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INTERVENTION TO SUPPORT PEOPLE IN THEIR SELF-DEVELOPMENT PROCESS: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Ofra KIRSCHENBOIM¹

Abstract

Nowadays, we see people who have difficulty in speaking about themselves. They found it easier to talk about others and to blame and attack them. This leads to negative energies, lack of confidence and unhappiness. Pressure, stress or anxiety can be the trigger for personal growth and development. In recent years, an attempt has been made to combine research into personality, research on mutual social action, and research into society. The need for critical self-awareness and for active, selective learning, are the factors behind the desire to combine these research areas. There are approaches that claim that interaction between individuals is the social basis. This is a micro paradigm, which states that the individual has an influence on the society. Following the literature, this paper aims to understand the self-development process, as an argument for developing a method for personal and emotional growth. Thus, the model will be developed to help people deal with crises and difficulties caused by external factors, beyond the control of the patient.

Keywords: personal and emotional growth, self-development, intervention, self-awareness.

Introduction

This paper aims to understand the self-development process as an argument for developing a method to assist a person who wishes to have personal and emotional growth, to improve the quality of his life or to fill his life with positive feelings and personal satisfaction. The method could also be support for those who have been traumatized, gone through a crisis or is under stress and wants to feel good within himself. If a person so desires, he can improve the quality of his emotional life. The method called Improve Myself Internally Method (IMI) proposes a practical, efficient technique of emotional improvement, based on five principles. These principles are oriented to the ability to differentiate and to define situations, to listen to the inner voice, to remain within the desire, the ability to do reflection

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without speaking about the other person and to choose the positive sentence which will give a good feeling. The model will be developed to help people deal with crises and difficulties caused by external factors, beyond the control of the patient. Pressure, stress or anxiety can be the trigger for personal growth and development.

Facts and Interpretation

Berger and Luckman (1985) say that the social constructionism approach – under which the social reality is an outcome of interactions between individuals and groups, and based on that is determined the understanding, importance and significance of something particular. Reality is a human construct. People create reality, but also interpret it constantly. What people perceive and interpret as reality is, in itself, a construct, a product of social interaction between individuals and societies. In order to explain reality, one needs to understand, analyze, and interpret the social processes that contributed to this construct. Social facts do not exist – rather, reality is an outcome of social construct and interaction. Each person is an autonomous entity with the ability to interpret reality and act uniquely within it, and so when a person conducts various relationships with others, he is actually contributing to the ongoing process of the social construction of reality and influencing its character. Anoch (2000) claims that the focus is on the way in which people act on the basis of the interpretation that they give to reality. People derive their interpretation of reality from situations.

Lazarus & Lazarus (2001) state that images are part of our thought processes. The mental show that we imagine can influence our behavior and our conscious willpower. The power of imagination is really strong. For example, imagine you have a slice of lemon under your tongue and notice how you begin to secrete saliva as if the slice really existed. In an experiment, the subjects were shown pictures and, using a brain scanner, the researchers checked which areas of the brain were activated when they looked at the actual pictures. Then the same subjects were asked to close their eyes and imagine the pictures they had just looked at. Results showed that the same areas were activated as if the subjects were looking at the actual pictures and not just imagining them. It can thus be concluded that our imagination is not just “a figment of our imagination”, but it is very realistic. Lerner and Tidence (2006) claim that imagination can dictate what will occur in reality. This is why imagination is a tool that induces anxiety. We think about all kinds of bad things that might occur, and begin to be frightened. Yet, to the same extent, imagination can be used as a therapeutic tool for relaxation and reducing anxiety and if we use it for positive images, it can influence our positive feeling.

The aroma of food that awakens our appetite will give us a pleasant feeling, whereas the smell of a bitter, chemical substance will make us feel nauseous and cause us to move away. Thus, from an evolutionary standpoint, a negative emotion evokes caution and defence about a nearby danger. The smell creates interpretation but what is the fact and what is the interpretation? This proves the great importance of being able to differentiate between the two. When your neighbor shouts because your barking dog disturbs her, what is the fact and what is the interpretation? If a person has the ability to distinguish between the two, he will be able to control

his emotions and reactions.

Kahneman (2005) had a research project in which they studied several hundred people who underwent a colonoscopy, an invasive procedure using a plastic tube which is inserted into the anus to examine the lower digestive system. Even though the procedure lasts for only a few moments, it is considered to be a painful and unpleasant examination. In his study Kahneman divided the subjects into two groups. In the first group, the colonoscopy procedure was carried out as normal. In the second group, the same procedure was carried out, but at the end of the test, the physician left the tube in the patient's body without moving it for one extra moment. This caused one extra moment of discomfort, but of course, this moment involved less pain and unpleasantness than during the actual procedure when the tube was being moved around in the body. When the subjects were asked to describe their experience, a surprising discovery was found. The second group, in which the test had lasted one more minute, described a more positive experience than the first group, because they remembered the final moment in which they did not experience any discomfort. Thus, the conclusion reached is that our memory is not at all objective. We choose certain moments from our history, for whatever reasons, and determine our stance and our mood based on these moments. Final moments are especially important. We remember the emotional final moments of a movie, the final moments before we leave a person close to us and in this experiment, the subjects remembered the one moment in which they had slight relief from the pain.

