

## **A MODEL OF INTERVENTION IN THE DISORDERS OF YOUTH SOCIALIZATION**

*Decrease in the impulsiveness index and improvement of the relational management in the education of teenagers through the action of groupal psychotherapy with the use of body language methods.*

### **Introduction**

In spite of the efforts which are nowadays being carried out from the different institutions, concerning detection and treatment of violent behaviours, it seems that the results are scarcely effective. Maybe because these topics are being approached from low-coordinated views.

As Luis Bonino<sup>1</sup> raises in his article "Obstáculos a la comprensión y a las intervenciones sobre la violencia..." (Obstacles to the understanding and actions against violence...) an integral and transforming approach of such a serious and multiform social problem can not be faced – as complex problem – from traditional views or criteria, simple or naturalist as are those which are currently prevailing in the social speech about the matter.

The priority matter when we seek to intervene in jobs, studies or researches of violent behaviours is to eliminate obstacles to display said attitudes and that particularly the social operators who are in charge of the subject (in Law, Public Health and Education) were not seduced by them and could be recovered for an integral and critical approach to the problem.

The scientific literature offers us researchers, with several points of view, who try to point out which isolated or interacting predictor are exponents of antisocial behaviour. Such is the aim of the investigation Jorge Sobral and others<sup>2</sup>, from the University of Santiago are carrying out where the influence of family, school, groupal and socio-economic aspects about the antisocial and/or delictive behaviour of the youngsters of the sample is analyzed.

Further on the family environment, it has been shown interest on the context of the school socialization and the bridges from there which can be set towards an antisocial behaviour: school failure, low levels of self-esteem linked to self-perceptions the teenagers develop in that specific environment, the role of the classmates when giving the subject groups which operate as initiatic frameworks in the consumption of certain substances, etc. (Svobodny, 1982; Swaim, 1991).

Among the main reactionary problems cited which are appearing in the school centres are the behavioural problems. This phenomenon causes discomfort in the teachers collective, absenteeism in the students and crisis in the families; the behavioural problems create a high deterioration of the school coexistence.

In environments where the communicative processes are developed at different levels of responsibility and control, the conflicts of interests, misunderstandings and problems are usual. The conflicts offer the opportunity to grow up, but only if they are adequately

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<sup>1</sup> Bonino, L. 19. "Obstáculos a la comprensión y a las intervenciones sobre la violencia..."

<sup>2</sup> Sobral J., Romero E., Luengo A, y Marzoa J. 2004. Personalidad y conducta antisocial: amplificadores individuales de los efectos contextuales. Universidad de Santiago

solved. When these are not settled and this situation is repeated there appear problems of victimization and violence.

Violence, almost from the start drives to a scaling and as a consequence to a “process of relationship between the violent youth and the figures of his environment where rivalry prevails, with the negation of authority and a constant battle of hierarchy” (Ortega Bebiá, 2004).

This development provokes in most cases psychosocial backwardness, school failure and imbalances in the processes of building-up identity and self-esteem.

In research the risk of maladaptive behaviour is defined as “exposure to circumstances which increases the probability to show any deviant or problematic behaviour (Lemos, 1996)”. Among the elements which seem to protect young people from the risk factors are an attractive physical presence and powerful social skills. This risk behaviours which are shown in the school context are being configured through the interrelation of the different systems, on one hand pupil-family and on the other the educational system.

The intervention over problems of social maladjustment in general and the bullying particularly requires a global program, which is only possible from the contextual model of systems.

### **Description of the project**

This program is focused on teenagers who show a high level of impulsiveness and violent behaviours. The violent youths before any obstacle feel unable to control frustration and defer the satisfaction of desire, they do not respect the rights of the others, they usually lack empathy, they find hard to recognize the limits and can have the sense of justice distorted; all these elements exponents of sociopathic behaviours expressed in antisocial conducts.

The program shall try to diminish the impulsiveness levels, to develop and improve behavioural and cognitive skills by means of the use of groupal therapy with the use of body language methods and problem-solving training.

With the body language work I am trying to help the subjects to recognize their body in the space (self-image) and that – through the non-verbal communication – they could carry out “communicative learning” and familiarize with types of relationship which allow them to solve their conflicts via reflection and dialogue.

The basis of the body language is the technical knowledge of the body. This knowledge alludes to the organic movement as the physiological play of the muscle system, to introspection and psychosomatic sensitization. The study of the elements body-space-time configure the axes in this, and these are approached from two forms that are linked and complement themselves: a rational point of view, of awareness, and an emotional point of view, of experience.

Prior to the technical learning of the conscious movement, it is necessary to awaken to the internal body sensations and to the perception of external stimuli through the senses.

The sensitization work allows to find the relation between the physical and the emotional. By means of the plastic elements of the body language the behaviour could be transferred to the body language (phrasing, modulations, inflections, rythm,...) and

develop by a progressive and conscious job a higher emotional balance, improving the impulsiveness control and learn to hear.

