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MOOC 2 – Unit 2 EMPATHY : psychologist's keystone in early intervention

Good practices

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GOOD PRACTICES : INTRODUCTION



The time has come to put into practice the theoretical and practical principles previously studied and learned, through the analysis of some concrete clinical cases that are proposed to you based on the interviews you have already read, involving people representing different types of victims and professionals in the field. We remind you that you have at your disposal the 3rd section of this training entirely dedicated to clinical cases.



Therefore, we invite you to think on how you understand the perspective and attitude of the professional: which protocol, organization or suggestion has been chosen and why.

Then, putting yourself in the professional position: what would have you done differently or alternatively, and why ?

Keep up the good work !



1 GOOD PRACTICE : Teaching empathy

To work with a group using “the state-of –art” technical introduction tool:

- Use a setting similar to the Balint group (cf. TIP of the Chapter 2)
- Ask every group member about their personal meaning of the word “Empathy”
- Invite everyone to express their opinion.
- Write on a paper board every meaning linked to the author’s name.
- Invite everyone to reflect on the other meanings specially if their sense is not clear to them.
- Write the different ways of understanding each term.
- After this first exchange, invite everyone to write or draw their own sense of empathy again.
- Take a picture of the paper board (that you keep)



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2 GOOD PRACTICE : Teaching sensory-motor empathy

You can start with your students to feel and understand the archaic and basic empathy in the group: the Sensory-motor Empathy. We suggest that you use the movement and dance, doing simple movement, like the WAVE Movement* :

1. In a large space, interior or exterior, make a line with every student 50 cm apart ;
2. and start with a progressive rhythmic music, baroque style is better ;
3. Start to walk together keeping the line to reach the established position in front of the group (at least 15 m, better 20 m away);
4. Arrive at the goal on the other side, without losing the rhythm and synchronicity of the group, turn around and go out and back;
5. Increase the speed of the steps in progression and following the music ;
6. Give each other your hand as soon as the pace approaches the running pace ;
7. Give an indication to feel the breathing of others, of the group and seek the same synchronicity of running steps ;
8. Give each other a hand and run all together;
9. Listen to the wave that rises in the group;
10. Decrease with the rhythm;
11. Make the exercise last longer so that the group reaches synchronicity at any speed;
12. Finish the exercise when you have come to walk again, let go of your hands and breathe slowly ;
13. Take the time to make the group express itself in a circle on what has been experienced, perceived: in general everyone has identified a wave of joy;
14. Advise to do it often in group, especially before group supervision or Balint groups.



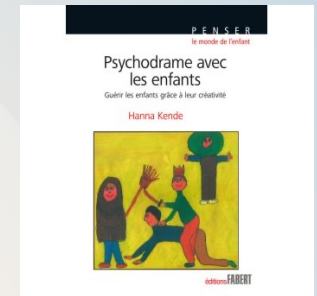
3 GOOD PRACTICE : Teaching cognitive empathy

We suggest you to bring your student to experiment conflict but without emotion. For this goal, we suggest you the exercise “MEDIEVAL DISPUTATION” **:

1. You have to propose a subject or a book, or a problem to your student group, if necessary you can list/delineate the lines of the theme (that must be far from current personal or group problems) ;
2. You decide the composition of 3 groups ;
3. You assign different roles to each group :
Groupe A) Support the thesis in favour of the book, or the theme, or a solution of the problem;
Group B) Support the thesis against the book, or the theme, or a solution of the problem;
Group C) The Public that will decide who was the most convincing in their language and defence;
4. The students don't choose their side, but they have 1 hour to prepare their speech in group;
5. And 20' minutes to present their disputation;
6. The Public group has to follow the presentations and choose the best explanation for their reasons;
7. You (can) keep the time - the following week – to make the group express themselves on their emotions and grasp the relationships with the logical development of their official speeches;
8. You can point out that for many students the fact that the task was imposed allowed to keep emotions at a better distance and thus let cognitive consciousness work with more openness and understanding of the positions of others.



4 GOOD PRACTICE : Teaching emotional empathy



Therefore, you invite your student to think about how they understand at different psychic levels the perspective and attitude of the others, better if in the student group.

You can use this other tool: the **Adlerian Psychodrama** * as an exercise for developing empathy posture without interpretation but only using the "history drive development". Adlerian psychodrama allows to see and live the personal emotional blockade, to understand the other mind and its emotions, but with accompaniment of the group and the therapist supervisor.

You use a semi-structured story like the following **story** of the "ISLAND and the Firebird":

« On one island, Aborigines spot a "Firebird" crashing on the opposite side of their Village. Alarmed, they run and discover human beings "almost like them". »

The group of students must be divided into two groups, choose which ones want to play the aviators and which the Aborigines and give life to the continuation of the story.

They have 20 minutes in a small group to agree on the sequel and the ending of the story.

After starting the "Game", they will have max 45' to complete the story.

The therapist lets students work both in the small group phase and in the game phase, but always keeps an eye on whether the groups need his/her intervention to unlock an individual or group emotion that remains perceived but not understood. The important thing is not a fair ending, but a right insight double perception of the group and the students.

At the end of the game phase, it takes at least 1h to let all the participants talk about the sensations and emotions experienced. It is important to have at least 2 sessions, or even better three.



5 GOOD PRACTICE : Teaching empathy evolution

The “day after” technical tool is to be used as the follow-up to the “state-of-art” tool and the other techniques from precedent good practices:

In a setting similar to the Balint group (cf. TIP of the Chapter 2), as used in the precedent “state-of-art” technical introduction tool:

- Ask every group member about their meaning of the word “Empathy” on this particular day after having experienced the crisis intervention and group’s support as suggested in the good practices.
- Invite everyone to express their opinion.
- Write on a paper board every meaning linked to the author’s name.
- Put on display the board that was filled during the last session.
- Invite everyone to compare their current definition with the one they expressed on the last session.
- Take a picture of two paper boards (that you kept).



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