Adolescent Therapy Using Film; Theory and Process
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• Relationships with commercial interests:
  – Grants/Research Support: none
  – Speakers Bureau/Honoraria: none
  – Consulting Fees: none
  – Other: none
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explain the theoretical strength behind the use of Film for Therapeutic gain

2. Develop a framework for using film in a Therapeutic setting

3. Describe the experience of participating in a film therapy/creative arts therapeutic process from the participant’s point of view
The Power of Cinema

• Film has great educational and therapeutic potential [1,2,3]

• As an art form shows internal and external world simultaneously

• Elementary cinema revolves around visual storytelling; not limited by language, doesn’t exclude other cultures [4]

• Films can allow for vicarious learning and behaviour rehearsal [5]
The Power of Cinema 1

- Films contain metaphorical elements which may align with cultural archetypes on a sub-conscious level, bypassing conscious resistance [7]
Audio-visual material and learning 1

Improve Illness Awareness [7a]

ISIS - French study (158 patients)

ISIS - Hypertension and cardiovascular risk educational computer program
Compared to regular education program (physicians, nurses, leaflets)

CV knowledge tested at baseline and 2 months after by 28 item standardised questionnaire

Both groups improved on CV knowledge score, the ISIS group significantly more than the controls
Improve Recall [7b]

Pictographs are used in those with poor literacy to aid recall of instructions.

21 subjects listened to lists of actions for managing fever (50) and sore mouth (38).

One action list was accompanied by a pictograph during listening and recall.

Average recall was 85% with pictographs and 14% without. A highly significant finding (p<0.0001).
Computer Based Education lesson using Audio Visual content for Rheumatoid Arthritis vs standard education (physican, nurse, leaflet) [7c]

significant, sustained improvements favouring the AV intervention, in:

Knowledge
Outlook on life
Hopefulness of a good prognosis
Rehabilitative behaviours (joint protection etc)
reduced belief- luck alone would determine the state of their condition
• Imitation and modelling behaviour may play a part
• Bandura [1,2] hypothesized that children learn by copying the observed behaviour of attachment figures
Social Learning Theory; the Bandura experiment
Gardner [6] suggested the existence of multiple intelligences; The more of these we access, the faster we learn.

**LOGICAL**  -> plot
**LINGUISTIC**  -> dialogue
**VISUO-SPATIAL**  -> pictures, colours, symbols and camerawork
**MUSICAL**  -> sounds, score
**KINESTHETIC**  -> movement
**INTERPERSONAL**  -> storytelling
**INTRAPSYCHIC**  -> self reflection/inner guidance
"pi", dir. Aronofsky 1998
Power of cinema 2: accessing the internal world

- Cinematic elements add to the emotional impact of viewed material
- These aid the director in demonstrating the internal world of a character in response to external mechanisms
- Facial expression, shot size/angle, colour grade, speed and sound essential elements
- Camera oscillates between observer and participant
“Suspiria”, dir. D Argento 1977
Power of cinema 3: Narrative

• Focused attention to a story creates a mild trance state [8,10]
• During such times, reduction in perception of external stimuli, preoccupation with thoughts and external issues
• Films contain metaphorical elements which may align with cultural archetypes on a sub-conscious level, bypassing conscious resistance [7]
• Metaphors in stories carry an intuitive understanding tapping into unconscious processing.
Power of cinema 3: Physical Space

• Cinematic auditoriums holds a cultural position where their ambience and presence is a sanctuary

• If watching a film creates a trance like state, induction starts with simply entering the movie theatre

• Motifs facilitate relaxation and enjoyment; the smell of popcorn, dim lights, a large screen [11]
• First of its kind, manualised group programme using films for therapy
• Aim was to appeal to adolescents often put off by standard therapeutic programmes [12]
• Creative arts groups are seen as less overwhelming, (initially) concrete and easier to relate to [14]
• They can facilitate relaxation and peer bonding [13,15]
• Theme based group, using short films to build elements of resilience (self esteem, symptom management)
• Themes relevant to all mental health conditions (e.g. stigma, loss, loneliness)
• Natural progression through 8 weekly sessions
• Group one hour in length, short film followed by guided discussion

Akhtar, N., Robinson, C., Rose, R., 2015
• Short films from YouTube and Vimeo
• Selected for diversity of themes, metaphorical content and strong cinematic elements
• Guided discussion an elaborated, manualised system based on the Cinematherapy model (Zuhr Institute, California, USA)
Two integral and unique features to our model

The creation of an **immersive environment** to aid engagement

And

- **Layered system** for therapeutic dialogue
Akhtar, N., Robinson, C., Rose, R., 2015
TECHNICAL!

PROJECTIVE (Like or dislike of characters)!

EMPATHETIC (emotions characters feel)!

REACTIVE (Emotions patients feel whilst watching)!

DEEP MEANING (aligning of narratives)!
EXPERIENCE
references


references


Questions?