

The Therapist as a Conductor of a Symphony

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The essential ingredient of effective psychotherapy is the authentic communicative relationship offered to the client by the psychotherapist. The sole concern of the therapist is to maintain a communicative intimacy. Therapy thus becomes uniquely non-manipulative, non-authoritarian, non-directive and no demands.

The goal is to improve the ability to communicate in a genuine manner, which is done by helping to face essential aloneness and to feel more responsible for one's own behavior. The struggle against seeing oneself as an individual is the core of every psychopathology. A person is usually not confronted with aloneness except when a decision must be made and action taken.

The therapist helps the client feel responsible for her or his words by compassionately and gently confronting defenses (resistances) as manifested in behavior. The therapist's activity is to clarify how the client becomes aware of her or his true and genuine feelings, impulses and motives, thus providing the opportunity to develop new ways of dealing with such problems as domination, submission, decision-making, liking and disliking, which we all must resolve in all of our relationships. A person hears only what they understand.

The therapist can best be viewed as a conductor of a symphony orchestra in which she or he does not write the music but clarifies and interprets by the use of creative imagination. There is an attempt to enhance the ingenuity and creative powers of a client's spontaneous and natural functioning. To quote Louis Pasteur, "Chance favors a prepared mind." When we realize the universe is not ours to manage we will stop asking what the world needs. Instead, ask what makes you come alive and go do it, because what the world needs is people who have come alive. A wounded mind is held by anger and fury, which is tinder for the fiery flames of hate. Transform yourself to better transform the world, through the energies of mindfulness, compassion, concentration, insight and wisdom.

The therapist believes what is not said between people is also heard. The therapist tries not to leave clients in the dark but to leave them searching for the light, as reasoning explains the darkness. Therapy is an opportunity to cultivate more receptivity and humility, to experience genuine regret or remorse and to be inquisitive and have a desire to learn. If you want to understand your mind, sit down and observe it.

The therapist needs to have sensitivity to, and knowledge of, ethical, professional and legal issues and the ability to translate this awareness effectively into practice. The therapist plants positive seeds to enable the client to eventually carry a torch powerful enough to illuminate her or his own depths. At the end of each day, ask yourself, "Has my heart been kind?" It is not difficult to be mindful; it just takes practice to be mindful.