Presentation Abstract

Surname
Di Gennaro

Name
Sonia

Field of Expertise
Psicoterapy

Name of National Association
IAT - Istituto di Analisi Transazionale

Other Affiliation
EATA

Modality of Participation
in-person

Type of Presentation
Oral Presentation

Presentation Title
When Experience Cannot Be Spoken: Dreams as Relational Field Indicators in Psychotherapy

Abstract
Background and objectives Recent contributions within Transactional Analysis have conceptualised dreams as markers of change (Vignozzi, Tangolo & Romaniello, 2025). From a distinct relational perspective, this study draws on Relational TA (Hargaden & Sills, 2002) and power-aware perspectives on the co-created relational field (Minikin, 2024) to conceptualise dreams as expressions of the relational field. In line with efforts to develop TA as an evidence-based practice, dreams are understood not as intrapsychic representations to be interpreted, but as indicators of relational processes that can be systematically observed. The study examines how shifts in dream narratives relate to rupture and repair, shame, and vulnerability within the therapeutic relationship. Methods A Systematic Qualitative Single-Case Design (McLeod, 2010) was employed. Data from an eighteen-month tele-psychotherapy included dream reports, session notes, and countertransference logs. Rigour was supported through triangulation, supervision, and mapping rupture-repair markers (Safran and Muran, 2000). Analysis integrated relational TA with rupture-repair theory, using phenomenological coding of dream material while attending to the therapist's participation within the co-created field. Findings Dreams function as indicators of relational change, reflecting shifts in safety, proximity, and mutual recognition. Their evolution is co-shaped within the therapeutic relationship, including changes in the dreamer's capacity to act, to be met, and to negotiate power and vulnerability. Clinically, a progression from constricted or dehumanised imagery toward more vital and relationally responsive figures was observed, paralleling phases of rupture, repair, and increasing tolerance of affect and relational proximity. Conclusions This study contributes to the development of Transactional Analysis as an evidence-based, relational practice by offering a framework for tracing co-created processes of

change. Dreams not only reflect change but may also participate in the relational field through which transformation becomes possible.

Professional Picture