So what is reality? And what is imagination? It is now known that a person does not have the ability to be in a state of extreme subjectivity.

Loftus (1996) is a researcher of the memory and she states that man is not subjective and we are capable of creating memories of things that never even existed. She has reported how she was able to cause people to interpret reality in a different way to what actually happened, and she was even able to plant actual memories in a person's mind. In her studies, she shows people a movie in which a car crashes into a tree. One sub-group of participants was asked at what speed did the car touch the tree in the movie, the other sub-group was asked at what speed did the car crash into the tree. The difference in what each group estimated was tens of kph (kilometers per hour). In another question, Loftus asked the subjects whether the driver or passenger window broke. They were all quite sure of the answers they gave, even though in the movie, no windows at all were broken. She concluded that the manner in which a question is posed, "plants" information in the subjects' memory. In a similar experiment, she told participants a story about how they got lost in the mall when they were children. Many of them identified with the story, and even added more details about what happened, even though the event was invented by Loftus as part of her research.

Danon and Sheinfeld (2011) describe a parable in their book of two people stuck in a traffic jam during rush hours, a situation familiar to all of us. One of the drivers reports that he feels imprisoned and stifled in his car and cannot bear the situation, whereas the other driver reports that it gives him time to rest and relax, drink a cup of water or change the CD in the car. The objective situation is identical in both cases, but the subjective feeling is different, due to the interpretation. Since each of the two has a different internal monologue, so the emotion

each one feels is completely different.

What we tell ourselves in reaction to a situation we find ourselves in determines our mood, our feelings and our resulting actions. In most cases, we are not aware of this process, because we talk to ourselves very quickly and do not take notice and we, therefore, get the impression that the external situation causes us to feel as we do. However, when we gain a greater awareness of the facts, we get to understand that: An event leads to an internal sentence which leads to a feeling which leads to a reaction.

Malakh (2013) notes that brain research studies about the “seeing brain” show that our sense of vision does not absorb the exact details of the physical world, but focuses on building a model of an external reality that help us survive and enables us to function efficiently. A variation on this idea was found earlier in the Copernican Revolution of Emmanuel Kant who claimed that using our senses we do not perceive the world as it really is, but we view it through a filter or our glasses. We extrapolate our internal categories on the visible reality.

In the book *The Quarrel of the Faculties*, translated by Yiftah Hellerman-Carmel (2007), it is claimed that we do not really see the external world, we only see the images that we create in our own minds. Since these images can never accurately reflect reality, there is no point in trying to guess what reality actually looks like. The author concludes that 99% of our reality is what we have decided it will look like.

The Inner Voice

Zeidenfeld and Rahav (2005) state that, according to Durkheim, the role of sociology is to investigate social facts. Social facts are facts about some sort of regularity related to the social order – modes of behavior, thinking and feeling, that have their own actuality, outside of the lives and perceptions of individual people. These are facts that dictate the activity of individuals in society. This means that it is a society that determined the boundaries for the individual’s behavior. Each individual formulates, based on his experience, knowledge of how the social world operates, and how one has to conduct oneself within it. This knowledge is formulated as a result of our essential need to conduct social relations and live in the world. However, at the same time, this knowledge is utilitarian knowledge, which helps us decide how to conduct our lives, but it cannot answer the deeper questions, such as why the social world operates as it does, or how did the current situation come about – a situation that appears to us to be “natural” and “obvious.”

Zeidenfeld and Rahav (2005) quote Durkheim’s most famous study, on suicide, a study that looks at the phenomenon socially. On the surface, suicide is not a social matter, but a personal issue for the individual and the classic, intuitive responses to this issue come from psychology since it relates to the individual. However, Durkheim relates to suicide as a social fact – a fact that is located outside the individual, and influenced by other social facts. Society influences the behavior of individuals and directs their actions, and suicide is not dependent solely on the individuals concerned, even though it would seem to be an individual issue.

