but quite distinct area, because these practitioners have been medically trained and operate in the legal and regulatory frameworks of mainstream medicine and health. Ethical issues for this group—the focus of this paper—have not been well explored in the published literature.

However, we know that holistic healthcare involves a different conceptualisation of healing that, through its engagement with the whole patient (mind-body-spirit), creates quite different physician-patient relationships. These in turn raise new ethical considerations to do with vulnerabilities, ethical self awareness and trust (4). We also know that new treatments, such as touch therapy, whether integrated with mainstream approaches or not, also present new ethical considerations (5).

Such ethical issues have been of interest to the International Society of Holistic Health (ISHH). This chapter, which was developed in a collaboration between holistic practitioners and researchers, offers information, content and implications of the ISHH guidelines. It aims to be useful to those wanting to reflect further on ethical practices in holistic healthcare. In a context where much modern medical and health practice is about integrative multidisciplinary approaches and inter-professional teams (6), and medical, nursing and allied health education increasingly engages with notions of what are ethical virtues (7), such matters are of interest to healthcare practitioners and educators generally. Ethics for health professionals has increasingly been conceptualised as being about an integrated set of knowledge, skills, and attributes such that the literature speaks of ethics as being about personhood and the evolution of the whole practitioner (8). This chapter aims to contribute to this kind of integrated discussion of modern ethical healthcare.

Definitions and importance of ethics

Ethics are reflections and guidelines on how to act, while morals describe how we act. Ethics can be based on duty, on rights, on virtues, on consequence, on usefulness or on relations (9). The fundamental premise for all ethics is that every human being is equally valuable and demands the same respect and consideration. The main role of ethical guidelines is to protect those who cannot fully defend themselves and who cannot voice their demands or stand up for their rights.

Ethical principles and guidelines are important, because they help encourage reflections on how to act. Unless human behaviour is audited against well-theorised and developed ethical statements, it is difficult for practice to be consistently ethical. Holistic healthcare practice involves a proactive approach to multidisciplinary treatments, often involving diverse teams of professionals. This can create new pressures and ethical decision-making situations for practitioners. Accordingly, the ‘whole-of-patient’ focus of holistic practice requires careful development of authentic and useful guidelines for practices that are not narrowly bio-medical.

Vision and aims

The International Society of Holistic Health (ISHH) is comprised of physicians, allied health professionals, and researchers, who have a commitment to developing high quality, whole-of-patient, integrative healthcare. The association has members across the world, in the Middle East, Europe, America, Asia, Australia, and elsewhere. This international group have been interested in and published on contemporary developments in healthcare that reflect our

emphasis on multidisciplinary, holistic, innovative—and above all effective and ethical—care for patients. We undertake collaborative international research on healthcare practices that integrate bio-medical and other approaches to achieve quality, patient-centered care. We also organise conferences that are an international meeting place of all those interested in advancing practices in holistic healthcare. The aims of the ISHH are:

- To promote holistic health awareness among health care providers, organisations and the general public
- To foster and stimulate the highest quality of health care provision in all communities.

Holistic health care is defined as the art and science of healing the whole person—body, mind and spirit, by prevention and treatment—to promote optimal health. The ISHH believes that health is a holistic concept, because it is impossible to be healthy without taking into account the physical, mental, social, environmental, and spiritual aspects of life. The fields of knowledge and experience that can inform this area are therefore vast. Accordingly, the ethical decision-making situations that can arise in holistic practice are many and varied. Yet we believe they can be guided by simple universal principles that can be agreed-upon by those in many cultures and countries.

The ethical principles and guidelines endorsed by ISHH aim to help us fulfill another aspect of our vision: to build bridges between the various factions of medicine and healthcare providers that shares a goal in creating high quality holistic healthcare services. This emphasis upon building bridges across different areas of practice, services, cultures, and countries is why our emphasis is on simplicity and clarity of ethical statements.

Key ethical principles for holistic practice

Two key principles underline high quality holistic healthcare practices:

- 1) Do to others as you want to be done by
- 2) Ask if it would be okay if everybody acted the way you plan to act.

The first principle is common to many world religions. It requires the practitioner to imagine being the patient and to ask yourself if the behaviour would be desirable if you were on its receiving end. The second principle comes from Kant's writings. Kant suggests that the basis for immorality is to make an exemption for oneself (10). This principle invites you as practitioner to ask yourself if your behaviour would be good for society if it were universally adopted.

Aims of holistic practice

The aims of holistic practice are fourfold:

- 1) Heal, help, and comfort the patient

- 2) Support and strengthen the internal healing forces of each person
- 3) Treat the person as a whole (bio-psycho-social-spiritual being)
- 4) Focus on prevention when possible.

The first aim positions the health practitioner as a holistic helper of those experiencing illness and related hardships. The second aim focuses the attention of holistic healthcare on developing the capacities of healing of the patient, rather than acting upon the patient. The third aim emphasises the importance of whole-of-patient care and the interrelatedness of the different dimensions of being in any consideration of how best to meet the patient's needs. The fourth aim emphasises the value of prevention, positioning holistic healthcare as being about proactive approaches to health: education for health, healthy behaviours, and so on. Together these aims suggest quite different relationships between the patient and practitioner than are suggested by either traditional bio-medical models or more modern corporate models of healthcare. In the holistic model the practitioner focuses on empowering the patient and delivers services that cannot be so easily commoditised—it is difficult to see how empathy as a basis for giving comfort, or an engagement with the spiritual dimensions of the patient as part of whole-of-patient approaches, could ever be authentically priced on the healthcare marketplace.

If the holistic practitioner takes on different roles and responsibilities from those found in bio-medical traditions of care, or new corporate models of care, it follows that there will be ethical considerations in holistic care that are related, but not exactly the same, as those found in these two other models of healthcare. In developing ethical practices the holistic practitioner will want to be aware that holistic practice may involve applying universal ethical principles to new practice contexts. Recognising how a universal ethical principle—such as that treatment be evidence-based—is relevant to new practice contexts is an important part of developing deeper ethical awareness. This is a truism of learning generally: a generic knowledge or skill can only be internalised and reproduced in daily practice when it has been applied to enough diverse contexts to make it deeply understood.

Ethical guidelines

- 1) The values and laws on which the practitioner should build holistic practices are:
 - 1.1 compassion
 - 1.2 mutual trust
 - 1.3 respect for the patient's integrity
 - 1.4 human rights
 - 1.5 truth and justice to the patient and society
 - 1.6 national laws
 - 1.7 informed consent
 - 1.8 confidentiality.
 - In delivering healthcare, the practitioner should:
 - 2.1 give information regarding the purpose, content, duration, cost of treatment and complaint rules

- 2.2 build the practice on evidence
- 2.3 use methods that are validated
- 2.4 use methods one can master
- 2.5 use methods that do not harm
- 2.6 place concern for the patient as paramount when trying out methods
- 2.7 keep records (10 years) that patients can read
- 2.8 conduct research, develop and test new methods of diagnosis and treatment to high standards of quality research practice
- 2.9 monitor and evaluate results
- 2.9 develop and improve one's practice
- 2.10 use one's resources fairly
- 2.11 where possible, develop the tool (oneself).

2) The practitioner's relationship to colleagues should:

- 3.1 be respectful
- 3.2 involve raising misconduct by other practitioners directly with them in a caring way; secondly with authorities
- 3.3 not express criticism of colleagues in front of patients
- 3.4 be transparent, sharing, and open, assuming informed consent in patient matters
- 3.5 not involve inappropriate interference in, or prevention of, treatment given by others.

3) In relations with patients, the practitioner must not:

- 4.1 disrespect the patient's right to choose (treatment, life or death)
- 4.2 assist actively in ending life
- 4.3 exploit or manipulate the patient economically, philosophically, religiously, sexually or in any other way (the consent of the patient does not free the practitioner from this duty)
- 4.4 engage in a sexual relationship with the patient
- 4.5 promise to cure the patient, or hinder the patient receiving help from others.

The first part of the guidelines focuses on broad values and laws that should govern holistic practice. The emphasis upon compassion suggests the way in which holistic care involves practitioner empathy for the patient, which is critical to an engagement with the whole patient. The second part of the guidelines emphasises that holistic practice is accountable, evidence-based, and rigorously developed. The third part of the guidelines emphasises high standards in collegial interactions in ways that serve the interests of rigorous and accountable healthcare services. The last and fourth part of the guidelines emphasise what the practitioner should not do in interactions with patients, consistent with other parts of the guidelines. Considered as a whole, these guidelines suggest that if holistic practice involves

the integration of mainstream approaches and CAM to deliver whole-of-patient healthcare, such healthcare is not exempt from the high standards of rigour, accountability, transparency, and duty of care expected of practitioners everywhere. For example, when tailoring treatments from different disciplines to meet complex healthcare needs, the practitioner must be able to point at the evidence that informs decision-making about the appropriate treatments.

Ethics and quality of care

Ethical healthcare practices and quality healthcare practices are related but different aspects of healthcare delivery. The personal ethics of the practitioner set the pre-conditions for quality healthcare at the micro-level of provider and patient; the quality of the care systems sets the macro pre-conditions for provider-patient interactions. Provider practices that are ethical are also practices that aim for high quality. Holistic healthcare should aim to deliver services with the same quality aims as those set by the World Health Organisation (WHO), which have also been adopted by many countries in the world.

Conclusions

In contrast to some representations of alternative therapeutic approaches as not involving, for example, a reliance on evidence-based approaches (11), the foregoing suggests that many of the principles and guidelines that apply to mainstream medicine apply to holistic healthcare. Expectations of quality and safety also apply.

At the same time, in this paper, we do not give a simple ‘yes’ or ‘no’ answer to the question of whether ethical frameworks that apply to narrow bio-medical healthcare approaches apply to holistic healthcare. The health ethics literature suggests that one error to avoid in developing ethical statements is the assumption that frameworks developed for one health context can be simply applied to another (12). We take the view that holistic healthcare involves many common ethical principles and guidelines that can find new challenges of application in the multidisciplinary contexts of whole-of-patient care.

Of course, most people from vastly different contexts of care can agree upon a set of common principles and guidelines if they are broad enough. The real challenges of obtaining real, *in-practice* agreement on ethics comes when practitioners need to make sound decisions about a familiar principle in an unfamiliar context. The meaning of ethics in holistic practice requires an effort of understanding precisely because holistic care opens up new contexts for the application of familiar ethical principles and guidelines. Thus, the restatement of familiar ethical principles and guidelines in ways that are nuanced to the contexts of holistic healthcare is important to developing understandings of how the former applies to the new contexts. This is the task that ISHH is engaged in as it develops these working principles and guidelines. Our work challenges healthcare educators to design undergraduate and continuing professional development courses that provide learners with opportunities to understand how familiar ethics principles and guidelines apply across diverse healthcare contexts.

We believe that our work also extends a special challenge to holistic healthcare providers who want to address all aspects of the patient's life: to apply the ethical standards to all aspects of one's own life. Only then will we truly be able to live and work as we preach. And only then will we be able to touch the spirit, mind, and body of the patient in a way that allows healing to take place.

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Lesson to Learn about the Pelvic Examination and its Sexually Suppressive Procedure

It is so easy to see the errors of the past and so impossible to see the errors of today. But we believe that it is more important for our patients to reflect on our methods of today than to judge the past. As is often said: “First do no harm”. We have been wondering why so many young people have severe problem in their love and sex life, not being able to avoid sexually transmitted diseases and why so many people have sexual problems. About one in ten young adult women suffers from vulvodynia, a shameful “new” disease that only half the patients bring to their physician. Around every third woman seems to have a serious sexual problem and as every woman have a physician, it seems that we are generally not very good at helping. But it may be even worse. How come that the standard gynecological procedures we use as physicians in the every-day clinical practice, like the pelvic examination, are actually repressing the sexuality of the woman?

Introduction

In “Lessons from medicine’s shameful past”(1) the editor focused on the medical profession’s repression of homosexuality only a few decades ago (2,3), using the aggressive and destructive methods so strongly criticized by the highly actual Illich (4). It is so easy to see the errors of the past and so impossible to see the errors of today. But we believe that it is more important for our patients to reflect on our methods of today than to judge the past. As is often said: “First do no harm”. We have been wondering why so many young people have severe problem in their love and sex life, not being able to avoid sexually transmitted diseases and why so many people have sexual problems. About one in ten young adult women suffers from vulvodynia, a shameful “new” disease that only half the patients bring to their physician (5). Around every third woman seems to have sexual problems of some kind (6), and as every woman have a physician, it seems that we are generally not very good at helping. But it may be even worse. How come that the standard gynecological procedures we use as physicians in

the every-day clinical practice, like the pelvic examination, are actually repressing the sexuality of the woman? Let us take a critical look.

Is the pelvic examination a harmful and sexually suppressive procedure?

The pelvic examination is a common examination performed in general practice or by the gynecologist. Whenever a woman complains of pain in the abdomen, the general practitioner/gynecologist is in principle obliged to carry out a pelvic examination in order to rule out ectopic pregnancy, acute inflammation of the lower abdomen or something else that can seriously affect the patient. The patient is examined in the traditionally gynecological position with her legs in stirrups, after which the physician can inspect, examine, explore and take samples.

When we speak to women about their experiences in this situation, a surprisingly large number of women report that they have felt humiliated and devaluated by the procedure that is normally followed. They often find it insulting to be put in positions in which their reproductive organs are exposed, without being in any way able to look after themselves. They often feel incapable of protecting themselves against an examination that may be insensitive, rushed and not leave space for them as human beings, the sole intention being to perform a physical procedure as efficiently as possible.

It is worrisome that the numerous physicians and gynecologists around the world subject women to examinations, which may be a stressful and perhaps even traumatic experience. Part of the problem is obviously due to shortage of time, but another important part of the problem appears to be due to misunderstood respect for the woman's sexual boundaries, which means that the physician feels more secure in reducing the female patient to a pure object of examination. It is considerably easier to examine a set of organs than to relate to a living person, with feelings of shame and desire and a sexuality that can threaten to end the career of the physician, if he so much as relates to it.

Mere suspicion that the physician may assault the woman, who is placed in what is a very vulnerable position can cause the physician to entrench himself behind this clinical facade in a way that is in itself dehumanising. Instead of being present, the physician almost tries to avoid being there, and becomes an excuse for himself. Paradoxically, this gives rise to another type of violation – being rummaged around in the woman's most delicate parts, as though one was something rather like a car engine. Pushed to its extreme, it is as though the medical profession has decided once and for all that it is difficult to show human respect and care in the situation, where the patient's reproductive organs are exposed. Instead, it is necessary to make do with showing the craftsman's respect that a skilled clockmaker displays with a sophisticated timepiece. We have ourselves faced ethical problems in putting women or young girls, who have previously been subjected to sexual assault, through the general examination procedure, because this procedure can bring back memories of assault. Nor is it possible to solve a problem of that kind by simply passing the buck on to the gynecologist, who although he has more experience generally has far less knowledge of the patient. One of the emotionally most difficult aspects of the pelvic examination is the physical touch itself, which the gynecologist tries to make less dangerous by using rubber gloves and instruments.

Due to a strict professionalism with often a brusque silence (because the physician is afraid of saying the wrong thing) the women can sometimes be reminded of up-tightness, bad sexual experiences with insensitive lovers, or even insulting sexual touches, rough partners, attempted rape or in the worst case assault in childhood.

Where sexually harmless situations are concerned, the physician generally does not have any objection to calming the patient through touch, for example by putting his hand on the arm of a woman who is upset. This often causes difficulties in the gynecological context, because if the situation is misunderstood by the woman, the entire medical career of the physician can be finished in an afternoon. It is important that both the patient and the physician realize that instead of avoiding any human touch in connection with a pelvic examination, the physical touch can and must also be an entirely natural constituent element here too. As in any other emotionally difficult situation, supporting physical touch may help the woman to feel acceptance and support, and in that way promote her sense of security in the situation and not least her confidence in the physician and the treatment.

Many male medical students at first have serious problems with the pelvic examination (as an example one student became impotent for months, after spending a period of time in a gynecology department). We also often encounter patients, who clearly hated the pelvic examination, because it reminded them of unpleasant things from their past. There we must consider whether it might not be possible to turn the unavoidable touching of the woman around, so that it becomes not an evil that has to be minimized, but a therapeutic resource that can be drawn on or in other words instead of masking the touch using it to express respect for and care of the woman in the examination situation.

The holistic pelvic examination

When there is an actual sexual trauma the situation is even more complex. The purpose is the healing of the patient, to re-establish the natural relationship with the body, sexuality and reproductive organs also in patients with to acknowledged or suspected sexual violations. For integration of presumed traumas following incest and sexual assaults it is recommended to carry out a slow pelvic examination, based on the holistic principles of holding and processing. On top of the normal examination in such cases all the legal aspects according to the law in the specific country must also be followed.

Due to the fact that we had a patient with a need for a considerate procedure of this type, we arranged for a very thorough, careful and well- planned procedure, which specifically tried to avoid turning the patient into an object and instead to treat the woman as a woman. The idea was to make the pelvic examination slow – very slow, in fact, so slow that the physician could be sure that the patient was entirely there at all stages of the examination, indeed in everything what was done with her. We also went through the procedure with the nurse, who approved it. We found, to our surprise, that the pelvic examination was in fact healing and therapeutic for the patient, when it was performed in this slow and attentive way. We have discovered that it was not unpleasant (as a male physician) to be present in the examination situation. The new and more relaxed attitude and new acceptance of this unavoidable physical touching of the woman's reproductive organs led to a surprising change in the patient's experience of the examination.

With this new approach women started to say that it was nowhere near as bad as it used to be. In contrast to what might have been imagined, the empathic and physically present form of examination also becomes less sexually provocative for the physician than the normal, rapid gynecological procedure. Since that time we have allowed ourselves an extra amount of time, when we have had female patients with sexual problems, who perhaps have been subjected to sexual assault – the truth of which, however, it is never possible to know for sure - but who have been very vulnerable, sensitive and perhaps even full of shame and self-condemnatory in relation to their sex, reproductive organs and sexuality.

If sexual assault is suspected, we use the slow procedure with preparation of the patient, where she is thoroughly informed about it beforehand, so that we can be sure of her complete acceptance and assistance throughout the procedure.

The purpose is re-establishment of the natural relationship with the body, sexuality and reproductive organs in the patient, who has problems due to acknowledged or suspected sexual violations.

Sexual violations are often forcibly repressed. It appears that the tissues that are touched during the violation often bear the trauma. It is characteristic of these patients that their love lives are often problematic and do not provide the necessary support to heal the old wounds in the soul, and therapy is therefore indicated. When this is concerned with the reproductive organs, it poses particular difficulties, as the therapy can easily be experienced as a repetition of the original violation, not least due to the risk of projection and transference. There is therefore a need for a procedure that is familiar and safe for the patient, but it involves therapeutic touching of sexual organs over and beyond what is standard medical practice. We establish the following procedure, with which the patient is familiarized and accepts, before the treatment is initiated. The procedure is carried out with a nurse and ample time allocated (three hours). The procedure includes:

- Conversation about the present condition - relationship to body, sexuality and reproductive organs, including investigation of problems in sex life such as pain and painful memories are recapitulated.
- Conversation about the concept of boundaries, so that the patient understands fully where her own sexual boundaries are in order that the examination is not experienced as an assault.
- Conversation about how the assault can be projected into the present. How do the patient and therapist act, if the patient finds the therapy a violation? It is important to say so immediately, if something feels unpleasant or wrong.
- The establishment of the therapeutic room as a safe place.
- Stopping exercise - touching of the body and reproductive organs on the outside of the clothes, where the patient says stop and the hands are removed at once.
- Contact: Physical touching of the body – from the head down to the stomach, pelvis and lower abdomen, slowly and in suitable steps, so that the patient is present and secure throughout.
- Visualization of extended pelvic examination, where the therapist runs through the steps of the examination thoroughly, so the patient can imagine them before they are due to happen.

- Touching on the outside of the clothes with repetition of the “Stop” procedure if necessary.
- Pelvic examination paying special attention to traumatized (damaged/scarred/blocked) areas.
- Feel, acknowledge and let go of the traumatized areas. If there are areas, that appear blocked or “the patient not present”, has pains or other discomfort, we then give special attention with regard to their integration. This is not fundamentally different for example from the treatment of growing pains in children by touching the areas that are sore, for example around the knee. If the sick areas are attended, they are also usually healed.
- Post-processing of emotions and traumas. The work with blocked places in the body often release painful gestalts from childhood and adolescence, which must be talked through, in the same way that the patient’s painful feelings must be supported and accommodated by both physician and patient.
- Healing is only possible, when negative decisions are found and dropped. The patient has to come back to the present, let go of negative sentences or ideas and plan for further positive progress.
- These points above are printed out, signed and approved by the patient as a formal contract.

So we do not just need attention, respect and care – and acknowledgement of our soul – we also need something bodily, physical and down-to-earth, namely acceptance of our sex. When it is possible as a physician to meet the patient with respect and within boundaries to recognize her as a woman, then we can help her and give her our full acceptance. Many problems related to sexuality then appear to decrease, as they are probably due to self-condemnation and lack of sexual self- acceptance.

Slow pelvic examination with a therapeutic element

It is important to notice that we introduced a slow pelvic examination with a therapeutic element, relevant for a wide range of psychosomatic disturbances related to gender and sexuality, from infertility to gynecological and sexual psychosomatic problems and the long-term consequences of child sexual abuse. On one hand this opens up for a clinical practice with many beneficial and healing qualities for the patient, because it allows a much closer and more intimate relationship between the patient and the physician that has been the traditional practice, but on the other hand this procedure has several disadvantages.

In many cultures this cannot be practiced due to cultural or religious reasons and the sexual taboo being so strong, that the female will experience the process as overwhelming or even insulting. In the United States it might be practically impossible to follow our recommendation in many cases, because of the time consumption, economics and reimbursement issues of this culture and the heavy “malpractice culture” in that country.

The most difficult problem of this procedure seems to be that it makes it very difficult to be sure that the procedure and all the involved steps are always necessary and rational. This procedure and the cultural issues involved means that it has a high potential for malpractice, but this can be minimized dramatically by the following steps: 1) Before the procedure is done, the patient must read about it with at least one case study like the one in this paper, to fully understand the emotional and existential implications of the procedure, so she has time to contemplate and make her decision of whether to accept the physician's offer or not; 2) The procedure is also orally presented by the physician to the patient before she signs the contract; 3) The physician must be in supervision to discuss the problems if any about borders, intimacy, emotional and sexual issues. Close supervision and full inter-collegial openness is the best prevention of malpractice, as malpractice often occurs with physicians without a network and without openness about what is going on in their clinic.

The ethical aspects

Touch is a very dramatic and mutual thing for our physical and emotional being: when I touch you, you touch me (7). As many people only know touch in connection with sexual behavior, a sexual reaction to a completely innocent touch is not rare in the clinic. If sexually aroused, the female can react as "if she has sexual organs all over her body", making physical contact with her very electric and sexual, and this reaction can come very sudden and highly unexpected and not always convenient. If the physician retracts from her in this situation, what would be the immediate reaction of most normal people, she will experience that her body, gender and sexuality is not acceptable, which destroys intimacy and trust negatively for the patient and the professional relationship. Being there, staying in contact, takes a great deal of "spaciousness" on the part of the physician. This spaciousness should be a part of our medical training, but is often not, making so many pelvic examinations and other procedures emotionally painful and awkward for both physician and patient.

