

P-528 - TREATING DEPRESSIVE CRISES MORE EFFECTIVELY BY TAKING INTO ACCOUNT OVEREXCITABILITIES AND THE “THIRD FACTOR”

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Introduction: This paper argues that “gifted” persons who suffer from depressive crises, should not be offered traditional therapeutic methods only. These methods may not be effective for these persons in the long run. Instead, these individuals should be provided with a treatment based on the Theory of Positive Disintegration (TPD), a theory of personality development devised by the Polish psychiatrist and psychologist Kazimierz Dabrowski (1902 - 1980). The TPD views neurotic depression not per se as an illness. Instead, it regards depressive symptoms as a necessary phase in which given socially/biologically determined mental structures disintegrate, so that a more conscious and autonomous personality structure can develop. In this context, “gifted” means that the respective person possesses (1) an inner autonomous drive to develop one's own personality (called “third factor”) and (2) overexcitabilities (especially intellectual, imaginal and emotional).

Objective: To suggest an additional way to treat depressive crises in a subgroup of patients.

Aim: To propose how to identify persons who may profit from the TPD-approach.

Methods: The paper describes the TPD and therapeutic interventions which follow from the theory. In order to identify persons who may profit from the TPD-approach, application of a preliminary self-assessment questionnaire is suggested.

Discussion/results: Using a questionnaire, depressive patients should be tested for overexcitabilities and the “third factor”. Patients displaying these characteristics should be offered therapeutic interventions based on the TPD. These include

- (1) assisting patients with reframing their neurotic symptoms as creative and developmental, and
- (2) providing “tools” for developmental autotherapy.