The sentences a person says about himself are usually the ones he heard in his childhood during his first interactions with other people. Bowlby (2016) claimed that the main parental function is to be a safe foundation for the child. When a child has this safe foundation, he is able to move away because he is certain that he will be wanted when he returns and he knows that his parent will soothe him if he is anxious or fearful. As far as the parent is concerned, the significance of this function means that he has to be competent, available, and prepared to act when necessary and only when necessary. The realization of the function of a safe foundation for the infant is as follows: Whenever the infant is distressed, the need to have a connection with the parental figure arises. The more the parental figure addresses the infant's need, the faster his anxiety will recede and his behavior will revert to normal. This dialogue is the result of the infant's innate "knowledge" that when he feels distressed, he must activate a system of communication with the parental figure because his proximity to her will reduce his distress. The actual practice of this dialogue is the milestone of any future significant relationships. Under normal circumstances, the parent's calming influence will be internalized by the infant and will form the basis for a safe foundation for him.

Sobol and Goldberg (2014) claim that our cognition is nourished by inner talk and since our personal interpretation is sometimes flawed, this is the reason why we have fears. If a person changes his pessimistic pattern of thinking, then his fears will decrease and this will help him form realistic, positive thoughts and as a result he will succeed in propelling himself toward the desired behavior. Danon and Sheinfeld (2011) use the term "self-speak" to define internal conversation. They claim that whatever we say to ourselves in reaction to situations we find ourselves in, defines our feelings and consequently, our reactions. They say that addicts are particularly vulnerable to negative self-speak, many of them did not fully experience attachment in a continuous manner. As a result, they speak about themselves in negative terms. Danon and Sheinfeld claim that it is possible to control negative thinking if a person is aware of when he sinks into that mode and consciously exchanges his negative statements for positive ones by saying sentences such as "I can do without the drug." Most addicts speak about themselves in a negative manner – "I cannot manage without drugs or alcohol." Danon and Sheinfeld call this "frightening self-speak" and in most cases, it comes from the subconscious and is automatic and frightening. Negative self-speak can cause or increase panic which causes increased heartbeat, pressure in the chest, and sweaty palms. And in such a physical state, the addict must have the drugs. Negative self-speak comes from negative habits. A person is not born with it, he learns to speak in this manner and is of course influenced by the adult who was meant to be responsible for him during childhood and was not available for him. It is obvious that how a person is treated during childhood by his parents and, in particular, his mother, and the relationships in his childhood home are hugely influential. They claim that just as it is possible to change non-healthy behavioral patterns such as excessive coffee drinking or white sugar consumption, so it is also possible to change -healthy thinking patterns to positive, supportive thinking patterns. This requires awareness and willpower and obviously the understanding that this is possible and worthwhile and then the positive thinking will lead to positive emotions.

In their work, Danon and Sheinfeld have devised a formula: an external event – creates self-speak – creates a feeling – creates a reaction. This means that we are responsible for our feelings and when we are prepared to take responsibility for our feelings, we will have control over our lives. This recognition gives us a sense of power. This is one of the important keys to living more efficiently and freely with a sense of security and that only I control myself.

From the moment we wake up until we fall asleep, our brain is constantly working and thinking. Fear often causes our thoughts to work at a faster pace. However, if we learn to stop and listen to the sentences within us at the first stage and then, at the second stage, learn to ask if these sentences pull us down or raise us up? The sentences we say to ourselves lead to emotions and these lead to physical feelings such as increased heartbeat, sweating, stomach pains, dizziness, sleep disorders etc.

Bibi (2016) claims that the basis for negative thoughts is the absence of a satisfactory experience of being taken care of in a devoted and loving manner. We repress reality. This may be a one-time experience of lack or vacuum, or it may be an ongoing experience but we are left in an anxious state the whole time, either worried about loss or abandonment. An emotional experience, or lack, or vacuum is the main source of human anxiety. Anxiety about separating from a partner, fear of flying, fear of tests is all connected in the end to components of loss and lack.

Marom *et al.* (2011) says that creating thoughts about a catastrophe are based on exaggeration in estimating the significance of the negative outcomes, and exaggeration of the feeling of inability to deal with them. However, it is possible to challenge these catastrophic feelings in three stages. 1. To identify them, 2. To argue with them and the extent of their veracity, 3. To exchange them with more realistic feelings using CBT – cognitive-behavioral therapy.

Gilbert (2007) explains that our awareness is the outcome of our brain, and our brain is the outcome of our past experiences and our genetic makeup. Therefore, whatever happens to us is natural, and our awareness enables us to take responsibility and to choose to cultivate the healthy and beneficial parts of us. Both the beneficial and harmful parts are natural to our brains. Using mindfulness we can choose which part we wish to cultivate. Mindfulness enables us to observe our mind and to see the urges, the feelings, and the thoughts, to observe the cyclical pattern of our thoughts and to stop it and we learn to observe in a non-judgmental manner.