The subject of ethics has been of utmost importance for the physician, since Hippocrates and whenever the physician touches the patient the ethics of the action must be considered. The problem of touch is mostly much more of an ethical problem than it is a legal problem: Why do you touch the patient, what is the intention? If the intention is for the physician to enjoy his patient – what we do most of the time with people in private – we consider this unethically, even if this is just holding hands. The physician should have the healing of the patient as his sole focus and if the intention of the physicians is wholeheartedly and rooted in deep medical expertise to heal the patient (and in this intention touch any part of the body including the genital), this is ethical. Interestingly, the physician's ethics seems to be proportional with his results with his patients. Only the clearest of intentions can bring us outstanding results (8).

But simply touching sensitively – the essence of manual medicine – is a much more powerful tool than many modern and bio-medically oriented physicians assume. Many pains and discomforts can be alleviated just by touching the sick area and help the patient to be in better contact with the troubled tissue and organs of the body. Lack of presence in the body seems to be connected with many symptoms that can be readily reversed simply by sensitive touch in the intention of healing. When touch is combined with therapeutic work on mind and

feelings, holistic healing seems to be facilitated and many problems can be solved in a direct, easy and effective way in the clinic, without the use of drugs.

Manual medicine even in its most simple form is a powerful and often underestimated medical tool. The great power of physical contact between physician and his patient, which is even stronger in the context of the theory, practice and intent of holistic healing, is often not taken sufficiently into use in the medical clinic today, where everything is supposed to be cured with a drug. Much suffering and money could be saved, if the physician of our time was able to discriminate more clearly between intimacy and sexuality and thus dared to be more intimate and physical with their patients. If the physician masters the art of touch he can even give the quality of holding without touching.

Conclusions

A surprisingly large number of women report that they have felt humiliated and devaluated by the gynecological procedure or pelvic examination. They often find it insulting to be put in positions in which their reproductive organs are exposed, without being in any way able to look after themselves or control the situation. They often feel incapable of protecting themselves against an examination that may be insensitive, rushed and not leave space for them as human beings, the sole intention being to perform a physical procedure as efficiently as possible. We suspect that these experiences are harmful for the woman and suggest a more holistic approach to gynecology and the pelvic examination.

The holistic approach seems give the woman a more safe and even sometimes a healing experience (9). We have developed a “slow” holistic pelvic examination, designed for solving gynecological and sexual problems of psycho-somatic origin. It is a recommended alternative to the standard procedure, whenever there is a suspicion of a history of sexual assault or sexual abuse, even when that abuse took place many years ago. It is often more time-consuming and can involve strong emotions on the part of the patient, as earlier unresolved traumas are contacted during the examination. In the holistic pelvic examination this is not a problem, but quite opposite the release of suppressed emotions might be healing to the patient, if the physician knows how “to hold” (meaning to care for) the patient and how to process the problems and emotions in order for the patient to heal.

Many gynecological problems like involuntary childlessness or infertility seem to follow problems in the woman’s relationship with her body, gender and sexuality, which might be alleviated by a holistic approach to the woman and the gynecological procedures. It is important that the woman experience to be seen and acknowledged as a whole person, where she feels herself and all parts of her body deeply accepted. This approach can change the often quite provocative pelvic examination from a fearful to a peaceful or even healing experience. Sometimes a few hours of work can change the woman’s perception of herself, her body, her gender and her sexuality, but this is usually not done in a busy general practice.

A holistic approach in general can help the woman not to feel humiliated or devalued by the pelvic examination procedure, but instead respected, acknowledged and accepted as the woman she really is (9).

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Medical Ethics and Therapeutic Dilemmas in the Sexology Clinic

Medical ethics provides us with rules and principles about how we as physicians can benefit our patients without doing harm; this goal is the essence of ethical medicine. Contemporary “sexual-ethical rules” were set up to protect patients from being sexually abused by their physicians or sexologists, but surveys document that the existent “ethical rules” do not prevent sexual abuse of patients by their therapists.

On the other hand they make holistic physicians, sexologists and CAM-therapists using bodywork especially vulnerable to accusations of unethical behavior. The fear of being harmed by open critique in the media makes many physicians abstain from using CAM-bodywork, therapeutic touch, and sexological manual therapy, thus depriving many chronic pain patients the healing care they desperately need.

The standard ethical rules in medicine and therapy are thus not working well and should be revised. A deeper understanding of sexual traumas and sexual healing enables us to evaluate the general validity of ethical rules, and the specific ethics of sexological therapies and CAM-bodywork. We discuss the ethics of manual sexological techniques, like “vaginal acupressure” with therapeutic asexual, genital touch for dyspareunia and vulvodynia and Betty Dodson’s sexological method and “the sexological examination”, where direct sexual, clitoral stimulation are used to break the orgasm-barrier in anorgasmia.

The problems of consent are discussed. Sexual desires acted out without ethical consciousness are potentially harmful, and the Hippocratic ethical rule of “not abusing the patient’s body” must be well respected at all times. We conclude that therapeutic touch is ethical and should be allowed, but understand that different countries and cultures have different rules and laws.

Introduction

The physicians around Hippocrates 300 BC used in their famous “character medicine” (1) intimate conversations, bodywork and spiritual exercises. The Hippocratic physicians were extremely aware of medical ethics and the Hippocratic oath contained a promise of “not

abusing the patient's body" and regulated thus the physician's behavior (1). Character medicine induces salutogenesis through rehabilitation of the patient's character (2). When patients step into character they improve self-esteem and self-confidence, use their talents better, and create more value in their relationships, and thus increase their sense of coherence (SOC) (3-10), which according to a large body of scientific evidence induce healing of both physical and mental diseases (11-15). As we have two genders, a natural part of this process was the rehabilitation of the patient's sexual character (1).

According to Corpus Hippocraticum bodywork like healing massage with and without oil was a central part of the holistic medical treatment, and the Hippocratic medicine included intimate pelvic massage through the bodily openings, which was believed to balance the female psyche and cure diseases like "Hysteria" (1,16,17). Similar techniques have been used for millennia in India as a part of the tantric tradition, and presumably many premodern cultures.

Hippocratic character medicine was built on a theory of four basic elements, which according to Greek anatomical science were represented in the body by four bodily fluids. In spite of significant progress in anatomical understanding, it is still generally believed in holistic medical science that bodywork is essential for the healing of both somatoform and psychoform dissociation (18,19). In so many ways contemporary holistic medical science has been validating the methods of ancient Greek medicine and for more than two millennia became the holistic medicine of whole Europe - and a significant part of the near orient.

The development of natural science during the last century has given us the pharmaceuticals used by contemporary biomedicine, which has now become the dominant medicine in Europe. In Asia and Africa CAM is still dominant, and in the USA CAM is now again becoming the preferred medicine with more CAM-consultations than biomedical consultations after 50 years of biomedical dominance.

Biomedicine has made it possible to treat patients without the need for bodywork and healing touch (20), thus avoiding the problematic nudity, and physical intimacy of the classical holistic medicine. Except for a few clinical standard procedures like the physical examination including pelvic examination, and some tools of manual medicine i.e. manipulation of the spine in lower back pain, the biomedical physician rarely do touch and undress his patient.

The International Society for Holistic Health, a society for the physician, therapist and researcher in the field of scientific holistic medicine, has in its ethical code for holistic medical practitioners two rules regarding the therapists' ethical conduct: "The practitioner must not: Exploit the patient economically, philosophically, religiously, sexually or in any other way. The consent of the patient does not free from this." And "The practitioner must not: Engage in a sexual relationship with the patient." These rules are copied from the ethical rules of biomedical doctors; they secure that holistic physician and therapists are behaving as well as the biomedical physicians, but they might not be optimal for their purpose.

In the shift to biomedicine the complex ethics of holistic medicine expressed in the original Hippocratic rule "do not abuse the patient's body" has been changed to the much simpler rule of contemporary biomedicine: "do not act out sexually". For most physicians these rules are saying the same, but a sexual relationship is not always abuse. Sometimes it can be helpful, as in the famous example from Masters and Johnson's clinic, where a female physician worked as substitute partner for male patients with erectile sexual dysfunction (21).

Today both CAM and advanced holistic sexology are using methods that use sexual elements, making it necessary to reconsider the medical sexual ethics. Another reason to analyze medical sexual ethics is the sad fact that in spite of the simplicity of the ethical rule of not acting out sexually, sex between doctors and patients are extremely common, and the violation of the ethical rules are causing many problems both to patients, physicians and their societies. Violation of ethical rules are also one of the most common accusations in the media against doctors and a bare accusation can harm the doctor's whole career, also when the physician is later completely cleared.

In studies with 1,891 responders, 9% of the physicians admitted to having had a sexual relationship with a patient (22) and many more were likely to have had it without admitting it, as such an admission to break the "ethical rules" often have dire consequences for the physicians career. In one study 29% of the responding therapists reported that at least one of their patients had experienced sexual relations with the most recent, former therapist (23). Much more common than having sex with a patient is having sex with a former patient; only a 37% of the physicians opposed sexual contact with a former patient, while 94% opposed sexual contact with a current patients (22).

In spite of most doctors finding it acceptable to have sex with former patients, and in spite of the fact that no valid arguments have been put up against this, it often has dire consequences because of strict "ethical rules". One example of this is a well-respected gynecologist in the United States, who eight years after treating a patient became her partner. He broke a very restrictive ethical rule of the local medical association of never having sex with an ex-patient, and he had to leave his job at the hospital (24). From a rational perspective this is an example of an ethical rule that harms not only the physician, but also the many future patients he could have helped, and in the end also the medical society now having to expel one of its fine members for unethical conduct. Many more examples like this exist.

Accusations of unethical conduct has been raised against one of us (SV) in the media some years ago by a group of psychiatrists that found the procedures of a pilot study in sexological, manual therapy (17) unethical. This media campaign had strong negative impact on our research in holistic medicine, even though we have had no patients complain about the treatment that helped every second patient without harming anybody (11-15,25,26), which was verified by the police investigation also.

A later investigation by the authorities concluded that our holistic medical treatment had no ethical problems and that the accusations for abuse were false, but damage was done, and valuable funding lost. Public accusation for breaking the medical ethical rules, or just spreading such rumors are often-used and highly efficient weapons against colleagues in inter-collegial power-struggles, where holistic medical physicians, sexologist and other alternative therapists who use bodywork are especially vulnerable to such accusations. The result is that many therapists avoid using bodywork in spite of this kind of therapy being the only way to heal somatoform dissociation (18,19). Ethical rules that create such a severe hindrance for the physicians, that they do not dare to use the tools needed to treat the patients, are not ethical in our final analysis.

These examples indicate an urgent need for deep exploration into the difficult field of medical ethics and if possible, a change of the rules of medical sexual ethics, in order to make them much more beneficial and much less harmful, both to patients and their physicians. We need to analyze when a physician-patient relationships is actually harmful and traumatizing to the patient, and when it is not, to see if we can pinpoint the ethical principles and sharpen the

“ethical rules”, so that we can protect the patients from sexual abuse, and in the same time make rules that do not harm the physicians or unnecessarily restrict his ability to use the therapeutic tools that help.

In this paper we first look at ethical problems in sexuality in general; then we look at ethical problems in sexological and holistic manual therapy and finally we look at the ethical problems in the physician-patient relationship.

Ethical problems in sexuality

When is sex harmful?

We need our sexual practice not to cause sexual traumas and if possible we would like sexuality to be a source of pleasure and personal development. We would also be very happy if our sexual behavior leads to sexual, psychological and existential healing of our partner and our self.

To avoid harming each other we need a thorough understanding of what sexual behavior causes sexual traumas. A logic way to investigate this seems to be an analysis of the loss in quality of life of people getting sexual traumas. Unfortunately no thorough, prospective studies have been made on this, making is impossible to analyze the negative effect of sexual life events. Several retrospective studies have been made documenting a strong association between abusive sexual life events and quality of life; Table 1 list such findings from our own study (27,28).

Table 1. Major events in life (selected for illustration).

The connection between global QOL and 1,000 different life events; only statistically (p<0.05; NS: Not significant) and clinically significant factors listed. Difference in global QOL is measured according to the Integrated QOL theory, and is measured with the validated SEQOL questionnaire. *) Difference in percentage between the worst and the best off (single events), or calculated with the method of weight modified linear regression (impact of all events).	
Life Event (impact of single event)	QOL-difference (%) *)
Sexual assault by well-known offender	-20.8
Threatened with violence upon family	-18.6
Victim of rape	-15.7
Incest, without intercourse	-15.4
Sexual assault: Pawing	-13.9
Expulsed from a group	-12.9
Lack of care in childhood	-12.3
Attempt of rape, 1st time (women)	-12.1
Two psychiatric hospitalisations	-11.9
Registered in a credit-bureau	-11.9
Cannot run	-11.9
Other serious physical disorders	-11.5
Got kicked under attack	-11.2
Sex harassment	-10.8
Brain bleeding (apoplexy, stroke)	-10.3

Global quality of life is in contemporary holistic medical science often seen as the most important endpoint in studies, and it seems quite clear and logic that events like incest and rape are associated with low quality of life. But it is very important to remember that a low quality of life also is associated with high vulnerability increasing both likelihood of getting involved with sexually traumatising events, and the likelihood of being traumatised by a sexual event. Sexually traumatising events will decrease quality of life, often taking the patient into an evil circle of inviting abuse by playing the victim and being victimised. Being raped is an indicator of being vulnerable. Incest is an indicator of a dysfunctional family. The negative effect of rape or incest is thus not so easily established, and the research on rape has demonstrated what has been called posttraumatic paradoxal growth (29-33): the raped girls are seemingly doing better than the girls not being raped. These data are very disturbing to our whole understanding of sexual traumas, and makes us aware of the complexity of the subject. What looks like a trauma can be a healing event (34).

In spite of these reflections, sexual assaults are known to be among the most traumatic of events and sexual torture is internationally acknowledged as the most evil and destructive methods of torture, and many sex-torture-victims are never rehabilitated in spite of intensive therapy. Rape is intentionally used in war to destroy and enslave the enemy, and rape of a virgin has in pre-modern cultures been regarded as a sin comparable to murdering the girl and the rapist given a similar punishment. Sexual abuse of a patient's body has since Hippocrates been considered one of the most fundamental violations of the physicians ethical rules; a serious crime followed by severe punishment by the Gods. The traumas of violent incest are known from clinical practice to be among the most traumatic of life event (35-37).

So incest and sex with children are extremely harmful, as is sexual violation by force. In accordance with this our study of the correlation of life events and global quality of life documented that rape, incest, and sexual assaults actually were among the life events associated with a very low quality of life of the victim (see table 1). We found such events similar to events like "threatened with violence to the family" and statistically worse than the events of "brain-bleeding" and "two psychiatric hospitalizations".

But things are even more complicated. Some people are actively seeking to become victims of sexual violence, and sexual masochists are often paying prostitutes money for sexual slavery and forceful sexual abuse (35-38). People are often filled with strong and strange sexual desires leading to all kinds of difficulty and developmental crises from sexual abuse they first gave their consent to.

One theory is that these people are actually searching for healing from early sexual abuse by seeking similar events, as they only can heal by getting back into the traumatic events, and need present time abuse as support for going back (39). This theory is not in accordance with our clinical finding, since many such patients do not recall sexual abuse in childhood during therapy (although some do). From a philosophical perspective these traumas seem to be inherited from their parents in an "energetic" or symbolic way; they are often called "karmic traumas". So one theory of paradoxal posttraumatic growth is that patients who need these events to heal actual or symbolic "karmic" traumas subconsciously attract these events. Philosophies of this kind coming to the west from the orient, especially Hinduistic and Buddhist philosophy from India, China and Japan are becoming increasingly popular. It is important to underline that the teachings of many of these philosophies are not easily rejected by scientific arguments. We often need to work with "karmic" traumas in the holistic clinic, as patients present trauma, they impossibly could have had, like one patient "recalling" the

pictures of being raped by 100 soldiers during a war, and presenting the emotional content of the trauma in therapy. An alternative interpretation of this “karmic trauma” is that we are talking about “implanted memory” (40), but as there is no claim of this having happened in reality, this term does not seem appropriate.

Some philosophers with this line of thinking believe that even sexual assaults in childhood are invited by a vulnerability caused by the karmic traumas, and that these events happens for a higher, spiritual reason. How repulsive this thinking might seem, placing so much of the guilt on the victim, the perspective often helps severely abused patients to assume responsibility for the experience. The perspective of karma creates order in chaos for the time being, and allows the patient to integrate the traumas caused by the abuse, which is important for existential healing (salutogenesis) (3,4,41-43). In the course of therapy such “therapeutic philosophy” must be carefully de-learned (40).

To conclude this paragraph, sex is harmful when: 1) the victim is too vulnerable, or 2) too much force is used, 3) leading to a sexual experience which is overwhelmingly painful (or pleasurable) leading to repressed emotions, 4) and the event induces a destructive philosophy or self-image. If 1), 2) and 3) are happening, but this is leading to healing, this sexual event was not harmful, but beneficent. This can be the case in holistic sexological therapy, based on the principle of similarity, where the tool of “controlled abuse” are being used (44). This might be the most difficult problem to solve in this paper: That the fruit of any sexual event only can be known afterwards. Some events like incest and rape are very likely to damage the patient; sado-masochistic games are presumably not, in spite of physical and mental pain being a core ingredient. This is the essence of the paradox we need to deal with: sexual torture in a prison is damaging; sexual torture in a swinger club is not. What in the end determines, if a sexual event is healing or harming is if the person needs it to happen. It is such a complex understanding of sexuality we need to integrate in a pragmatic medical ethic.

What is the damage from sexual traumas?

Research has documented that sexual traumas can damage a person’s sexuality, mental health (i.e. self esteem), physical health (i.e. cause chronic pelvic pain and primary vulvodynia), quality of life, and the character, mission of life and existence at large (45-51). The many different damages are listed in table 2. Lack of more accurate research data makes it impossible to quantify the relative damages.

Table 2. Some of the most common negative consequences of sexual traumas.

Psychodynamic damage on sexual life from sexual violations:
• Loss of lust, as an expression of repression of the wish to have sex.
• Loss of arousal, as the patient abstains from involving her mind, feelings and body with sex.
• Loss of orgasmic potency. Because of repression, pleasure becomes less intense, and more local, and less transcendent
• Pain during intercourse and chronic genital pain as the pelvis and the local tissue of the genitals are holding on to many painful emotions from the trauma. Primary vulvodynia

Table 2. (Continued).

Psychodynamic damage on sexual life from sexual violations:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nymphomania and sexualisation. Sometimes the person gets so identified with being a sexual being that all her purpose of life is redefined to the sexual area, making the woman a clinical nymphomania. • Symbiotic dependency. Happens often when sexual contact has substituted for care.
Psychodynamic damage from sexual violations on body, mind and existence:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boredom, passivity, low self esteem, depression - symptoms from repression of power: mind, feelings, and body • Physical chronic pain i.e. low back pain, muscular tension pain • Low self esteem, existential “invisibility” - symptoms from repression of sexuality, feelings, gender and character • Emotional pain, unhappiness and meaninglessness - symptoms from repression of self and purpose of life • Lack of sense of coherence, discontinuation of relationships or alienation, with father, mother, brother, a physician etc., including interruption of care or treatment. • Mental disease, patients with borderline personality and schizophrenia have very often been sexually abused
Other problems arising from sex, sexual abuse, and self-abuse:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STDs and hiv/aids (52) • Reproduction. Often the sexually violated patient will have problem with reproduction. • Children. Children of rape, incest and abuse can be genetically defective. A dysfunctional family cannot give what they need for a normal psychosexual development. • Alienation and sex-love split. Using sex as an expression of love might be very difficult, making love difficult, and arresting the spiritual and personal developmental of the patient. Often sexuality and love is compartmentalized in the persona life. • Sex for fun and power-games. When the motivation is no longer the joy of sensual pleasure, sex becomes often more motivated by using it for fun, and to obtain power. • Prostitution. Research has shown prostitution to be much more common among incest and rape victims; often the element of prostitution is a hidden trade of sex for money, food, accommodation, drugs or other material or immaterial benefits. Prostitution is associated with drug abuse, hiv-infections and an early death. • Sexually abusive behaviour. Most sadly, many of the abused children will become child abusers themselves, if the problems are not solved in therapy, using manipulation, social pressure, or brute force towards other in the sexual area. • Professional incest. Sadly many of the cases of professional incest might be carried out also by incest victims, which are unconsciously attracted to the professional position of power and legitimacy and to the therapeutic work with other victims, consciously or unconsciously motivated by their need to solve their own problems.

How are we harmed by sexual traumas?

What is it exactly that is damaging about sexual abuse? A full scientific understanding of this question will presumably allow us to reverse most of the damaging effects of the sexual neglects, assaults and abuses, many of which are listed in table 2.

According to the life mission theory (45-51), what really damages us is what damage our philosophy of life. A negative decision taken during a painful traumatic event is cementing a repression of the painful emotion and thus a reducing of our existence as the repressed life-energy is not accessible for us anymore. Accumulated negative beliefs and attitudes can destroy our health, quality of life and general abilities (35-37,41-43). Such negative life-decisions are “generalized justifications” by which our painful responsibility for the situation is transferred away from us (the self) and into the outer world represented by mind (53). Thorough analysis of complete lists of repressed, negative decisions recovered from extensive, sexual traumas in holistic existential therapy with sexually severely abused patient (37), illustrate this negative impact of the sexual abuse, giving us a good understanding of the damaging effect of sexual violation.

If we make sure that the person we are with is not overwhelmed by negative feelings and emotions we can be sure that the person is not traumatised; it does not matter in principle if we are taking the patient into difficult feelings related to sexuality or into different kinds of feelings. Feelings that can be contained are not harmful. From a Jungian perspective (54) there are three different sources of sexual traumas:

- From the beginning of life we are created by a somewhat “impure”, sexual energy, causing what has been called “karmic traumas” (as discussed above)
- We are adjusting to sexually imperfect and somewhat unhealthy parents in the womb and during childhood, setting up our internal circulation of sexual energy wrongly.
- During childhood we are sensitive and very vulnerable and therefore inevitably accumulating sexual traumas from the contact with our parent, who unconsciously sometimes neglects us and sometimes violates us. We are in addition sometimes overtly abused and traumatised sexually.

All this sums up to everybody being unavoidably sexually unhealthy with severe repression of sexual energy, inappropriate circulation of sexual energy etc. Some of us are more severely traumatised by sexual traumas. If we are severely violated i.e. as incest-victims this often makes us dysfunctional or even seriously ill. Often sexual violations cause mental illness (i.e. borderline); sometimes it makes the victim behave irresponsibly i.e. becoming a prostitute; sometimes it gives inappropriate sexual behaviour (i.e. sexual aggression, sexual self-victimisation) (see table 2).

All sexual damage is basically about repressed feelings causing sexual blockages and lack of libido and negative sexual attitudes causing inappropriate or even destructive sexual behaviour. Symptoms of this are the many different kinds of sexual dysfunctions we notice in the clinic. As we need to go back to heal our old wound, every sexual event, even how negative, are likely to be a possibility of healing. This leads to the strange conclusion that a

life-event is not in itself harmful; it will harm or help you depending on the way you work with it and take learning from it; this goes in principle for incest and rape too.

What is sexual healing?

How are we healed sexually, if we have been sexually traumatised? Sexual healing is what helps us free our repressed sexual energy and related feelings (54), thus raising libido and personal power. That is done by changing the negative attitudes, which can be seen by its effect, since it turns the person back to a normal interest in sexuality and to constructive sexual behaviour. Interestingly, sexual traumas often contain both pleasure and pain (38) and sexual violation is often extremely painful emotionally, but there is often also an element of pleasure causing a lot of additional guilt and shame. So, for sexual healing we need to integrate the traumas, but allowing both the sexual pleasure and the sexual pain to surface (38).

