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COUNSELING FOR NEUROTIC PERSONS

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Abstract

Modern era is the era of internets and networking for communication without personal contacts. Further globalization and industrial development have created stress and tensions. This mental pandemic has unfortunately resulted in creating the disorder and disruptions in the neurotic system in human brain. Since no established therapy has any curative or preventive medicines, the psychologists are attempting to minimize the impact of disorder on human performance and behavior. This paper is an attempt to throw light upon the system of counseling for the neurotics.

Introduction

Today, in the modern world of internet and net works, human beings are increasing afflicted with neurosis where the connections between the brain cells and mind get interrupted or disrupted or delinked quite often. The number neurotic patients i.e. mentally sick persons has been fast rising in all the countries of the world including India. The NIMHANS, Bangalore, has drawn a depressing portrait of conditions of neurotics by the end of 2025. Adding fuel to the fire, no convincing and conclusive therapies and measures treatment are available. Medical scientists are a little hesitant to accept that the neurosis is not a pandemic disease but a dysfunction of certain cells in human brain. Dr. Raymond Fowler (1) without mincing the words tells, “Neurosis is the effect of functional disorder in the cerebellum which needs highly sophisticated and unassuming surgery of brain”.

Hypothesis

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Dysfunction of or disorder in any system, whether biological or otherwise, results in developing disequilibrium or imbalance between its inputs and expected output. In the light of this fact, neurosis or mental disease represents maladjustment or malfunctioning of human brain. The whole thrust, therefore, lies in rectifying human behavior.

Objective

Having cognized the facts about neurotics, the objective of this paper is to examine and suggest how best neurotic person would likely to behave and act as a normal person.

A brief historical outline

As early as in 1839 the attention had been drawn to undertake the treatment of patients suffering from mental ailments. A British therapist John Clooney had set up the practice of treating the patients of mental diseases. By 1860, systematic and rational attempts were made for proper treatment of such kinds of patients. Attempts made to find out the possible reasons, indications and effects of mental illness.

Thereafter, Charlotte, Capelin etc., had undertaken extensive research in understanding the causes of mental sickness. Sigmund Fried, the renowned psychologist, during the period of 1856 to 1939 had come out with a number of scientific propositions relating to mental sickness. He concluded that mental sickness is curable if proper if timely right approach was made the therapists. He developed what was later on called Freudian Theory stating three major propositions useful for diagnosing the causes of mental sickness, viz.,

1. Mental activities are similar to physical activities having natural reasons which are likely to create misunderstanding among others;
2. Most of the mental activities of a person are directly influenced by external environment around him with his cognition;

3. The personality of an individual is normally gets developed during the early ages; mental sickness normally arises at the later period in life; personality is equally responsible for mental sickness.

Generally, mental sickness in a person refers to psychosis, schizophrenia, hysteria, Dementia (due to old age), mania, epilepsy, depression, and stress, etc. It is advisable that no sooner these diseases started showing the signs, due care should have been taken immediately.

Symptoms of Neurosis

1. Continuously and constantly brooding over certain issues of discontentment,
2. Habitually irritating, shrieking, and provoking others,
3. Uncontrollable body movements and emotions,
4. Insomnia and exhaustion
5. Reprimanding and admonishing others without reasons,
6. Finding fault with members of the family,
7. Avoiding people, developing dislike for others, neglecting them,
8. Remaining engrossed in particular thoughts and developing fear,
9. Talking about short-comings of others and self; entering into meaningless discussions,
10. Continuous changes in personality,
11. Any other abnormal behavior

How a neurotic patient is identified? -

1. When his thinking capacity, memory power, intelligence, etc., apparently failing;
2. When constantly feels uneasiness, gets annoyed or abusing or misbehaving; others;

3. When constantly distressing, losing concentration, doing something repeatedly;
4. When physically suffers from head-aches, body pains, sleeplessness, breathing troubles, chest-pains, etc.,
5. When he is subject to mental disturbances, emotional nervousness, disturbances in brain, Asymptotic Nervousness. Psycho-Somatic Syndrome,
6. When he is passionately inclined to commit physical, sexual, or violent behavior, or involved in heavy drinking;
7. When his behavior does not correspond to his age, decorum and decency; and
8. When he is subject to emotional disturbances and without reason suddenly starts crying or laughing.