The reason why we do things is formed by listening to our inner sentences and voice. This greatly influences the way in which our awareness is organized and will influence what we notice and what we ignore, as well as our thoughts and behavior. So in the first stage, it is very important that we have the ability to identify our sentences and then to listen to them. Many people are unaware of these inner sentences. When I ask a child if he had an inner sentence when he saw his schoolbag thrown on the floor, he answers in the negative because he works on auto-pilot and does not have the space to listen to himself.

Bibi (2016) claims that feelings awaken cognition, so if someone is in an anxious state and feels sad and angry, he will begin to think negative thoughts. However, cognitive theorists think otherwise and claim that thoughts are what create feelings. For example, when a person begins to think about danger, then

he becomes fearful and not the opposite. When a person thinks about his boss who is about to enter his room and invade his privacy, then he becomes angry. From this, we deduce that people who have negative feelings and do not feel happiness are governed by negative thoughts that imprison them in earlier negative patterns. Whenever negative memories and thoughts increase, then negative feelings also increase. Whenever they manage to overcome the negative thoughts and stand up to oppose them, their mood improves and their feeling of happiness increases. Cognitive therapy developed from this understanding which seeks out and identifies the negative thought patterns and changes them. A person can only stop being a victim of his past when he understands his past history, including the traumatic events, and makes peace with it. Cognitive therapy stresses the present and takes leave of the past. For example, an elderly school janitor, who trained and worked as an engineer in the FSU, may be happy with his present job or may be frustrated. It all depends how he interprets his job, what sentences he says to himself, whether he feels insulted that he has a simple manual job despite his professional training and experience and whether he feels insulted, embittered and very unhappy with his lot. On the other hand, another person with the same history may hold the exact same position and will be very happy and cheerful. He would certainly have preferred to find a job as an engineer based on his previous experience but he came to terms with the fact that when he moved to Israel his situation changed. He prefers the Israeli climate to what he was used to in the FSU, he enjoys the physical activity at his age which is part of his job even though he has past the standard retirement age, and he got to know all the school children who greeted him every morning. He cleans the classrooms thoroughly as if they were his own property and so his positive attitude to his job and the fact that he found satisfaction with what the job did offer him, made him satisfied with what he had. Due to the sentences he told himself, joyful and satisfied emotions about his job developed. If he had told himself negative sentences, he would have felt embittered and angry.

Wills

The AGIL paradigm (Parsons, 2004), is a theory of systems that indicates the functions and factors contributing to social unity and allowing the continuity and existence of the social system. Every person wants to belong. The will to belong is the basis for man's existence in the world. Man's first social belonging is to his family, and subsequently to the society around him. In order to belong, man has to want to accept upon himself the laws of society. This is his basis will. From this derive his other daily wishes, such as to get from place to place, to learn, to enjoy himself, to spend leisure time. According to Parsons, the four systems are: (1) adaptation – the system has to be able to adapt itself to the environment, and to enlist the resources required for this; (2) goal – the system has to define and set goals for itself, and develop the mechanisms and methods required for achieving them; integration – the various sub-systems of the social system have to be adapted to one another; (3) latency – the system has to develop methods of preserving the cultural patterns and values, and of imparting them to future generations; (4)

socialization – people in society comply with the social demands since they internalize the social norms and value through the socialization process, in which the individual learns how to conduct himself in society, in order to belong. This is an inner, psychological need of the individual. The norms and values are internalized in the individual, and thus the culture becomes part of that individual. The social rules are internalized in individuals through an ongoing process of socialization, and are not merely an external force operating on them. They become an inner force within the individual, and this is man's will to belong to the group.

Hobbs (2004) argues that society does not fall apart, in spite of the fact that each individual worries about satisfying his own needs, since between all the individuals there is an unofficial contract that gives legitimacy to each individual in himself. And the individual himself wishes to be a part of the social contract.

A person never does anything that he does not want to do. Even if he is not really satisfied with his choice, he still preferred that choice to the alternative one. Every action begins with, and is formed by, a desire, even if these is not always a conscious one. Whoever is astute and observes will see that every desire is formed from an earlier and deeper desire. For example, a person sets his alarm clock at night for the following morning. This action results from the desire to set his alarm clock for the morning. The actual desire results from the desire to get up in the morning, which results from the desire to go to work in the morning, which results from the desire to earn a livelihood, which results from the desire to have the means to meet his needs. The deeper a person penetrates into his innermost desires, the more he discovers who he is, what his characteristics are, what makes him feel good and what promotes and builds his personality. Desire is a cognitive process in which an individual decides to do an action.