In therapy the use of the principle of similarity is most efficiently doing this. When the patient is given a stimulus similar to that, which originally caused the problem, the sexual trauma will suddenly reappear in the patient's consciousness and sexuality will heal. Clinical holistic therapy has the tool of "controlled sexual abuse" (44), where a sexual violation is repeated symbolically, while the patient receives the holding and support that she missed during the violation, allowing her to integrate the sexual trauma and heal sexually.

It is not only in the clinic that the patient is helped by the principle of similarity; in real life everything bad seems to repeat itself until the day, where the patient is able to really understand and cope with it. Most interestingly many patients realise that they often have been co-creating the event together with the violator, because the event was needed for her to heal – i.e. a rape scene. This realisation often is almost unbearable, but assuming responsibility is what changes the pattern in real life, and after this the vulnerability causing the trauma will often disappear and everything change. Statistics shows the healing effect of traumatic events as "paradoxal growth" (29-33) and researchers have wondered if such results were artifacts, but from the theory of existential healing paradoxal growth (i.e. after rape) seems reasonable and likely to happen. This does not by any chance mean that rape should be excused or legalized. We just underline the fact that people with a background as victims often invite violators, because of a subconscious longing for healing and instinctively felt possible through a repetition of the trauma.

Sexual healing takes holding and processing (53), because without holding and support the patient cannot confront the past events that were overwhelmingly painful (or overwhelmingly pleasurable) and heal. Therapy must give the needed holding and as sex is related to the body, holding often needs to be physical, or even genital (55), as already Hippocrates and the old physicians discovered (1).

Most interestingly the need for physical holding in sexual healing is not always met – for ethical reasons. Many therapists have come to the understanding that the best way to avoid sexual abuse of the patient is by restraining oneself to never touch a patient. Such rules might work, when therapy is about changing behaviors, but in deep psychodynamic healing of sexuality they directly hinder the patient's healing. The fear of sexuality and the derived rule of not touching the patient have caused the biggest problem in psychoanalysis, namely its well-known lack of efficiency (see below on "Freud's trap"). As soon as sexuality appears

and libidinous energy is invested in the therapy, the longing for intimacy and touch appears; this longing is not just a longing for sex, it is a longing for sexual healing. So it is coming from a much deeper layer in the patient that normal sexuality and with a much larger force, because if it cannot be fulfilled it stays unfulfilled for years, but constantly hindering the patient to be healed. Often therapy takes 10 years, and a lot of mourning and sexual frustration is experienced in the end, but only small therapeutic progress in spite of so many years and thousands of hours of therapy. Here we have a damaging effect of sexual neglect in the therapy, combined with sometimes “financial exploration” of the patient.

Vulnerable teenagers and prostitution

The younger a person is the more vulnerable to sexual violations. Danish teenagers often start to have a sex life at the age of thirteen years, but they must be aware of the very special, intimate and emotionally difficult nature of sexuality at all times, and in spite of explicit sexual education by teachers in school, by parents and by their physician, early sexual experiences are often somewhat traumatizing. The understanding amongst Danish physicians today is that it would be more sexually traumatizing for the teenagers to be held back, but that is an issue that can be debated. The larger the age difference, the larger will the difference in power also be, and the more vulnerable the weakest partner will be. If both were keenly aware of the dangers and pitfalls of a sexual relationship, even an age difference could be harmless. Teenage prostitutes often have a history of sexual traumatization and live their life with friends “on the street” using heroin as self-medication for existential pain. The heroin is offered free by pushers, who later teach them to hook. Prostitution, also of adult women, can result in low quality of life (56)] and these women are often left completely without lust for life, with no sexual desire or orgasmic potency.

It is important to understand that teenagers are not yet adult or fully able to care for their own interests and lives, so it seems logical to forbid teenage prostitution. The law against teenage prostitution in the USA these days does definitely not stop it, as there are now an estimated number of 500.000 teenage prostitutes in USA (57). It is time to reconsider the situation and understand the sad consequences of laws against teenage prostitution, which only seem to marginalize and repress the vulnerable teenagers, to make them criminals and to impose on them an unbearable feeling of blame and guilt. The only solution we can see is to educate the whole population on the harmful effects of sexual abuse. If the society focused on healing its citizens and teaching them to treat sexual partners well in general, prostitution would be much less harmful.

In Denmark we have had what has been called the neo-sexual revolution (58), making sex as normal as eating and so legal and generally accepted, together with striptease, prostitution, and porno, that we now have publicly accepted brothels very much like the famous red light district in liberal Amsterdam and porno-cabarets on most TV-cables. Some politicians have even considered registering prostitutes and letting them pay taxes as ordinary, respected citizens. This new, relaxed attitude towards sexuality has allowed prostitutes and porno models to enter the public arena like popular television programs on the public national TV, and some have managed to be both the star of the gasoline-station porn-movie-market and a TV-celebrity at the same time. The conclusion by the Danish public seems to be, that soft prostitution and the porn industry does not in itself harm the girl. What is harmful is the

lack of acceptance and self-acceptance coming from painful sexual experiences, with lack of love and care, awareness, respect, and acknowledgement of the soul of the sex-partner.

We thus believe that it is time to understand the direction of the development in the next generations towards full sexual liberation in the western society; it is important to legalize also prostitution, and to start educating the whole population on the real dangers of sexual relationships. These dangers come from people being simpleminded, spiritually undeveloped, and unconscious of their impact and their bad intentions.

Ethical problems of sexological therapy and cam-bodywork

The use of holistic medicine, cam and bodywork in Denmark

In Denmark both patients and physicians have questioned the efficiency of biomedicine (drugs). 40% of the population is chronically ill in spite of free health care and good quality hospitals. Several Cochrane analyses have shown, that the drugs being used often harm as much or even more than they benefit (59). This makes many patients return to holistic medicine and CAM, with 400,000 patients using it in 1990, 800,000 using it 2000 (60) and an estimated number of 1,600,000 using it 2010. Recent research has documented that psychodynamic psychotherapy is more efficient than psychiatric standard treatment (61-63), without having the adverse effects of drugs, making psychotherapy very popular. Problems related to the body, like chronic pain and sexual problems, are present with 50% of the population and more and more often being cured by holistic medicine (CAM-bodywork or psychotherapy combined), which seems surprisingly efficient (11-15).

The scientific synthesis of epidemiology, CAM and psychodynamic psychotherapy into scientific holistic medicine (clinical holistic medicine, CHM) (41-43) has given us a highly efficient, integrative treatments system, able to solve health problems for at least half of the patients (physical, mental, sexual, and existential health problems) in one year and 20 hours of therapy according to our recent clinical studies (11-15,65). In holistic medicine, like in all psychodynamic and existentially oriented therapies, the patient's body and sexuality becomes very important issues (54,64) and holistically and psychodynamically oriented physicians and therapists believe, as did the ancient Greek and Indian doctors, that a healthy sexuality is a basic condition for physical and mental health and well-being.

But when bodywork more or less directly addresses the patient's sexuality, many sexual feelings can be provoked in both patient and therapist, which demands a high ethical awareness and an ability to discriminate sharply between acting out and treating the patient. This becomes even more complicated, when the therapist use their own sexuality to help the patient, as in the tool of being a patient's "substitute partner/surrogate partner" (21). The ethical consideration here has been, if in this classical example, the sexual intercourse during which the female therapist is curing the male patient's erectile dysfunction, is "abusing the patient's body" or "healing the patient's body". From a standard biomedical ethical perspective the behavior of the therapist is definitely unethical; from a wiser, holistic-medical perspective the behavior, which helped the patient and did him no harm, might actually be ethical conduct. All this indicates that things in this area are a little bit more complicated than

we usually imagine, and that we need to be clearer about what ethical rules should guide contemporary and future holistic medicine.

Sexological manual therapy

With this recent development medicine is somewhat surprisingly returning to its roots, and medicine is coming back to the use of bodywork (1,20,44,55), including a number of intimate, medical, manual procedures (65-71) calling for ethical analysis. The direct work with the patients sexual energies and genitals as it happens in holistic sexology i.e. the treatment of vulvodynia with “acceptance through touch” (54) and “vaginal acupressure” (1,16,17) is not very different from what is happening in the regular gynaecologic pelvic exam and we have found it to be ethical and efficient, although still possibly somewhat alienating to a traditionally trained biomedical physician and to different cultures and traditions.

A much more direct, sexological tool is the feministically inspired, radical procedure of “direct sexual stimulation” involving therapist touch of female patient’s vulva to assist the patient’s accept of own genitals. Instruction in manual masturbation including use of pelvic floor, pelvic movements, sound on the breathing, sexual vulva, direct stimulation of clitoris or vagina (digital or with clitoral vibrator) (65-71), sexual fantasies, sexual breath work, stimulation of nipples and other erotic zones, use of clitoral vibrator, which has been successfully used by Betty Dodson from the United States (73) to help women with anorgasmia and other sexual dysfunction. It includes the radical practice of all participants masturbating naked together in the therapy group and it is now practiced by a dozen of Danish sexologists personally trained by Dodson. It has been used for almost a decade by over 500 female patients (65). Direct sexual stimulation has been used for many years for sexological research in the United States (69,71), Denmark (65) and many other countries (70) and especially the sexological research by psychoanalyst and body-therapist Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957). This method has been extremely important for our understanding of sexuality (71) and the use of direct sexual stimulation in the sexological clinics makes an ethical analysis of the method relevant.

When it comes to the use of a “substitute/surrogate partner” most find this not to be a violation of ethical rules, because of the fact that studies have documented the therapeutic value of this unconventional procedure with no reports of problems or patients harmed (21). It is quite clear that we need to learn a lesson about medical ethics from this. It is “holistic” in the widest sense of this word as the therapist uses his whole existence to help. But one might as well argue, that this practice is financial, if not sexual abuse of a love-sick patient, who come to this love-sick therapist (73) for the sexual healing and end up being sexually exploited. Most interestingly there is a lot of sympathy for a female therapist using this method for helping a dysfunctional male patient, and a lot of skepticism for a male therapist helping a dysfunctional female patient, because traditionally women has been the sexual victims of abusive men, but when the doctor is female, the roles are inverted and the female is in power, so this argument is not valid.

Hippocratic ethics was undoubtedly born out of the need for control of the therapist’s behavior and stopping him from acting out, when sexually aroused from the close bodily encounter with his patient. Modern day physicians and therapists have honored the tradition

of medical ethics and all over the world physicians and therapists seem to agree about not acting out sexually. The more directly sexual issues are addressed in therapy, the stronger the sexual transference and counter-transference will be. When as in psychoanalysis sex becomes the major focus and the patient starts work on their Oedipus complex containing some of the strongest sexual energies known to man, with often resulting in a mutual sexual interest going to an extreme level of intensity, and all too often leading to what we call “professional incest”. In psychodynamic psychotherapy there can also be a symbolic and verbal acting out, which has not been covered by the ethical rules. Most interestingly, a rule of not touching the patient is not really helping here. Quite the opposite this rule is a serious hindrance to the asexual, physical contact and holding necessary for releasing the sexual tension and allowing therapy to progress (53). In psychoanalysis, the ethical rules seems to create what we have called the “Freud’s trap”, keeping the sexually awakened, female patient coming to the therapist for many years in spite of never getting the sexual healing she longs for (74). So we believe that the ethical rules should most definitely be revised, if the major concern is the therapeutic progress of the patient.

Ethics is about doing good for the patient and avoiding doing harm; this is essential and should be kept in mind at all times, also when we analyze the ethics of radical and provocative manual sexological techniques. An ethical discussion is never about the moral of a society or about its laws or rules or about anything else. When a therapist uses his or her own sexuality as a tool to help others, for example when Betty Dodson masturbates before a group of female patients with anorgasmia, to excite them and teach them how to get an orgasm, or when she touches the patients genitals to improve a patient’s genital self-acceptance (72), the question is if this method is helping or harming the patient. Recent research has demonstrated that the method of direct sexual stimulation is extremely efficient and seemingly not harmful. It does not look like acting out on the videotape (72), but as she is serving her patients with her whole existence, using body, mind, spirit and heart. But we are still left with questions like: Is this an ethical practice? Is this a sexual relationship?

The concept of “substitute/surrogate partners” was bravely introduced by Masters and Johnson in 1959 (21). One of the most important contributions to the development of the scientific sexology came from a female doctor, who took the role as a substitute partner in the research program: “Finally a physician, who openly admitted her curiosity towards the role as a substitute partner, offered her services... When she was convinced about the desperate need for such a partner for treatment of sexual malfunction of the unmarried man, she continued as substitute partner, and she contributed, both from her personal and professional experience, to develop the role to an optimal degree of efficiency” (21). This female physician obviously played an important role in achieving the impressing result of helping 32 of 41 dysfunctional male patients in the program. Her behavior was never condemned or punished to our knowledge and the medical society thus accepted her behavior as ethical, which still 50 years later is remarkable.

The conclusion from this work was that a doctor’s sexual relationship with a patient was beneficial, if the intention with the relationship was to cure the patient’s sexual problems and done with the necessary (written) consent. In many cases where physicians and patients have sexual relationships, there is no intention of curing or developing the patient; they happen from the simple and natural reason of sexual desire, combined with lack of self-control and lack of agreement with the ethical rules.

What about this method of “substitute/surrogate partnership” - is this acting out? Can this be ethical, in spite of the physician-patient-relationship being a mutual sexually satisfying relationship, when the scientific studies document that it most definitely helped the patients and did no harm? Can defining a substitute partnership be a solution for a doctor and a patient that continues to be hopelessly in love, in spite of not seeing each other, and even years going by?

Psychodynamic perspectives on sexuality and sexual development

To truly understand harm from sexual events we need to understand the nature of sexuality (54,64,69,71): What is sex? A simple answer is that sex is about inborn, sexual behavior. Just feeling sexual pleasure or sexual desire when being with another person is not having sex; this is a completely internal thing in one's own being. As we are sexual beings, our bodies behave much like animals; they are almost always interested in sex. Our body often reacts sexually to other bodies.

Then we have sexual orientation. Freud said that we originally were polymorphous perverted children, but now as adults we are likely to be socialized into heterosexual, genital sexuality. This means that deep down in our repressed sexuality, we find everything of sexual interest. But this is even more complicated: When a person's psychosexual development is disturbed, the patient can be developmentally arrested at different stages, like the infantile autoerotic stage, the oral, anal or genital stage. Many schizophrenics seems to be poorly relating to the world coming from infantile autoerotism (64,75) and treating schizophrenics almost always include healing sexually (54,64,75). Sexual energy accumulated within our body, and within our relationship, as we invest our libidinous energy in it. Searles and other fine therapists noticed that only the patients we love and are able to invest our libidinous energy in are helped by the therapy (76). The investment of libidinous energy and the sexual interest in each other is not damaging, but in general helpful.

Another important aspect of sexuality is that we according to Jung are double sexed beings with the opposite sex inside, but not being expressed; we can therefore have auto sexuality, fantasy, masturbation etc. When we have sex, we project the opposite sex into our partner. Only this way we can feel the partner attractive. This makes all expressions of sexuality a mirroring of our internal state and our sexual health a function of the flow or lack of flow of sexual energy within our self. Most unfortunately this natural inner circulation of sexual energy is highly vulnerable both to sexual violence and sexual neglect, especially in childhood, where we are totally dependent of relation to a sexual healthy father and mother. If mother and father are not able to circulate their own sexual energy freely and joyfully, this will according to Grof be felt already in the womb, and we will have inherited sexual disturbances with no traumatic course, but appearing in therapy as what has been called “karmic traumas”. This is quite complicated as the patient in holistic psychodynamic psychotherapy or holistic breath work can present traumas from rape or incest, with events that never really happened giving problem of temporary “implanted memories”, but such memories will always disappear, when the patient realization that this is energetically inherited “karmic traumas”.

Freud noticed that everybody develops though a natural and necessary Oedipal phase, the boys wanting to marry their mother and the girls wanting to marry their father; he also noticed

that most patients still had an unsolved issue with this called the famous Oedipus complex. All together this leaves us and every of our patients with a highly complex, personal, sexual history with something energetically inborn, something introjected at the foetal state, and always also with sexual traumas from childhood, where our father and mother sometimes did not show us the bodily and sexual interest we needed or violating our sexual borders when showing too much interest. Many female patients has been directly sexually violated in childhood (one in 5 or 7 according to most sources), some patients also violated or raped as adults and some have also violated other people, which seems to be even more harmful to them than being violated.

So we are sexual beings, coming from semen and egg, and from the very beginning created by sexuality. We come from sexual beings that were not entirely healthy in their sexual energies, because of a complex personal history, and we have lived a long life being sexually active in many ways, and been together with sexually active people with whom we have interacted, sometimes causing traumas, and sometimes healing traumas, and giving us our sexuality and life-energy back.

To be physically, mentally and existentially healthy we need a healthy flow of sexual life energy within our organism, and both mental and physical illness seems at least partly to come from blocked sexual energy, making rehabilitation of sexual health an issue of primary interest in the holistic medical clinic.

Ethical problems of sexual physician-patient relationships

Let us now return to the difficult issue of physician-patient sex. How can we avoid that a sexual physician-patient relationship harms the patient? The first question we have to ask is what dangers such a relationship is putting the patient in and there are several important, ethical reasons why a physician should not to have sex with his patient (22,23,54,64,73,77-80):

- The patient's treatment is disrupted.
- The patient's trust of therapists in general is destroyed.
- The power is with the doctor/therapist making him able to sexually exploit a large fraction of his young female patients that admire him.
- The patient who often takes the role of a child and the doctor being the parent can be attracted to the doctor, because of Oedipal sexual transferences, and a sexual relationship will block the needed solution of the Oedipus complex.
- The physician exploiting his patients sexually will destroy the confidence and status not only of himself, but also of all other doctors.
- The physician will most likely engage in the sexual relationship to act out on sexual counter-transference; by vesting the invested libidinous energy the physician waste the energy that could have set the patient free (76).
- The physician will often be older and the patient young and vulnerable; this increases the danger of a sexual relationship being harmful.

- The danger of the relationship being in conflict with the ethical rules of the physician's community and therefore having dire consequences for him.

From the physician's perspective a very good reason not to have sex with a patient is obviously that he has taken the Hippocratic oath: Into whatsoever houses I enter, I will enter to help the sick, and I will abstain from all intentional wrongdoing and harm, especially from abusing the bodies of man or woman, bond or free (1).

In spite of knowing this, many physicians and therapists engage in a sexual relationship with their patient, and through history many doctors have successfully married their patients. Sometimes a woman, who knew of an attractive doctor, became his patient intending to seduce him. It has been argued that a patient is unable to give consent to a sexual relationship, and that such a relationship always is harmful (80). We have found no clear scientific evidence that a sexual relationship between therapist and physician is harmful. An eroticized relation can be used to heal the patient (81) giving some worrying indication that we might be much too negative in our fear of and attitude towards sexuality.

In practice, because of all the difficulties listed above, it is difficult for a physician to avoid harming a patient, if they become partners right away. But a conscious and ethical physician can carefully avoid the dangers one by one, and put up a strategy that makes it acceptable to relate intimately with the patient. According to the analysis above of what causes sexual traumas, we feel safe to conclude that in the case of the patient and the physician falling desperately in love, decent behavior and awareness of the points above will save the patient from traumas. We recommend that the following steps are also taken, and propose this approach to be included in standard ethical rules for physicians and therapists:

- Start by ending the professional relationship without hurrying, in such a way that the patient is either cured or transferred to another physician for continued treatment. Most doctors find it acceptable to start a relationship after termination of the patient-therapist relations, but it is wise to wait for at least six month before making the relation intimate. On the other hand it would be waste of life and love not to see each other; this might be the most difficult challenge, but it is very important and the physician must seek the help he needs to meet it.
- End a relationship with a present partner if any and end it for good. Do it now and be without a partner for a while, to find yourself. Take therapy for at least three month (10-20 sessions) to be sure that you do the right thing.
- Assume full responsibility for the new relationship to the patient, admit it openly to everybody, and behave decently, loving and respectful at all times. If you hide it, you probably do not mean it and you are most likely up to hurting you patient's heart seriously.
- Be extremely explicit about the possibility of the relationship being temporary, in spite of intense and honest feelings of love and the best of intentions. The relationship may not last forever as it might serve the purpose of personal development for both parties, not the purpose of finding a partner for life – in spite of both parties believing the later.
- If and only if it feels right: Get married.

Such a relationship might be for life, but is always for learning. It is bound to be painful which both parties should be well aware of. Success in transforming the relationship from a professional to a personal relationship almost always takes a third person, which must be a coach or a therapist with experience in this area. This person will support the weakest part and balance the power often quite unbalanced between a physician and a patient, which is very good for both parties in the relationship. It is the privilege of the consciousness physician that he can turn such difficulties of potentially destructive and disastrous nature into a mutually beneficial learning experience.

Some physicians or therapists who do not know themselves well enough and who do not reflect upon their own existence in sufficient depth, feel urged to take the route of direct sexual involvement. Real troubles comes, when the relationship is first hidden and then suddenly involuntarily exposed, often leading to unlimited damage both to the patient and to the physician. The physician can lose his whole career, wife/husband and family, friends, and the earned position in the society. The patient will often be deeply hurt and lose faith in physicians/therapists and in therapy in general and can thus have remaining unsolved problems for many years thereafter.

It is only fair that these physicians are excluded from the medical society, although a more rational approach considering the patient would be to treat the misbehaving physician for his personal problems, to help him/her integrate his “mana” (54), which is projected into the patient. If the therapy is successful this would make it possible for him/her to be able to help the suffering patient, who might else be lost for good, or at least be out of therapeutic reach for years. The physician, who is not in love with his/her patient, but voluntarily chooses to abuse his patient’s body, finances, or the patient in any other way, can normally not be helped by therapy, as he/she insists on being evil (49). The only solution here is unfortunately the withdrawal of the medical license, and often also imprisonment to protect other patients from being abused.

Discussion

Basically ethical rules are securing that people do not harm each other. Sexual ethics is about securing that we are not harming for example children with our inappropriate sexual behavior. The trans-cultural taboo of incest is securing that parents do not sexually abuse children. The rule against adultery is securing the general population against STDs and it gives children at least some confidence in the man raising them being their father. The rule about the doctor not acting out allows the family to entrust the patient to the doctor’s care and allows the patient to be able to undress safely, when needed for examination and treatment. Many of the ethical rules are thus extremely practical.

But other ethical rules are not so wise, i.e. the rule of not touching the patient, which is a completely new rule in medicine, arising from modern culture being very mental and far from the body. Most unfortunately these new “ethical rules” are extremely harmful to medicine and they may very well be the reason, why we have 40% of the whole population being physically and mentally ill today. Without the sexual healing of the patient we cannot at all heal the patient’s body or mind so completely dependent on sexual health – the healthy circulation of the basic life-energy of our organism. We think that it is important that ethical rules are not

made so strict that they are a hindrance to the natural, healthy processes of life, like people finding each other and wanting to be together for life. If the doctor-patient relationship is brought to a natural end, a physician and an ex-patient who love each other should be allowed to a relationship and marriage. We recommend that the medical ethical rules always are making this possible. Medical ethics has most unfortunately borrowed its rules from the anti-sexual moral attitudes of a conservative, Christian society, not from rational scientific examination of induced harm from sexual abuse. Contemporary ethical rules are creating a lot of fear from touching the patients, fear of being accused of sexual abuse. This fear is very realistic as a physician who does bodywork is highly vulnerable to false accusations of sexual abuse. There seems to be no documentation that body-workers abuse their patients more than other physicians and therapists. We must encourage the medical societies to change the rules so that the patients can get the bodywork, therapeutic touch and manual sexological treatment they need, without their doctor fearing for his career.

