

INTERNATIONAL PROVERBS ABOUT HOPE



Friedhelm Röder

MD, DM, psychiatrist, psychotherapist,
Retired senior doctor of the Vogelsbergklinik,
Psychosomatic Rehabilitation Hospital
(Grebenhain, Germany)

Email: roeder@gmx.net

Received 05.04.2021

Accepted for publication 28.06.2021

Published 07.07.2021

Abstract

The base for every treatment is hope. To understand the concept of a patient about the future and to stimulate a process of widening the horizon proverbs about hope can be used. As a help for a therapist to use this tool a paper seized DIN A 4 was created which offers a collection of international proverbs. Some practical hints are given how to use the paper. Also, the paper can be used by the patient afterwards to transmute the role within the family from a source of trouble into a source of encouragement.

Keywords: hope, fantasy, proverb, transmutation, Positive Psychotherapy

Introduction

Due to their different developmental pattern, The emotional and motivational base for every treatment is hope [Peseschkian, Aziz 2009, p. 64]. Hoping is the combination of two abilities. On one side there is the abilities to remember well doing experiences in the past. On the other side there is the ability to imagine new well doing experiences in the future. The imagination might be similar as the previous ones or even totally different.

Treatment is a cooperation between a therapist and a patient for the benefit of the patient following rules which make sense to both, even if the basic ideas behind this vision may differ from each other. As first common step they must talk about their visions of hope. Doing this they start with the relaxing part of the complicated emotional situation, causing the wish or the need for treatment. Thus, the danger of a failing start of the first meeting is averted. Doing this the chances for a positive start of the meeting rise at once. And this positive experience encourages the

imaginations of further positive experiences with each other. The more desperate a patient is, the more important is to direct the attention on positive aspects of life. And talking about hope is a subject everybody understands at once. And hope is a subject each of the members of the patient's social system have an attitude to, which is mostly known by the patient. So, the therapist can ask the patient about their concept of hope. Thus, it is possible to understand the social position of the patient and to discover chances to change it.

Talking about hope is not only important at the beginning of a therapy, but also in every situation a crisis is raising or has already overwhelmed the patient with the unsolved problems. Then talking about hope is an important way to stabilize the slackened emotional status and identity. And as the treatment goes on, the concepts of hope sometimes change. Because of this it might be useful to return to the earlier attitude of hope and to compare it with the actual result of the latest development.

Hope is the ability to calculate with possibilities, which are not known in the presence. So, hope is closely

related with fantasy. To make talking about hope more sufficient the abilities of fantasy on side of the patient and of the therapist must be encouraged. For that purpose, the Positive and Transcultural Psychotherapy uses the technique of telling stories or proverbs. The* method of offering the patient a great variety of international proverbs about hope is an invitation to enlarge the horizon of fantasy [Peseschkian 1979, p. 7]. For this purpose I developed a DIN A 4-sized paper containing proverbs about hope from many places and cultures [Personal comments 2009-2013; Özcan, Seuß 2013; www.sprueche-liste.com; www.sprueche.woxikon.de; www.sprichworte-der-welt.de]. Some of the proverbs in this collection can be exchanged with a few from the cultural background of the patient which are familiar to him or her

Application

Handout with international proverbs about hope:

What kind of hope do you have when facing your problems?

“Actually, it is not difficult to reach the top of a mountain. You only have to walk slowly enough.”

“It is better to stumble while going new ways than to just run in place on the ways you know.”

But how do you find your way and your speed? Without hope, nothing will be possible.

But: Which hope guides to which aim? Therefore: Which kind of hope do you have?

International proverbs:

If hope didn't exist, I wouldn't be alive now. (Germany)

On one hand, I still hope, but on the other hand, I still doubt. (Germany)

Hope is something you don't have to buy. (Germany)

Is the way ahead of you in darkness? Remember: the curtain is only before your eyes, but not in your way. (Turkey)

No matter how much snow is falling, it will not remain until summer. (Turkey)

When God closes the silver door, he opens the golden one. (Turkey)

If you don't know how to go on, there are still four solutions left. (Bulgaria)

Hope is just a swimming vest, but not a lifeboat. (Poland)

Hope without strain is like a sea voyage without a ship. (Wales)

He who harnesses the hope before his cart, will drive twice as fast as before. (Poland)

Even the stake hopes that it will become green again when next spring returns. (Finland)

Hope is the anchor of the world. (Bantu)

The smaller the lizard, the bigger its hope to become a crocodile one day. (Abyssinia)

Hope and courage are two bright diamonds in the crown of success. (India)

If you lose a hope which was in vain, you will gain a lot. (Italy)

- Which proverb encourages you?
- What is the next step that this proverb encourages you to take?

Practical hints:

Print this handout and give it to the patient.

Ask the patient to read this handout aloud. It usually takes between two or three minutes to read it. This allows to check the measure of the patient's ability to read, which may give information about the intellectual status, and discover psychotic disorders of thinking. By listening to the patient's reading, it is possible to watch the patient's spontaneous reactions.

After the patient has read the handout, you may begin to talk with the patient about these proverbs.

At the end of this therapeutic session, you may encourage the patient to take the handout home, for him/herself and for presentation to the family. Thus, you help the patient to change his or her role at home. Very often a patient is defined by the family mainly as a cause for troubles and the family hopes that his visit to a psychiatrist or psychotherapist will bring release for him/herself and for them. If the patient presents them with this handout, the family members learn at once that they are included in the therapy and that they shall be encouraged also. The patient thus transmutes his or her role from a cause for troubles into a cause for hope and the patient can read the handout together with the family members and talk about their situation in a new and simple way. Their discussion can unbolt various blockades that have existed within and between them.

Conclusions

The base for every treatment is hope. To understand the concept of a patient about the future and to stimulate a process of widening the horizon proverbs about hope can be used.

As the therapy progresses, it is possible to return to this collection of proverbs and see whether the process of learning has caused the patient to change his or her favorite proverb.

As a help for a therapist to use this tool a paper sized DIN A 4 was created which offers a collection of international proverbs. Some practical hints are given how to use the paper. Also, the paper can be used by the patient afterwards to transmute the role within the family from a source of trouble into a source of encouragement.

References

- [1] **ÖZCAN, C., SEUSS, R.** (2013). *Türk Atasözleri – Türkische Sprichwörter. Auswahl und Übersetzung mit Zeichnungen von Ina Seeberg* [Türk Atasözleri - Turkish proverbs. Selection and translation with drawings by Ina Seeberg]. Deutscher Taschenbuch Verlag, München, 6.Auflage.
- [2] Personal comments from friends, colleagues and patients, 2009-2013.
- [3] **PESESCHKIAN, N.** (2016). *Oriental Stories as Techniques in Positive Psychotherapy*. Author House UK. ISBN 978-1524660871
- [4] **PESESCHKIAN, N., AZIZ, A.** (2009). *Lexikon der Positiven Psychotherapie* [Lexicon of Positive Psychotherapy]. Frankfurt/Main: Fischer Taschenbuch Verlag.
- [5] Sprichwörter aus aller Welt [Proverbs from around the world]. URL: www.sprichworte-der-welt.de [accessed: 04.04.21].