THE THEORY OF SALUTOGENESIS USED AS A FRAMEWORK FOR MENTAL HEALTH PROMOTION IN THE RECOVERY PROCESS OF PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS.

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The main purpose of this presentation is to show how the theory of salutogenesis (Antonovsky, 1987) has been operationalised into salutogenic therapy principles and an intervention program for promoting coping defined as a sense of coherence (SOC) among people with mental health problems.
BACKGROUND

ALTHOUGH THE THEORY OF SALUTOGENESIS GIVES A GENERIC UNDERSTANDING OF HOW COPING MAY BE CREATED, THIS HAS NOT BEEN SUFFICIENTLY EXPLORED AMONG PEOPLE WITH MENTAL HEALTH PROBLEMS.
The salutogenic theory developed as salutogenic therapy principles has not previously been described in the literature.

An intervention is not ready to be evaluated unless the theoretical basis of the intervention has been developed and carried out, and judicious use of a theoretical framework can illuminate areas that might not otherwise be visible.
Publications


The Sense of Coherence

- Comprehensibility
- Manageability
- Meaningfulness
EFFECT OF THE INTERVENTION

- Statistical significant change
- Evaluation form.
The role of the professional mental health worker

In a salutogenic perspective, the professional mental health worker functions more as a dialogue partner, balancing between listening empathetically to participants’ difficulties and taking into account their strengths and resources (Hubble, Duncan & Miller, 1999).
Target group

The intervention is developed for people with various relatively stable mental health problems who are able to have a dialogue and live in the community but need support from the health system.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Symptoms (SCL-90)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N=106</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>%*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Somatisation (0.94)</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td></td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>71.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Obsessive-compulsive (1.07)</td>
<td>1.78</td>
<td></td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>79.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Interpersonal sensitivity (0.97)</td>
<td>1.67</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>67</td>
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<tr>
<td>Depression (0.95)</td>
<td>1.83</td>
<td></td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>79.2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Anxiety (0.76)</td>
<td>1.59</td>
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<td>1.00</td>
<td>76.4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hostility (0.75)</td>
<td>.68</td>
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<td>.69</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>Phobic anxiety (0.46)</td>
<td>1.41</td>
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<td>1.05</td>
<td>73.6</td>
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<td>Paranoid ideation (0.89)</td>
<td>1.33</td>
<td></td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>67</td>
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<td>Psychoticism (0.42)</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td></td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>66</td>
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<td>Addditional items</td>
<td>1.71</td>
<td></td>
<td>.84</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Global Severity Index (0.77)</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td></td>
<td>.75</td>
<td>81.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*% of participants with scores above the cutpoint, (numbers in paranthesis) indicating clinically disturbing symptoms.
Aim

The main aim of the intervention is to increase participants’ awareness of their potential, their internal and external resources and their ability to use them and thus to increase their SOC, coping and level of mental health.
SALUTOGENESIS  PATHOGENESIS

- Focusing on the origins of health.
- Seeking to explain why people get sick.

- ARON ANTONOVSKY (1923-1994)
The theory of Salutogenesis consists of

Central concepts:

- Sense of coherence (SOC),
- General resistance resources (GRR)
- Appropriate challenges
Therapy principles:

- The health continuum model
- The story of the person
- Health promoting (salutary) factors
- Stress and strain is comprehended as potentially health promoting
- Active adaptation is the ideal in treatment.
Example 1.

The principle of focusing on the persons’ history and own perception of her/his situation and less on diagnosis
Encouraging the perception of diagnosis as a narrow description of reality
The leaders listen to participants in an open, “not knowing”, accepting manner.
Listen to participants’ narrative identity: shedding light on his or her coping ability
Example 2

The Sense of Coherence

- Comprehensibility – Consistency
- Manageability – Appropriate challenges
- Meaningfulness – Participation in own development
Assigning homework based on crucial spheres in human existence

- Inner feelings.
- Immediate personal relations.
- Major activity.
- Existential issues.
Example of homework

- How do you take care of your needs for activity and rest?

The participants are thus invited to consider the value of taking control of one’s own needs and inner feelings.
Conclusion

The intervention may serve as a guide to mental health practice when mental health promotion and coping is the main target.
Thank you!

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