Hoffman (2006) discusses Rousseau's political philosophy which states that "man is born free and is everywhere in chains." The social contract is a holy right which is the basis for all other rights. The source of this contract is not found in nature, it is based on agreement. The family is the first example of a unit in which everyone is born equal and free and that is why the members hand over their freedom to the father who is the head of this unit. From this beginning, things later got mixed up and when man made the rules of authority, it did not mean that his desire disappeared. According to Rousseau, force does not determine the right to rule and a person is only obligated to listen to legitimate sources of authority. No man has the natural right to rule over another person, and force does not give rise to any right. Therefore, agreement is the only foundation of any legal form of authority. Rousseau believed that the purpose of the Social Contract is "to find the best form of partnership that will protect with the common force the body and the property of the individual, and that each one of its members will unite with everyone else, and despite this, will only be answerable to himself." Rousseau believed in the Law of the General Will and claimed that the general will must be imposed on the individual. In the Social Contract, the individual loses his ability to do whatever he wants, but he gains civil freedom and property. These are social laws without which society cannot exist, but the individual has to remember that his will is not eradicated even when and if he keeps the social laws of the society. As mentioned above, a person's desire is the story of his personality. When he expresses his will, he is telling everyone only about himself.

Azoulay (2016) proposes a concrete, consolidated way of thinking about the meaning of life and other, related questions. His way will free us of illusions that cause us to be miserable and allow us to build our unique path to create a life of meaning and value. At the end of this path, the elusive happiness may well be found. Azoulay proposes exchanging the term happiness with meaningful. He says that happiness is a dangerous term in that it leads to a life of frustration and lack of satisfaction. It is an ideal that cannot be realized. He suggests using the term meaningful instead, and quotes many differences between the two terms.

When discussing the question of what motivates people, Azoulay is convinced that his answer of meaningfulness is the correct one. Not happiness, money, sex or power but meaning. Meaning is connected to the circle of values that a person has and the imprint he leaves on this circle. The model of meaningful that Azoulay proposes is not a fantasy, but a rational one. He speaks of the difference between pessimism and optimism and shows the necessity of being optimistic. He says that it is not a question of personality, fate or circumstances of life, but an important, ethical and fundamental decision.

Frankl (1995) claims that there are some psychological approaches which promote the positive aspects of the person. His book “Man’s Search for Meaning” was one of the first to discuss man’s positive aspects. Frankl was a Holocaust survivor who went through Auschwitz and in his book he describes how he retained his sanity in that hellish existence. His approach says that modern man has lost the meaning of life and suffers from an “existential vacuum”. This leads to the boredom, depression, aggressiveness and addiction which are so common in modern day society. Frankl (1982) believes that in order to be saved from the existential vacuum and emotional maladies, man has to find meaning in his life. He has to desire and yearn for something and this desire is the key to man’s existence.

Shatil (1994) writes about the principles of Carl Rogers, one of the first humanistic psychologists who saw that a person’s main desire is to look for meaning. The source of human difficulty is the gap between a person’s actual self-perception and the ideal perception. He claims that the solution to this gap is found both in education and in psychological treatment which promotes empathy and unconditional acceptance. According to Carl Rogers, emotional energy motivates people.

To Speak Only of Yourself

Adar-Bonis (2007) proposes the theory of the symbolic interaction paradigm, that is, a paradigm that sees society as the outcome of daily interactions between individuals within a society. According to this paradigm, society comes into being as the joint reality constructed by individuals. When individuals in society create and maintain human contact with other individuals, an interaction is created between the individuals, which becomes a kind of general dynamic. When a person in society is able to speak only of himself, he ceases to blame other individuals in society, and stands on his own, with him being clear about himself. Through this, a positive interaction will be created, as opposed to the negative interactions that there were in the past.

Fonagy (2008) says that the concept of “reflection”, as used by Winnicott, comes to describe the importance of the mother’s recounting of the baby’s experiences and feelings. The mother reflects to the baby what is happening in his soul, through her sounds, tunes, movements and touch, so that the baby can internalize that he has feelings, from which derive his independent wishes. Winnicott (1995) writes that the mother functions as a mirror to her child. When the mother observes her infant and child she reflects and returns his self. He claims that the role of the caregiver is to reflect what the subject of her care brings, in the most positive manner possible.

Landau (1993) reviews the containment function of the mother and the therapist. He states that Bowles’s ideas of substituent material expand upon Bion’s concept of the vessel. The mother is a substituent material for the child, which changes the self of the infant with her constant listening to him, with active partnership and with constant change. When the object serves as a container, it is an existence that has a presence, it is fixed and permanent, it processes ramifications and returns them when they have been processed. More than that, it is an active participant which enables something which does not yet exist to be formed, it enables the realization of internal potential.

Ogden (2003) says that the patient-therapist relationship parallels the infant-mother relationship. In the patient-therapist relationship, in the analytical space, there is room for the potential space where the therapeutic experience occurs. This space is dependent on the patient feeling safe and is created by the therapist’s skills and adapting himself to the patient’s needs.

