



Application of Humanistic Approach in Family Counseling

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Abstract

In this study, the problems resulting from intra-family relations and other factors (psychological, social, emotional, economic, educational, personal, professional, managerial factors, parenting and being a spouse, etc.) were assessed from a humanistic perspective within the family counseling practice. The members of the family define and perceive the "family relational problems" within the network of relations (spouses relations with each other, with their children, and the children's relations with each other), which allows them to realize experientially how they are affected both as individuals and as a family. Intra-family problems are closely linked to the personality traits of spouses and their children, educational and cultural factors, their roles and status, the way in which they perceive and evaluate human relations, and the form of the family. During the family counseling practice, the sessions were spread over a long period of time, which allowed the family members to mature, to define the problems, to adopt new experiences and to transfer them to family life, to understand themselves, to become aware of the psychological, social and emotional desires, wishes and needs of other members, to adopt new constructive behaviors and to develop positive human relationships, thus allowing the creation of fundamental group dynamics. It has been observed that the humanistic approach can be applied in family counseling sessions and that the family develops by becoming aware of their personal and family problems, and gains understanding and empathy which leads to a happier and more peaceful life.

Keywords: humanistic approach, psychological counseling, family

1. Introduction

Family is a fundamental unit which may exhibit variations based on the social structure of the society (Erdur-Baker,2011;Nazlı,2001). Its basic functions are biological, social, psychological and economic. There are having children, satisfying economic needs, social status, children's and religious education, common life, protecting the members, care, love, respect and sexual life. The fundamental functions of a healthy family are sharing feelings, accepting individual differences, collaboration, sense of humor, meeting basic needs, problem solving, expressing positive emotions, healthy communication, shared time, and coping skills (Özgüven, 2000; Meydan,2013). Morina's group counseling studies in 1940s (group leadership skills, member interactions and the process of change) contributed significantly to marriage and family counseling models (Lebow,2013). The fundamental problems which influenced the development of family counseling (i.e. changes in the family structure, unemployment or professional problems, division of labor, childcare, economic inputs and outputs, disruption of the family unity, insufficient communication and problem-solving skills, being a single parent, drug and alcohol dependency, problems related to school, problems related to the guidance of the child, teenage depression and suicide, adult children leaving home problem, etc.). Psychological counseling theories focus on the individual or the group whereas family counseling regards the "family system" as a patient. The family, not an individual, takes part in the counseling process (Topsas, 2012; Akdoğan&Ceyhan,2011). They are similar to psychological counseling theories and they benefit from their techniques. However, this does not necessarily mean that family counseling theories are identical with psychological counseling theories. Carl Rogers adapted the individual patient-centered counseling to family counseling. Since patient centered approach focuses on the development of effective and sincere

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relationships, it is very suitable for family counseling. Rogers believes that if the counselor creates a suitable environment, the family members will trust each other more. Rogers enumerates the requisite conditions for a suitable environment as follows: sincerity, transparency, acceptance, positive regard, care, empathy, active listening. According to person centered family counseling, people develop emotional problems when they cannot communicate their feelings and thoughts about others (Sperenkle,2012). For these people are usually afraid of being punished. This fear develops in childhood when they were threatened. Here the counselor's role is to create favorable conditions. According to Rogers, the counselor educates the family members by being a model. Thus the family members develop their potentials (Sperenkle&Davis&Lebow,2009).

2. Application

Case: Couple Z had been married for 16 years. They had two children. However, their relationship was not sound since the beginning. The conflict between the mother-in-law and the bride was the main issue. In addition, there was incompatibility between the spouses and the husband had found a foreign lover, which caused the spouses to consider ending the marriage. The counseling ended after ten sessions.

