AFOP®: A NEW METHOD FOR TREATING OCD

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Introduction

The AFOP® method was developed to provide a more effective therapy for Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD), since CBT treatment can be effective for the treatment of some disorders, but its not as effective for OCD.

In this pilot study we studied the efficacy of the AFOP® method. The AFOP® method is a new treatment for OCD with an analytical-experiential orientation. The treatment lasts between 6 months and two years and is based on Jungian and Ethological theories. It differs from other treatment methods in its approach.

In the AFOP® method, Obsessions and Compulsions are seen as the result of anxiety. The latter provoked by a collapsed central nervous system caused by traumatic experiences and/or prolonged periods of stress in infancy and/or adolescence.

This, in turn, causes the person to lose their natural instincts and drives, converting their vital energy into obsessions and compulsions.

OCD is considered here an emotional disorder as opposed to a cognitive disorder. Hence, the sessions are focused on the underlying emotional causes and not the cognitive symptoms which are seen as an expression of Anxiety.

The treatment is personalized. However, every treatment shares common elements:

- A **thorough evaluation** which leads to an understanding of the internal conflicts causing the symptoms.
- There is **no direct exposure** to the symptoms or the fears nor are there attempts to change the obsessive symptoms with cognitive techniques.

- Sessions focus exclusively on **unblocking the collapsed central nervous system**, and **activating** the patient's instincts and **drives**.
- **Intense sessions** with the goal of **activating the instinct**
- **General Cognitive Flexibilization** as opposed to cognitive restructuration targeting the obsessions.
- **Intense physical activities** which are symbolically relevant to the patient (Boxing, Climbing, Dancing, Theatre e.g.).
- Monthly 8-hour **group therapy**.
- Increasing **assertiveness, creative expression and life skills** in order to further activate and unblock the central nervous system.

AFOP®

Drive Activation
and Focalization

Instinct recovery

Reality confronted
without fear or guilt

Our hypothesis is that the AFOP® method will be able to reduce the level of anxiety (state anxiety) patients experience, as well as to eliminate more firmly installed traits of anxiety which cause the obsessive symptoms.

Method

We measured the efficacy of the AFOP® method through a repeated measures design (N=15) pre-treatment and after 3-6 months into treatment (M1). We used the STAI questionnaire (Y-Form) to evaluate both the level of anxiety as well as the trait anxiety.

Results

A repeated measures ANOVA showed a significant effect of the treatment on trait anxiety, [$F(1.13)= 23.31, p < 0.001$]. No significant effect was found for state anxiety, [$F(1.13)= 1.96, p < 0.19$].

Clinical observations

Significant reduction of the **intensity and frequency of Obsessions and Compulsions**.

Various patients with serious symptoms have been **cured completely**.

Table 1

Repeated Measures Analysis of State and Trait Anxiety Pre-Treatment over time

Source	df	SS	MS	F	p
State Anxiety	1	79,350	79,350	1,956	0.185
Trait Anxiety	1	504,600	504,600	23,311	≤0.001
Total	2				

Discussion

In future research with a bigger N size we expect both measurements to show significant results. Also, we want to include measurements of the later treatment phases and follow-up results as well as more questionnaires (Y-BOCS, BDI-II, etc).

AnxietyState

Estimated Marginal Means of AnxietyState

AnxietyTrait

Estimated Marginal Means of AnxietyTrait

1(Hofmann, Asnaani, Vonk, Sawyer & Fang, 2012).
2(Spielberger, Gorsuch, Lushene, Vagg, & Jacobs,1983).