Weir (1995) states that Winnicott’s theory about the potential space has an important influence on understanding artistic expression. “The infant’s first connection to reality occurs as an illusion when he sees himself as an extension of his mother. Therefore, there has to be a similar time period when creating a piece of art work when the artist feels to be one unit with his work. And then gradually and continuously, until the piece of work is completed, the individual parts that comprise the artwork get their own identity. So I feel that the potential for the individual’s creativity is to be found in the area between joining and separation. In other words, the more an individual is able to freely move between joining and separation (and sometimes contain these two aspects at the same time), the more creative he can become. The potential space is the one that allows us to experience and experiment and be creative. This is the space that allows us to experience the freedom to be and to create.

Troaziih (2002) writes about the task of the mother is to translate the reality into words for her infant. She is the one who serves as a bridge between his inner world and the external world around him and thus enables him to be a person who communicates with his surroundings.

Fonagy (2008) says that Winnicott’s term “reflection” describes the importance of the story of the infant’s feelings and experiences by the mother. She reflects to the infant what is happening in his soul through her voice, sounds, movements and touch so that the infant is able to internalize that he has feelings that are the source of desires.

Based on this understanding of reflection, the technique of interventional therapy developed in which the therapist says what the patient has said and presents

the emotional significance of what the patient has expressed. Thus the reflection technique is a process in which the therapist reflects back to the patient what his image is. He repeats the contents of what the patient has said, but in different words. In this manner, the therapist assists the patients in clarifying his feelings, and also conveys his acceptance and understanding of the patient back to the patient. Reflection can be used to help the patient meet his inner voice and then reflect back to him what happens to him in cases of when he does or does not listen to the inner voice. Rogers (2005) says that care about a patient means that the therapist releases him from any pressure the patient may feel to behave in a manner that will satisfy the therapist's desires. This care means that the therapist relates to the patient as a separate individual who is allowed to experience his feelings and experience the various events he has been through with his self.

Wilkins & Bozarth (2001) say that as soon as this release happens and the patient feels "he can be himself", then the therapeutic experience becomes curative. They contributed the term "curative" to professional literature. The curative experience applies to both sides. The therapist feels he is strong enough to give up on being judgmental and setting conditions. He is happy with the human experience he feels in accepting another person without judging him or looking for justice. On the other side, the patient feels that he has been accepted without judgment, that he has self-worth of his own because he does not have to fight in order to uncover his self-value. The patient has to truly believe that the therapist has no expectations from him to behave in a successful and improved manner. He must believe that the therapist's feeling towards him is congruent. Then the patient will be able to unconditionally accept himself, he will not look for ways to "find favor in himself" but he will respect himself as he is.

To Speak Positively

Goffman (1980) argues that the behavior of the individual in society has an influence on the definition of the situation that society formulates for itself. The individual person has the ability to control society's definition. Hence, when he expresses himself in a positive way, he has the ability to create a pleasant impression that will guide others, as though it were of their own free will. Goffman (2006) argues that in every situation, we conduct "negotiations" over the definition of the shared situation. In order to act vis-a-vis one another, both individuals have to come to an agreement regarding the situation in which they find themselves. The definition is dependent on the situation. At this stage, there is no attempt to understand society as a whole, only to understand the situation. An equilibrium is created in regard to the definition of the situation, which forms the basis for the negotiations.

A Bandura (2006) claim that being miserable does not demand effort or courage, anyone can be miserable but achieving happiness does demand effort. The challenge of achieving happiness demands greater effort as we get older. In order to retain positive emotional wellbeing, we have to work on ourselves. Prager talks about responsibility and commitment on the way to achieving happiness. He claims that everyone should make the commitment to being happy, not only with

himself but also with his spouse and family members, because when someone is unhappy this is felt by all the people in his surroundings and it causes them to feel unhappy too. Positive psychology is, in fact, preventative medicine, which investigates why some people are happier and more resilient to what life throws at them. Studies done in the USA have proved that the level of depressed people can be reduced by more than 50% through preventative psychological medicine. Positive psychology looks for and promotes the strong and positive points, the inner strengths and skills of people for the purpose of enabling them to live healthier, more fulfilling, and more active lives. Other derivatives of positive psychology include providing tools for emotional resilience, teaching about quality of life, providing tools for increasing happiness and satisfaction. Studies about happiness, success and psychological growth used to be almost automatically rejected by prestigious scientific journals on the basis that “happiness is not a scientific term.”

