

# POSITIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY: A transcultural psychodynamic method

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## OBJECTIVES

To introduce and analyse elements and techniques of Positive Psychotherapy (PPT) – a humanistic psychodynamic short-term method developed by Nossrat Peseschkian, MD, since 1968 – and to compare it with the needs and requirements of a cultural-specific psychotherapy. To discuss the possible characteristics of transcultural psychotherapeutic methods.

## METHODS

Positive Psychotherapy (PPT) has been applied in treatment and training over the past 35 years, and results of its application in more than 20 countries and cultures are shared. Different intervention techniques of PPT are explained and discussed from a transcultural perspective.

## RESULTS

### POSITIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY

According to the traditional conception, the illness stands between the therapist and the patient.

Traditional procedure: Therapist --- Illness --- Patient

As soon as we concern ourselves not only with the illness, but also with the regenerative capacities of the patient, the relationship between the therapist and the patient takes on a new quality.

Positive procedure: Therapist --- Capacities Illness --- Patient

### Positive interpretation of disorders

- **Depression** - the ability to react with deep emotionality
- **Alcoholism** – to give oneself that warmth (and love) one does not get from others
- **Laziness** - the ability to avoid demands of achievement and work
- **Sexual disorders** – to pull back from the conflict of sexuality

### Life-Balance

- The balance model of Positive Psychotherapy -

### The Principle of Consultation

The five-stage treatment of Positive Psychotherapy

- Stage of observation/distancing
- Stage of inventory
- Stage of situational encouragement
- Stage of verbalization
- Stage of broadening of goals

Positive Psychotherapy is based on a humanistic, positive, and resource-oriented conception of human-beings. Based on this concept, disorders are seen from a “positive” perspective and as a capability to express something. This approach helps the therapist to see the patient as a whole, and it gives the patient hope that he/she will be able to deal with the current problems and disorders. In this state, stories and tales are used.

A key technique of PPT is the Balance-Model – an assessment, how the patient has distributed his/her energy in the four main areas of life. During the therapy, the patient understands where his/her one-sidedness comes from, which (unconscious) family concepts have played a role, and the connection between his present problems and his disbalance. Patients from different cultural and social backgrounds not only understand this concept, but can relate to it and apply it in their daily life.

## CONCLUSIONS

Positive Psychotherapy has proven efficient in the application in different cultures. It consists of several elements which one would expect from a method to be identified as a transcultural psychotherapeutic method. The positive conception of human nature, the holistic approach, the use of stories and anecdotes, the inclusion of the family in the therapeutic process, the half-structured first interview and the short-term duration have made it possible to apply Positive Psychotherapy in different cultures effectively.

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