Presentation Abstract

Surname
Bastianelli

Name
Laura

Other Authors
Silvia Tauriello

Field of Expertise
Psicoterapy

Name of National Association
IRPIR

Other Affiliation
SPR Italia - CPI - EMDR Italia

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Presentation Title

Recognizing and Guiding Change in Psychotherapy: Practical Tools in Transactional Analysis and Neuroscience.

Abstract
The workshop aims to examine two distinct types of change in psychotherapy—incremental change and transformational change —with particular reference to their conceptualization within Transactional Analysis (Bastianelli et al., 2019). Transformational change is associated with the activation of the neurobiological mechanism of memory reconsolidation (Pedreira et al., 2004; Ecker, 2024), which enables a stable cessation of the client's behaviors, mental states, and somatic manifestations. In light of neuroscientific evidence, the methodology of Transactional Analysis is reconsidered by integrating the transtheoretical model of the Therapeutic Reconsolidation Process (TRP) (Ecker et al., 2018; 2022; 2026), with the aim of intentionally guiding clinical strategy and optimizing its effectiveness. From this perspective, understanding memory reconsolidation processes allows the therapist to facilitate corrective experiences capable of addressing the implicit roots of symptoms, promoting their dissolution and reducing the risk of relapse. The workshop includes a brief theoretical introduction, followed by an experiential analysis based on clinical material (session transcripts and videos), aimed at identifying and distinguishing between the two types of change and their respective neurobiological mechanisms. Participants will be provided with an observation grid to identify key steps in therapeutic interventions. The work will be supported by small-group discussions designed to consolidate learning. Finally, a comparison will be proposed between the fundamental steps of incremental and transformational change and the processes of decontamination and deconfusion typical of Transactional Analysis, correlating them with work on impasses (Mastromarino and Milizia, 1988). The discussion will explore how knowledge of the

underlying mechanisms can enhance case formulation and intervention planning, guiding clinical choices and contributing to the development of practice-based research.