Diener and Biswas-Diener (2008) suggest in their most recent book that happiness should be considered an important component in life and a true resource, more than anything else. They say that psychological happiness includes approaches to life, social support, spiritual and material development, the resources that a person has, his health and the activities he does. They gathered data about the experience of happiness from thousands of people, including extremely rich people, poor people, religious leaders, business people, and unemployed people, from more than one hundred countries. They also found that the perception of happiness is individual and differs from person to person. Therefore, they chose to define happiness as “subjective emotional wellbeing.” This is a subjective situation which includes satisfaction with life and what people value as being important in life. Psychological happiness is the feeling that we have a good life, which is rewarding, enjoyable and valuable. They emphasize that happiness is not an outcome, but an ongoing process. Although it is connected to life’s circumstances, even more so, it is connected to a person’s approach to life and the way in which he experiences the world. Happiness is not only a goal but an efficient path that we learn to walk along. It is a result of what we do, not what we have. Thus, happiness is not something we reach, rather it is a process that we are in the middle of, and in which we are continually making progress. If we do not develop the various forms of psychological happiness, our quality of life will be negatively affected.

Lyubomirsky (2008) claims that person’s decision to be happy, is what makes him happy. A person who decides to work on himself and focus on the factors that will give him a good feeling in life can achieve a state of good emotional feeling. This is the basis for the treatment method I am proposing. His study showed that a decision to be happier demands effort, self-discipline, commitment and that a person has to work with himself, all the time. In Judaism this is known as “working on one’s character.” Lyubomirsky’s findings showed that a person has to work towards happiness and, just like any other achievement in life, achieving happiness requires study, practice, and perseverance. Dealing with happiness is at its basis a cognitive and behavioral practice more than an emotional state, and the condition to achieving it is the commitment to try. Positive sentences and a good mood open up a person, to himself, to others, to the world and happy people normally behave better toward other people than unhappy people do. They are more genial, nicer, more open, smile more – and primarily to themselves.

In Leviticus Chapter 19, the Bible states “Love your neighbor as yourself.” How will you know how to love another person? Like yourself! When you love yourself, you will know how to love another person as yourself. Therefore, dealing with happiness is part of our ethical and emotional responsibility toward ourselves and others. It is a subject that we must become aware of and learn to think how to say good things about what we experience. Perls (1996) claims that gestalt therapy considers a person as one perfect body which is greater than the sum of its parts, and so it is not possible to observe specific events or specific components to try and understand the person or the problem he is facing. Gestalt therapy is a kind of experiential creation which also uses artistic tools in order to understand a person in the present, in the here and now.

Obviously, the past is part of the materials in the treatment room, but the principal basis of the treatment is that a person takes responsibility for his life in the present and does not allow past events to rule over him. Dewey (1946) defined five aspects of reflective thinking: suggestions; ideas; making hypotheses; conceptualizing and reaching conclusions about possible explanations; and testing the hypotheses by action. According to Dewey, reflective thinking is a kind of higher thinking which is combined with self-research to improve the quality of the action. Dewey applied his theories to teaching practices.

Shawn (2013) expanded the application of reflective thinking above and beyond teaching practices. He differentiates between reflection during the time of the action and reflection that occurs after the action. In simple language, reflective thinking is one that observes every action from above before, during or after the action which is aimed at explaining and conceptualizing the knowledge which has accrued from personal experience and evaluation of the action to improve similar or repeated performance of those actions in the future.

Merleau-Ponty (2002) was a phenomenologist philosopher. The basis of his belief is the wish to dismantle the body-subject concept, as a concept which prevents us from understanding the world in which we live. The verbal aspect plays an important part in this, because language, by definition, makes the polarization between man and the world permanent and therefore blocks the way to understanding extreme situations like traumatic events, as many trauma victims will testify. In order to understand an event in which the polarized concept is dismantled, language must be referred to in a different manner. Therefore, phenomenological research aims to break the dichotomy between body-subject and instead to deal with the essence. This type of research regards the language used to describe the experience in a completely different manner. In phenomenological language, a word is not just a representation of objects and meanings, but functions as a way of creating meanings.

Deutscher (2011) says that behind every word, hides an entire and complex categorization system which is ultimately connected to the physical experience. (Think about the words “here” or “before” and they can only have meaning in connection with the body.) A word is not an empty vessel, it is connected to thought, and it represents thought. So in the deepest sense of the meaning, a word is a new thought which has its own meaning. Based on our everyday experiences, it is quite clear to us that as we speak, we learn about what we are thinking. A speaker does not only think before he speaks, or even while he speaks; his words are his

thoughts, and speaking is a process of unveiling and discovery. Use of language defines and refines a person's thoughts. The words we use teach us something new about ourselves, and this is why they have both the power to heal and the power to destroy with our words. Merleau-Ponty (2002) claims that in reality, a complete thought represented in a whole and perfect manner in a sentence does not exist. In fact, the opposite is true. In many instances, thoughts do not gain meaning until they are verbally expressed. He claims that in many instances authors begin writing without knowing exactly what they want to write about and what they have to say (just like a painter does not always know what he will paint when he begins.) A story, a thought, an opinion and reasons for an argument are all formed from language and within the language and meaning is formed while using language. Language has meaning.

