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THE ROLE OF PSYCHOTHERAPIST IN THE INDIVIDUAL APPROACH TO THE CLIENT WITHIN THE HEALTH TOURISM

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Abstract

Forest medicine is attracting huge attention all over the world. Based on the Japanese Shinrin Yoku movement („forest bathing“), it gathers scientists in studying the effects of being in the forest. The improvement of health situation, reduction of psychological and physical disorders, faster adaptation to stress and relaxation, are a few of the benefits that spending time in the forest brings. If we, as a part of a team, include a psychotherapist, the mentioned positive effects could get additional dimension. Thanks to his(her) support, methods and interventions, positive changes achieved in the forest medicine could have more lasting effects, could lead toward bigger satisfaction and further unfolding of the client's individuation process. In the presentation, methods of Jungian psychology and psychotherapy will be discussed and applied (with the emphasis on active imagination) in the context of health tourism based on the model: cure forest and healing forest.

Key Words: *health tourism, Jungian psychology, forest medicine.*

JEL classification: *I31*

Introduction

Today, when the emphasis in a lot of different theoretical and practical areas of life and work has been put on the individual approach, the world of tourism that, among other things, includes forest medicine and forest spa, is all but an exception. The vision that promotes and supports the collective approach often neglect the needs of a particular person or a specific group of individuals. That kind of approach is boarding the train going backwards - into the past. New trends in the development of the touristic offer in general and, of course, here in Serbia, need to put the

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person as well as the need of specific, smaller groups of individuals in the center of attention. Each individual and each group of individuals have their particular needs connected with the unique personality that lays underneath and the motives that are keeping the group together. The common factors are by no means to be overlooked, but the whole spectrum of nuances including the individual history, the present psychological and somatic health status, the emotional and work relations, needs of a certain group, etc., is demanding more space. Focusing on the individual is the inseparable part of in-depth psychotherapy including Jungian approach. In order to give a person or a particular group the opportunity to get the maximum benefits from the forest medicine and/or a forest spa experience, the psychotherapist needs to be included.

Forest Spa and Forest Medicine

The Japanese Shinrin Yoku movement of “forest bathing” that began its rise towards the end of the 1980s, described even then a lot of positive effects of being in the forest ambient (Tsunetsugu et al., 2010). The beneficial effects of spending the time in the forest had been shown in a huge number of studies (Ohtsuka et al., 1998; Yamaguchi et al., 2006; Ochiai et al., 2015). The work of Park and colleagues confirmed those findings (Park et al., 2007). Since then, a Shinrin Yoku approach has been seen as a valuable approach in preventive health care in Japan and in other countries in the world (Miyazaki et al., 2015).

In another study, Tsunetsugu and associates demonstrated that, while spending time in the forest, participants had lower blood pressure, lower sympathetic nervous activity and lower heart rate. When the psychological factors are in question, people were more relaxed, more vigorous and less negative (Tsumetsugu et al., 2013).

Besides that, a great deal of research demonstrated a spectrum of beneficial results of being in the forest environment. Among others, the rise of subjective vitality that includes “meaning, having physical and mental energy” was one of them (Ryan et al. 2010).

What Ryan and associates discovered was very valuable, because it showed that positive emotions connected with vitality could make people more resilient and less vulnerable to different kind of illnesses (Cohen et al., 2006).

The collaboration of Forest Spa, Forest Medicine and Jungian psychology and psychotherapy

Having all this in mind, the author - with her colleagues, the president of the Serbian Medical Spa Association, prof. G. Isailović and the president of the Association of Nature and Forest Therapy in California, USA, A. M. Clifford –recognized and promoted the collaboration between forest spa and forest medicine on the one side, and psychological (more precisely, Jungian) perspective, on the other side.

In order to provide a client with the best possible service, the role of psychotherapist could be multidimensional. Through the interview with a client, the analyst could give a “psychological evaluation” of the client’s personality and his special needs, “blind spots”, areas of interest, one-sidedness, creative potentials and other valuable data. That is important, because it could direct the offered touristic services (connected with the forest and medical spa, forest therapy, health tourism) into more individualized way that would produce optimal results and satisfaction for the client. Besides that, Jungian approach, with its method of active imagination could deepen and prolong the positive effect of the forest and medical spa, forest medicine and health tourism in general.

Within the framework of “cure forest”, individuals that are healthy could get into better contact with themselves. That could connect them with more psychological and physical energy that would be very beneficial for their work, their family and their emotional life. Within the framework of “healing forest”, persons with some psychological, psychiatric, psychosomatic and somatic disorders could get into contact with the healthy parts or themselves, with their creative potentials and the additional resources from the unconscious that could promote the healing process.

