



THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE THERAPEUTIC STORY IN THE IMPROVEMENT OF BEHAVIOURAL RISK ATTITUDES IN CHILDREN

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Abstract. The therapeutic story, with its conceptual identity tries and, in most cases, succeeds in improving/ changing certain risk behaviours that, in time, can form character traits. In this context, the therapeutic story can turn into the remedy of such situations, especially when it is applied to the child-patient..

Keywords: child, risk behaviour, therapeutic story, identity, abstract, behaviour

Introduction

Our cognitive journey starts with the need to identify the context of the conceptual identity related to the two entities- the therapeutic story and risk behaviour- within the broader picture of behavioural attitude which actually grounds them.

Thus, according to Sillamz N (1996) Larousse-Psychology Dictionary the baseline is represented by:

- a) Conduct - a group of actions through which an organism tries to adapt to a determinate situation; it represents a response to motivation, triggering psychological, motor and physiological mechanisms.
- b) Attitude - manner of dealing with a situation; attitude can be personal, the subject perceives it as part of his/her personality, which renders attitude as similar with character traits;
- c) Behaviour - conduct of a subject in a particular environment and time frame, with a particular meaning, that can correspond to the search of a certain situation or susceptible object and that has the capacity to reduce tensions and satisfy the individual's needs.

In this context, self conduct decoding by using the therapeutic story, emphasises the strategy through which the sent message has the desired impact on the receptor (R)- in our case- the child- by the transmitter (T) that can either be: a psychotherapist, psychologist, school counsellor, teacher and even a parent.

Therefore, the therapeutic story, Pașca M.D și Tia T.(2007) does nothing else but to transmit, based on reported events, a life experience and a state of a fact that

have a role in tracing a potential solution, this involving the „storyteller” with his entire personality. The story must contain the receiver's age particularities, bearing in mind that words have healing and therapeutic properties, that they can decimate or construct an identity, they can hurt but they can also forgive.

A therapeutic story has several characteristics:

- „Comprises”, by narration, life experiences;
- Has a clearly defined purpose;
- The message emerges from the context;
- It is not readable, instead it fits (it is told);
- It does not need explanations;
- Its „core structure leaves from:
 - a) Therapeutic indications;
 - b) Desired effects

Also one must take into account:

- Where- the place where the story is told (spatial coordinates);
- When- the time frame when the story is told (astral time);
- How- the way the story events are presented (way of expression);
- How much- the quantity and quality of verbal expression (1-2 stories in order for quality to prevail);
- Why- the reason why we use the therapeutic story (rationale, message), so that the cause- effect relationship to represent the quintessence of the solution provided by this therapeutic instrument to a problem occurred in a certain context and moment, more or less related to a child's cognitive development.

Due to the complexity of the childhood ages (up to 12 years of age) also considered from the standpoint of skills acquired during this period of time and the fluctuations of human values, filtered by the bio-psycho-social frame the child is experiencing, his conduct

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exhibited in time through attitudes and behaviour may, at a given moment, adopt a risky behaviour, generating new approaches based on non-values background.

At this point, „values” as:

- 1- Irritability (conflicting behaviour);
- 2- Lack of interest (especially related to school);
- 3- Unfollowing rules;
- 4- Negativism;
- 5- Lack of respect (rudeness);
- 6- Refusal;
- 7- Isolation (lack of communication and relationship);

are basic themes of therapeutic stories, that help a child became aware, in terms with his age, of the risk behaviour and behavioural attitudes.

Methodologically, we will focus on the following essential therapeutic stories, Paşca MD (2008): (correspondence between ranking and story), therefore:

1. The story of Pogonici hedgehog:

- a) Therapeutic indications:
 - Conflicting behaviour;
 - Irritability;
- b) Desired effects:
 - Decrease in the interpersonal aggressivity.

"Once upon a time, in a faraway wood there lived a hedgehog that used to tear flowers. One day, a deer saw him tearing flowers and asked him why he did that. Pogonici felt anger.

- Mind your own business, you're bothering me, said the hedgehog.

- But it's not OK to tear flowers with no reason at all, as they never harmed you, replied the deer.

The hedgehog moved on. At the lakeside he saw a sleeping bunny. He started to whistle loudly:

- Hey, can't you see I'm sleeping? yelled angrily the bunny.

- Couldn't care less, said the hedgehog as he moved on.

The following days passed in the same way. But, each day Pogonici felt lonelier because no one wanted to play with him.

One evening, as he returned home, the hedgehog fell into a hole. He screamed for help in vain, as nobody came to the rescue".

2. Bibi's story

- a) Therapeutic indications
 - Lack of interest;
 - Difficulties in adapting to an educational system;
- b) Desired effects:
 - Understanding the importance of education and school;
 - Preventing school drop;
 - Awareness and responsibility towards the students' school results.

"Bibi was a cute lion cub. He wasn't very interested in his father's advices, that wanted to teach him hunting, fishing and defence skills as the jungle was a dangerous place, even for the sole reason of getting lost...While his

brothers learned these life lessons, Bibi would sunbathe all day long or would play with the monkeys and swim race with the frogs.