The technique is centred on the awareness of the body, space and time.

The body awareness is progressive and the experiences are based on proprioceptive sensations of the body resting or in movement: muscle contraction, relaxation, body scheme (strength point, expressive area, balance area), breathing (abdominal, thoracic and clavicular).

The awareness of the space shall become a variable value according to its use and the experience one gets from it. We start from the sphere of the individual time taking as a reference three dimensions of movement: vertical (high-low), transverse (left-right) y sagittal (opposite-behind), to find step by step the possibilities of bidirectional movement and the incorporation of more people in the planes up to getting to a total space.

The awareness of time allows to familiarize with rhythm (inner/outer) and tempo. The concept of "tempo" alludes to the speed or slowness degree which it is demonstrated, within the time in its widest sense, a loud or movement sequence.

Any process of expressive work overlaps the three topics, the awareness of the body, the space and the time. In the process of learning it is gone through phases where at the beginning it is started from rationality, one is aware of the subject matter – with the respective technical explanations – and it is started to feel that there exists another dimension in the way to be perceived oneself and the others. In a second stage the body accepts what mind and imagination have provided and starts the body assimilation; in this condition creativity is prevailing. Lastly, mind and body have assimilated the relationship and integrate the behaviour.

The goals of the program are the following:

- ✓ To improve dysfunctions in youths caused by a shortage in socialization which leads to unadapted, defiant and confrontation behaviours (disruptive behaviours, manifest disobedience to the rules of coexistence, violent acts against persons or furniture).
  - To decrease behavioural alterations and impulsiveness using positive transference in the acceptance of boundaries for their improvement. Training in self-control.
- ✓ To decrease indexes of school failure caused by emotional disturbances: negative self-concept and maladjusted self-image lead to a deficit in relational management caused by high levels of stress and frequent alcohol and drugs consumption.
  - To improve the perception of the I and self-image, conceptualizing again the problems with a positive view. To manage strategies of emotional motivation and the assumption of higher responsibility levels in the subjects.
- ✓ To prepare descriptors for detection and handling of ill-treatment in school (of gender, among peers and because of belonging to risk families, problems of social or economic deprivation).

✓ To improve some of the anomalies in the communication concerning definition of limits among the school subsystems and the school system and other suprasystem elements, which allow to reduce school absenteeism.

- Practical and reflexive knowledge learning social rules and its boundaries.

The last motivation in this job is to create any significant contribution to the knowledge of programs to diminish school violence, improving in teenagers the control of their impulses, and providing communication strategies for their social adjustment.

## **Theory**

The objective of this Program is to investigate if the group psychotherapy work using methods of relaxation and body language helps to decrease indexes of impulsiveness (arousal activation), as well as to improve emotional control in teenagers typified as having a shortage in relational management.

It is hoped in teenagers of 14/16 who receive this treatment to acquire habits of listening and reflexivity to improve their impulsive behaviour and their tendency to deny the principle of authority, creating positive changes.

## **Design and variables**

- We shall choose three groups of subjects ("normal", control, experimental) with ages between 14/16, that is to say pupils of 3<sup>o</sup> degree of ESO (Compulsory Secondary Education).

The n<sup>o</sup> of each group shall be from 8 to 10 teenagers.

To be selected in the Program the subjects shall fill in some questionnaires about personality, family relationship and curriculum skills under the supervision of trained staff, and without the presence of their teachers nor other usual school authorities. The pupils shall voluntarily take part and shall receive strict guarantees of confidentiality and anonymity.

## **Training program in Life Skills**

The intervention can be divided in five components:

1. A cognitive component designed to show information regarding the short-term and long-term consequences of the violent behaviour, the current prevalence indexes and the process of the consequent emotional deterioration.
2. A decision-taking component design to boost the development of a critical thought and a responsible decision-taking.
3. An emotional control component designed to endow the young people of skills to face anxiety and anger.
4. A training in social skills component, through methods of body language, which include assertiveness techniques to resist effectively the direct pressures of the peers inclined to unadapted behaviours.
5. A project of self-improvement designed to make better personal skills to change certain behaviours. Introducing in their emotional scheme a higher resistance to frustration and promoting prosocial attitudes.

These five components fit the title of the sessions (from 20 to 30) which are the following:

- 1.- Self-image and self-improvement.
- 2.- Persuasion, independent thought and decision-taking.
- 3.- Emotional control and assertiveness.
- 4.- Regulation and conflict resolution.
- 5.- Social and communication skills.

The students shall be asked to divide each global self-improvement objective in a series of fortnightly sub-goals, then they can gradually mould their own behaviour and value their advances weekly.

The work dynamics have:

- Basic rules which shall be explicit in all the program sessions,
- Methods of work as the following: brainstorming, debate, role-playing or behavioural essay, case study, dramatizations, psychodrama, sociodrama,
- Methods of thought: PIN, neighbours, gossiping people, advisers, message of the heart, advice from editorial, consensus on aspects/qualities.

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