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Dementia in psychoanalytic psychotherapy

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Psychoanalytical psychotherapy is usually not primary recognized as a supportive approach and is traditionally placed on the expressive and explorative pole of the psychotherapy spectrum. The common aim of psychoanalytical psychotherapy is to identify innate patterns, repressed emotions, and forgotten experiences. In making this unconscious content conscious it gets easier for the patient to know, change or accept who they are. Although dementia is rarely considered for psychotherapy, and because of its nature even less for psychoanalytical psychotherapy, we believe psychoanalytical informed ideas and concepts have much to offer in outlining a benefiting approach to dementia patients. As memory function is critically affected in dementia, the illness alters the core of a patient's self and his object relations. In developing a profound understanding of these human experiences and their complex functioning, psychoanalysis can conceive precise interventions that provide efficiently for the patient's cognitive, relational, and relational needs. Together with most powerful aspects of contemporary psychoanalytical psychotherapy, i.e. curiosity, openness, and acceptance, we can contribute considerably to the quality of life for more and more people who are living with dementia.

Biography

Malka Ceh is a postgraduate student of psychotherapy science at Sigmund Freud University Vienna, and a psychoanalytic psychotherapist in training, currently working under supervision at the psychotherapeutic faculty clinic in Ljubljana, Slovenia. She is a founding member of Physiopsychological Research Association PsyPhys, member of International Neuropsychoanalysis Society, and member of International Association of Clinical Neuropsychotherapy. Her research interests include neuropsychotherapy, neuropsychoanalysis, and sport psychotherapy.

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