

Eating disorders and disordered eating: Underlying issues and a generic approach

Julia Buckroyd
Emeritus Professor of Counselling
University of Hertfordshire

Eating Disorders and Disordered Eating

- The problem about diagnosis (Waller, 2008)
- NICE guidelines for treatment (DoH 2004)
- A trans-modal approach (Buckroyd and Rother, 2007)

A generic approach to disordered eating: the relevance of attachment theory

- emotional vocabulary (Goleman, 1995)
- affect regulation
- identity and sense of self
- relationships

Emotional vocabulary

- the necessity of language (Oliver Sacks)
- reflection on experience
- knowing via sharing

Affect regulation

- Essential day to day
- The capacity to self-soothe (Schoore, 2003)
- And if not.....

Identity and sense of self

- Created in the crucible of relationship (Stern,1985)
- For good or ill
- Or not at all
- Essential to self esteem and self nurture

Relationships for affect management (Schoore, 2003)

- People need people
- But if they don't trust people.....(Gerhardt, 2004)

The task of the counsellor

- To create the facilitating environment and
- To teach cognitive strategies (Schore, 2003)

The facilitating environment

- The facilitating environment
- The plasticity of the right brain (Schore ,2003)
- The role of the counsellor

‘Well managed babies come to expect a world that is responsive to feelings and helps to bring intense states back to a comfortable level; through the experience of having it done for them, they learn how to do it for themselves’
(Gerhardt 2004)

What is the task of the counsellor?

1

- The remedial relationship
 - Active and interactive
 - Attuned
 - Accepting
 - Reflective
 - Modelling nurture

What is the task of the counsellor?

2

- The repair of deficit
 - Teaching skills
 - Encouraging exploration
 - Containing anxiety
 - Encouraging reporting

What is the task of the counsellor?

3

- Making the work relevant to the obsession/compulsion
 - Injuries to the self as trigger
 - Anxieties about the self as trigger

What is the task of the counsellor?

4

- Changing the internal dialogue
 - Restraining the parent
 - Taking care of the child
 - Developing the adult

What is the task of the counsellor?

5

- Keeping in mind both the problem and its meaning

Improving our response

- Short term counselling
- Finding the focus
- Improving outcomes
- Extending the ideas to addiction, obsession and compulsion
- Developing an integrative/pluralist/eclectic style