Presentation Abstract

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Field of Expertise
Psicoterapy

Name of National Association
IRPIR

Modality of Participation
in-person

Type of Presentation
Workshop

Presentation Title

The Forest as Therapist: A Bottom-Up Model of Script Transformation in Transactional Analysis

Abstract

Background and objectives. Nature-based therapies and green prescriptions are increasingly supported by evidence across multiple health domains, with countries such as Japan, South Korea, the UK, Canada, and New Zealand having formally adopted them. This context creates new opportunities for psychotherapists, including transactional analysis practitioners. Ecological TA (Eco-TA) is emerging as a framework that reconceptualizes nature as an active co-therapeutic agent. Clinically grounded models linking forest therapy with TA theory, however, remain limited. This workshop introduces the Forest-Mediated Psychotherapy Model (FMP Model): an integrative theoretical-clinical framework grounded in TA and informed by neuroscience and research on nature-based interventions.

Methods and approach. Developed within a Practice-Based Evidence framework, the model draws on clinical observation, and empirical data, including longitudinal cases documented through video material and findings from an ongoing pilot study (Oncology Unit, Rieti Hospital, 2024). The model describes how sensory-motor engagement in forest activates physis (Berne, 1968), the organism's intrinsic drive toward growth and self-regulation. Environmental stimuli reduce top-down cognitive control and facilitate access to the Somatic Child, triggering a cascade of psychophysiological self-regulatory processes that, over time, lead to changes in ego state organization and body script patterns. In this model, the forest functions as the primary agent of change, while the therapist facilitates the client's relationship with the environment. The workshop is experiential and includes guided sensory immersion, observation of photographic and video clinical material, and structured reflection.

Key expected outcomes. Participants will acquire a clinically applicable framework for integrating forest therapy into TA practice and will reflect on a trasformation in the therapist's role: becoming a facilitator of the patient–forest relationship mediated by the body.

Conclusions. The FMP Model contributes to the development of Eco-TA and opens new directions for empirical research at the intersection of TA, neuroscience, and nature-based psychotherapy.

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Professional Picture

