
Coaching psicogénico: Una posibilidad a la crisis en el enfoque psicoterapéutico tradicional

Psychogenic coaching: a possibility to the crisis in the traditional psychotherapy approach

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RESUMEN

La psicología actual se enfrenta a desafíos que tienen características particulares. Estos desafíos tienen que ver con la inmediatez, la alienación y la construcción de un sentido existista de la vida. El problema es que estas necesidades actuales siguen siendo tratadas con una psicología con bases epistemológicas y psicológicas obsoletas. Necesitamos reconocer esta crisis. Este artículo se enfoca en ofrecer una posibilidad de reflexión y especialización para los psicoterapeutas y la psicología en general, en la búsqueda de volverse más atinentes a los desafíos que enfrentan en su quehacer actual. Propone la necesidad de declarar crisis en los fundamentos filosóficos, los paradigmas, los enfoques y las técnicas que dan base a la psicoterapia tradicional. En el desarrollo del artículo se presenta una disciplina complementaria recientemente creada llamada coaching psicogénico. Se muestran sus características principales y generales. Por último, se desglosan ciertas premisas éticas importantes para adoptar en la actualidad e incrementar la efectividad y credibilidad de la psicología.

Palabra clave: coaching, competencias, crisis, estructura, observador, ontología, psicogénico, sujeto.

ABSTRACT

Present-day psychology faces challenges which possess particular characteristics. These challenges have to do with immediacy, alienation and the construction of a success-driven sense of life. The problem is that these current needs continue to be treated through psychotherapy approaches with obsolete epistemological and psychological grounds. We need to recognize this crisis.

This article focuses on offering the possibility of reflection and specialization for psychotherapists and psychology in general, seeking to be more attentive to the challenges they face in their current field of work. It proposes the need to declare crisis in the philosophical grounds, paradigms, approaches and techniques that give rise to traditional psychotherapy. The production of this article proposes a newly

created, complementary discipline, called psychogenic coaching. Its main and general characteristics are herein presented. Finally, there is a breakdown of certain important ethical premises to start adopting and thus increase the effectiveness and credibility of psychology.

Keywords: architecture, objectual, process, space, tangible, univocal.

Introduction

The rhythm with which we currently live has been conditioning the natural balance required by human beings for their survival. This natural balance encompasses many aspects or domains of one's existence: coexistence with the environment, the management of climate change, personal relationships in the digital age, the alienation of communication due to technological advances, among others; these are some of the ingredients that are part of the broth that puts the aforementioned balance in check. Due to this, there are some moments in life in which we lose our way, or we are presented with the impossibility of giving meaning to our existence and to what surrounds us. We then begin to suffer from stress, depression, anguish, tiredness or any psychological discomfort. From my point of view, the most complex aspect of this is not to begin to suffer some discomfort like the ones I have mentioned; the complexity lies in the fact that we begin to think that this state of stress or anxiety, being recurrent, is something normal and we get used to this constant imbalance. Psychology is called to "De-normalize" this situation.

Psychology - as a science- has evolved in the search for solutions based on widely studied methodologies to nurture psychologists on an epistemological basis to guide the study and classification of mental and behavior processes, but the achievements have become obsolete in the face of new demands, alienating people's psychology and their daily pains.

We are currently overrun by technological advances which, although useful and necessary, have also brought risks and difficulties. Technological advances have provided immediacy in processes and information, giving a false illusion

of happiness linked to this speed without asking how it affects human life and its relationships. This immediacy has become so important that its loss can lead to a crisis of meaning, to emptiness, to the impotence of depending on these technological advances to continue and to achieve the rhythm proposed to us by current events. And this generates mistrust; mistrust of the world around us, mistrust of ourselves and of others as well, which makes it difficult to build relationships that help us reinvent ourselves, restructure ourselves and move forward. For all the above-mentioned reasons, psychology and its therapeutic practice need to be reinvented in order to get closer to the Being we are being and from there to connect with their options and proposals. For all these reasons, psychology and its therapeutic practice need to be reinvented to hence grow closer to the Being we are being and from hereinafter connect with their options and their proposals. We cannot move away from progress or current needs, and above all we need to build and design an identity that inspires trust and longings. We can no longer be the "healers". We can and also need to be the facilitators, the mentors, those who design and who provide concrete tools for everyday life to approach a psychology that aims to support human beings in their growth and future strategic design. For this, I propose what I have called "psychogenic coaching" or psychogenic facilitation of our clients. For this to happen, we must first break with the philosophical tradition to which we render honors. A tradition that I will quote below.

Development

Psychogenic coaching emerges from a heterogeneous and wide range of influences ranging from the thought of Classical Greece, through Rafael

Echeverría's Ontology of Language or Sigmund Freud's Psychodynamics and its contribution to the definition and understanding of Being. The current conception of Being that we have inherited from Greek thought has led us to a crisis of meaning about the Being that we are.