Analysis of reasons for mentally sickness (Psychopathology)

Any person under heavy stress and tension normally loses his temper suddenly and holds no control over his actions and behavior; His mind remains involved in several problems without possible solutions at a point in time. In absence of outlets or proper solutions, he further gets distressed his mind becomes sick. He often suffers from (a) physical, (b) emotional and (c) mental. Stress.

- (a) Physical ailments: Mentally sick patient becomes tired, bored, disinterested, and suffers from sleeplessness, loss of appetite, loss of weight, pain in body, dryness of mouth, eyes etc., continuous sound in the ears; loss of vision; skin diseases, fall in the rate of blood circulation, breathing troubles, and for women-folk –irregular and problematic menopause.
- (b) Emotional ailment: Despondency, pessimism, deranged, disorientation, distressful, dejection, lack of enthusiasm, happiness, and optimism, affected with the phobias and manias, Possessiveness, Hallucination, suicidal thoughts, etc., are reflected in his personality;

- (c) Mental or Psychological symptoms: Gradually but effectively their physical and mental activities weaken and slowed down; their cognition comes down, memory fails, they often forget domestic and social responsibilities, they think of false episodes, they live in their own imaginative world under heavy stress and strain.

The Need for Psychological Counseling

A ray of hope for proper treatment of a neurotic person emits from neuro-psychiatry. Only a psychological counselor can offer right direction to any wayward or mentally sick person.. It is certainly a missionary pursuit but not a vocation pursued by counselors. People have certain doubts, misconceptions, or misgivings that based on misinformation. It is not possible to predict when a person would need the services of the psychological counselor but certainly almost every person, sooner or later, feels the necessity of psychological counseling. In fact, any person facing physical and mental problems constantly and continuously who wants to get rid of them for seeking happiness, does feel the necessity of such counselor.

A person desirous of personality improvement and social good-will, despite his physical and mental problems, is always doubtful of the effectiveness of psychological counseling. Many avoid such counseling due to misunderstanding and infirm opinion. They hold that persons having poor capacity or less competence, only depend upon the help of others. Such persons alone feel the necessity counseling. Thus, counseling is only for those who are mentally weak and ill. According to them, counseling is meaningless and time-consuming. Counsels do not or cannot solve human problems. There exists a section of the people, who strongly believe that human life is totally controlled by certain heavenly powers, and that all human problems can be solved only by prayers and worships. Further, without realizing the gravity of problems, they suggest that the time heals all the problems.

A few opine that by seeking help from the counselor means the failure or defeat of our intelligence, self-confidence and culture of family system. Without the right information and evidences, they criticize and avoid seeking the advice from the counselors. As a first-aid, people immediately apply lotion on a wound, but avoid counseling for mental ailment. The belief on counseling at times is the matter of one's experience, his/her culture and family back ground.

Counseling is based upon certain tested principles. It offers solutions not only to serious mental sickness, but also for personality development and confidence building activities. More often than not, unforeseen problems, the solutions which the mind cannot, would be solved by seeking the guidance from the counselor. Whenever our own people on whom we depend for advice, could not offer any appropriate solution, we of course, seek the help of a counselor. In case of personally secret matters (unconcerned with exploitation) or technical matters, one could approach the counselor for proper direction.

Whenever someone comes across any specific and identifiable problem, it has a number of dimensions. The person facing the problem has to grasp all its dimensions- alternative solutions, applicability of those solutions, possible impact on various situations.

The benefits of counseling cannot be accurately measured. As the process of counseling moves ahead, newer results usher in, and finally, one can observe the difference by comparing the previous condition of a mentally sick person with the end results. The positive results therefrom cause to enhance self-confidence and when endorsed by relatives and friends the faith becomes unwavering. As a recovery of wound is a slow and time-consuming, so does the effect of the counseling. It throws new light on changes of one's own thoughts, emotions, actions apart from cognizing the capabilities, misgivings, mistakes, and attitudes. It helps improving decision-making capacity, and ability to think in a different manner. It has been experienced by a majority of psychological counselors that any

person suffering from mental sickness, would likely to improve his commitment, accept responsibility, and willing to face any problem. All such benefits would certainly accrue when the counselor is highly experienced and knowledgeable.