A fairy-tale like atmosphere that a forest emanates, together with its sounds, fragrances and calmness, provides us with a necessary base for entering the “alchemical” process that is enabling a person to become more as he or she really is. A magical forest ambient, together with the analyst and a forest guide, represents a temenos that enables our clients to feel safe enough in order to dive into oneself and to discover something new and valuable for establishing a healthier psychological and physical balance.

During that process a client will, besides having insights, relax and become more spontaneous and creative. Drawings, collages, figures and other products important for evoking positive emotions and healing process could be very successfully created in the forest. For accomplishing that, we need a bit of dirt, leaves, grass, flowers, branches and similar material from the nature.

Very often, working on the individuation process brings with itself a sense of relaxation and of being renewed. If we give our client a chance to express him(her)self in a creative way, a lot of previously “captured” psychological energy will be released and it could, as a consequence, liberate him or her from the burden of tension, sense of being worried, preoccupied, aggressive or depressed.

The process of letting go of the mentioned negative feelings and sensations is very valuable since the continuous exposure to them, could lead to functional and later, structural somatic disorders.

Active imagination as a method of Jungian psychology and psychotherapy

Active imagination is a very valuable method in analytical psychology, besides the analysis of dreams, transference/countertransference (Zdravković, 2011), working with fantasies and creative ways of expression, etc. It is a very direct, often more direct than words, way of getting in touch with the unconscious contents. Jung, the founder of analytical psychology, defined active imagination as “the mother of all the possibilities, where like all psychological opposites, the inner and outer worlds are joined together in a living union” (Jung, 1921). Since our conscious life is just a small part of our whole personality, connecting with the psychological images from the unconscious could be very beneficial for the person. It could overcome the resistance in the psychotherapy, give a valuable information for reducing oneness, widening the experience of oneself and furthering the process of individuation (Zdravković, 2012).

There are a lot of different ways in which active imagination could be performed. A person could draw, paint, model in clay, use dance and movement, make collages, play music etc. By expressing themselves in this way, they could establish a dialog with the figures from the inner

world and enable, as James Hillman said, “the animistic involvement into the world (Hillman, 1985).

Active imagination could be described as dreaming with open eyes. While in dreams Ego is passively watching what is happening before him, in active imagination it has an active role. “By concentrating on a mood or a picture, Sheila Powell tells us, and by paying attention to them the images begin to have a life of their own. They develop according to their own logic ... this creates a new situation for the individual, feeling is raised and the conscious ego is stimulated to react more immediately” (Powell, 1998). It could be done during the analytical hour or between them, with an individual and in the group. Jungians are usually performing it inside, in the analytical room, but it could also be done outside. The author was doing the workshop with active imagination, in the context of forest spa and medicine, outside in the forest ambient.

In the following text, the author will illustrate her work, based on the cooperation between the Jungian analyst and the forest guides, in the context of the forest spa and forest medicine. The workshops were held in Olimia, Slovenia and in La Gerona national park, Spain. The leaders of these workshops had explored the integration of the active imagination (as the method of Jungian psychology and psychotherapy) and making mandalas into forest medicine.

Workshop in Olimia

The first workshop was held in Olimia, in spring 2017. Prof. Isailović and the author were invited to the spa Olimia to help in enhancing their individual approach to the client. There were 19 participants from Serbia and Slovenia: 18 women and one man, age from 23 to 70. The majority of them were on the specialization in medical esthetics within the Academy of applied studies (Visoka škola strukovnih studija). The other part of the participants consisted from the people employed in the spa Olimia. During the walk and the “forest bathing”, participants collected the material from the nature. In a suitable spot, they were invited by the analyst to make a mandala together. Their product could be seen in the figure 1. Each person gave the contribution in making mandala. They were all very eager to do it and after finishing it, they spontaneously made a circle from their bodies around the mandala`s circle and put their hands inside it and connected with the ground. That could be seen in the figure 2. All participants had positive associations connected with the process of

making a mandala together as well as with the product itself. They also felt more connected with themselves, with other members of the group and with the nature that was surrounding them.

Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4



Figure 5



Figure 6



During the next day, the participants were invited to do active imagination inside. Some of them chose to work alone and others to work in small groups. They were instructed to use the material from the forest they had brought with them. The starting point for active imagination could have been the dominant feeling or a sensation they were having at that moment, the image from a recent dream or the mood they were in. After connecting with it, they were told to let their hands do the work without having the conscious intention or the idea of the product they were going to make. Figures 3, 4 and 9 represent group products of active imagination. They were all centered around the circular shape and were having different images inside and around it. After active imagination, the analyst talked with individuals and with members of small groups. Each small group member had associations connected with their product and the process of working together. Besides the contents that emerged and were important for each individual, they all had an enlarged feeling of joyfulness and group cohesiveness.

Figure 7



Figure 8



Figure 9



Figure 10



Figure 11



People that were working alone also had vivid association about the process and the images that were created. Their products could be seen in the figures 5, 6, 7 and 8. They all had a feeling of something valuable emerging from the unconscious. All of them were much more vivid, energized and relaxed after active imagination. The difference before and after applying active imagination could also be seen in the pictures taken after the lecture - before active imagination (figure 10) and after active imagination (figure 11).

Workshop in La Gerona national park

The second workshop was held in La Gerona national park in Spain. There were 10 participants from age 25 to 70. There were seven women and three men. They were from Spain, USA, China and Serbia. They were all interested in forest medicine and in doing active imagination in the forest ambient. They were evaluated, by themselves and by the Jungian analyst as a part of a “normal” population. No one had psychiatric diagnoses.

During the three day workshop, the psychological state of the participants was evaluated before and after active imagination, making mandalas and walking through the forest and at the beginning and the end of the whole workshop. The evaluation was made by the analyst psychological evaluation through the interview with the participants. Besides that, the voice and speech analysis was performed.

As far as the psychological evaluation is concerned, the analyst compared verbal and non-verbal reactions of the participants before and after active imagination was performed. It included different features: the way a

person talked, the content of the talk, the tone and the changes in the voice, facial expression, eye contact, aliveness, energy level, bodily posture and movement, the sense of connectedness with the others and with the nature, etc.

For each participant, there was a noticeable difference in the psychological state before and after the workshop. There were a lot of similar positive reactions in all participants. Besides that, they gained something additional that was valuable for each of them and was connected with their personalities, their situations at work and at home and with their individual histories.

In the continuation of the paper, the products of active imagination could be seen for each participant. Although they were made from the similar forest material, it could be seen quite clearly that every creation is unique and authentic – since each person was similar, but at the same time, different in some important aspects. Each individual's psychological situation was expressed in the specific images that became personified in these creations. The author made an interview with each participant before and after active imagination and here are some of the results of the psychological evaluation.

Figure 12



Figure 13



Before the workshop begun, the first participant was feeling enthusiastic about the whole project, very curious, but, at the same time, quite physically tired and exhausted because of her situation at work. After the workshop, she was very satisfied, her expectations were met. She recovered physically and felt much more energy than at the beginning. She felt closer to the group and to the forest. Her work can be seen in the figure 12.

The second participant was interested, but quite reserved in his expression at the beginning. He was also very tired, because of a difficult working week and exhausted because of his health problems. After he made his creation, he felt more expressive and energized, refreshed and more relaxed. He was feeling more connected with the forest, too. His product of active imagination can be seen in the figure 13.

Figure 14



Figure 15



The third participant was, at the beginning, curious about learning a different method of working with people than the one she used in her everyday work. She was much more in her intellectual than in her emotional side. After the image from the unconscious emerged, she was satisfied with the experiential work and she became more spontaneous in

her reactions and more open. She felt more connected with the forest. Her work can be seen in the figure 14.

The fourth participant was, at the beginning, very motivated to participate in the workshop, quite communicative, eager to start with the work, but pretty rational in the way he talked. When he made his product, he felt more relaxed and energized. He opened more and became more playful. He also felt more connected with the nature that surrounded him. The image that appeared to the day light through active imagination can be seen in figure 15.

Figure 16



Figure 17



The fifth participant was very polite and introverted, but without too much verbal and non-expression. After the work with active imagination, she became less reserved and more expressive while talking. She felt more connected with other members of the group. The product of her active imagination can be seen in figure 16.

The sixth participant was very curious about the approaching experience, highly motivated, but with a high control concerning his emotional side. After the work, he became more emotional and happy. He acquired a couple of important insights and dropped a few tears of satisfaction,

because of the whole experience. He also felt more connected with the forest. This product can be seen in figure 17.

Figure 18



Figure 19



The seventh participant was quite frustrated at the beginning of the workshop since she had a very unpleasant experience when she arrived to Spain. Her money and passport were stolen. That made her feel anxious. After the workshop she felt much more relaxed and open a bit more towards others and the nature. Her work can be seen in the figure 18.