In general sex is not harmful, but a natural and healthy part of life and a condition for a full, loving relationship between man and woman. A healthy sexuality is a condition for physical and mental health, and personal development of character, spirit and purpose of life. A full insight into sexuality is extremely important for knowing one self. A sexual relation between two adults can be harmful if:

- there is an unloving relationship with the lack of awareness, respect, care, acceptance and/or acknowledgment of the other persons soul
- there is a conflict of interest leading to power struggles and traumas (a physically, emotionally or spiritually painful experience, and a negative decision modifying existence (37))
- the soul, mind, feelings, body, gender, integrity, wishes, status or power of the person are seduced, manipulated or invisibly violated
- an important relationship is broken or damaged
- care or a medical treatment is interrupted.

On the other hand, when a sexual relationship is not physically, emotionally or spiritually painful, when responsibility is not failed, when the person or the persons perception of self or other is not in any way violated or damaged, and when important relationships, care and treatment is not interrupted, sex is not harmful. Sex can be healing, and even a painful sexual event can induce sexual and existential healing according to the principle of similarity.

We have analysed the holistic sexological manual procedures and found them ethically acceptable. We found no ethical problems with holistic medical procedures that involve sexuality, like direct sexual stimulation, or substitute partnership. We did find problems with a physician having a sexual relationship with a patient, but no problem with the physician and the patient becoming partners in life after therapy is ended. Sexual transferences and counter-transferences not taken well care of can easily destroy both the life of the physician or therapist and the life of the patient. Sexual desires acted out without ethical consciousness are potentially harmful.

We believe that most societies of physicians and therapists have not understood sexuality well enough and that many ethical rules, i.e. the rule of not touching the patient in psychotherapy, are counterproductive and therefore not ethical, in spite of looking ethical at a

first glance. Only through a deep understanding on the nature of sexuality and sexual trauma can we secure a truly ethical, beneficial and not harmful conduct as physicians and therapist. Ethical rules must come from wisdom, not from the contemporary moral of the society or the medical community.

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Integrative Ethical Theory

We have presented an integral ethical theory with three dimensions: 1) intent, 2) outcome and 3) the quality of the act, well known from a) the duty ethics, b) the utilitarian ethics and c) the feminist ethics. This theory makes it possible to give a complex evaluation of the ethics of a complex holistic medical or sexological treatment. We have introduced a new “rule of integrative ethics” that allows us to evaluate the medical ethics of complex therapeutic behavior. This ethical model is useful for clinical holistic medicine, especially to evaluate the ethics of concrete therapeutic actions in advanced holistic medical and sexological treatment. An integrative medical ethic is useful for teaching ethics to holistic therapists and physicians and for training students in holistic medicine.

Introduction

Ethics is the philosophy and science about doing good. It must be discriminated from the moral of society, which is the set of moral rules that a specific society requests its members to respect and follow. Medical ethics can sometimes be in conflict with the morals of society; it can be immoral to kill but ethical to perform euthanasia or it can be immoral for 13-year old teenagers to have sex but ethical to give them birth control. In a society physicians often receive permission to violate moral rules of society, if the actions are well based in medical ethics. Therefore it is urgent that the principles of medical ethics are clear, logical, fair and practical.

The medical ethics has its roots with Hippocrates (460-377 BCE), who worked with non-drug therapy. His aim was to help people cure their diseases by stepping into character, knowing themselves, and using all their talents to create value in the world. One thing that could seriously harm a physician’s ability to help was if his reputation was destroyed, if he was mistrusted, or if he destroyed his therapeutic relationships by having sex with his patients. All this meant special demands and conduct for the behavior of a physician, hence the famous medical ethics (1).

With the establishment of the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine in 1997, expanding to the Research Clinic for Holistic Medicine and Sexology in 2003, and into the Nordic School of Holistic Medicine in 2004, all under the auspices of the Quality of Life Research

Center in Copenhagen, we have gone back to clinical medicine, i.e. a medicine that is examination and cure in the same process (2-4). For almost two decades we have been doing research in non-drug medicine - clinical holistic medicine - which is basically the combination of conversation and touch therapy (5-9). Of talking and touching, touching is far the most emotional, and the most difficult to master. In spite of this, it is well known that bodywork and touch therapy has no adverse effects, if it is done gently and without use of perfumed, aromatic oils (10). Even the most vulnerable and fragile of patients, the mentally ill children and teenagers has been shown to benefit from therapeutic touch (11), but even if you avoid extremely vigorous touch, the patient can still be violated sexually, hence the classical Hippocratic rule of the physician avoiding abusing his patients sexually. We know of no therapist that does not agree in this simple and basic rule of professional behavior. So this is simple.

What is not so simple is to create value for the patient just by talking and touching. When the therapist's words and behavior is used as medicine – when the doctor is himself the tool (12) - the need for a clear and practical medical ethics becomes obvious. Most unfortunately medical ethics has not developed much since Hippocrates, while the ethics as a philosophical subject had undergone a tremendous development. Most unfortunately, philosophical ethics had divided into three major schools, none of them completely efficient in guiding the practice of medicine and therapy. We therefore in our research project on clinical holistic medicine started to develop an integrated medical ethics that could fill the gap (13).

As teachers of the therapy and the training of therapists we have assumed responsibility for our patients and for our student's behavior. The practical training of the student to behave optimally together with the patient was what most urgently forced us to work on formulating a new more comprehensive medical ethic.

Holistic medicine and ethics

The Nordic style of holistic medicine and therapy is somewhat different from many other countries, especially America. In the Nordic countries sexology is often an integrated part of the medical clinic, while in other parts of the world the sexological clinics are separated from the medical facilities. In the US, a doctor is rarely a sexologist and a sexologist is rarely a doctor. In Europe, strongly inspired by Freud (14), Jung (15,16) Reich (17) and many other therapists, researchers and sexologists (18-20) including many physicians has included work with the patient's sexuality in their clinical work.

As most other holistic therapists we believe that the process of healing one's existence comes about when sufficient resources are available for the patient. Our concept for giving this support is the four steps of 1) love, 2) trust, 3) holding and 4) processing the patient (3-9). This often leads to close intimacy between the therapist and the patient, often leading further into re-parenting and spontaneous regression into the most emotionally painful childhood and adolescent life events. The extreme closeness and intimacy needed for the patient's healing and the material of the patient's case story is not always as neutral to the therapist as wished for. The experienced therapist knows how to deal with all kinds of reactions, from intense emotional suffering, resentment and aggression, to transference, projections of love, strength and desire, all the way up to sexual excitement.

In the beginning the student and the inexperienced therapist often feels it both awkward and somewhat flattering, when the patient falls in love with them. The reaction to the patient turning on sexually, are often either disgust and condemnation or excitement and desire. The student is before anything a human being with his/her own repressed material, own vulnerable borders, and own sexuality. The repressed material can be activated, the borders violated, the sexual desire awakened, and from this arises many problems for most students.

It takes about 10 minutes to read the standard medical ethical rules for a student and unfortunately the sexual desire is often not well controlled by such rules. The inexperienced student is often in a very difficult situation regarding ethics, because of the rules being very tempting and very easy to go about. The only solid thing granting an ethical behavior is the therapist being deeply founded in his/her own inner ethics, or “natural ethics” known from philosophy. The fundamental idea is that every man has an ethical nature, which often must be discovered in serious self-contemplation; what is almost always discovered is that in the essence of our soul, we are loving beings who wants to contribute with something of value to our fellow men.

Sexual issues in clinical practice

A rule will often seem ridiculous, when reality comes marching in and a young man and a young woman fall in love and want each other. Such a relationship will often appear more important than anything else, including the whole education and medical carrier. In this situation ethical rules are much more likely to make the involved persons keep the relationship secret than to make them abstain from having the relationship.

When it comes to personal development, secrecy about a relationship between a patient and a therapist or student with elements of love and sexuality is almost certain to disturb or even arrest it. Applying standard ethical rules, which often cannot be respected even by experienced therapists to the students, are therefore not only meaningless, but even damaging to the learning and development of the student. As we definitely need our students to be ethical and well behaved therapists, the problem is now what kind of ethics we need to impose on them as their teachers, or more precisely: how we can make them solve their own ethical problems by doing a thorough analyses of their personal ethics and the consequent medical ethics.

If possible to formulate at all, we need an ethical theory to guide this important endeavor; we need a general and fundamental understanding of human ethics to enlighten all students and therapists about our deeply ethical nature and the extreme value of ethics. In addition to such a theory we need a strategy for couching the students into the development of a perfectly ethical practice.

The use of ethics

First we need to understand that ethics is meant to guide our actions in order to do good for others in this life. Judging and punishing is generally not good. It leads to conditioned learning (Pavlovian, unconscious learning), with reflex inhibitions and accumulations of life-

pain, thus crippling of the soul and existence, instead of facilitating conscious learning, awareness and enlightenment. If we want to create a community of conscious and responsible people, we need everybody to develop a high degree of self-esteem, a full permission to acting on any urge, and a flexible system of feedback to notice impact of any action and efficient learning. The environment must be open and friendly, and everybody must assume that the other person come with a good intent.

Ethics can be used to judge the actions of other people, but being judgmental is often not of any value, unless the offender is completely expelled from the society. If one can choose between being a good example and being judgmental, the impact on a family or on the community will normally be a hundred times more constructive if you elect to be the good example. Rules are often carried in our minds and not in our hearts, making them easy to neglect, when a person can gain a personal advantage or can avoid confronting a neurotic pattern of behavior dictated by un-integrated life-pain.

Depending on the understanding of human nature, ethics is something natural that must be looked for and found at the bottom of your soul, or something un-natural that must be imposed on man from the outside world. The life-mission theory (21-28) states that everybody the essentially in his soul carry a wish to do good in the world, using specific talents and gifts. According to this theory ethics is not only something that we can find and discover within ourselves, but something that is a direct expression of our innermost nature. Doing good for other people is what life is about. Doing good and making a difference in the world is the meaning of life, the fundamental reason why we are here. The more ethical rules, the easier it is to go into the mind, to go to a place of judging another person, and to lose connection to the heart and deep nature of self; ideally therefore we all carry a non-rule based ethics, customized to completely fit our own understanding of life and self.

A timeline strategy for integrating ethics

There have been three major directions in ethical thinking: the duty ethics, the utilitarian ethics and the feministic ethics. With duty ethics the intention is what is important. If you kill a person with no intention whatsoever to do so, your action can still be ethical. The utilitarian ethics looks at the result of the action: if the person died, the action was wrong, even if you desperately tried to help him as a physician. The feministic thinkers have been looking very much into the balance between the male and the female components in ethical situations.

To integrate these three seemingly contradictory ethical philosophies has been a very difficult task, but obviously this is what must be done for us to have the best ethics, as most people will choose the combination of a good intention, good result and balanced actions. Only a fanatic will say that we just need to look into our heart, the result of our action is not important. Only an opportunistic person deprived of any scruple will say that we can be as evil as we want, as long as it maximizes the profit for me or for the world at large. And only a person with no roots into reality would state that now is all that counts, intention and result are not important at all.

So how can the three different ethical perspectives become integrated into a common ethical theory for use in holistic medical practice? A simple way is to use the timeline: Before an action we must look at our intention (or the intention of another person, directly if

possible, or through his/her statement of the intent), we must look at the probable outcome of our different choices of action, and for each of them we must visualize the events that will come in order to see which line of events born from these different possible actions will be the most harmonious.

In the middle of an action, after choosing the fundamental direction, we must keep an eye on our intent to be sure not to depart from an ethical route. Due to the emotional aspects involved, we must be keenly aware to interact in our best way, reflect and at all time notice our impact in order to evaluate if there is anything in our behavior, understanding, or perspective that we need to correct. Finally we must be certain that every present situation is balanced between female and male energies, not being too much colored by the element of “water” or of too much “fire”.

After the action we must contemplate on what we did, how we did it, and what we accomplished. Did I come from a good intent or did I catch myself coming from my shadow (25)? Did I act in fine balance, respecting both the male and the female aspects of the universe? Did I do the good I intended? What did I learn? What is the urge in myself and in the space and universe that I now feel? What will be my next step? Is there something or some relationship I involuntarily damaged, which I now need to repair before I can move forward?

An ethical theory based on the theory of existence

To create a formal theory of ethics we need to map the dimensions of existence relevant for human ethics and to be sure to encompass the totality. The extended version of the life mission theory called the theory of talent (23) gives fundamental dimensions of human existence: love/intent, power/consciousness and gender/sexuality. Interestingly, these three dimensions correspond to the three ethical perspectives of duty ethics (love/intention), utilitarian ethics (power/consciousness), and feministic ethics (gender/balance between the male and the female). That makes the life mission theory an excellent framework for an ethical theory with the axes: 1) Intent, 2) impact, and 3) balance between male and female.

In a way, the ethical debate is done with, if one can use such a simple theoretical framework for ethical guidance in all our actions. The strength of such a model is that it invites anybody who knows it to look for these dimensions in themselves, and thus it helps developing natural ethics. This is especially important where a flawless ethics is a must, as in the training of students in holistic medicine.

A strategy for coaching

It only takes about ten minutes to read and explain the ethical rules of physicians or other therapists to a class of students. The issue most intensely stressed is the ethical rules regarding sexuality. Sexual abuse cannot be tolerated and just one student or physician caught in severe misconduct can bring shame over a whole hospital or university, actually over the whole

medical society. In spite of this obvious fact, sexual misconduct has continuously been a problem, ever since the ethical rules handed down by Hippocrates.

In the modern medical clinic, sexual abuse during the therapy is extremely rare, as people not being able to control their sexual behavior are likely to be regarded as compulsive sexual offenders and sent away for psychiatric care. The problem is when a physician or student and a patient fall in love. In this situation everything including the education or whole medical career loses its significance, compared to this relationship now commencing. In practice it is almost impossible to keep the two parties from each other and even awareness of the strict ethical rules forbidding a sexual relationship will most likely make the two persons engage in a hidden relationship instead and anyway.

Case study one

A 50-year old, married psychotherapist and his 27-year old patient fell in love. She was in his therapy group. They started a sexual relationship, which they kept secret for about 6 month, until the day when she finally broke down and told another person that he drank and had sexually abused her. He was drinking, because he had severe emotional problems from this double life: a sexually highly dissatisfying life in his marriage and in the darkest secrecy, a promiscuous life with prostitutes and now also the sexual abuse of a patient. She had not been able to get help from another therapist, neither could she tell her girlfriends about the relationship, because she was afraid that the new therapist or some of the girlfriends would denounce him and thus ruin his career. After this incident the patient was supported and refused to see him again, which he insisted. Only after she had threatened him with the possibility of reporting to the ethical committee of the psychotherapist association did he stop bothering her. The psychotherapist is still working as a therapist. The patient is now in therapy healing her wounded heart and body, but the new therapy is facing severe difficulties, because of her serious distrust and intentions of her new therapist. She has seemingly been severely damaged existentially by the abusive relationship.

This situation is unfortunately not unusual and in one study 23% of the incest victims reported a new sexual violation from their therapist (29). Seemingly we are facing a paradox: all the ethical rules are working fine, except with the people, who really need them. Instead of helping, the ethical rules seems to be a destructive barrier making it impossible to talk about what is really going on, making the patients and therapist who fall in love and engage in a relationship so wrong that they must keep it a secret forever. Not being able to share this with anybody, the relationship turns out to but much more harmful, than it would have been in an open and accepting society. The conclusion is that a sexual relationship between a therapist and a patient is damaging; but what seems to be most damaging is the consequences of the wrong and the deep secrecy making it impossible for both the patient and the therapist to talk about it with anybody and to seek supervision and help.

If the therapist in the above mentioned case had been open about his sexual problems in the first place, if not with anybody else then just with his wife, the situation could not have persisted for years and developed as it did. If he just could admit it to his own supervisor and therapist, the situation would not have gone completely out of control and he could have been helped to confront his own feelings and personal problems creating the emotional pull in

order to take his projections back (30). If it was not a “deathly sin” leading to expulsion from the society of psychotherapists, the patient could have gone to another therapist for help, or she could have talked with her friends about it.

Case study two

A 30-year old student in holistic medicine fell in love with a mentally ill participant of the same age in a quality of life course and shared her experience and different thoughts with her supervisor. As a sexual relationship seemingly could not be avoided, she asked permission to sleep with him. The supervisor gave the permission, under the condition that she takes full responsibility for the impact of her actions. She slept with him and a month afterwards he entered an almost suicidal crisis. In the middle of the night she took her car and drove 300 km to assist him and help him through his crisis. She felt an extreme degree of empathy and responsibility and knew that she was in it with everything she has got. She stayed intimate and closely emotionally connected to him for about 100 intensive hours in a row during which she connected with her supervisor by phone. Finally she managed to get him to trust her and to receive the holding he needed for healing existentially. He now succeeded to integrate the strong life-pains that made him want to die. After this dramatic culmination of his old tendency to attempt suicide and his spontaneous regression to early childhood and poor mothering, it seemed that his mental and existential problems were to a large extent solved. She on her part took her projections back from him too, so her sexual desire was gone. In her next supervision session it looked more to her like an intense wish to help the young man, than it looked like a sexual intention in its own right. Giving her body will not be a part of her treatments, but here for some idiopathic reason this was inevitable. So they were in the end both set free by the episode, which from normal moral and medical-ethical standards would have been unacceptable. She also learned about the dramatic impact of a sexual relationship with a patient, and why she needs to be extremely careful with this kind of involvement in the future. Without wise guidance this relationship could have ended tragically.

BOX 1: CAM often use one or more of the five central, holistic principles of healing the whole person (from 31).

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The principle of salutogenesis: the whole person must be healed (existential healing), not only a part of the person. This is done by recovering the sense of coherence, character and purpose of life of the person b) The similarity principle: only by reminding the patient (or his body, mind or soul) of what made him ill, can the patient be cured. The reason for this is that the earlier wound/trauma(s) live in the subconscious (or body-mind) c) The Hering's law of cure (Constantine Hering, 1800-1880): that you will get well in the opposite order of the way you got ill d) The principle of resources: only when you are getting the holding/care and support you did not get when you became ill, can you be healed from the old wound (2-4) e) The principle of using as little force as possible (primum non nocere or first do no harm), because since Hippocrates (460-377 BCE) statement "Declare the past, diagnose the present, foretell the future; practice these acts. As to diseases, make a habit of two things - to help, or at least to do no harm" (1), it has been paramount not to harm the patient or running a risk with the patient's life or health. |
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Therapeutic behaviour in clinical holistic medicine

According to the holistic process theory of healing, holistic and existential healing happens when the patient encounters the repressed content of his or her unconscious. There are three steps in holistic healing: 1) feel, 2) understand and 3) let go (31). To facilitate healing, the therapist must support the patient, which is called “holding” (known as the “principle of resources”) (32, Box 1). At the same time the therapist must take the patient into painful emotions and gestalts - the traumas from early life - by exposing the patient to small doses of that originally made him ill (this is known as the “principle of similarity”) (32-39). The latter therapeutic re-exposure to the evil is called “processing”. As most of what gave us our traumas originally was evil, the key to healing is really treating the patient “bad” with the good intention of healing them. This is what happens in the therapeutic processing.

So the skilful therapist treats the patient good and bad at the same time; holding takes love, devotion, acceptance, patience, acknowledgement, respect and so forth (23), while processing takes small doses of controlled violence, abuse, neglect etc. as is well known from the advanced toolbox of clinical holistic medicine (8) and intensive holistic therapy (40-43). The necessity of “evil” actions in holistic therapy calls urgently for an ethical tool that allows us to evaluate each therapeutic action regarding its ethical standing. Below we present three examples in need of ethical evaluation.

Example one: a patient physically abused as a child

A patient was severely beaten as a child. According to the principle of similarity, the therapist must beat him again, or do something similar to provoke and process him. The therapist must take the patient back to his childhood traumatic violence and (after getting consent) once again beat him. This is what has been called “encounter” (44). During such a session, the therapist through role-play, invite the patient to go back in time, into re-experiencing being children beaten by his father (now the therapist) and to once again feel all the anger and fear that the beating made him feel, and little by little understand what the violent abuse and repression did to him as child. What it did do his personality - to allow him to let go of all his repressed hate and anger and in the end to embrace, understand his father, and forgive him. This is a most difficult therapeutic process, as any therapist will know.

Is this an ethical action? To answer this question, we can look at 1) the intent, 2) the way the exercise was done and 3) the outcome. We need to compare it to the three steps of healing: feel, understand and let go. Regarding the first: If it was done with a good intent – to heal – then we believe it was ethical. Concerning the second: If it was done in an empathic and balanced way, helpful to the patient, facilitating the recall of old feelings and emotions, facilitating reflection and understanding, and facilitating forgiveness and letting go of negative beliefs and learning from the childhood violent abuse, then it was ethical in our opinion. Regarding the last: If it helped the patient to heal and forgive, it was ethical as we understand it– if it healed or supported healing, because it provoked emotion, understanding and letting go, it was ethical. If the patient learned from it and gained understanding and self-insight it was ethical in our opinion.

The “rule of integrative ethics”

It is always difficult to balance these three factors: Intent, outcome and quality of action. The “rule of integrative ethics” is that if two or three out of these three ethical dimensions were fine, then the action was all together ethical in our opinion. Imagine that the exercise was well performed, and everything in principle went well, but the patient was not helped. We would not blame the therapist in that situation. Imagine that the therapist failed to do the therapy empathically, but that it was done in the best of intentions, and that it really helped the patient. Again, we would not blame the therapist. Imagine that the intent was not good, but selfish, as the therapist himself had been beaten as a child, and needed to do this exercise for his own sake; if it was done emphatically and skillfully, and if it really helped the patient, we would not accuse him for being a bad therapist – but of course we would still give him critique and encourage him to take the therapy he needs himself.

But, if this was done with a selfish intent, and it did not help the patient, we would reject it as unethical therapy. If it was done in the best of intentions, but performed badly, so it did not help the patient, we would say, that it was not good therapy. If the intention was evil, and the act cruel and it really did help the patient, we would still blame the therapist for not giving good and ethical therapy.

Example two: a cancer patient in existential trouble

Now let’s take a little more difficult example. A cancer patient wants to live, but feels that she is losing herself – her hair, her body tissues, her dignity, wearing a ridiculous wig. The therapist wants to encourage her to be what she is, and love just that, and in this intent he makes a role play with her where he puts her wig in the office’s paper-bin (it does not destroy the wig, as the bin is clean and empty). After this she feels courageous enough to be bald and she does not wear the wig anymore. Was that ethical?

It was done in a good intent. It was – at least according to the moral of society - a violation of her integrity and the outcome was good. As two out of three of these ethical dimensions were positive, the action was all in all ethically acceptable and good in our opinion.

Example three: holistic sexology: healing a sexually abused woman using “acceptance through touch”

Sexual dysfunctions often come from lack of self-acceptance. A traditional cure for this is therapeutic touch especially if the therapist is able to signify acceptance by the touch, a technique known as “acceptance through touch” (1,8,45). Around the year 1900 therapeutic touch was often practiced as a swift kiss, but due to moral reflections this practice has now become rare. Let us use such a controversial practice as the next example.

A holistic therapist works on a severely sexually abused 21-year old woman. The therapist feels that just touching the patient by hand is not enough to heal her, and chooses therefore, after getting her consent for this action, to gently kiss her mons pubis (over the

pubic hair and the pubic bone, at one of the acupressure points related to sexuality known as “Conception Vessel 4” in Chinese medicine (46)). The intention is to let her know that her body and genitals are completely lovely, acceptable and fine for him or indeed taking her father’s place psychodynamically.