The first idea we want to rescue from Greek thought is Parmenides' conception that the meaning of life and the essence of Being is conferred by another being or another life, which is beyond this one and promotes that access to the being of things is to access their truth, and that the real way to access that truth is through reason. A concrete example of this way of conceiving the Being that emerges from this conception is the fact that we walk around the world defending our positions as if they were true, as if the gaze I have before some event or phenomenon was the correct perception, the true perception and the only one that counts. Sometimes we even state that the perception we have before any event or phenomenon is just as the phenomenon is. This truth, which was originally subjective, we consolidated by relying on the thoughts of those who are akin to our beliefs; and if not, notice if it is true that we do not get together more with those who have fewer divergences, we create families, groups, brotherhoods or even simpler, we share a cup of coffee with the one that is similar to us. Not only this, but if they do not resemble us, we try to convince them, persuade them and make them resemble us. Wars are an example of this form of Being as ancient as Greek thought itself. It makes no difference what year you are reading this article. Unfortunately, it is most likely that there is an ongoing war, one has just ended or there is a risk of one and if we see the origin thereof, it possibly has to do with some process or conflict that in its most basic core could be defined as a difference of opinion. A difference between my truth and yours can cause us to throw bombs, invade ourselves, and even kill ourselves. Or an individual belief in the benefits of winning. Even if that means casualties for many. Taking this question of what the truth is specifically to the psy-

chological plane, I often ask executives that I accompany in psychogenic coaching processes: How did the negotiation go? Very well, they answer me: "Because I convinced them of everything. It will be done my way ". Then success is given by imposing my point of view and convincing others. In this way, we have structured a psychology in which the psychologist tells the patient what they have or what they suffer from, and from his particular expert viewpoint, paths of action are designed for patients to follow. I am not saying that the psychologist is not an expert, because I firmly believe that they are. I just postulate that the therapist's expertise is not in the patient's life. They are the only experts in their life. No one is more expert in their own life than themselves. The psychologist's expertise lies in theories, methodologies and techniques to diagnose and accompany. In no case is that expertise lies within the life of the patient. We have created an addiction to knowing things clearly and a punishment for those who do not. That is, a need to access the truth of things and the truth in relation to the patient that brings us closer to metaphysics and moves us further and further away from facilitation. These examples speak of the crisis of meaning to which I referred to earlier in the article, and which relate to the conception of Being and its truth about things in the program that by legacy we have made our own.

A second idea inherited from Greek thought, in this case from Heraclitus, is the conception of the Being in constant evolution which is a fundamental part of the epistemological bases of the ontological proposal and -although Freud never mentioned it explicitly- of the psychodynamic proposal, and is one of the most important conceptions of Being within this proposal. This conception of Being speaks that we are not, but that we are being within a context of constant change that promotes responsibility, autonomy, the possibility of becoming participants in our own transformation and change. From the psychogenic coaching viewpoint, we believe that every time we learn, we change. Sometimes this transformation is more ev-

ident and sometimes less so. We also know that we are reluctant to change for the sake of biology. Our routines and habits are driven by the basal ganglia that manage the optimal energy consumption of our brain. The so-called “comfort zone” is nothing more than the low energy consumption that routines and habits promote. As *Néstor Braidot* tells us in his 2015 book on Neuromanagement, “to modify not only habits, but also thought patterns (mental maps), it is necessary to disarticulate much of what is incorporated in the basal ganglia and this requires a lot of energy”. For a strong change the amygdala—which is part of what, from the theory of the Triune Brain theory of Paul MacLean, known as the emotional brain—must intervene. Since the orbital-frontal cortex is connected to the brain’s fear circuit (where the amygdala actively intervenes) the very idea of change is perceived as a very important metabolic energy intake from the prefrontal region in favor of fear. In other words, the greater the change, the greater the fear. (*Braidot*, 2015). So, we are not only reluctant to change by our perception of Being, but also biologically!

Let’s change the Being for being so that the soul (or psyche) is seen not as a unit, but a multiplicity, hence becoming polyphonic, thus going hand in hand with Nietzsche, who told us that “We are who we are, those who have been and what we pretend to be” (*Nietzsche*, 2011). This paradigm shift allows for psychogenic coaching. It is the same new paradigm that accommodates the Freudian proposal in Western psychology. A paradigm in which we are the architects of our existence and allows for having different views because they can even be complementary. A view of the world in which it is worth thinking something and then thinking the opposite. In which one can let go of postures, let go of boundaries, let go of voices and opinions that are not mine. Or which are mine but were not mine, as they were inherited from others very dear to us. Releasing pain; releasing trauma. A world in which, as parents, we stop telling our children: “I’m going to tell you how things are” and we go on to say: “I don’t know how things are,

I’ll tell you how they were for me and I ask you to please tell me how they were or are for you”. Psychogenic coaching mainly communicates the need to facilitate transformation, understood as learning, in our clients and/or patients. Transformation which is understood as learning. The psychologist needs to stop being such a psychologist (from the metaphysical perspective), and start being more of a teacher, facilitator, mentor and trainer, and for this we need to declare a crisis within the current psychotherapeutic care approach.