No less important, the style of speaking is also important and meaningful. A word gets meaning from the context of the sentence and also from the body language, which always hovers in the background, and is synchronized with the word. Body language plays an important role in conveying messages. Thus, from the point of view of human experience and of the individual, a word has a fixed place in space and time. It enables me to express myself, to be myself, to discover myself, and to understand myself. The connection between language and thought is extremely intimate. Meaning and understanding are the outcome of the way in which we use language. The connection is so profound that it is not really possible to speak in terms of an inner world of thoughts, detached from language as just words emitting from one's mouth and disconnected to one's thoughts. Language plays an important part in our inner world, and indeed, inner talk plays an important role in high cognitive processes. Moreover, it is critically important to note that language is part of a cognitive process which is connected to the physical experience. Thus, according to the phenomenological approach, words are part of the physical experience. This statement has dramatic ramifications on our ability to understand the experiences that a person has. Language is the home of the subject. He may speak in different languages but his world takes place within a unique body language belonging just to him, the language within which and which he lives. When trying to describe an event that happened to them, most people want to speak about other people and find it difficult to speak about themselves. When a person succeeds in getting in touch with himself and manages to find the exact word to describe what he experienced, he is able to relax and find the solution for himself.

Apple (2015) says that empathy is a milestone in psychotherapy in general, and also in other therapeutic approaches. It enables connecting to the patient's world and thus assists in creating a safe space in which the patient learns and develops. Thus, the ability of the therapist to show empathy is critical for progress in the treatment. Yalom (2002) emphasizes that the therapist's ability to help his patients is dependent to a great extent on "his ability to enter the world of the patient in an exact way." Kohout (2005) defines empathy as a position toward another person which expresses your readiness to enter his world to see, to feel, and to understand his subjective experience. In *"The Handbook of Mentalizing in Mental Health Practice"* Fonagy and Bateman (2012) claim that the ability of mentalization is mindfulness. Mindfulness is awareness of self-experience as being autonomous,

influential and ongoing which is distinguished as a separate entity in the world. This ability includes a profound empathy which enables the person to see the other as if he himself is within the other person, as well as the power to observe, so that a person looks in on himself from the outside.

Mentalization can also be understood as a concept that deals with people's ability to interpret their internal and external surroundings, to give them meaning and to create reasonable narratives that will enable them to have a continuum of unified and complete experience of identity and to compose for themselves a theory of the mind. What Fonagy and Bateman (2012) define as "the effective focus" is the hidden way in which earlier events influence interactions in the present. They claim that these influences are mostly emotional and are hidden in the subconscious. Their importance lies in their influence over the ability to mentalize in situations in which the hurt or the anger that were felt in the past disrupt and disturb the ability to react properly in the present. This is a recognized and complex situation. Fonagy and Bateman claim that the communicational breakdown resulting from these emotional regressions are important and can be diagnosed. Once they have been diagnosed, they can be improved and treated.

Conclusions

In recent years, an attempt has been made to combine research into personality, research on mutual social action, and research into society. The need for critical self-awareness and for active, selective learning, are the factors behind the desire to combine these research areas. There are approaches that claim that interaction between individuals is the social basis. This is a micro paradigm, which states that the individual has an influence on the society. Nowadays, we see people who have difficulty in speaking about themselves. They found it easier to talk about others and to blame and attack them. This leads to negative energies, lack of confidence and unhappiness. Thus, the aim of IMI method is to get a person to confront himself in order to retain his inner stability, happiness and positive energies. It will focus on the ability to name an inner feeling, to verbalize the ability of an adult to connect to himself. A person can improve his inner self-work with himself and cause himself to feel secure, steady, happy and not degraded, insulted and hurt. In many cases, when a person has been hurt, he wishes to talk about others. "He did this to me", "He hurt me", "He made me angry". The goal of this method is to help a person connect to himself and ask "What am I?" "I lose control", "I feel alone", "My ability to be flexible is limited". By using such sentences, a person becomes responsible for himself and for his emotions and thus he is capable of looking after himself and to do what is good for him, changing the way of thinking and behavior patterns.

Attitudes about life experiences are different from an individual to another and could be due to the lower level of personal development (Vintila *et al.*, 2009). Thus, to help people in their personal development is necessary to develop interventions and to use validated and culturally adapted scale (Tudorel *et al.*, 2018; Vintila *et al.*, 2018). Moreover, social support is recognized to be a protective factor that could reduce the effect of stressful, overwhelming life events so it is important to include it in future interventions.

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