The rationale for this action is clear: a kiss is maybe the most powerful bodily sign of acceptance, and the genital kiss is a well-known sexological procedure developed by van der Velde around 1900 as an exercise for couples (47). The genital kiss was a non-sexual interaction indented for lovers; it allowed a man to heal his women for sexual frigidity. Brecher wrote in 1969: “The genital kiss, van der Velde adds, ”is particularly calculated to overcome frigidity and fear in hitherto inexperienced women who have had no erotic practice, and are as yet scarcely capable of specific sexual desire”. In the example the procedure of the genital kiss seemingly did the job and helped the woman to acceptance of own body and sexuality. After the therapy she is able to enter a happy sexual relationship for the first time in her life.

Was this action ethical? Let’s analyse according to the “rule of integrative ethics”:

- It was done in the best of intentions.
- It was not sex and therefore not in conflict with the ethics of Hippocrates (but as it was close to the vulva it was still in conflict with the moral of society).
- The woman was helped but it is difficult to say if it was this kiss that healed her.

The score are as follows: a) It was done with a good intention, b) the action was not sex so it was ethical according to medical ethics but at the same time not morally acceptable by society, c) the outcome was good. All in all this is therefore still an ethical act.

Discussion

This kind of “doubtful” actions as shown in example three has been quite normal in the classical holistic therapy of Asia, guided by the principle often called “holy madness” or “crazy wisdom” (48,49). Holy madness is today often used in advanced holistic therapy and at advanced courses in self-knowledge and personal development.

With a traditional duty-ethic many actions performed in the state of “holy madness” must be rejected as unethical, but in the light of a complex, integrated ethics, many of the actions become also ethically acceptable. They are actually very helpful for learning and personal development, because they turn reality up-side-down and force the students to think and reflect.

It must be admitted, that according to the integrative ethics, sex with a patient, if done with a good intent, and with a good outcome, is in principle ethical, in spite of validating the famous ethical rule of Hippocrates of not having sex with your patient. In spite of this, modern holistic therapists agrees, that this rule is so important, that even the best of intentions and the best of outcomes cannot allow for a dispensation from it. Therefore, we strongly advise that the “rule of integrative ethics” is not used to justify sex with the patient. The suspicion, that the therapist did it for himself, and not for his patient, will always be there, making the action unethical.

Conclusions

An integral ethical theory can integrate the three ethical core dimensions: 1) intent, 2) outcome and 3) the quality of the act, well known from a) the duty ethics, b) the utilitarian ethics and c) the feminist ethics. This theory makes it possible to give a complex evaluation of the ethics of a complex holistic medical or sexological treatment. We have introduced a new “rule of integrative ethics” that allows us to evaluate the medical ethics of complex therapeutic behaviour, even if such a behaviour be judged as immoral by society in general. This ethics is useful for clinical holistic medicine, especially to ethically evaluate the concrete therapeutic actions in advanced holistic medical and sexological treatment. An integrative medical ethic is useful for teaching ethics to holistic therapists and physicians and for training students in holistic medicine.

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Section 10: Acknowledgment

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About the Quality of Life Research Center in Copenhagen, Denmark

The Quality of Life Research Center in Copenhagen was established in 1989, when the physician Søren Ventegodt succeeded in getting a collaboration started with the Department of Social Medicine at the University of Copenhagen in response to the project “Quality of life and causes of disease”. An interdisciplinary “Working group for the quality of life in Copenhagen” was established and when funds were raised in 1991 the University Hospital of Copenhagen (Rigshospitalet) opened its doors for the project.

The main task was a comprehensive follow-up of 9,006 pregnancies and the children delivered during 1959-61. This Copenhagen Perinatal Birth Cohort was established by the a gynecologist and a pediatrician, the late Aage Villumsen, MD, PhD and the late Bengt Zachau-Christiansen, MD, PhD, who had made intensive studies during pregnancy, early childhood and young adulthood. The cohort was during 1980-1989 directed by the pediatrician Joav Merrick, MD, DMSc, who established the Prospective Pediatric Research Unit at the University Hospital of Copenhagen and managed to update the cohort for further follow-up register research, until he moved to Israel. The focus was to study quality of life related to socio-economic status and health in order to compare with the data collected during pregnancy, delivery and early childhood.

The project continued to grow and later in 1993, the work was organized into a statistics group, a software group that developed the computer programs for use in the data entry and a group responsible for analysis of the data.

Quality of life research center at the university medical center

The Quality of Life Center at the University Hospital generated grants, publicity with research and discussions among the professionals leading to the claim that quality of life was significant for health and disease. It is obvious that a single person cannot do much about his/her own disease, if it is caused by chemical defects in the body or outside chemical-

physical influences. However, if a substantial part of diseases are caused by a low quality of life, we can all prevent a lot of disease and operate as our own physicians, if we make a personal effort and work to improve our quality of life. A series of investigations showed that this was indeed possible. This view of the role of personal responsibility for illness and health would naturally lead to a radical re-consideration of the role of the physician and also influence our society.

Independent quality of life research center

In 1994, The Quality of Life Research Center became an independent institution located in the center of the old Copenhagen. Today, the number of full-time employees have grown. The Research Center is still expanding and several companies and numerous institutions make use of the resources, such as lectures, courses, consulting or contract research. The companies, which have used the competence of the research center and its tools on quality of life and quality of working life, include IBM, Lego, several banks, a number of counties, municipalities, several ministries, The National Defense Center for Leadership and many other management training institutions, along with more than 300 public and private companies. It started in Denmark, but has expanded to involve the whole Scandinavian area.

The center's research on the quality of life have been through several phases from measurement of quality of life, from theory to practice over several projects on the quality of life in Denmark, which have been published and received extended public coverage and public impact in Denmark and Scandinavia. The data is now also an important part of Veenhoven's Database on Happiness at Rotterdam University in the Netherlands.

New research

Since The Quality-of-Life Research Center became independent a number of new research projects were launched. One was a project that aimed to prevent illness and social problems among the elderly in one of the municipalities by inspiring the elderly to improve their quality of life themselves. Another a project about quality of life after apoplectic attacks at one of the major hospitals in Copenhagen and the Danish Agency for Industry granted funds for a project about the quality of work life.

Quality of life of 10,000 danes

There is a general consensus that many of the diseases that plague the Western world (which are not the result of external factors such as starvation, micro-organisms, infection or genetic defects) are lifestyle related and as such, preventable through lifestyle changes. Thus increasing time and effort is spent on developing public health strategies to promote "healthy" lifestyles. However, it is not a simple task to identify and dispel the negative and unhealthy parts of our modern lifestyle even with numerous behavioural factors that can be readily

highlighted harmful, like the use of alcohol, use of tobacco, the lack of regular exercise and a high fat, low fibre diet.

However there is more to Western culture and lifestyle than these factors and if we only focus on them we can risk overlooking others. We refer to other large parts of our life, for instance the way we think about and perceive life (our life attitudes, our perception of reality and our quality of life) and the degree of happiness we experience through the different dimensions of our existence. These factors or dimensions can now, to some degree, be isolated and examined. The medical sociologist Aaron Antonovsky (1923-1994) from the Faculty of Health Sciences at Ben Gurion University in Beer-Sheva, who developed the salutogenic model of health and illness, discussed the dimension, “sense of coherence”, that is closely related to the dimension of “life meaning”, as perhaps the deepest and most important dimension of quality of life. Typically, the clinician or researcher, when attempting to reveal a connection between health and a certain factor, sides with only one of the possible dimensions stated above. A simple, one-dimensional hypothesis is then postulated, like for instance that cholesterol is harmful to circulation. Cholesterol levels are then measured, manipulated and ensuing changes to circulatory function monitored. The subsequent result may show a significant, though small connection, which supports the initial hypothesis and in turn becomes the basis for implementing preventive measures, like a change of diet. The multi-factorial dimension is therefore often overlooked.

In order to investigate this multifactorial dimension a cross-sectional survey examining close to 10,000 Danes was undertaken in order to investigate the connection between lifestyle, quality of life and health status by way of a questionnaire based survey. The questionnaire was mailed in February 1993 to 2,460 persons aged between 18-88, randomly selected from the CPR (Danish Central Register) and 7,222 persons from the Copenhagen Perinatal Birth Cohort 1959-61.

A total of 1,501 persons between the ages 18-88 years and 4,626 persons between the ages 31-33 years returned the questionnaire (response rates 61.0% and 64.1% respectively). The results showed that health had a stronger correlation to quality of life ($r=0.5$, $p<0.0001$), than it had to lifestyle ($r=0.2$, $p<0.0001$).

It was concluded that preventable diseases could be more effectively handled through a concentrated effort to improve quality of life rather than through an approach that focus solely on the factors that are traditionally seen to reflect an unhealthy life style.

Collaborations across borders

The project has been developed during several phases. The first phase, 1980-1990, was about mapping the medical systems of the pre-modern cultures of the world, understanding their philosophies and practices and merging this knowledge with western biomedicine. A huge task seemingly successfully accomplished in the Quality of Life (QOL) theories, and the QOL philosophy, and the most recent theories of existence, explaining the human nature, and especially the hidden resources of man, their nature, their location in human existence and the way to approach them through human consciousness.

Søren Ventegodt visited several countries around the globe in the late 1980s and analysed about 10 pre-modern medical systems and a dozen of shamans, shangomas and spiritual

leaders noticing most surprisingly similarities, allowing him together with about 20 colleagues at the QOL Study Group at the University of Copenhagen, to model the connection between QOL and health. This model was later further developed and represented in the integrative QOL theories and a number of publications. Based on this philosophical breakthrough the Quality of Life Research Center was established at the University hospital. Here a broad cooperation took place with many interested physicians and nurses from the hospital.

A QOL conference in 1993 with more than 100 scientific participants discussed the connection between QOL and the development of disease and its prevention. Four physicians collaborated on the QOL population survey 1993. For the next 10 years the difficult task of integrating bio-medicine and the traditional medicine went on and Søren Ventegodt again visited several centers and scientists at the Universities of New York, Berkeley, Stanford and other institutions. He also met people like David Spiegel, Dean Ornish, Louise Hay, Dalai Lama and many other leading persons in the field of holistic medicine and spirituality.

Around the year 2000 an international scientific network started to take form with an intense collaboration with the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) in Israel, which has now developed the concept of “Holistic Medicine”. We believe that the trained physician today has three medical toolboxes: the manual medicine (traditional), the bio-medicine (with drugs and pharmacology) and the consciousness-based medicine (scientific, holistic medicine). What is extremely interesting is that most diseases can be alleviated with all three sets of medical tools, but only the bio-medical toolset is highly expensive. The physician, using his hands and his consciousness to improve the health of the patient by mobilising hidden resources in the patient can use his skills in any cultural setting, rich or poor.

Contact person

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About the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development in Israel

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) in Israel was established in 1998 as a virtual institute under the auspices of the Medical Director, Ministry of Social Affairs and Social Services in order to function as the research arm for the Office of the Medical Director. In 1998 the National Council for Child Health and Pediatrics, Ministry of Health and in 1999 the Director General and Deputy Director General of the Ministry of Health endorsed the establishment of the NICHD.

Mission

The mission of a National Institute for Child Health and Human Development in Israel is to provide an academic focal point for the scholarly interdisciplinary study of child life, health, public health, welfare, disability, rehabilitation, intellectual disability and related aspects of human development. This mission includes research, teaching, clinical work, information and public service activities in the field of child health and human development.

Service and academic activities

Over the years many activities became focused in the south of Israel due to collaboration with various professionals at the Faculty of Health Sciences (FOHS) at the Ben Gurion University of the Negev (BGU). Since 2000 an affiliation with the Zusman Child Development Center at the Pediatric Division of Soroka University Medical Center has resulted in collaboration around the establishment of the Down Syndrome Clinic at that center. In 2002 a full course on “Disability” was established at the Recanati School for Allied Professions in the Community, FOHS, BGU and in 2005 collaboration was started with the Primary Care Unit of the faculty and disability became part of the master of public health

course on “Children and society”. In the academic year 2005-2006 a one semester course on “Aging with disability” was started as part of the master of science program in gerontology in our collaboration with the Center for Multidisciplinary Research in Aging.

Research activities

The affiliated staff have over the years published work from projects and research activities in this national and international collaboration. In the year 2000 the International Journal of Adolescent Medicine and Health and in 2005 the International Journal on Disability and Human development of Freund Publishing House (London and Tel Aviv), in the year 2003 the TSW-Child Health and Human Development and in 2006 the TSW-Holistic Health and Medicine of the Scientific World Journal (New York and Kirkkonummi, Finland), all peer-reviewed international journals were affiliated with the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. From 2008 also the International Journal of Child Health and Human Development (Nova Science, New York), the International Journal of Child and Adolescent Health (Nova Science) and the Journal of Pain Management (Nova Science) affiliated and from 2009 the International Public Health Journal (Nova Science) and Journal of Alternative Medicine Research (Nova Science).

National collaborations

Nationally the NICHD works in collaboration with the Faculty of Health Sciences, Ben Gurion University of the Negev; Department of Physical Therapy, Sackler School of Medicine, Tel Aviv University; Autism Center, Assaf HaRofeh Medical Center; National Rett and PKU Centers at Chaim Sheba Medical Center, Tel HaShomer; Department of Physiotherapy, Haifa University; Department of Education, Bar Ilan University, Ramat Gan, Faculty of Social Sciences and Health Sciences; College of Judea and Samaria in Ariel and recently also collaborations has been established with the Division of Pediatrics at Hadassah, Center for Pediatric Chronic Illness, Har HaZofim in Jerusalem.

International collaborations

Internationally with the Department of Disability and Human Development, College of Applied Health Sciences, University of Illinois at Chicago; Strong Center for Developmental Disabilities, Golisano Children's Hospital at Strong, University of Rochester School of Medicine and Dentistry, New York; Centre on Intellectual Disabilities, University of Albany, New York; Centre for Chronic Disease Prevention and Control, Health Canada, Ottawa; Chandler Medical Center and Children's Hospital, Kentucky Children's Hospital, Section of Adolescent Medicine, University of Kentucky, Lexington; Chronic Disease Prevention and Control Research Center, Baylor College of Medicine, Houston, Texas; Division of Neuroscience, Department of Psychiatry, Columbia University, New York; Institute for the

Study of Disadvantage and Disability, Atlanta; Center for Autism and Related Disorders, Department Psychiatry, Children's Hospital Boston, Boston; Department of Paediatrics, Child Health and Adolescent Medicine, Children's Hospital at Westmead, Westmead, Australia; International Centre for the Study of Occupational and Mental Health, Düsseldorf, Germany; Centre for Advanced Studies in Nursing, Department of General Practice and Primary Care, University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, United Kingdom; Quality of Life Research Center, Copenhagen, Denmark; Nordic School of Public Health, Gottenburg, Sweden, Scandinavian Institute of Quality of Working Life, Oslo, Norway; Centre for Quality of Life of the Hong Kong Institute of Asia-Pacific Studies and School of Social Work, Chinese University, Hong Kong.

Targets

Our focus is on research, international collaborations, clinical work, teaching and policy in health, disability and human development and to establish the NICHD as a permanent institute at one of the residential care centers for persons with intellectual disability in Israel in order to conduct model research and together with the four university schools of public health/medicine in Israel establish a national master and doctoral program in disability and human development at the institute to secure the next generation of professionals working in this often non-prestigious/low-status field of work.

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Health and human development is a book series with publications from a multidisciplinary group of researchers, practitioners and clinicians for an international professional forum interested in the broad spectrum of health and human development.

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Index

A

- Abraham, 169, 178, 194, 295, 458
- abuse, 27, 94, 104, 107, 114, 117, 154, 157, 176,
178, 190, 213, 224, 226, 229, 230, 252, 253, 254,
255, 256, 259, 263, 264, 267, 273, 279, 281, 288,
293, 294, 299, 300, 301, 303, 312, 325, 330, 333,
337, 347, 354, 356, 361, 363, 366, 379, 383, 386,
397, 403, 407, 417, 423, 431, 435, 436, 442, 443,
449, 451, 457, 460, 466, 469, 470, 471, 473, 501,
504, 505, 507, 508, 509, 519, 520, 531, 534, 545
- accommodation, 11, 190, 442, 509
- accountability, 492
- acne, 477
- acquaintance, 395
- acupuncture, 107, 418
- adaptation, 30, 40, 455, 461
- adductor, 404
- adductor brevis, 404
- adenocarcinoma, 479
- adhesions, 122, 159, 160, 381, 382
- adjustment, 455
- adolescent development, 153
- adolescents, 153, 155, 156, 157, 436
- adulthood, 547
- advantages, 42, 45, 145
- adverse effects, 2, 87, 113, 114, 116, 117, 118, 119,
243, 513, 528
- adverse event, 259, 260, 261, 267, 268, 371, 482,
483
- advocacy, 545
- aetiology, 118, 225
- Africa, 504
- aggression, 172, 265, 510, 528
- AIDS, 180, 217, 233, 369
- alcohol abuse, 69
- alcoholics, 278
- alcoholism, 32, 76, 148, 165, 283, 296, 398, 412, 430
- alienation, 448, 509
- allergy, 180, 218, 233, 369
- alternative medicine, 114, 200, 487, 493, 538
- alternative treatments, 420
- amenorrhea, 465, 478
- American Psychiatric Association, 385
- American Psychological Association, 412, 430
- amniotic fluid, 306
- anatomy, 14, 41, 59, 205, 416
- anger, 39, 103, 145, 175, 226, 255, 264, 265, 327,
328, 360, 366, 367, 399, 410, 415, 421, 451, 534
- anorexia, 167, 168, 169, 172, 173, 177, 178
- anorexia nervosa, 167, 168, 169, 172, 173, 177, 178
- anorgasmia, 81, 84, 87, 88, 89, 91, 113, 114, 118,
119, 120, 122, 123, 124, 149, 150, 176, 243, 377,
382, 384, 409, 418, 466, 473, 484, 503, 514, 515,
524
- anoxia, 478
- antibiotic, 18, 472
- anti-cancer, 472
- antidepressant, 154, 155
- antidepressant medication, 154
- antipsychotic, 356, 364, 524
- antipsychotic drugs, 356, 364, 524
- antisocial behavior, 168
- anus, 15, 95, 170, 171, 174, 176, 292, 301, 356, 360,
391, 419, 421, 466, 470, 473
- anxiety, 140, 155, 162, 175, 239, 262, 280, 391, 415,
537
- apoplexy, 506
- appetite, 168, 288, 321
- appointments, 109, 326
- arousal, 14, 15, 17, 28, 37, 48, 49, 81, 84, 121, 122,
123, 127, 306, 352, 354, 365, 379, 380, 381, 382,
384, 399, 402, 409, 418, 508, 524
- arrest, 529

arthritis, 71, 354
 ascorbic acid, 128
 Asia, 142, 488, 504, 536, 553
 assault, 68, 69, 71, 72, 74, 274, 275, 277, 292, 310, 389, 390, 391, 392, 393, 397, 461, 496, 498, 501, 506, 523
 assessment, 15, 55, 87, 119, 155, 161, 278, 354, 412, 502
 asthma, 180, 218, 233, 369
 atheists, 71
 atherosclerosis, 35
 atoms, 24
 atrocities, 277
 atrophy, 407
 Austria, 92, 483, 484, 538, 539, 545
 authorities, 68, 71, 491, 505
 autism, 157, 171
 autoimmune diseases, 180, 218, 234, 369
 autonomy, 450
 aversion, 81, 84, 172, 378, 384, 465, 466, 478

B

back pain, 25, 26, 504, 509
 bacteria, 190, 377, 442
 banks, 548
 basic needs, 34
 behavior therapy, 281, 334, 347
 behavioral disorders, 385
 behaviors, 35, 154, 155, 156, 173, 200, 477, 480, 511
 beneficial effect, 35, 133
 benign, 478
 bias, 73, 74
 bible, 445
 Bible, 445
 biochemistry, 183, 184, 205, 220, 221, 250, 251, 269, 376, 460
 biofeedback, 407
 birth control, 527
 black market, 242
 bladder stones, 161
 blame, 72, 74, 275, 471, 512, 535
 bleeding, 25, 68, 71, 99, 292, 311, 312, 321, 404, 418, 506, 507
 blind spot, 359
 blood pressure, 128
 body image, 168, 436
 body shape, 478, 479
 bone, 115, 404, 536
 boredom, 448
 bowel, 391, 392

brain, 71, 148, 164, 183, 184, 190, 194, 203, 205, 220, 250, 269, 283, 295, 329, 348, 398, 412, 429, 442, 459, 507, 556
 breakdown, 27, 285, 293, 294
 breast cancer, 32, 35, 424, 483
 breathing, 105, 360, 514
 bribes, 49
 bridges, 489
 brief reactive psychosis, 481
 Britain, 76, 502
 bronchitis, 69
 brutality, 309
 Buddhist countries, 1
 bulimia, 167, 168, 169, 170, 172, 173, 177, 178, 478
 bulimia nervosa, 167, 168, 170, 172, 177
 bun, 312
 burn, 3, 168
 burnout, 126, 181, 218, 234, 369

C

cables, 512
 canals, 512
 cancer, 12, 20, 24, 48, 70, 76, 161, 175, 181, 210, 218, 233, 234, 331, 354, 369, 370, 406, 412, 424, 425, 431, 437, 466, 467, 468, 475, 479, 482, 493, 535, 556
 cancer care, 493
 candidiasis, 477
 carbohydrates, 168
 carcinoma, 478, 479
 Caribbean, iv, 556
 case study, 96, 337, 396, 500
 catalyst, 480
 catharsis, 229, 450
 causality, 72
 censorship, 215
 cerebral cortex, 184, 269
 cervical cancer, 524
 chancroid, 477
 chaos, 66, 215, 226, 255, 508
 chemotherapy, 208, 210, 357, 424, 468, 479
 chicken, 327
 child abuse, 266, 458, 509, 556
 child development, 91, 147, 157, 164, 179, 194, 219, 235, 249, 282, 296, 335, 386, 397, 400, 411, 429, 459, 523, 538
 child molesters, 38
 childhood, 10, 12, 27, 41, 68, 71, 72, 74, 83, 89, 90, 99, 103, 107, 117, 125, 129, 130, 143, 146, 154, 162, 169, 171, 175, 179, 183, 190, 203, 204, 218, 225, 230, 231, 232, 240, 243, 245, 246, 248, 250, 252, 261, 265, 274, 281, 285, 286, 288, 289, 294,