Today we go to the psychologist when we have a mental difficulty. When some illness, discomfort, displeasure or pathology is presented to us, we go to the psychologist with hopes that they tell us what we have and we put ourselves at their disposal to act. This is the first consequence of a therapeutic system based on the conception of truth as the attainable ideal. We go to the psychologist because they know the truth and we completely forget that they are always giving us a diagnosis which, in its most basic definition, is nothing more than an interpretation. I am not saying that psychologists lie to us or don’t know, nor am I exhorting patients to stop attending their sessions. What I am questioning, is the need installed today to exercise therapy from the seat of truth, losing sight of the patient, his history, his pains and, finally, his difference. I judge that psychology today is practiced from the check list perspective. From doing a questionnaire, tests and parting from said data, determine the path of action and truth for the patient. Very few times we find psychologists who relate to the patient based on a genuine interest in their history, experiences and emotionality. Giving DSM a place of irrefutable truth, instead of a space for guidance and orientation. I propose the urgency of declaring in crisis many domains and systems which we are part thereof, and it is in these statements that the psychologist will find a wonderful space of mentorship to guide mankind; but this mentorship cannot be truth-based, it cannot be from the imposition of this or that knowledge. It must be done based on genuine contact with the

mystery and doubt proper of human beings, understanding this Being that is being transformed, thus I propose that we change the Being for being.

When we apply, say, design, create or do any act in the world, it is related to our own conception of existence, to what we believe is possible for human beings. In our actions, we reveal our own interpretation of Being. We conduct ourselves, live and move our lives from that perspective. "Each approach made by an observer speaks to us of the type of observer that that observer considers himself to be" (Echeverría, 1994). This assumption is important in the practice of psychogenic coaching because, in a generic way, it tells us that every act reveals and evidences the judgment we have about ourselves. Tell me how you act, and I will tell you who you are.

The three main assumptions of Language Ontology are:

i.- We interpret human beings as linguistic beings.

ii.-We interpret language as generative.

iii.-We interpret that human beings create themselves in and through language. (Echeverría p. 20)

This first hypothesis refers to the fact that it is language that makes human beings the particular type of being that we are, because it is the main vehicle for understanding human phenomena and the medium through which we reveal ourselves. Thus, language is one of three primary domains of the human being, the other two are emotion and corporeality and all three must be cohesive. The other domain is emotion, where the impulses and motivators reside, most of the time invisible, to our behavior. The emotion of rage, for example, possesses a coherence in the body (gestures) and in language (what is said). However, it raises the primacy of language over others because it proposes that we need language in order to make sense of emotional and/or bodily phenomena. We need to give importance not only to language, but also to the other two domains in the psychotherapy session. Coherence between domains is fundamental

for the psychologist in session. We can design a more comprehensive approach to our patients and/or clients. Many times, our training as psychologists is aimed at listening to what the patient tells us with his language, and we lose the richness that comes from listening to their emotion and corporeality.

The second hypothesis speaks of the power of language and we need that power for our session to be effective, because both epistemological lines we choose for the psychogenic coaching proposal are carried out conversationally. Moreover, Freud spoke of the "cure by the word" (Freud, 2005). To access this premise, we must distinguish that we have been giving passive value to language for centuries, as if it were only meant to account for or describe what exists on the outside, or to relate what happens within us. We receive this passive value from the traditional conception of language understood through the history of humanity and this also needs to be declared in crisis.

The third hypothesis is that human beings find in language a lever of transformation. This tells us that for centuries we've gone by with a perception of what we understand as "a way of being" linked to being inherited. We understand this way of being as something we were provided with before we were born, and we go around the world with it and from it. However, from this standpoint, language is an important tool for modifying their way of being. It has to do precisely with the proposal by Heraclitus that changes the Being for the being. Or per Nietzsche, this life would be a space in which we are the creature and the creator. And we agree with this premise because it is the premise that allows us to maintain that a psychogenic coaching session includes within its possibilities the transformation of the client.

