

"Unity of Opposites": Hope in Psychodrama Group Psychotherapy Based on the Jewish Hassidic Spiritual Approach

Thoughts about the Corona Pandemic Crisis

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“Even if a sharp sword is hanging over one’s neck, he should not prevent himself from mercy” (Talmud, tractate Berakhot 10a). This perception of doing everything we can create hope, is manifested in the Talmudic expression as one of the fundamental essences of Judaism. In the therapeutic field, hope is part of our psychological structure but mostly it is an essential infinite crave for growth, that exists in every aspect in human's life. It expresses the opposites sides of the self; both psychological inner urge for change, together with the spiritual belief in his/her own ability to create this change. Creating hope within Opposites sides of the self, can be compared to the definition of hope as a dialectical experience.

It is evident when one enters the therapist's room and claims hope, yet unconsciously does everything he/she can to "sabotage" it (Mitchel 1993\2003). Opposites sides of the human experience, are part of every therapeutic relationships such as; anger and self-regulation; helplessness and creativity, and the "sense of inner death" alongside with the sense of inner vitality (Eigen, 1996/2010) Therefore hope reflects the existence of "per of opposites" within the self ,that redefine our in-personal and interpersonal relationships. Eigen's perception that "psychoanalysis recognizes the opposites such as body, soul and spirit" (Eigen, 2004/2014 p.68) emphasizes the patient's capacity to generate an image that consists of **all the parts** of the self; to realize that she/he is a whole that consists of opposites that represents multiplicity.

those opposites can lead to a distractive pulse that causes an extreme motion, such as split (Klein, 1946) or to fruitful dialog (Rotenberg 1990, Kahana, 2010). In **Jewish history, Jewish theosophy and Jewish mysticism: Kabbala and the Hassidic movement**, opposites reflect; fragmentation and reparation (Shalom ,1967). In the Hassidic theosophy this two opposites sides are not considered as an extreme dialectical experience, as they exist on one sequence (Rabbi Shneur Zalman Of Liady,

Tanya 1772) on not as two negative parts; "good or bad". Fragmentation represents; crisis, dread, fear breakdown and despair along with reparation that represents; authenticity mental strength and creativity.

By acknowledging and connecting between those opposites, and by beginning a small "emotional movement" (Eigen, 1996) between them, we can create the process that evolves the ability for dialog on the in-personal level and interpersonal level. Furthermore, a creative dialog can reduce extreme behavior and enables inner balance between opposites (Rotenberg 1990). According to the Jewish Hassidic movement and its founder, Rabbi Yisrael **H'Baal Shem Tov** (1770-1760) any crisis has the potential to turn "*upside down*" for the good (1794).

H'Baal Shem Tov offers a new method of interpretation to human fragility, by saying that "*in every escalation(crisis) is hidden a spark of elevation*" (1793\ 1998). His successor **Rabbi Shneur Zalman From Liady** (1745-1813) the founder of Chabad Hassidic movement called this mental effort; "**Caring Opposites and Unity of Opposites**" as he claimed that they are two sides that exist at the same mental sequence (1772). **In psychodynamic aspects hope is a dialectical experience.** (Mitchell, 1993\2003 p.260). a, 2014). In **Psychodrama** group psychotherapy, hope is a psychospiritual experience based on a new approach that integrates psychodynamic aspects and Jewish spirituality. This approach is based on a creative theatrical dialog within opposites that can be played on **one sequence, such as the Psychodramatic stage.**

Psychodrama group therapy was created by a Jewish psychiatrist; Jacob Levi Moreno (1889-1925) who believed in creating a theatrical stage platform for the self to play itself out (Moreno, 1932). It is considered as the theory of a therapeutic culture (Artzi 1991). He claimed that psychodrama is an integration of body, mind and soul that can be played in every therapeutic session. In psychodrama group therapy, **conflicts and contradictions** are part of the inner-personal and interpersonal drama. Psychodramatic methods can be used in order to help the patients to discover the roots of one's "drama of pain and loss" and drama of disappointment as authentic feelings, but also to present moments that can be part of the **drama of hope**"(Bracha Gidron, 2019). In order to generate integration between those approaches, a new quantitative study was carried out in Jerusalem between 2015-2019.

The research that I conducted in 2019 was demonstrated in 2020 Corona epidemic crisis in my practice. It demonstrates the ability to create Hope in group psychodrama psychotherapy by integrating between psychodynamic approach, and the Spiritual knowledge based on **the Jewish Hassidic concept ; Carry Opposites and Unity of Opposites** .One of the research's results was a new model in group psychodrama psychotherapy that presents how can the new psychodramatic interventions contains **transitions** between Opposites by using creative and theatrical dialog between them.

This process effects my patients to manage distress in a creative methods **during the Corona epidemic crisis**. One of the side effects of the Corona epidemic is the lost of stability and emotional anchor that causes; anxiety, depression and regression . .By involving Psychodrama therapeutic new approach , the patients could help themselves and their families to regulate between extreme emotions, in a way that leads to more flexible ways to manage a dialectical distress, as well as creating new meaning to interpret and elaborate this crisis and expanding the space so hope can be revealed.

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