- 299, 300, 303, 330, 332, 335, 337, 338, 340, 343, 344, 346, 347, 352, 360, 361, 365, 366, 370, 379, 386, 387, 390, 393, 400, 401, 415, 416, 424, 431, 435, 442, 453, 469, 470, 475, 497, 499, 506, 507, 508, 510, 516, 517, 523, 525, 528, 533, 534, 547
- childhood sexual abuse, 89, 90, 117, 125, 169, 179, 183, 218, 232, 250, 281, 330, 335, 338, 347, 370, 386, 415, 431, 523
- China, 1, 507
- Chinese medicine, 421, 536
- cholesterol, 549
- Christianity, 42
- chronic diseases, 24
- chronic illness, 32, 76, 148, 155, 165, 283, 296, 398, 412, 430, 556
- chronic irritation, 467
- circulation, 69, 510, 516, 519, 549
- circumcision, 478, 479
- City, 50, 115
- clarity, 489
- class, 466, 531
- classical methods, 3
- classical sexology, 2, 199
- classroom, 194, 295, 458
- cleaning, 300
- clients, 46, 209, 281, 332, 334, 347, 453
- clinical holistic medicine, 2, 5, 113, 116, 118, 129, 130, 140, 169, 174, 179, 180, 181, 185, 200, 208, 223, 227, 231, 241, 242, 246, 259, 260, 268, 269, 332, 352, 357, 371, 378, 383, 425, 472, 476, 482, 483, 513, 522, 523, 527, 528, 534, 537
- clinical interventions, 2
- clinical problems, 2
- clinical trials, 2, 384, 467
- close relationships, 156
- closure, 253, 427
- CNS, 362
- CO₂, 407, 413
- coal, 316, 318, 325
- cocaine, 242, 362
- coding, 345
- coffee, 308
- cognitive therapy, 332
- coherence, 24, 30, 34, 48, 91, 129, 135, 136, 175, 179, 181, 182, 199, 201, 202, 204, 205, 210, 213, 216, 220, 229, 234, 245, 251, 259, 267, 335, 343, 344, 356, 359, 366, 383, 459, 471, 476, 504, 509, 521, 523, 533, 538, 549
- college students, 435
- colon, 290
- colonoscopy, 161
- color, viii, 210, 317, 328, 359, 467
- coma, 338
- communism, 71
- community, 24, 53, 63, 67, 70, 187, 210, 224, 416, 449, 518, 521, 530
- compassion, 204, 275, 490, 491
- compensation, 207
- complaints, 11, 18, 62, 118, 155, 159, 161, 163, 376, 436
- complexity, 205, 215, 337, 341, 376, 450, 507
- complications, 176
- comprehension, 46, 305
- compression, 15
- concordance, 127, 404
- concrete thinking, 153
- conference, 238, 550
- confidentiality, 17, 155, 208, 264, 351, 357, 490
- conflict, 9, 12, 122, 168, 206, 240, 244, 394, 518, 520, 527, 536
- conflict of interest, 520
- confrontation, 31, 46, 113, 115, 116, 230, 471
- connective tissue, 15
- consciousness, 2, 9, 12, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28, 29, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 43, 45, 47, 48, 49, 65, 73, 75, 76, 91, 94, 107, 113, 117, 136, 140, 142, 147, 148, 163, 164, 165, 175, 179, 180, 183, 184, 189, 191, 194, 195, 200, 202, 203, 206, 208, 210, 212, 214, 215, 216, 217, 219, 220, 221, 223, 226, 229, 230, 231, 233, 234, 245, 250, 251, 253, 256, 260, 269, 281, 282, 283, 293, 295, 300, 302, 304, 323, 330, 333, 335, 339, 343, 346, 347, 348, 351, 352, 353, 357, 359, 361, 362, 365, 366, 368, 386, 397, 398, 401, 405, 409, 411, 412, 417, 419, 426, 429, 430, 436, 437, 441, 443, 445, 449, 456, 458, 459, 460, 471, 473, 482, 503, 511, 519, 520, 522, 523, 531, 537, 538, 549, 550
- consensus, 17, 548
- consent, 17, 96, 116, 121, 267, 289, 365, 377, 378, 383, 399, 404, 405, 424, 450, 451, 471, 473, 480, 491, 503, 504, 507, 515, 518, 534, 535
- constipation, 304
- consulting, 548
- consumption, 96, 396, 499
- contour, 11
- contraceptives, 404
- control group, 35
- conviction, 469
- copyright, viii
- Copyright*, viii, 110
- coronary arteries, 35
- coronary heart disease, 32, 35, 468, 483
- correlation, 55, 59, 62, 67, 162, 507, 549
- correlation coefficient, 55, 59
- correlations, 65
- cortisol, 127

- cost, 77, 133, 147, 164, 217, 241, 282, 296, 397, 413, 431, 482, 490
- cotton, 466
- counsel, 89, 136, 150, 179, 295, 335, 428, 437, 458, 523
- counseling, 83, 155, 187, 188, 276, 332
- craving, 449
- creativity, 184, 200, 214, 215, 220, 250, 261, 460
- criminals, 38, 512
- critical analysis, 524
- criticism, 46, 144, 308, 491
- cross-sectional study, 216, 521
- cultural norms, 53
- culture, 1, 17, 96, 114, 115, 187, 190, 210, 239, 240, 264, 266, 279, 332, 365, 382, 396, 404, 441, 454, 455, 473, 499, 519, 549, 556
- cure, 1, 2, 3, 10, 16, 19, 32, 76, 82, 87, 88, 95, 105, 119, 130, 135, 148, 165, 169, 174, 180, 194, 200, 208, 209, 213, 214, 215, 230, 254, 256, 260, 275, 283, 296, 330, 351, 354, 355, 357, 378, 379, 382, 383, 384, 398, 406, 407, 410, 412, 419, 423, 427, 428, 430, 453, 460, 467, 468, 469, 471, 476, 491, 504, 515, 527, 528, 533, 535
- cures, 3, 12, 175, 214, 259, 260, 380, 403, 472
- cycles, 14, 188, 286, 439
- cycling, 70
- cytomegalovirus, 156
-
- D**
-
- damages, viii, 313, 508, 510
- dance, 30, 214, 215, 308, 352, 353, 358
- dances, 307
- danger, 44, 87, 88, 105, 106, 119, 120, 208, 213, 214, 223, 231, 353, 357, 367, 382, 403, 423, 473, 481, 517, 518
- data analysis, 556
- data collection, 108
- debts, 71
- decay, 345, 363
- defecation, 171
- defects, 451, 547
- defense mechanisms, 127
- deficiencies, 142
- denial, 35, 41, 114, 239, 323, 339, 341, 380, 401
- Denmark, ix, xi, 1, 46, 53, 56, 63, 66, 75, 82, 88, 89, 116, 117, 125, 135, 142, 148, 150, 151, 163, 165, 169, 177, 183, 193, 200, 213, 216, 242, 260, 262, 295, 382, 391, 400, 404, 408, 411, 426, 450, 458, 461, 473, 482, 502, 512, 513, 514, 522, 524, 545, 547, 548, 550, 553
- dependent variable, 67
- depression, 54, 118, 140, 476, 509
- dermis, 278
- despair, 2, 175, 244, 399
- destination, 170
- destiny, 202, 209, 246
- destruction, 173, 337, 346
- detachment, 329
- developed countries, 363
- deviation, 134
- diagnosis, 68, 69, 71, 84, 123, 154, 330, 406, 467, 491
- diarrhea, 325
- dichotomy, 31
- diet, 549
- dieting, 168
- dignity, 142, 535
- direct observation, 117
- dirt, 346
- disability, 54, 71, 160, 545, 551, 553
- disadvantages, 95, 396, 499
- disappointment, 10
- disaster, 470
- discharges, 120
- discomfort, 13, 54, 59, 60, 61, 62, 93, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 103, 106, 121, 122, 192, 326, 377, 381, 382, 384, 387, 393, 399, 402, 404, 406, 407, 409, 410, 418, 446, 466, 467, 472, 477, 478, 499
- discrete variable, 55
- discrimination, 456
- discs, 290
- disgust, 2, 103, 399, 410, 415, 443, 451, 453, 457, 466, 475, 529
- dislocation, 167, 177
- disorder, 47, 81, 84, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171, 172, 174, 175, 176, 177, 281, 334, 347, 378, 380, 384, 413, 466, 468, 469, 470, 475, 476, 477, 480, 481, 524
- dispersion, 167, 177
- displacement, 171, 352
- dissatisfaction, 71
- dissociation, 150, 176, 201, 202, 275, 504, 505
- distress, 16, 146, 156
- disturbances, 25, 30, 95, 118, 154, 167, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 201, 211, 286, 365, 375, 396, 419, 457, 465, 467, 477, 478, 499, 516
- diversity, 116
- doctors, 14, 239, 240, 241, 242, 248, 469, 473, 504, 505, 513, 517, 518
- dominance, 226, 256, 504
- dosage, 329
- draft, 279
- drawing, 277, 300, 304, 328
- dream, 238, 302, 309, 317, 320, 321, 324, 328, 454
- dreaming, 257, 370

drug abuse, 154, 156, 509
 drug therapy, 267, 527
 drugs, 2, 18, 68, 69, 168, 174, 177, 190, 194, 200,
 211, 212, 214, 260, 293, 314, 356, 362, 363, 364,
 365, 370, 420, 424, 442, 460, 468, 472, 475, 501,
 509, 513, 524, 550
 dyspareunia, 4, 9, 15, 18, 19, 21, 81, 83, 84, 107,
 159, 172, 376, 381, 384, 415, 465, 466, 475, 503
 dysplasia, 387, 406, 466, 467, 468, 475, 478

E

eating disorders, 154, 157, 167, 168, 169, 170, 171,
 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 478, 556
 eating disturbances, 154
 economic status, 547
 economy, 70, 245
 ecstasy, 3, 20, 42, 195, 362, 411, 430, 439, 442, 444,
 457, 460, 538
 ectopic pregnancy, 388, 496
 eczema, 180, 218, 233, 369, 477
 edema, 15
 educational experience, 329
 egg, 143, 444, 455, 456, 517
 ejaculation, 4, 10, 18, 20, 53, 54, 60, 61, 62, 172,
 191, 416, 439, 443, 444, 457
 elective abortion, 154
 electromyography, 407, 413
 emergency physician, 161
 emotion, 71, 145, 161, 163, 193, 345, 447, 510, 534
 emotional intelligence, 181, 215, 539
 emotional problems, 2, 10, 12, 16, 18, 19, 83, 94,
 187, 288, 289, 419, 451, 457, 468, 532
 emotional reactions, 261
 emotional state, 27
 empathy, 201, 490, 491, 533
 employment, 55, 70
 empowerment, 202, 436
 encouragement, 153, 155, 404
 endometriosis, 159
 energetic techniques, 2
 England, 187, 260
 epidemiology, 513
 equality, 323
 erectile impotency, 2, 18, 19
 erythema multiforme, 477
 ethical issues, 488
 ethical standards, 87, 105, 119, 213, 267, 274, 382,
 402, 423, 493, 533
 ethics, 17, 40, 75, 94, 95, 123, 124, 154, 192, 193,
 209, 213, 238, 240, 291, 293, 301, 330, 331, 332,
 355, 363, 364, 403, 409, 417, 419, 425, 426, 446,
 447, 449, 465, 472, 480, 484, 487, 488, 492, 493,

500, 503, 504, 505, 514, 515, 519, 520, 523, 527,
 528, 529, 530, 531, 535, 536, 537
 etiology, 18, 25, 256, 406, 409
 EU, 1, 470, 545
 eukaryote, 190, 442
 Europe, 1, 14, 38, 49, 95, 115, 155, 157, 419, 470,
 488, 504, 528
 euthanasia, 527
 evil, 10, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48,
 49, 50, 91, 103, 147, 164, 172, 179, 190, 194,
 219, 235, 259, 264, 265, 267, 282, 285, 286, 295,
 301, 307, 314, 318, 321, 322, 323, 326, 333, 335,
 338, 339, 348, 353, 356, 360, 361, 368, 390, 397,
 411, 429, 442, 453, 454, 455, 457, 459, 469, 497,
 507, 519, 523, 530, 534, 535, 538
 examinations, 14, 15, 160, 161, 163, 380, 387, 389,
 466, 496, 500
 exercise, 4, 11, 14, 20, 90, 108, 120, 128, 162, 168,
 182, 259, 261, 262, 263, 264, 265, 267, 279, 290,
 385, 392, 393, 395, 408, 498, 534, 535, 536, 549
 exile, 368
 existential healing, 3, 23, 31, 73, 74, 81, 84, 88, 89,
 113, 115, 135, 141, 159, 160, 163, 199, 203, 210,
 215, 231, 239, 245, 246, 276, 287, 302, 360, 366,
 389, 401, 409, 417, 419, 426, 451, 476, 506, 508,
 511, 520, 533, 534
 experiences, 9, 25, 68, 71, 73, 99, 117, 144, 162,
 201, 212, 214, 244, 248, 261, 273, 282, 294, 330,
 333, 339, 347, 352, 353, 360, 362, 380, 388, 402,
 424, 496, 501
 expertise, 208, 209, 355, 357, 361, 367, 409, 426
 exploitation, 246, 247, 300, 332, 471, 525
 exploration, 16, 48, 65, 83, 95, 122, 135, 206, 244,
 260, 292, 301, 375, 377, 380, 387, 423, 465, 467,
 468, 470, 471, 473, 505, 512
 exposure, 281, 334, 347, 380, 534
 expulsion, 533
 extrovert, 442, 444

F

faecal incontinence, 2
 faith, 46, 519
 family members, 224, 325
 family physician, 24, 35, 143, 162, 274
 family therapy, 274, 282, 300, 334, 347
 fantasy, 224, 238, 254, 256, 455, 516
 fasting, 68
 fat, 168, 312
 faults, 142, 144
 fears, 17, 162, 466
 feedback, 265, 530

feelings, 2, 13, 16, 24, 25, 26, 29, 37, 49, 62, 71, 73, 83, 93, 94, 99, 103, 104, 113, 114, 115, 121, 122, 124, 135, 139, 159, 162, 163, 168, 170, 189, 191, 192, 202, 204, 205, 213, 215, 225, 229, 231, 238, 240, 244, 253, 255, 260, 263, 265, 266, 273, 275, 277, 278, 280, 289, 290, 292, 293, 299, 301, 303, 304, 326, 329, 332, 338, 339, 341, 344, 347, 366, 375, 379, 380, 381, 384, 389, 391, 392, 393, 395, 399, 400, 402, 403, 405, 407, 410, 415, 418, 419, 420, 422, 423, 427, 428, 435, 436, 440, 441, 442, 443, 445, 446, 448, 451, 457, 465, 467, 468, 469, 471, 472, 479, 481, 496, 499, 501, 508, 509, 510, 511, 513, 518, 520, 532, 534

female disorders, 2

female partner, 2, 9, 10, 18, 19

femur, 404, 405

fever, 306, 329

fibromyalgia, 181, 369

fidelity, 144

films, 115

Finland, 552

flexibility, 208, 357

fluid, 120

forensic psychology, 224

formula, 108, 314, 417

fragments, 43

free association, 207

free choice, 202

free will, 33, 38, 202

freedom, 81, 160, 189, 191, 202, 257, 339, 364, 441, 443, 446

freedom of choice, 202

Freud, 2, 3, 9, 12, 17, 21, 37, 38, 49, 82, 91, 123, 126, 170, 171, 176, 177, 179, 199, 203, 209, 223, 226, 228, 230, 231, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 259, 265, 267, 341, 376, 377, 384, 411, 429, 450, 452, 453, 455, 460, 469, 470, 476, 477, 511, 515, 516, 528

friction, 11, 318

friendship, 145, 278, 322, 326

fundamental needs, 366

funding, 505

fungi, 362

fungus, 362

G

garbage, 321

gastritis, 162

general practitioner, 62, 286, 377, 384, 388, 391, 436, 496

genes, 184, 190, 221, 251, 269, 376, 442, 454, 460

genetic defect, 548

genetic factors, 33

genital stage, 516

genital warts, 477

genitals, 2, 12, 19, 82, 83, 95, 103, 113, 114, 115, 116, 120, 121, 122, 124, 149, 159, 167, 170, 171, 173, 175, 176, 177, 191, 214, 240, 243, 248, 263, 293, 332, 360, 376, 379, 381, 383, 399, 402, 404, 405, 408, 409, 418, 420, 424, 426, 435, 442, 451, 452, 457, 465, 466, 467, 469, 470, 471, 472, 475, 479, 480, 508, 514, 515, 536

Germany, 212, 260, 268, 482, 483, 553

gerontology, 552

Gestalt, 107, 368, 421, 430, 539

gifted, 359, 480

glasses, 206, 359

God, 445, 476

Google, 215

Greece, 1, 95, 177, 419

grotesque, 38

group therapy, 47, 50, 76, 113, 115, 116, 117, 148, 165, 201, 274, 282, 283, 296, 300, 333, 334, 347, 348, 356, 398, 412, 430

group work, 206

guessing, 257

guidance, 83, 84, 188, 275, 286, 440, 531, 533

guidelines, 87, 119, 155, 385, 487, 488, 489, 490, 491, 492

guilt, 99, 103, 113, 114, 115, 124, 168, 226, 231, 238, 256, 266, 275, 292, 307, 399, 402, 404, 406, 410, 415, 418, 421, 422, 436, 448, 451, 457, 471, 472, 508, 512

gynecologist, 95, 124, 375, 377, 380, 381, 387, 390, 416, 423, 477, 481, 496, 505, 547

H

hair, 307, 535, 536

hammer, 310

happiness, 2, 29, 56, 65, 73, 147, 164, 183, 189, 194, 211, 229, 283, 291, 295, 346, 348, 359, 398, 404, 411, 413, 429, 440, 441, 445, 459, 549

harassment, 68, 72, 74, 172, 506

hardness, 9, 18

harmful effects, 512

harmony, 141

HE, 312

headache, 140, 303, 450

healing, 1, 19, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 48, 50, 73, 74, 76, 77, 84, 87, 88, 94, 95, 104, 105, 106, 107, 114, 117, 119, 125, 126, 129, 135, 136, 139, 140, 141, 146, 147, 159, 160, 163, 164, 175, 176, 180, 183, 192, 193, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203,

- 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 217, 220, 223, 229, 230, 231, 237, 239, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 253, 254, 259, 260, 263, 264, 265, 267, 273, 275, 276, 280, 281, 282, 285, 286, 287, 288, 293, 294, 295, 299, 300, 301, 302, 309, 310, 313, 314, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 337, 338, 344, 345, 346, 348, 349, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 365, 366, 367, 368, 370, 375, 377, 382, 383, 387, 388, 389, 390, 395, 396, 397, 398, 399, 401, 402, 403, 406, 408, 409, 410, 411, 412, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 429, 430, 436, 437, 446, 447, 449, 450, 451, 452, 455, 467, 469, 471, 472, 473, 475, 476, 477, 479, 480, 481, 482, 483, 484, 487, 488, 489, 490, 493, 497, 499, 500, 501, 503, 504, 507, 508, 510, 511, 512, 513, 516, 517, 520, 522, 524, 528, 532, 533, 534, 535, 538
- health education, 488
- health effects, 555
- health problems, 25, 72, 82, 116, 130, 376, 413, 420, 465, 468, 475, 479, 513
- health services, 109
- health status, 67, 72, 160, 549
- heart disease, 395
- heart failure, 242
- heart rate, 127, 128, 281, 334, 347
- height, 288
- hopelessness, 175, 338, 399, 402, 407, 410, 415, 418, 451, 453, 457
- hemisphere, 168
- hepatitis, 156
- hermeneutics, 211
- heroin, 512
- heterosexuality, 453
- high fat, 549
- Hippocratic tradition, 1, 2, 122, 213, 241, 363, 376
- HIV, 154, 156, 180, 217, 233, 369, 523
- HIV/AIDS, 156
- hives, 307
- holistic care, 490, 491, 492, 493
- holistic medicine, 2, 5, 21, 24, 27, 33, 73, 75, 76, 77, 81, 89, 90, 91, 94, 106, 107, 108, 113, 116, 118, 120, 124, 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, 135, 136, 140, 147, 150, 151, 159, 160, 163, 164, 165, 169, 174, 176, 177, 178, 179, 180, 181, 182, 184, 185, 194, 195, 199, 200, 206, 208, 209, 211, 212, 213, 215, 217, 218, 219, 220, 223, 225, 227, 231, 232, 233, 234, 237, 239, 241, 242, 243, 245, 246, 248, 249, 250, 251, 257, 259, 260, 267, 268, 269, 274, 276, 278, 280, 281, 282, 285, 287, 288, 293, 294, 295, 296, 297, 302, 305, 330, 331, 332, 333, 334, 335, 347, 348, 349, 351, 352, 355, 357, 358, 365, 367, 368, 369, 370, 371, 375, 378, 383, 384, 385, 386, 389, 397, 401, 410, 412, 413, 417, 425, 428, 430, 431, 436, 437, 440, 445, 448, 459, 460, 461, 467, 469, 472, 476, 477, 481, 482, 483, 484, 502, 504, 505, 513, 514, 521, 522, 523, 524, 527, 528, 531, 533, 534, 537, 538, 539, 543, 545, 550, 556
- holistic model, 439, 490
- holistic tradition, 2
- homework, 27, 278, 392, 479
- homicide, 153
- homosexuality, 439, 452, 495, 502
- homosexuals, 56
- honesty, 140, 204, 240, 450
- Hong Kong, 553
- hopelessness, 2, 175, 211, 275, 280, 399, 453
- hospitalization, 87, 117
- host, 155
- human brain, 184
- human coitus, 1
- human development, 177, 225, 474, 545, 551, 553, 555
- human interactions, 259, 261, 267
- human nature, 12, 48, 50, 55, 168, 189, 441, 455, 530, 549
- human rights, 363, 490
- human values, 331
- Hunter, 370
- husband, 88, 119, 142, 143, 145, 276, 301, 381, 519
- hypertension, 218, 233, 369
- hypothesis, 4, 20, 66, 82, 83, 89, 94, 150, 167, 177, 419, 549
- hysterectomy, 162
- hysteria, 1, 3, 95, 120, 123, 239, 240, 249, 256, 375, 377, 419, 469

I

- ice, 144, 314, 408
- ideal, 27, 37, 43, 203, 207
- ideology, 127
- idiopathic, 419, 533
- illusion, 31, 204
- image, 150, 194, 314, 327, 458
- imagery, 268, 539
- images, 314, 315
- imagination, 49, 208, 211, 261, 264, 357
- imbalances, 144, 211, 467, 474
- immune function, 477
- immune system, 436, 468
- impacts, 210
- impetigo, 477
- impotence, 439, 451
- imprisonment, 254, 313, 363, 519

impulses, 207, 244
 impurities, 208, 211
 incidence, 53, 274, 300, 416
 independence, 329
 India, 1, 452, 504, 507
 Indians, 370
 induction, 88, 90, 107, 114, 117, 119, 126, 129, 133, 184, 206, 219, 233, 251, 437, 483, 521
 industrial revolution, 95, 419
 infancy, 12, 75, 77, 216
 infertility, 2, 76, 89, 95, 107, 125, 178, 195, 217, 232, 281, 296, 335, 349, 368, 380, 384, 385, 387, 388, 395, 396, 412, 430, 436, 459, 484, 499, 501, 502
 inflammation, 377, 388, 406, 465, 468, 475, 478, 496
 inflammatory disease, 154
 informed consent, 490, 491
 inhibition, 46, 193, 446
 initiation, 113, 169
 inner balance, 47, 365
 insane, 204, 302, 326, 344
 insanity, 39, 286, 293, 353
 insecurity, 2, 329, 421
 instinct, 38
 institutionalisation, 363
 integration, 43, 48, 71, 92, 93, 113, 115, 201, 207, 229, 234, 237, 254, 285, 294, 300, 346, 352, 379, 388, 392, 393, 415, 421, 427, 454, 461, 473, 484, 492, 497, 499, 538, 555
 intellect, 266
 intelligence, 27, 143, 189, 214, 229, 329, 330, 441
 intentionality, 448
 intercourse, 2, 11, 12, 13, 15, 18, 19, 54, 59, 60, 61, 62, 68, 71, 72, 74, 99, 116, 121, 127, 128, 130, 140, 149, 162, 169, 191, 254, 256, 262, 263, 266, 307, 379, 380, 381, 384, 391, 394, 399, 402, 403, 406, 409, 416, 418, 419, 421, 443, 476, 506, 508
 interference, 491
 internalised, 456, 490
 interrelatedness, 490
 interruptions, 155
 interstitial cystitis, 4, 20, 21, 160
 intervention, 12, 53, 76, 84, 114, 116, 118, 121, 148, 165, 192, 201, 268, 280, 283, 296, 332, 334, 348, 379, 380, 383, 398, 405, 412, 430, 446, 465, 478, 482, 539
 intimacy, 87, 96, 105, 119, 139, 146, 175, 193, 208, 211, 213, 230, 239, 245, 280, 287, 288, 289, 293, 301, 330, 332, 351, 357, 358, 382, 397, 403, 405, 406, 423, 447, 449, 457, 471, 474, 483, 500, 501, 504, 512, 528
 intimidation, 354
 introitus, 291, 299, 384, 407, 468, 474, 475

introvert, 443
 irritant eczema, 477
 isolation, 168
 Israel, xi, 24, 195, 458, 482, 522, 545, 547, 550, 551, 553, 556