One day, Bibi was attacked by a tiger and as he missed out on his father's lesson, he didn't know what to do.

Scared to death, he screamed for his brothers and sisters, who managed to rescue him. That's when Bibi decided to visit his father and ask him to teach him everything he considers necessary. Bibi promised to work twice as much as to recover the lost time. His father accepted and Bibi made real progresses.

After many years, he inherited his father's throne. As king of the jungle, he explained to the cubs the importance of knowledge in order to beat life's harshness."

3. Lapinot's story

- a) Therapeutic indications:
 - Lack of respect for group rules;
- b) Desired effects:
 - Improving class and at home discipline.

"Lapinot was a very distracted bunny that would always interrupt his class. In school, he would cling to the lion's mane, would kick the mouse or pull the tale of the monkeys.

In his class there were also a bear and a camel that found him hilarious and would imitate his gestures, but other than that all animals found him unbearable and would avoid playing with him.

One day Lapinot wanted to play with the giraffe, but she retorted:

- I don't want to play with you because you kick me all the time and bother me when I'm working. I'll play with you when you deserve it.

Lapinot replied to the giraffe:

- I couldn't care less if you don't want to play with me!

However, to himself Lapinot felt sad and lonely. He said to himself: „I wish I had more friends to play with all day long. I'm tired of everybody complaining of me".

What do you think La pinot could do in order to gain the giraffe's trust and to become her friend?"

4. The story of the dwarf who didn't want anything

- a) Therapeutic indications:
 - Negativism ;
 - Lack of engaging in various activities;
 - Lack of socialising ;
- b) Desired effects:
 - Understanding the concept of collaboration and acceptance ;

"In a faraway house, there lived a family formed of a mother, father and daughter. The little girl got used to saying „no” to all her parents' requests. If her mother asked her to do something, she would immediately refuse, replying that she didn't want to get dirty on her hands or that she didn't feel like getting out of bed at that hour,

As days passed, the little girl brought her parents to despair, so in the end the mother asked the wood genie to help her. The genie moved by the mother's countless prayers, impersonated a funny dwarf and hid in the

girl's locks of hair.

At dinner time, the mother called her daughter telling her she made her favourite cake. Awfully glad, the girl wanted to reply to her mother's request but felt she couldn't make a sound, except for a hoarse „no”. The situation would repeat so that every time she wanted to say „yes”, „no” would come out of her mouth.

Just when she felt more desperate than ever, the dwarf showed up of nowhere and said: „Don't be scared, I am the dwarf that helps you say „no”. Since you said „no” far too many times I thought you might want for me to stay with you forever”.

- That's foolish! said the girl. I want to be able to say „yes” whenever I like something.

- Than you must learn to say „yes”. If you continue to say „yes” only when it best suits you, you'll be stuck in this situation. It is important to take into account the other's desires, added the dwarf.

The girl understood the dwarf's words and ever since, she stopped abusing the word „no”.

5. The Cloud and the Sun

a) Therapeutic indications:

- Lack of respect;
- Impoliteness;

b) Desired effects: ???

- It is said that one day the Wind's youngest son was walking quietly through the sky. A strong sound made him stay still. Sun and Cloud were arguing strongly:

- You're the only one to blame! You splashed a sun beam into my eyes and woke me up! yelled Cloud

- No! You're the guilty one! You covered my face! Screamed even louder Sun.

- Actually it's you! Instead of apologizing to me, you pulled your tongue and made faces at me!

- You haven't even apologized! You turbed your back at me and covered my face.

Wind wanted to say something to calm them down... but it was in vain. Nobody was listening to him.

Since that day, Sun and Cloud became enemies. Every time they had a chance, they would hurt each other and would scream as loud as they could. Everybody knew that when Cloud was crying it was because Sun hit him with a sun beam in the eye and when Sun was covered in clouds- this was revenge!

However, the small wind is also the most perseverant, as he knew those two were also kind so he wouldn't let

go until he'd make them reconcile. Did anybody say this wasn't possible? I don't think so, because I know that when Wind promises something he makes it happen.”

In the same context of the therapeutic story, Peseschkian N (2005), we come across a similar message:

6. Dirty nests

“A dove would always change her nest. The strong smell that nests release in time was unbearable to her. She complained bitterly about this to an older, experienced and wiser dove. The latter nodded her head and said; „You don't change a thing by changing your nest. The bothering smell doesn't come from those nests but from you!”.

7. Give him your hand!

“A man sank in a swamp in the northern part of Persia. The only thing staying out of the mud was his head. He yelled as hard as he could for help. Soon many people gathered on site. One of them decided to try to save the poor man.

„Give me your hand”, he screamed. I'll get you out of there”. But the drowning man would continue to scream for help without letting the other one help him.

„Give me your hand!, the man said many times. But the answer was always the same, a pathetic cry for help. That's when someone stopped and said: „ can't you see he'll never give you his hand? It's you who must give his hand to him. Only then will you be able to save him!””

Used as therapy and taking into account its specific applicable procedures, the therapeutic story helps improve risky behavioural conducts, generating, in time, new approaches and conducts in the human value, having as basic social actor the child and his harmonious and healthy moral development.

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