The eight participant was very interested to see what was going to happen, but a bit to enthusiastic to make an impression on others. At the end of the workshop she became more spontaneous and authentic and more connected with other members of the group. Her product of active imagination can be seen in figure 19.

The ninth participant was interested in the work, but at the same time quite anxious about the unknown method she was about to experience. At the end, she felt more centered and calmer, with the noticable satisfaction because of the fact that she had delt well with the new experience that

was valuable for her. The work of this participant can be seen in figure 20.

The tenth participant was, at the beginning, very introverted and shy, less connected with others. At the end of the workshop, she became more energized, with a few important insights connected with her actions in the future and more open toward the group and the nature that surrounded her. The work she made can be seen in figure 21.

Figure 20



Figure 21



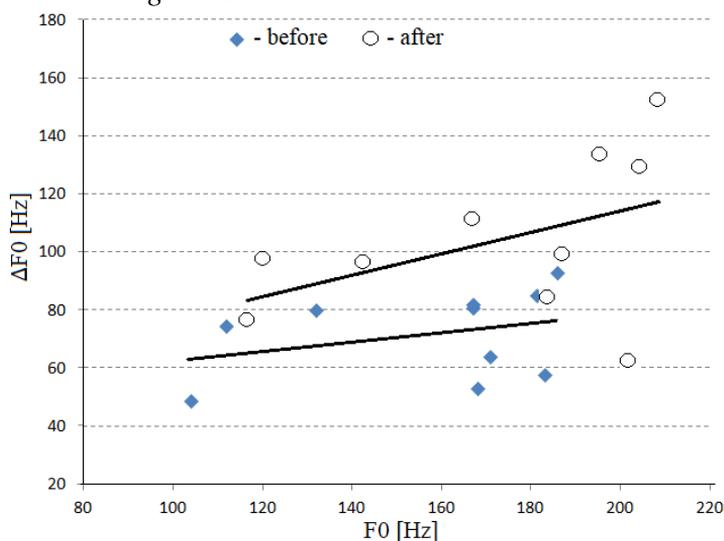
In general, all participants had positive feelings towards the experience they had. Majority of them felt more connected with themselves and other members of the group.

In a pilot experiment with active imagination in the forest, held in La Gerona national park in Spain, a voice analysis was made for ten participants (Zdravković & Jovičić, 2017). It is assumed that participants in the experiment will report more beneficial experiences (positive emotions, feeling refreshed, relaxation, or generally speaking positive changes in the mood) after applying active imagination and that these

experiences will have the influence on participant's voice and speech characteristics. It is well known that positive emotional states can be registered by voice and speech analysis, as well as the difference between positive and negative emotions (Rajković et al., 2018).

The voice of each participant in the workshop was recorded before and after active imagination. The authors posed a question: are there any differences in the participants' voice quality before and after the experiment, as the consequence of the psychological effect of active imagination that had been expressed in positive emotions? The first results of this research are represented as scatter diagram in the figure 23.

Figure 22: Scatter diagram of basic features of the voice quality before and after active imagination.



Two basic features of the voice quality were analyzed: a basic voice frequency F0 and a dynamic of the basic voice frequency ΔF0. It is well known from literature that these features have higher values in the positive psychological and emotional states (Gobl & Chasasaide, 2003; Rajković et al., 2018). The results represented in the figure 23 show a statistically significant difference ($p < 0.05$) in the distance of the regression lines on these two features before and after the experiment with active imagination. These results gave a positive response to the posed question. They confirm that there are positive effects of spending time in the nature and the significant influence of the psychological

treatment based on the active imagination to the individuals' emotional state.

Conclusion

Based on the theoretical as well as on the practical part of this article, the author came to the conclusion that including a therapist (in this case a Jungian one) can be very fruitful in terms of enriching and promoting the individual approach within the health tourism. The widely shown beneficial effects of spending free time in the forest ambient can be made more lasting and evoke more satisfaction when the treatment is more adjusted to every particular person. In this way, with a help of a psychotherapist, the best possible touristic services can be provided. Evoking positive emotional reactions and the reduction of the negative ones are necessary factors in keeping someone healthy (within the cure forest concept) and strengthening the person enough to regain his(her) health (within the healing forest concept). Having this in mind, a psychotherapist can be very valuable in evaluating the specific needs of a client through the psychological evaluation in order for the optimal treatment to be applied. Besides that, Jungian method of active imagination can be very beneficial, for a healthy as well as for a client with mental and/or somatic disorders, when combined with forest spa and forest medicine approach.

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