J

Jack the Ripper, 38
 Japan, 1, 507
 Jews, 38
 job training, 69
 justification, 48, 241, 352

K

Kentucky, 1, 545, 552
 kidney, 167, 176, 421, 466
 kidneys, 160
 Kinsey, 1, 3, 56, 416
 knees, 317

L

labium, 394
 larva, 302
 learners, 492
 learning, 29, 43, 45, 46, 48, 73, 124, 155, 160, 204, 206, 207, 224, 273, 275, 280, 333, 345, 358, 364, 381, 452, 490, 511, 519, 529, 534, 536
 learning process, 46, 207
 legs, 2, 237, 290, 305, 311, 316, 317, 318, 388, 392, 496
 leisure, 55, 57, 278
 lending, 316
 lentigo, 478
 lesions, 478
 levator, 82
 liberalization, 200
 liberation, 104, 122, 513
 libido, 169, 209, 242, 376, 384, 399, 402, 408, 409, 418, 510, 511
 lice, 477
 lichen, 465, 466, 477, 478, 480
 lichen planus, 465, 477, 478, 480
 life changes, 461, 523
 lifestyle changes, 32, 35, 483, 548
 linguistics, 436
 liver, 160
 locomotor, 94, 126, 180, 218, 234, 369, 418
 locus, 475
 loneliness, 46, 47, 69, 143

loss of appetite, 142, 161, 168

Louisiana, 404

love, 2, 3, 5, 17, 21, 29, 31, 42, 44, 45, 47, 48, 94,
103, 104, 115, 126, 127, 131, 133, 134, 139, 140,
141, 142, 143, 144, 145, 146, 159, 173, 177, 189,
190, 192, 199, 201, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208,
209, 210, 211, 213, 215, 220, 229, 238, 239, 243,
245, 247, 248, 249, 257, 275, 278, 280, 285, 286,
287, 288, 290, 291, 293, 299, 300, 305, 307, 314,
321, 331, 333, 338, 343, 344, 346, 351, 353, 354,
356, 357, 358, 360, 361, 363, 364, 365, 378, 380,
387, 391, 393, 399, 401, 402, 408, 409, 417, 418,
419, 420, 421, 426, 427, 440, 441, 442, 445, 446,
448, 449, 450, 452, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 460,
470, 480, 495, 498, 509, 513, 514, 516, 518, 519,
520, 525, 528, 529, 531, 532, 533, 534, 535

LSD, 362, 365, 370

lying, 143, 289, 303, 304, 306, 310, 311, 314, 316,
322, 324, 325, 328

M

machinery, 206

magazines, 315

Maine, 404

major depression, 117, 118

majority, 62, 105, 159, 229, 419, 448, 481

maltreatment, 289, 337

management, 4, 5, 21, 22, 90, 128, 182, 385, 481,
548, 556

manipulation, 114, 120, 480, 504, 509

manual procedures, 1, 514, 520

manual sexualogical therapy, 2, 17, 88, 118, 119, 472

mapping, 12, 14, 192, 400, 416, 446, 549

marital life, 88, 119, 121, 123

marketplace, 490

marriage, 70, 238, 241, 246, 266, 520, 532

married couples, 53

masculinity, 470

masking, 390, 497

matrix, 210, 263, 456

media, 38, 254, 473, 503, 505

medical care, 390, 497, 532

medical expertise, 409, 426, 500

medical reason, 2

medical science, 1, 9, 23, 24, 48, 76, 95, 107, 165,
180, 195, 212, 217, 233, 260, 281, 335, 348, 365,
368, 408, 419, 430, 436, 461, 482, 504, 507, 537

medication, 27, 161, 192, 242, 280, 330, 512

melanoma, 479

melody, 345

melt, 439, 454

melting, 144, 444

melts, 227, 454

memory, 47, 89, 94, 105, 179, 223, 224, 225, 226,
228, 229, 231, 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 262,
383, 435, 456, 484, 508, 522, 523

menopause, 190, 442

menstruation, 394, 407

mental disorder, 126, 136, 181, 218, 234, 259, 267,
296, 348, 370, 377, 385, 469, 476, 556

mental health, 12, 27, 34, 71, 81, 82, 83, 84, 87, 89,
92, 93, 99, 100, 102, 106, 110, 121, 133, 135,
177, 227, 285, 286, 338, 346, 401, 508, 513, 520

mental illness, 1, 90, 123, 126, 168, 184, 200, 215,
219, 233, 240, 251, 333, 345, 483, 522

mental processes, 275

mental state, 339, 391, 466

mental states, 466

meridian, 418

messages, 326

meta-analysis, 136, 252, 386, 524

metamorphosis, 184, 204, 212, 221, 227, 245, 251,
261, 269, 343, 344, 345, 460, 480

metaphor, 204, 302, 344, 345

metastatic cancer, 367, 424, 478, 482

methodology, 107, 136, 180, 233, 250, 268, 431,
460, 484, 523, 537

Mexico, 404

Middle East, 488

migration, 556

military, 70

mind-body, 231, 259, 266, 267, 268, 269, 275, 371,
468, 470, 482, 483, 488, 539

Ministry of Education, 545

minors, 479

missions, 41, 42

misunderstanding, 241

modern society, 177

modernism, 47

modification, 16

modules, 184, 269

mold, 555

molecular biology, 24

molecules, 24, 445

monitoring, 117

monks, 2

mood disorder, 556

morbidity, 16, 153, 155, 156

morphine, 160, 190, 442

morphogenesis, 184, 220, 250, 456, 460

motivation, 187, 190, 285, 286, 338, 441, 445, 455,
467, 509

mucosa, 413, 466, 468, 475, 478

multidimensional, 18, 160

multiple factors, 155

murder, 439, 454
 muscles, 4, 10, 11, 20, 25, 82, 90, 114, 115, 128,
 162, 170, 182, 356, 379, 385, 404, 466
 music, 69, 184, 308, 312, 356
 mutual respect, 142
 mycotoxins, 555
 mythology, 265

N

naming, 471
 narcotics, 72, 74
 Native Americans, 362, 366
 natural science, 1, 504
 nausea, 107, 161, 313, 318, 320, 324
 negative attitudes, 94, 141, 143, 159, 161, 163, 276,
 287, 352, 389, 401, 418, 419, 480, 511
 negative consequences, 508
 negative emotions, 263, 301, 365, 379, 399, 416,
 420, 435, 453, 475, 478, 479, 480
 negative experiences, 47, 73, 150, 162
 neglect, 189, 226, 255, 331, 360, 366, 379, 399, 402,
 418, 420, 441, 454, 473, 512, 516, 530, 534, 556
 nerve, 121, 381
 nervousness, 394
 Netherlands, 548
 neurobiology, 107, 252, 386
 next generation, 513, 553
 Nobel Prize, 545
 noise, 307, 328
 normal development, 156
 North America, 362
 Norway, 553
 nudity, 122, 327, 504
 null hypothesis, 55
 nuns, 2
 nurses, 122, 293, 300, 424, 550
 nursing, 488, 493

O

objective criteria, 118
 obstacles, 46, 487
 obstruction, 160
 occlusion, 5, 21
 oedema, 477
 Oedipus complex, 83, 223, 253, 254, 256, 257, 453,
 473, 515, 517
 offenders, 265, 313, 532
 oil, 504
 old age, 72, 76
 omeprazole, 161
 openness, 69, 96, 204, 211, 301, 397, 500

opportunities, 492
 optimism, 241
 organ, 11, 23, 55, 66, 169, 465, 468, 470, 477
 organism, 23, 24, 34, 190, 442, 445, 452, 456, 517,
 519
 orgasm, 2, 3, 4, 9, 11, 12, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 53, 54,
 59, 60, 61, 62, 91, 93, 97, 98, 99, 105, 106, 107,
 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 120, 122, 123, 124,
 125, 127, 162, 169, 170, 174, 179, 182, 191, 192,
 194, 195, 229, 243, 249, 290, 307, 318, 324, 366,
 382, 385, 399, 402, 406, 409, 415, 416, 418, 419,
 420, 421, 429, 439, 442, 443, 444, 446, 451, 452,
 456, 457, 458, 473, 474, 475, 476, 484, 503, 515,
 524
 oriental traditions, 2
 outpatients, 178
 ovaries, 162, 405, 466
 overweight, 145, 174, 278
 ownership, 39

P

Pacific, 553
 pain, 2, 4, 5, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 25,
 26, 28, 29, 31, 32, 34, 35, 37, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43,
 45, 46, 54, 60, 62, 70, 76, 81, 84, 85, 86, 88, 89,
 90, 93, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 103, 104, 105, 106,
 107, 108, 114, 115, 121, 124, 126, 128, 130, 133,
 140, 141, 142, 143, 148, 149, 150, 154, 155, 157,
 159, 160, 161, 162, 163, 164, 165, 173, 179, 180,
 181, 184, 192, 200, 213, 215, 218, 219, 220, 225,
 232, 233, 234, 247, 251, 262, 263, 266, 273, 275,
 277, 278, 279, 280, 283, 288, 290, 291, 296, 301,
 304, 305, 306, 309, 310, 312, 316, 317, 318, 319,
 321, 324, 325, 332, 333, 337, 338, 339, 340, 341,
 346, 352, 353, 360, 369, 376, 377, 378, 380, 381,
 384, 385, 387, 388, 391, 393, 398, 399, 402, 403,
 404, 406, 407, 409, 410, 412, 413, 418, 419, 420,
 421, 424, 430, 435, 436, 439, 440, 443, 444, 446,
 448, 450, 451, 453, 457, 465, 466, 467, 468, 472,
 474, 477, 478, 482, 483, 496, 498, 502, 503, 508,
 509, 511, 512, 513, 521, 530, 538, 555
 pain management, 482
 pairing, 362
 palliative, 479
 palpation, 13, 15, 16
 pancreas, 160
 parallel, 41, 171, 174, 175, 177, 420
 paralysis, 262
 paranoia, 292
 parenting, 87, 105, 113, 115, 119, 122, 213, 229,
 240, 249, 287, 366, 403, 405, 423, 446, 449, 528
 Parliament, 216, 524

- patents, 3, 48, 84, 365
 pathogenesis, 159, 299
 pathology, 14, 155, 177, 205, 453
 patient care, 490, 492
 peak experience, 70
 pediatrician, 547
 peer influence, 153
 pelvic floor, 2, 4, 5, 10, 13, 15, 19, 20, 21, 82, 89, 91, 95, 99, 106, 108, 115, 182, 376, 384, 386, 407, 413, 418, 420, 469, 485, 514
 pelvic floor physical therapy, 2, 5, 21
 pelvic inflammatory disease, 154, 159
 pelvic physiotherapy, 2, 15
 pelvis, 15, 93, 94, 95, 103, 122, 145, 163, 173, 191, 192, 278, 285, 286, 309, 338, 360, 375, 376, 379, 387, 392, 393, 399, 405, 406, 415, 417, 418, 419, 420, 422, 426, 427, 442, 446, 466, 469, 472, 474, 481, 498, 508
 pemphigus, 477
 penis, 10, 95, 307, 311, 318, 381, 419, 451, 474, 475
 performance, 421
 perinatal, 522
 perineum, 15, 16
 permission, viii, 110, 287, 289, 358, 392, 527, 530, 533
 perpetrators, 292
 personal development, 3, 24, 42, 43, 70, 99, 135, 141, 145, 163, 203, 206, 209, 278, 329, 355, 359, 395, 448, 469, 479, 506, 509, 518, 520, 529, 536
 personal goals, 160
 personal history, 37, 41, 175, 203, 206, 228, 264, 278, 280, 339, 352, 353, 358, 366, 448, 467, 470, 517
 personal problems, 104, 519, 532
 personal relations, 226, 255, 480, 519
 personal relationship, 226, 255, 519
 personal responsibility, 548
 personality disorder, 476, 477
 personality type, 168
 personhood, 488
 pharmaceuticals, 376, 504
 pharmacological treatment, 477
 pharmacology, 550
 physical abuse, 76, 178, 379
 physical health, 2, 30, 34, 71, 72, 74, 81, 87, 89, 100, 102, 109, 133, 180, 181, 182, 216, 218, 233, 251, 369, 475, 508, 521
 physical massage, 2
 physical therapy, 2, 4, 5, 14, 15, 16, 20, 21, 82, 89, 106, 107, 108, 376, 386, 418, 469, 485
 physicians, 1, 3, 9, 62, 81, 88, 93, 96, 105, 119, 120, 121, 122, 123, 159, 168, 170, 171, 176, 192, 193, 200, 209, 212, 214, 225, 242, 246, 262, 293, 331, 353, 357, 363, 364, 367, 376, 381, 383, 384, 389, 394, 396, 402, 403, 409, 410, 418, 423, 426, 427, 436, 448, 449, 457, 465, 469, 470, 473, 480, 487, 488, 493, 495, 496, 500, 503, 504, 505, 507, 511, 512, 513, 514, 515, 518, 519, 520, 527, 528, 531, 537, 548, 550
 physics, 205, 212
 physiological description, 1
 physiological psychology, 381
 physiology, 11, 14, 205, 416
 pigmentation, 478
 pilot study, 32, 76, 90, 93, 94, 106, 148, 165, 169, 178, 180, 225, 283, 296, 398, 412, 413, 430, 505
 placebo, 18, 362
 planets, 312, 320
 plants, 366
 pleasure, 11, 12, 14, 18, 19, 28, 29, 30, 42, 45, 113, 114, 115, 123, 128, 171, 173, 174, 179, 189, 190, 191, 244, 247, 290, 328, 331, 380, 382, 383, 384, 419, 439, 440, 442, 443, 444, 445, 451, 453, 456, 457, 474, 475, 478, 479, 480, 506, 508, 509, 511, 516, 523
 plexus, 421
 PMS, 407, 465, 478
 pneumonia, 330
 polarity, 187, 190, 191, 193, 356, 441, 443, 444, 446, 455, 456
 polarization, 44
 police, 276, 300, 505
 political affiliations, 70
 political party, 70
 political problems, 2
 positive attitudes, 124, 200
 positive emotions, 39
 posttraumatic stress, 281, 334, 347
 pregnancy, 75, 77, 107, 154, 155, 216, 394, 396, 547
 prepuce, 122, 382, 466
 prestige, 190, 442
 prevention, 20, 65, 96, 397, 425, 489, 490, 491, 500, 545, 550
 preventive approach, 154
 probe, 66
 professional development, 492
 professionalism, 17, 390, 497
 profit, 530
 prognosis, 90, 128, 182, 385, 481
 project, 13, 17, 37, 83, 116, 141, 142, 175, 177, 206, 225, 278, 293, 301, 366, 424, 445, 449, 457, 516, 528, 547, 548, 549
 prolactin, 127
 prolapse, 15
 prophylactic, 35
 prosperity, 142

pruritus, 419, 465, 474, 478
 psoriasis, 477
 psychiatric disorders, 136, 252, 386, 524
 psychiatric illness, 246
 psychiatric patients, 302, 537
 psychiatrist, 154, 201, 292, 314
 psychiatry, 87, 105, 119, 157, 173, 176, 213, 223,
 231, 285, 286, 287, 288, 332, 335, 346, 353, 384,
 403, 423, 556
 psychic energy, 455
 psychoanalysis, 2, 3, 21, 91, 126, 179, 224, 237, 238,
 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 246, 247, 248, 253, 254,
 257, 376, 383, 410, 450, 456, 460, 477, 511, 515
 psychoanalytic tradition, 2
 psychobiology, 107, 252, 484, 522
 psychodynamic aspects, 2
 psychodynamic perspective, 114, 115, 214, 240
 psychological development, 383
 psychological health, 30
 psychological problems, 97, 99, 102, 104, 479
 psychological states, 34
 psychologist, 154, 170, 199, 276
 psychology, 46, 59, 87, 92, 105, 119, 183, 195, 205,
 213, 220, 229, 234, 250, 268, 332, 384, 403, 410,
 413, 416, 423, 460, 461, 477, 481, 484, 538, 539,
 556
 psychopathology, 174
 psychoses, 118, 293
 psychosis, 27, 87, 117, 118, 214, 277, 292, 294, 302,
 346, 424, 473
 psychosocial development, 153, 410, 454, 474
 psychosocial factors, 380, 384
 psychosomatic, 25, 33, 83, 94, 95, 157, 159, 160,
 161, 163, 173, 178, 376, 377, 380, 384, 387, 396,
 407, 418, 436, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 474, 475,
 479, 499
 psychotherapy, 2, 5, 12, 19, 21, 26, 50, 71, 82, 87,
 90, 105, 108, 113, 115, 116, 118, 119, 124, 126,
 136, 161, 170, 176, 178, 181, 184, 213, 219, 220,
 223, 224, 225, 229, 231, 232, 233, 237, 238, 240,
 241, 242, 246, 248, 250, 251, 252, 260, 261, 266,
 268, 269, 274, 300, 370, 378, 383, 384, 386, 403,
 412, 423, 430, 449, 459, 471, 482, 483, 513, 515,
 516, 520, 521, 524, 525, 539
 psychotropic drugs, 351, 362, 365, 366
 PTSD, 281, 334, 347
 puberty, 168, 169
 pubis, 399, 472, 477, 535
 public awareness, 451
 public health, 156, 548, 551, 553, 555, 556
 public service, 551
 punishment, 190, 315, 442, 507
 purification, 174

P-value, 100, 101

Q

qualifications, 209, 355, 470
 quality control, 330
 quality of life, 23, 24, 30, 33, 34, 35, 47, 50, 53, 56,
 57, 58, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, 66, 67, 70, 72, 73, 74,
 75, 76, 77, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91,
 92, 93, 94, 95, 99, 100, 104, 105, 106, 107, 109,
 114, 116, 117, 118, 119, 125, 126, 129, 133, 134,
 135, 136, 140, 141, 142, 147, 148, 150, 151, 155,
 156, 159, 160, 163, 164, 165, 177, 179, 180, 183,
 184, 188, 189, 192, 193, 194, 200, 205, 213, 215,
 216, 218, 219, 220, 221, 225, 227, 233, 234, 250,
 251, 259, 266, 267, 268, 274, 276, 282, 283, 285,
 286, 287, 289, 295, 296, 300, 312, 313, 334, 335,
 337, 338, 343, 344, 346, 348, 354, 358, 369, 370,
 383, 389, 398, 401, 403, 407, 411, 412, 417, 418,
 419, 423, 425, 429, 430, 431, 436, 440, 441, 446,
 447, 458, 459, 460, 470, 474, 477, 481, 483, 484,
 502, 506, 507, 508, 510, 512, 521, 522, 523, 524,
 533, 537, 538, 539, 543, 545, 547, 548, 549, 556
 quantum chemistry, 184, 220, 251, 269, 460

R

radiation, 424, 472
 radiation therapy, 424, 472
 rape, 68, 71, 72, 74, 89, 114, 125, 178, 218, 225,
 232, 243, 245, 254, 273, 274, 277, 280, 281, 282,
 286, 294, 295, 299, 300, 309, 314, 316, 320, 334,
 335, 339, 340, 347, 360, 369, 377, 379, 390, 420,
 421, 424, 439, 453, 454, 455, 457, 458, 461, 473,
 477, 478, 497, 506, 507, 508, 509, 511, 516, 538
 rapists, 38
 rash, 289, 291
 rating scale, 55
 rationality, 176, 199
 reactions, 13, 118, 370, 380, 450, 469, 471, 528
 reactivity, 127
 reading, 26, 301, 406, 467
 reality, 12, 27, 30, 43, 48, 50, 66, 189, 204, 206, 211,
 215, 223, 228, 244, 253, 264, 265, 274, 300, 305,
 331, 353, 441, 471, 508, 529, 530, 536, 549
 recall, 73, 74, 171, 177, 278, 360, 507, 534
 recalling, 227, 228, 265, 300, 507
 reception, 475
 recognition, 42, 404
 recommendations, viii, 3, 21, 126, 460, 470
 reconstruction, 525
 rectocele, 15

rectum, 15, 174, 292, 312, 316, 317, 318, 319, 325
 regression, 12, 27, 55, 68, 69, 70, 75, 87, 105, 119,
 173, 201, 213, 239, 241, 242, 244, 245, 246, 248,
 273, 280, 286, 293, 352, 360, 369, 382, 403, 406,
 415, 423, 454, 455, 506, 528, 533
 regulatory framework, 487
 rehabilitation, 116, 126, 129, 135, 174, 181, 192,
 202, 218, 234, 244, 288, 346, 369, 407, 413, 446,
 447, 448, 452, 453, 454, 504, 517, 545, 551
 Reichian therapy, 2, 470
 rejection, 189, 441, 452, 475
 relationship quality, 127
 relatives, 276
 relaxation, 14, 170, 188, 286, 315, 416, 439, 444,
 446, 539
 relevance, 525
 reliability, 67, 345
 religion, 71, 114
 REM, 281, 334, 347
 remission, 76, 170, 181, 218, 233, 369, 431, 437,
 479, 482
 repair, 35, 323, 399, 402, 409, 418, 531
 repression, 9, 34, 41, 73, 167, 170, 171, 172, 173,
 176, 177, 193, 202, 261, 263, 265, 267, 276, 288,
 293, 299, 352, 365, 379, 384, 402, 410, 418, 427,
 443, 446, 449, 451, 455, 457, 467, 475, 479, 495,
 508, 509, 510, 534
 reproduction, 190, 191, 442, 443, 444, 509
 reproductive organs, 160, 279, 387, 388, 389, 390,
 391, 392, 393, 394, 402, 496, 497, 498, 501
 repulsion, 2
 reputation, 240, 527
 resentment, 404, 528
 resistance, 11, 31, 82, 83, 103, 116, 122, 123, 150,
 175, 190, 204, 214, 215, 254, 257, 260, 263, 265,
 277, 318, 352, 353, 356, 359, 360, 361, 377, 379,
 442, 454, 469, 472, 475, 477
 resolution, 239, 475, 476
 resources, 3, 23, 24, 28, 31, 35, 43, 47, 48, 73, 117,
 141, 159, 160, 162, 163, 175, 201, 234, 273, 276,
 280, 285, 286, 287, 288, 289, 293, 294, 300, 333,
 338, 346, 355, 359, 379, 380, 389, 401, 417, 472,
 491, 528, 533, 534, 548, 549, 550
 retirement, 68
 retirement pension, 68
 rewards, 241
 rights, viii, 170, 488
 rings, 326
 risk factors, 125, 156
 risk-taking, 153, 154
 role-playing, 229
 rubber, 304, 390, 496

