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Countertransference Problems in the Treatment of a Mixed Group of War Veterans and Female Partners of War Veterans

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Aim. Analysis of countertransference problems in the treatment of a heterogeneous group of war veterans.

Method. The method used in this work was psychodynamic clinical observation and analysis of countertransference phenomena in group therapy.

Results. In the beginning of our work, we faced with a regressive group, which was behaving as it was re-born. The leading subject in the group was aggression and the need for hospitalization to protect them and their environment from their violence. With the development of group processes, a feeling of helplessness and lack of perspective appeared, together with suicidal ideas, which, because of the development of group cohesion and trust, could be openly discussed. With time, the group became a transitional object for its members, an object that gave them a feeling of safety but also a feeling of dependence.

Conclusion. The role of the therapist is to support group members in becoming independent. The therapist's function is in controlling, containing, and analyzing of the destructive, regressive part and in encouraging the healthy parts of the patient. With the integration of good therapeutic process, the healthy parts of the patient gain control over his or her regressive parts.

Key words: Croatia; defense mechanisms; ethnic groups; identification (psychology); psychoanalytic therapy; psychology, clinical; psychotrauma; PTSD; war