In addition to these assumptions, there are some important elements to understand about the proposal of psychogenic coaching, such as the concept of observer. We will understand the observer overall as the way we have to make sense of existence. The observer refers to the particular way

in which each Being gives meaning to the world. This way, we will understand the observer as the way we have to make sense of existence. The observer refers to the particular way in which each Being gives meaning to the world. This way, we become different observers and a way of relating to the world. It is crucial for our proposal to note that when we refer to the observer, we are referring to two types of words. First to a noun because it is a word whose referent is an entity. In this case, the entity to which it refers is the observer himself, who inevitably refers to ourselves. We are either this or that type of observer. Or better still, we are being X or Y observer. Secondly, we refer to a verb, because we understand it as a form, a way, a particular way of making sense, and not as an action that lies in the human eye. The type of observer we are is determined by our capacity to listen. Listening is the fundamental competence of the psychogenic coach; if we could only learn one competence in life it would have to be this one. “Everyone says what they say, and the others listen to what they hear”. What I can hear from what another has said, will always be in a gap space. And that gap is determined precisely by our differences as observers.

We firmly agree that talking is acting. Every time I speak there is an action that falls into the world with that word, and so it becomes fundamental to ask what action I commit every time I speak. Each action is a different linguistic act. We find the most basic input within the statements of the work done by the psychogenic facilitator, the assessments, which are the main pathway to found a session of psychogenic coaching and we work with those assessments to access the observer. It is the analogy with symptoms, traits, and behaviors to access the personality. Assessments are a type of statement, therefore they construe or modify reality and are not assertions. The judgmental distinction of the ontology of language resembles prejudices the most; those predispositions that human beings have towards the world. The problem is that many times we go around with our prejudices as if they were affirmations. We are machines when issuing

judgments. They serve us because they qualify the world, they serve as a reference framework; they expand us or take away our possibilities; they allow us to decide what is or not possible; thanks to judgments we can project futures based on past experiences.

Some years ago, a patient in session arrived with the following judgment: “*my father has been and is a very bad father*”. As I listened to her story and the many examples she shared to base her judgment on her father, I said to myself: “*Wow, apparently he really is a bad father*”. Later in the investigation, it occurred to me that perhaps the coachee had such a comparative history that the more I asked her, the more I would reinforce her idea. Then I suggested that we stop talking and that she write down on a sheet of paper a list of concrete actions or facts which she relied on to say that about her father. She did the exercise and wrote about one and a half pages of statements among which were: “That the father did not arrive to her wedding”, that “he disappeared from her life between the ages of 3 and 12”, that “he did not greet her for her birthdays”, and so on. Then I asked her to try to make a list of concrete actions or facts on which we could base the opposite judgment, that is, that her father was a good father. She didn’t believe it was possible and started the task anxiously. To our surprise, once she finished her task, she had written two pages on which she could establish that her father was good. She started crying and says to me: “I’m crying from joy, I’m crying for hope, I believe that I have been living from a place that was not real, and of course I have related to him from that belief. What matters most to me is to change the way I am with my dad. In this example we can look at the close relationship between our judgments and our way of being or our identity. We are as we judge, and we judge as we are. Imagine the power of psychology if it distinguished this, and psychologists possessed within our techniques, the basis of the patient’s judgments. By changing our judgments, we change; and the depth of the change has to do with the depth of the judgement.

Psychogenic coaching proposes different types of judgments, among which I highlight incidental judgments, master judgments and psychogenic judgments. The first are those on which we base our daily operation, our actions and our functional relationships. An example is “It is easier for me to relate to women because I feel I am truly heard”. Master judgments are those on which we have founded our existence and are the basis of our existential dimension. An example is “Only women take care and accompany. Men always give up and leave”. Psychogenic judgments are those that condition our personality structure. An example in the same line is “I am not worthy to be cared for by anyone”.

Psychogenic Coaching Proposal

Psychogenic coaching is a profession committed to the expansion of personal, organizational and social potential, based on psychogenic learning within a psychodynamic, constructivist, and ontological perspective. The psychogenic coach would then serve as facilitator in transforming the way of being of a dynamic soul; a designer and an assessor of change. Psychogenic coaching is to facilitate transformations from the psyche and that can only be done by the psychologist because their training has to do with the study of this psyche. No other type of coach could have as much depth and ethics in the perception as a psychologist with coach skills, or a psychogenic coach.

Psychogenic coaching is distinguished as a professional methodology with certain traits:

- It develops a particular style of conversation in which the question is prioritized trying, from the reflection and ethics viewpoint, to evoke answers in the coachee.
- The process occurs with the full consent of the coachee.
- The autonomous election of the coachee takes precedence.
- We seek to empower or give power of action to the coachee from a psychogenic interpretation translated into psychogenic and/or generic abilities.
- It is based on commitment with the consequences and accomplishment of objectives.
- A decided personal and organizational development is generated through psychogenic learning.

Psychogenic Coaching Objectives

Facilitate a process of psychogenic learning that, from the commitment with the coachee, expands their capacity of action, generates a change of observer, construes a way of integration of functions in the personality structure and makes possible their personal transformation.

To exemplify this, we need to introduce our own model that serves as anchor of our discipline.

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