S

sadism, 83, 167, 171, 172, 177, 229
 sadness, 103, 308
 scabies, 477
 Scandinavia, 545, 548
 scar tissue, 15, 83, 285, 286, 314, 338
 scarcity, 238
 schizophrenia, 5, 12, 20, 21, 24, 126, 175, 181, 220,
 244, 249, 288, 476, 484, 509, 525
 schizophrenic patients, 209, 239
 scientific knowledge, 206, 232
 scientific sexology, 1, 515
 scientific understanding, 376, 510
 screening, 155, 443
 sedatives, 364
 self esteem, 95, 149, 275, 379, 421, 448, 465, 466,
 478, 479, 508, 509
 self-actualization, 46
 self-awareness, 92, 234, 268, 387, 461, 484, 539
 self-concept, 381
 self-confidence, 10, 34, 275, 481, 504
 self-contemplation, 529
 self-control, 192, 515
 self-destruction, 173
 self-efficacy, 156
 self-esteem, 27, 54, 87, 90, 114, 117, 118, 124, 126,
 149, 150, 155, 184, 191, 192, 200, 215, 219, 224,
 226, 233, 251, 255, 263, 275, 278, 358, 394, 399,
 444, 446, 453, 466, 478, 479, 481, 483, 504, 522,
 530
 self-expression, 26
 self-image, 150, 194, 458, 508
 self-knowledge, 536
 self-worth, 34, 264, 479
 semen, 187, 190, 191, 441, 443, 444, 474, 475, 517
 sensation, 11, 13, 38, 104, 113, 309, 314, 316, 318,
 319, 320, 323, 324, 392
 sensations, 105, 202, 240, 289, 306, 381, 407, 468,
 471
 senses, 209, 225, 255, 408
 sensing, 262, 326
 sensitivity, 4, 14, 20, 21, 67, 90, 128, 182, 385, 481,
 524
 sex, 2, 10, 13, 14, 17, 19, 27, 53, 54, 56, 57, 58, 59,
 82, 89, 96, 103, 104, 121, 125, 139, 142, 144,
 145, 146, 154, 156, 169, 171, 172, 174, 178, 190,
 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 206, 217, 226, 229, 232,
 238, 239, 240, 246, 247, 255, 265, 266, 278, 279,
 289, 290, 295, 306, 308, 309, 311, 316, 317, 323,
 331, 332, 363, 365, 369, 377, 379, 382, 391, 392,
 393, 394, 395, 400, 401, 402, 404, 405, 408, 410,
 412, 415, 416, 417, 418, 420, 426, 428, 430, 440,

- 442, 443, 444, 446, 447, 448, 449, 451, 452, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 460, 461, 469, 472, 473, 474, 478, 479, 480, 495, 498, 499, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 511, 512, 515, 516, 517, 518, 520, 522, 527, 536, 539
- sex differences, 461, 522
- sexological bodywork, 2, 175, 213, 378, 427
- sexological examination, 2, 4, 13, 14, 16, 17, 18, 20, 82, 83, 88, 90, 113, 116, 120, 121, 122, 124, 128, 175, 178, 182, 375, 377, 379, 380, 382, 383, 384, 385, 408, 415, 418, 419, 426, 427, 428, 465, 467, 470, 471, 472, 473, 474, 480, 481, 484, 503, 537
- sexological patient, 2, 16, 379
- sexological treatment, 1, 9, 16, 17, 18, 19, 81, 82, 84, 87, 88, 123, 176, 188, 274, 337, 341, 377, 403, 450, 474, 481, 520, 527, 537
- sexologists, 1, 17, 37, 124, 159, 176, 188, 262, 286, 354, 367, 376, 378, 382, 408, 426, 436, 440, 469, 470, 473, 503, 514, 528
- sexology, ix, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 14, 19, 20, 21, 76, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 94, 105, 106, 108, 113, 114, 115, 116, 119, 121, 123, 124, 125, 128, 136, 150, 164, 169, 176, 178, 179, 182, 188, 193, 195, 199, 200, 213, 217, 219, 223, 231, 232, 237, 243, 248, 249, 250, 254, 269, 274, 276, 280, 281, 286, 287, 288, 295, 296, 297, 335, 346, 349, 351, 367, 368, 375, 376, 377, 378, 382, 383, 384, 385, 389, 399, 401, 402, 403, 409, 410, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 421, 423, 426, 427, 428, 437, 440, 446, 447, 458, 459, 465, 467, 470, 472, 473, 476, 477, 481, 483, 484, 505, 514, 522, 523, 524, 528, 535, 539
- sexual abuse, 18, 88, 95, 103, 105, 117, 119, 125, 154, 176, 178, 189, 190, 218, 224, 226, 229, 230, 231, 232, 243, 245, 246, 247, 250, 253, 254, 255, 256, 260, 261, 262, 265, 273, 278, 279, 280, 281, 285, 286, 288, 291, 293, 294, 300, 332, 334, 335, 337, 339, 340, 343, 353, 360, 361, 365, 383, 386, 387, 396, 397, 400, 416, 417, 421, 427, 429, 435, 442, 449, 450, 453, 466, 469, 472, 473, 499, 501, 503, 506, 507, 509, 510, 511, 512, 514, 520, 523, 525, 532
- sexual activities, 416
- sexual activity, 56, 88, 106, 120, 156, 190, 214, 382, 400, 403, 404, 416, 423, 441, 444
- sexual assaults, 71, 72, 74, 274, 300, 306, 309, 388, 391, 392, 497, 507, 508
- sexual behavior, 17, 127, 193, 332, 409, 416, 447, 449, 451, 500, 506, 516, 519, 532
- sexual behaviour, 244, 510, 511
- sexual contact, 238, 364, 410, 428, 443, 505, 509, 522, 525
- sexual desire, 2, 15, 53, 54, 55, 59, 60, 61, 62, 81, 84, 95, 96, 97, 98, 102, 103, 104, 106, 109, 124, 172, 191, 192, 237, 380, 382, 384, 440, 443, 446, 450, 507, 512, 515, 516, 529, 533, 536
- sexual development, 12, 123, 153, 154, 169, 170, 442, 453, 516
- sexual dysfunctions, 3, 9, 12, 15, 18, 19, 54, 82, 89, 114, 116, 124, 259, 267, 384, 400, 416, 451, 458, 466, 472, 473, 477, 510
- sexual experiences, 390, 451, 497, 512, 513
- sexual feelings, 2, 104, 225, 238, 240, 244, 255, 379, 400, 479, 513
- sexual harassment, 71, 72, 74, 193, 289, 447, 449
- sexual healing, 1, 19, 81, 83, 122, 164, 237, 238, 239, 248, 254, 256, 281, 300, 338, 375, 382, 400, 408, 409, 410, 474, 481, 503, 511, 514, 515, 519
- sexual health, 2, 150, 187, 193, 194, 245, 294, 384, 447, 453, 454, 458, 474, 478, 516, 517, 519
- sexual intercourse, 2, 93, 95, 97, 98, 99, 109, 169, 170, 171, 188, 241, 286, 439, 455, 513
- sexual motivation, 439
- sexual orientation, 56, 516
- sexual problems, 1, 3, 10, 18, 19, 53, 54, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 81, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 93, 95, 98, 106, 114, 121, 122, 130, 133, 136, 150, 167, 175, 179, 187, 188, 192, 200, 202, 225, 229, 230, 231, 242, 243, 276, 288, 295, 300, 335, 375, 376, 379, 380, 383, 384, 391, 397, 399, 400, 401, 402, 404, 408, 409, 416, 418, 419, 422, 427, 428, 437, 440, 443, 446, 447, 451, 457, 458, 471, 477, 495, 498, 501, 513, 515, 523, 532
- sexual violence, 301, 454, 458, 507, 516
- sexuality, 1, 2, 3, 4, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26, 29, 30, 31, 37, 49, 50, 53, 54, 62, 83, 89, 94, 95, 97, 98, 99, 102, 103, 104, 106, 109, 113, 114, 115, 116, 122, 123, 124, 128, 133, 139, 144, 146, 149, 153, 155, 156, 167, 169, 170, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 179, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 192, 193, 195, 202, 205, 206, 208, 209, 213, 223, 226, 229, 231, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 247, 248, 254, 256, 257, 259, 264, 265, 266, 267, 273, 278, 279, 280, 285, 286, 289, 290, 291, 301, 331, 335, 338, 341, 343, 344, 351, 354, 357, 358, 359, 360, 362, 366, 376, 378, 379, 380, 381, 383, 384, 385, 387, 388, 389, 391, 392, 393, 395, 396, 399, 400, 401, 402, 403, 404, 405, 406, 410, 411, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 423, 425, 427, 429, 430, 435, 436, 439, 440, 441, 442, 443, 444, 445, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 452, 454, 455, 456, 457, 460, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 474, 476, 481, 495, 496, 497, 498, 499, 500, 501, 506, 508, 509, 510, 511, 512, 513, 514,

- 515, 516, 517, 518, 520, 523, 524, 528, 529, 531, 536, 538, 556
- sexually transmitted diseases, 495
- sexually transmitted infections, 153
- shame, 2, 99, 103, 104, 113, 114, 115, 124, 149, 150, 168, 192, 226, 231, 238, 241, 256, 263, 265, 275, 280, 292, 312, 326, 389, 391, 399, 402, 404, 405, 406, 407, 410, 421, 422, 436, 446, 448, 451, 453, 457, 466, 471, 472, 475, 479, 496, 498, 511, 531
- shape, 11, 103, 328, 478, 479
- shortage, 389, 496
- shyness, 448, 479
- side effects, 15, 16, 17, 89, 93, 96, 99, 106, 109, 113, 117, 118, 130, 135, 181, 259, 260, 261, 267, 268, 367, 371, 384, 407, 416, 426, 467, 468, 481, 482, 483, 522, 539
- Sigmund Freud, 2, 5, 12, 20, 38, 202, 220, 232, 249, 368, 385, 400, 449, 481, 524, 537
- signs, 96, 117, 118, 123, 192, 293, 397, 446, 500, 522
- skeletal muscle, 25, 466, 468
- skeleton, 312
- skin, 70, 278, 311, 394, 465, 478
- skin cancer, 70
- skin tags, 478
- slavery, 507
- slaves, 319
- sleeping problems, 162, 395
- smoking, 93, 417
- social acceptance, 46
- social life, 30, 395
- social network, 33, 247
- social problems, 71, 163, 548
- social relations, 55, 210
- social relationships, 55
- Social Security, 69
- social support, 156
- social theory, 194, 295, 458
- social workers, 249
- software, 547
- sovereignty, 42, 454
- specialists, 155, 274, 472
- species, 362
- speech, 142
- sperm, 307, 311, 316, 318, 455
- sphincter, 13
- spinal cord, 407
- spine, 504
- spiritual wisdom, 2
- spirituality, 206, 213, 403, 423, 456, 550
- spontaneity, 208, 302, 357
- squamous cell, 479
- squamous cell carcinoma, 479
- stars, 242, 312
- starvation, 168, 173, 174, 548
- state of shock, 276
- statistics, 47, 88, 133, 134, 241, 400, 547
- sterile, 18, 377, 465, 466, 475, 478
- steroids, 407
- stimulus, 127, 511
- stomach, 25, 144, 160, 161, 163, 168, 170, 174, 265, 289, 290, 291, 305, 311, 312, 316, 317, 318, 319, 393, 399, 410, 448, 474, 498
- stratification, 73
- stream of consciousness, 203, 302, 343
- stressors, 33
- stretching, 15, 114
- stroke, 325, 506
- subgroups, 18, 98
- subjective experience, 38, 362, 444
- substance abuse, 281, 334, 347
- substance use, 154
- success rate, 199, 257
- suicide, 38, 46, 69, 87, 117, 153, 155, 278, 302, 328, 331, 332, 333, 339, 346, 364, 533, 556
- suicide attempts, 87, 117
- superego, 254
- supervision, 84, 87, 88, 96, 106, 117, 119, 120, 206, 214, 243, 294, 301, 332, 353, 361, 382, 397, 403, 424, 425, 500, 532, 533
- supervisor, 117, 119, 279, 332, 364, 469, 470, 532, 533
- suppression, 262, 404, 436, 450
- suprapubic, 14
- surgical intervention, 4, 21
- surplus, 280, 396
- survey, 10, 54, 59, 63, 66, 130, 148, 155, 163, 406, 449, 461, 522, 549, 550
- survival, 29, 30, 32, 35, 39, 44, 146, 203, 214, 245, 266, 359, 366, 405, 448, 452, 483
- survivors, 183, 232, 281, 282, 333, 334, 347, 431, 460, 525
- sweat, 264, 328, 329
- Sweden, 260, 268, 482, 483, 539, 553
- symbolic meanings, 474
- symbolism, 362
- sympathy, 352, 514
- symptoms, 15, 18, 25, 53, 70, 71, 84, 96, 98, 120, 139, 140, 146, 162, 167, 169, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 200, 224, 226, 241, 242, 253, 254, 255, 256, 275, 279, 293, 377, 388, 416, 466, 467, 469, 475, 500, 509, 524
- syndrome, 4, 5, 18, 21, 22, 81, 84, 149, 281, 335, 376, 384, 465, 466, 478
- synthesis, 169, 445, 513
- syphilis, 477

T

- talent, 37, 40, 47, 91, 140, 147, 160, 164, 179, 188, 189, 191, 194, 219, 235, 249, 276, 282, 285, 286, 287, 295, 335, 338, 348, 359, 360, 368, 389, 397, 401, 402, 404, 410, 411, 417, 418, 428, 440, 443, 457, 459, 523, 531, 538
- talk therapy, 1, 106, 465
- tantra, 1, 9, 13, 107, 108, 206, 240, 245, 408, 444
- tantric massage, 2, 418
- teenage girls, 167, 177
- teens, 470
- temperature, 328
- tension, 13, 14, 15, 25, 130, 162, 168, 174, 191, 193, 240, 245, 405, 418, 439, 443, 444, 447, 509, 515
- tensions, 25, 103, 105, 145, 170, 192, 226, 392, 404, 405, 420, 427, 446, 478
- testing, 82, 84, 351, 409, 427
- test-retest reliability, 67, 461, 522
- textbooks, 199, 410
- theatre, 70
- therapeutic approaches, 492
- therapeutic conversation, 2, 443
- therapeutic intervention, 38, 113, 115, 116, 451
- therapeutic interventions, 38
- therapeutic practice, 352
- therapeutic process, 115, 203, 204, 215, 227, 277, 301, 359, 361, 534
- therapeutic relationship, 238, 248, 527
- therapeutic touch, 2, 76, 114, 125, 175, 176, 180, 213, 217, 239, 241, 243, 246, 248, 249, 281, 285, 286, 335, 338, 349, 354, 368, 375, 378, 384, 387, 388, 393, 399, 403, 409, 412, 423, 430, 436, 465, 468, 470, 471, 472, 474, 482, 498, 503, 520, 522, 528, 535
- therapist, 3, 14, 15, 16, 17, 26, 31, 38, 46, 47, 83, 84, 87, 102, 103, 104, 105, 113, 114, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 122, 123, 174, 175, 177, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 223, 224, 225, 230, 231, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 254, 255, 256, 257, 262, 263, 265, 274, 275, 276, 277, 287, 288, 293, 301, 302, 315, 317, 322, 323, 329, 332, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 375, 378, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 387, 393, 403, 405, 408, 422, 423, 426, 427, 449, 450, 451, 452, 453, 454, 469, 470, 474, 480, 481, 498, 504, 505, 513, 514, 515, 517, 518, 519, 520, 521, 525, 528, 529, 532, 534, 535, 536
- therapy, 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 31, 38, 39, 40, 46, 47, 48, 53, 73, 74, 76, 81, 82, 83, 87, 88, 89, 90, 93, 94, 95, 99, 102, 103, 104, 105, 106, 107, 108, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118, 119, 120, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 129, 130, 133, 134, 135, 136, 150, 161, 162, 163, 164, 167, 168, 170, 173, 174, 175, 176, 177, 178, 179, 182, 188, 192, 193, 195, 199, 200, 201, 202, 203, 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209, 210, 211, 213, 214, 215, 217, 218, 219, 220, 223, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 237, 238, 239, 240, 241, 242, 243, 244, 245, 246, 247, 248, 249, 250, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, 259, 260, 261, 262, 263, 265, 266, 267, 268, 273, 274, 275, 276, 277, 278, 279, 280, 281, 282, 285, 286, 287, 288, 292, 293, 294, 296, 299, 300, 301, 302, 313, 317, 329, 332, 333, 334, 335, 337, 338, 339, 341, 343, 344, 345, 346, 347, 349, 351, 352, 353, 354, 355, 356, 357, 358, 359, 360, 361, 362, 363, 364, 365, 366, 367, 368, 369, 370, 375, 376, 377, 378, 380, 381, 382, 383, 384, 385, 386, 387, 391, 393, 394, 399, 400, 402, 403, 406, 407, 410, 412, 415, 416, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 426, 427, 428, 430, 435, 437, 440, 444, 446, 447, 448, 449, 450, 451, 453, 454, 455, 456, 457, 458, 459, 465, 468, 470, 471, 472, 474, 475, 479, 480, 481, 482, 484, 488, 498, 503, 505, 506, 507, 508, 509, 510, 511, 513, 514, 515, 516, 518, 519, 520, 523, 524, 525, 528, 532, 534, 535, 536, 538, 539, 556
- thinning, 466
- third dimension, 189, 441
- thoughts, 70, 168, 242, 257, 278, 288, 293, 299, 317, 318, 328, 329, 332, 341, 396, 533
- Tibet, 1
- tinea cruris, 477
- tinnitus, 180, 218, 233, 369
- tissue, 15, 23, 25, 39, 115, 141, 149, 150, 161, 276, 287, 314, 389, 392, 399, 401, 410, 415, 418, 427, 451, 467, 468, 475, 500, 508
- tobacco, 549
- torture, 265, 361, 439, 453, 454, 507, 508
- touch therapy, 1, 260, 488, 528
- trachea, 323
- traditions, 2, 48, 259, 267, 377, 490, 514
- trainees, 157
- training, 14, 26, 87, 88, 95, 105, 106, 116, 119, 120, 123, 193, 206, 208, 209, 213, 214, 243, 262, 267, 285, 286, 291, 294, 301, 338, 351, 352, 355, 357, 360, 362, 364, 382, 394, 403, 407, 420, 423, 424, 447, 449, 470, 477, 500, 527, 528, 531, 537, 548
- traits, 66
- transcendence, 48, 444
- transference, 3, 5, 12, 21, 83, 115, 117, 126, 127, 206, 209, 237, 238, 239, 240, 243, 245, 246, 248, 253, 254, 256, 332, 341, 353, 361, 375, 387, 393, 449, 450, 460, 498, 515, 517, 524, 525, 528, 538

transformation, 204, 227, 245, 302, 344, 345, 362, 480
transformations, 345
transition to adulthood, 153
translation, 94
translocation, 173
transparency, 492
trauma, 11, 26, 27, 28, 31, 89, 94, 107, 129, 130, 163, 175, 178, 226, 230, 232, 246, 252, 253, 254, 256, 257, 260, 264, 265, 273, 275, 276, 277, 279, 280, 282, 291, 293, 294, 323, 334, 339, 340, 341, 353, 358, 360, 361, 365, 366, 367, 369, 379, 386, 387, 388, 391, 392, 393, 419, 424, 428, 435, 436, 453, 457, 461, 478, 479, 497, 498, 507, 508, 511, 521, 522, 525, 533
traumatic brain injury, 413
traumatic events, 175, 230, 277, 279, 337, 346, 351, 365, 507, 511
traumatic experiences, 389
treatment methods, 384
trial, 76, 128
trichomonas, 477
tricyclic antidepressant, 407
tricyclic antidepressants, 407
tumor, 424
tumors, 424, 478, 479
twist, 328

U

UK, 482, 538
ulcer, 71
ultrasound, 83
umbilical cord, 306
unhappiness, 448, 509
United Kingdom, 268, 483, 553
universe, 10, 38, 48, 202, 215, 229, 241, 324, 360, 445, 476, 531
urethra, 4, 20, 167, 171, 173, 176, 177, 179, 466, 475, 484
urinary tract, 94, 159, 167, 176, 377, 384, 418, 465, 475, 478
urinary tract infection, 160, 377, 384, 475
urinary tract inflammation, 465, 478
urine, 2, 107, 174, 290, 415, 418, 426, 427, 430, 477
use of force, 351
uterus, 15, 25, 95, 104, 121, 162, 163, 290, 309, 325, 380, 399, 410, 419, 466, 474

V

vacuum, 266

vagina, 5, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 21, 90, 93, 94, 95, 99, 105, 106, 109, 114, 120, 121, 125, 174, 176, 178, 213, 214, 219, 232, 249, 265, 291, 292, 294, 297, 299, 301, 302, 309, 314, 316, 317, 319, 321, 332, 335, 338, 349, 351, 356, 360, 375, 379, 381, 384, 385, 394, 399, 406, 407, 410, 415, 417, 418, 419, 420, 421, 422, 423, 424, 425, 427, 428, 451, 459, 465, 466, 470, 472, 473, 474, 475, 478, 483, 514, 522
vaginal acupressure, 2, 5, 14, 16, 21, 81, 83, 90, 93, 94, 95, 97, 106, 108, 109, 114, 125, 151, 178, 214, 219, 229, 232, 240, 243, 249, 309, 376, 377, 380, 383, 385, 408, 413, 415, 419, 420, 422, 424, 426, 427, 428, 459, 483, 503, 514, 522
vaginal massage, 2, 14, 15, 82, 107, 114, 379
vaginitis, 466
valence, 47
validation, 67, 91, 136, 221, 460
valueless, 2
variations, 466
vehicles, 202
venereal disease, 71, 321
Viagra, ix, 2, 9, 10, 12, 13, 18, 19
victimisation, 510
victimization, 154, 157, 273, 274, 281, 334, 347
victims, 26, 72, 74, 265, 273, 274, 278, 280, 281, 282, 299, 301, 334, 337, 347, 427, 435, 473, 507, 509, 510, 511, 514, 532
video, 115, 116, 118, 119
videos, 115
videotape, 515
violence, 68, 71, 154, 262, 292, 343, 351, 356, 360, 365, 366, 400, 506, 507, 534
viral infection, 477
vision, 489
visualization, 256, 388
vitiligo, 478
voiding, 5, 21, 127, 524, 538
vomiting, 107, 157, 168, 170, 174, 263, 290, 320
vulnerability, 72, 74, 103, 139, 146, 266, 507, 508, 511
vulva, 15, 104, 108, 109, 115, 116, 118, 120, 263, 299, 309, 378, 384, 399, 402, 404, 405, 406, 407, 410, 418, 422, 451, 465, 466, 467, 468, 469, 470, 471, 472, 474, 475, 476, 477, 478, 479, 480, 481, 514, 536
vulval pain, 2, 5, 21
vulvitis, 466
vulvodynia, 2, 76, 81, 84, 89, 95, 103, 108, 124, 125, 130, 149, 150, 154, 157, 159, 160, 164, 178, 192, 195, 213, 217, 232, 250, 262, 263, 281, 296, 335, 349, 368, 384, 385, 399, 406, 407, 408, 410, 412, 413, 415, 419, 420, 428, 437, 439, 451, 457, 458,

459, 465, 466, 475, 477, 480, 484, 495, 502, 503,
508, 514, 524, 539

W

waking, 142, 315, 317
walking, 48, 208, 210, 313, 314, 357
waste, 142, 143, 162, 278, 314, 355, 517, 518
weakness, 9, 10, 99
wealth, 142
weapons, 505
wear, 535
web, 207, 210, 212, 456
weeping, 27, 288, 289, 308
weight control, 168
weight loss, 157, 168
welfare, 545, 551
western culture, 384

Wilhelm Reich, 2, 12, 82, 242, 254, 261, 416, 444,
469, 473, 476, 514
withdrawal, 168, 244, 519
workers, 321, 332, 520
World Health Organisation, 492
worldview, 189, 441
worms, 161, 318
worry, 144, 389
wrists, 313, 329
wrongdoing, 49, 518

Y

young adults, 436
young women, 2, 167, 174, 177, 178, 406, 410, 466

Z

zygote, 290, 444, 456