Selection and pretherapy

- Selection criteria: some patients (e.g., diagnosis of Axis I-II based on the DSM-IV, long physical illness, and so on) may prefer a short-term treatment; others with no psychological history or conflicts in the sphere of intimacy, sex, or grief have excluded (if not clinically necessary).
- Pretherapy week, including some problems.
- Psychometric inquiries, brief diagnostic categories (mood, anxiety, and self-management disorders, cluster B-C personality disorders).
- Focus on collecting information (motivation for group-oriented treatment) and therapy addressing specific issues without ignoring the wider context.
- Identifying the existential perspective and the narrative method (history writing and logbook).

Purpose: This poster seeks to describe a new existential psychotherapeutic treatment model in northern Norway, integrating the four dimensions of existence in a comprehensive clinical treatment program.

The existential team offers intensive time-limited inpatient psychotherapy, based on phenomenological-existential theory, with the main focus on group treatment. The four dimensions of existence (physical, social, personal, and spiritual) are a ‘leitmotiv’ in the program. After a week of specialized clinical assessment and treatment selection, patients from all parts of Norway (but predominantly from the northern half of the country) can enter the psychotherapeutic program (12 weeks in the course of one year).

Milestone meeting

- Opening the therapy day
- Closing the therapy day
- Lunch
- Individual therapy
- Group therapy
- Art therapy
- Integrated body and movement-oriented psychotherapy
- Physical training and exercise
- Pastoral care
- Psychoeducation
- Selection and pretherapy
- Purpose

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Viken senter

is a new private institution located in the north of Norway. The clinic consists of a mental health care centre which started in 2006 with three inpatient treatment programs for adults (CBT, Trauma and Existential therapy). A fourth program for inpatient family treatment program opens in the beginning of 2009.

A non-clinical unit with 8 rooms offers preventive activity, recreation, courses, supervision, pastoral care, team building and retreat. A specialized research unit will be involved in the further development of the programs. One of the missions of Viken Senter is to build up an expertise on the significant roles existential, religious/spiritual and cultural themes play in mental health.

Family-perspective

Involves key family figures in the therapy process. Focusing implicitly on relational struggles and strengths of the family. Keys to involving families are connecting, informing, exploring and educating.

Meditation

- Each day starts with a concentric group meditation.
- The emergence of a qualitatively aware awareness that is distinctly different from the usual mode of being in the world.

Group therapy

- The existential perspective is a persistent and challenging theme, being ‘living-within-theworld’ in this contextual ‘with-world’, everyone needs to deconstructive hope to respond and shape one’s group-relationship.
- The objectives of group therapy include:
  - Existential therapy in the group as a whole: the group as a whole, being a facilitator of the search for meaning.
  - The development of the group as a whole as a counter-force in the existential psychotherapeutic process.
  - Emphasizing the importance of the here-and-now phenomena and congruence, examining the role of the therapist.
  - The group as a whole as an actualization of what it means to be a human being, being facilitating ‘yellow-strawberries’ in the search for meaning.
  - To explore the individual, the interpersonal, the group and the institutional level through the existential/dynamic perspective.

Art therapy

- Creative action, the patient’s engagement in a creative struggle provides perceptual effects (the order of fixed experiences). The work needs to be historically contextual.
- The art therapist can only make the meaning (the camera in the mirror) and share their experiences, with a phenomenological curiosity in the group.

Integrated body and movement-oriented psychotherapy

- The milieu: the totality of the experience, a quality of deeper knowing, a totality of experiences.
- The milieu is a whole: the body experiences and a totality of experiences.
- The milieu provides the meaning of the client’s experiences, the totality of the milieu.
- The milieu is also a dynamic interaction of the therapist in the encounter situation (the therapist’s role).
- The milieu serves both as diagnostic and therapeutic tool (identifying parallel processes).

Opening and closing

- The experience of temporality: meeting opening and closure of the day, weeks (existential week closure) and existential periods.
- By means of thematic summary, mate, education, use of poetry and music, relaxation, play, etc.
- Communication both observed, body-oriented essays on one(s), being in minuteness, etc.