

COMMUNITY BASED ADAPTATION

ADULTS IN TRANSITION

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OUTLINE

- THE BASIC INSTINCT TO SURVIVE
- HUMAN MOTIVATION
- IDENTITY
- LEARNING
 - Emotional
 - Knowledge
- CONCLUSION

THE BASIC INSTINCT TO SURVIVE

- DIALOGUE OF OPPOSITES
 - EQUILIBRIUM VS. TENSION
 - COMFORT VS. DISCOMFORT
- HUMANS CAN DO THINGS: DESTRUCTION OR GROWTH
 - THINK
 - SPEAK
 - NEGOTIATE
 - BREAK
- ADAPTATION REFERS TO SURVIVAL OR GROWTH SKILLS

HUMAN MOTIVATION

- **THE STRUGGLE FOR RECOGNITION**

- Refers to recognition of ‘personhood’ as opposed to an object or ‘thing’;
- ‘Ubuntu’: Personhood, relationships with others, being recognized in relation to others;
- Commonality together with uniqueness;
- Emotional counterpart – authentic pride

- **MARGINALIZATION**

- When recognition is withheld or negated
 - *“loss of reality, to the situation where human beings are estranged from their own bodies, from the natural world and from their potentially universal essences.” (Marx, cited in Hook, 2004, p. 94).*
- Emotional counterpart – hubris/false recognition

IDENTITY

- PSYCHOLOGICAL TOOL FOR SELF- AND OTHER RECOGNITION
 - Physical: that which is seen, measured
 - Emotional: feelings
 - Intellectual: intellectual knowledge, left brain
 - Creative: knowledge, more right brain
 - Spiritual: relates to how we are uniquely important in the social world
- EACH RELATES TO THE OTHER
- BALANCE IS IMPORTANT

LEARNING

- THE REST OF THE WORLD IS 'MEDIATED' – WHAT WE ARE, OUR WORTH
- UNINTENDED LEARNING & INTENDED LEARNING
- CONTRIVED PUNISHMENT & REWARD OR UNDERSTANDING WHICH BRINGS INNER/NATURAL 'PUNISHMENT' & 'REWARD'
- DISRESPECT OF SELF IS BIGGEST OBSTACLE TO ADAPTATION TO CHANGE
- PASSIVE-OBEYANCE VS. CRITICAL QUESTIONING
- CRITICAL QUESTIONING ACCOMPANIED BY RESPECT

EMOTIONAL

- EMOTIONS RANGE FROM THE MOST PAINFUL TO THE MOST HAPPY
- NO EMOTION IS 'WRONG'
- HOW WE WORK WITH THEM IS UP TO CHOICE
- WHAT WE DO WITH THEM CAN LEAD TO AUTHENTIC PRIDE, OR HUBRIS
- WE HAVE NO CONTROL OVER WHAT LIFE DISHES OUT – WE HAVE CONTROL OVER HOW WE HANDLE IT
- WORKING WITH OUR TRUE IDENTITIES GIVES A FEELING OF EMPOWERMENT
- WORKING AGAINST IT GIVES FEELING OF DISEMPOWERMENT, VICTIMHOOD

KNOWLEDGE

- WE ARE OUR OWN EXPERTS
- WE ALSO OPERATE AND CO-EXIST WITH OTHERS
- WE NEED TO CREATE A BALANCE BETWEEN SELF- AND OTHER INTEREST
- DEVELOPMENT WORKERS AND ADVOCACY GROUPS
 - Find out, identify, recognize, affirm and respect existing knowledge
 - Work WITH individuals and groups in communities
 - Find common needs to create communal identity

“*though there is something reassuring about an omniscient therapist who is always in control of every situation, there can be something powerfully engaging about a fumbling therapist, a therapist willing to flounder with the patient until they, together, stumble upon an enabling discovery.*” (Irvin Yalom, 1989; p. 36).

CONCLUSION

- The instinct to survive is common to all life, including people
- Survival depends on a dialogue of opposites, including comfort and tension
- Comfort gives rest, tension gives rise to growth & learning
- Humans have basic need for recognition, and to learn to work with alienation
- The basic tool for self- and other recognition is identity
- We all have personal knowledge which is unique, plus commonalities with others
- When working out common problems, we need to find out unique knowledge
- To do so, we need to learn what HAS been learned, what IS known and what we WISH to achieve (and what NOT to achieve)
- Good learning involves, at the same time, good teaching. Nobody is just one or the other
- Critical questioning is core to growth, passive acceptance is core to stagnation.