In psychological treatment of a mentally sick person, he is instilled (i) how to maintain control over the emotions, (ii) how to secure happiness, and (iii) how to analyze the situation.

Many a time, the events happening in the life might not be the causes of problems. The manner in which the person views the problem, what does he understand about it, how does he evaluate it- all these factors are to be certainly taken into account in psychological treatment. For making the treatment more effective several therapies, namely (i) Play therapy, (ii) Music therapy, (iii) Behavior therapy, and (iv) Yoga therapy, have been applied by the counselors.

Generally, treatment of mental sickness implies treatment of mental fallibilities. But in psychological treatment these fallibilities are tested, examined and treated as the methods prescribed in the psycho-analysis therapy. The psychological treatment consists of two classes, namely (a) individual psycho-analysis, and (2) collective psychological analysis. When two or more mentally sick persons undertake the treatment, it is called collective psychological analysis.

Method of Physical Body Treatment

This method excludes psychological but only medical treatment that consists of:

- Electric treatment (E.C. T.)
- Insulin treatment, and
- Constant sleep therapy.

For a mentally sick person counseling process involves:

- Understanding the social and mental condition of a patient,
- Understanding the causes of mental nervousness and attempt to remove them,

- Motivating to continue the medicines already prescribed for mental sickness,
- Attempting to initiate positive desires in the patient, and
- Attempting to improve physical and mental health of the patient.

Today, psychological methods of treatment have been used extensively as compared to previous decades. The social attitude has also been changed in favor of greater acceptance of such methods. People have realized the effectiveness of psychological methods of test, diagnosis and treatment.

It is evident that the nature of mental sickness is dependent upon the nature of the mind of a person. Mentally backward patient has less number of neurons in the brain cells. The mental sickness due to economic, social, familial causes would differ from those which arise as consequences of struggle, pessimism, defeatism etc. While treating these patients the views of the following experts must be taken into consideration:

- a. Psychiatric,
- b. Occupational therapist,
- c. Psychiatric social workers.

[1] Psychiatric

A psychiatric is a medical graduate who undergoes special course on psychiatry making him eligible for treatment of the mentally sick patients. They are experts in physiology and anatomy thereby understanding the impact on them.

[2] Occupational therapist

The occupational therapists having cognized the physical capacity, interest, and hobby of a patient, motivates and activates him to undertake small ventures like stitching, embroidering, gardening, flower-making from crape, making visiting cards, garlands, etc. These and many other hobbies keep patients happy and satisfactory.

[3] Psychiatric social workers

These social workers offer services for mentally sick patients by arranging some events in which the patients were requested to participate. Collective events have salutary effects on such patients. It causes to open their minds and make them free to walk, talk and play with other mates forgetting their loneliness. Psychiatric social workers own the responsibility and accept the risk involved therein; therefore, they keep close and strict watch on the conditions.

Conditions for Counseling

In Germany and Switzerland, Dr. Brandt (3) had advocated and adopted the theory what was popularly known as 'Reverse gear approach' wherein the output behavior of a mentally sick person is attempted to reform by modifying the input factors. In practice, it could not yield expected results. The highly experienced and successful counselors are aware of the appropriate techniques to be adopted seeing the conditions of mentally sick persons. They cautiously move forward in their treatment. Normally, they adopt the following procedures in dealing with neurotics.

- (1) The counselors do not reveal their identity and purpose to the mentally sick person, nor do they disclose the purpose of their meeting;
- (2) The counselors pay visits at different times on different dates and record the behavior pattern of the patients;
- (3) They watch and listen minutely every word, its tone, scale, length, and attempt to decipher its meaning and context;
- (4) They remain conscious of violent behavior of mentally sick persons.
- (5) They maintain detailed records of all the meetings and attempt to suggest the ways to treatment to the caretakers of the patients; and

Summary

Neurosis has been on rise in the world. It primarily concerns with the disorder or dysfunction of neurotic system of human brain. It is not a disease or ailment. Hence, no therapy offers any preventive or curative drugs or medicines. The

dysfunction creates disequilibrium or imbalance in the input and output flow of neurons. It is only likely that by continuous positive counseling may minimize the effect of dysfunction.

Key words:

Neurosis, dysfunction of neurotic system, continuous counseling,

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