2.1. First Session

This session lasted 3.5 hours. At the beginning, the counselor explained the basic principles of counseling and confidentiality. After the counsel was structured, she asked the husband and the wife tell their story. When the husband started to speak, the women started to cry and interrupted him frequently, emphasizing her righteousness. The counselor told her that she needed emotional catharsis. G. accepted this and showed the marks of the violence she was exposed. She stated that her husband was wrong, that she wanted him to be ashamed, that she was harassed by his family, that she suffered injustice, and that she was oppressed despite her efforts, crying all the time. When the counselor listened to her, her thoughts were disengaged and were related to the emotional dimension of the relationship. She was fixated on the details very much. She frequently talked about the attitudes towards her, negative talks, and her verbal and behavioral reactions in the past. These thoughts which have become an obsession drained G's energy throughout the years. She always emphasized that she was oppressed, and underlined her characteristics. C, on the other hand, stated that he was not satisfied with his marriage because she displayed similar attitudes all the time, and that his solution was to end the marriage. He said that this decision dated back many years ago, but he was able to put it into practice when he accidentally met another woman. Although both of them were aware of the events in their marriage, they continued to hurt each other emotionally and personally. Lack of communication was reinforced by G's impatience and inability to listen and insisting on voicing the injustice she suffered. Although C. acted rationally, he suffered emotional burnout and needed to feel strong again. As a result he found marital satisfaction and new low in a new relationship. The reason for this was the birth of their daughter D., who was 2 years old during the counseling. G. birthed D. although C did not want her. According to the mother, D ensured the continuity of the marriage, whereas according to the father she only postponed the divorce. However, the baby was not an important factor according to C, because even though the development process was affected adversely, there was nothing to do anymore. Despite the fact that their marriage had a history of 16 years, every incident, every person, conversation, behavior, action and reaction were remembered by each of them very vividly and told in minute details. In other words, each side responded to accusations of the other with their own perception of truth and accused the other spouse. With regards to families, both of them defended their families, but since C knew that his parents' characters would not change, he did not take his wife to see them and took certain precautions in this respect. However, he stated that he was not appreciated by his wife in this regard, that he was always humiliated by her because of his family, and that he was forced to defend his parents as a son even when his wife was right. One of the issues C emphasized was that the secrets of the family were known by all neighbors, that his wife continued to tell everything to her neighbors, as a result of which he was unable to protect her family. G, on the other hand, stated that she felt relieved by sharing her feelings with them because of the dissatisfaction she felt in her marriage. However, according to C, these were only ruminations and she did not make any effort to get rid of them. She was aware that she was an obsessive person. It was obvious from C's watching the counsel's reflections with squinted eyes that he was afraid that she would accuse him. C's trust in the counsel and the counseling process

reinforced as the principle of neutrality was put into practice. The counselor's unbiased, non-judgmental attitude relaxed both parties emotionally. They observed the lack of communication between them. They realized that the psychological problems which accumulated throughout the years created an emotional burden for both of them. They realized that his burden was a "Gordian knot". They started to discuss whether they wanted to remedy their marriage, and realized their true feelings towards each other. The counselor's questions and projections allowed them to think about their true decisions and aims, and helped them to face their true selves, as a result of which they started to reconsider their problems. The counselor gave homework assignments to them for the next session which would take place 3 days later. In this period, they would never express their thoughts and feelings about the past, previous behaviors, accusations, taunts, parents and their characters, and wrongdoings. In case one of them did so, he or she would control himself/herself and apologize. And the other person would not respond, and simply be patient. The father-son relationship, the son's reluctance to study, his inability to stick to a program, and the mother who was responsible for this problem was frequently expressed during this session; however, the counselor postponed the discussion of this problem, and stated that it would be addressed in another session. This homework was particularly intended to prevent G. from living in the past, and test her as to whether she would manage to live 3 days without expressing her obsessions. This session focused mainly on listening the parties. During the session, G cried as she talked about the past and experienced it again; C's efforts to find a rational solution failed. The session also focused on his emotional loneliness and search and the children's situation. The counselor intervened as conflicts arose between the parties. The session ended.

2.2. Second Session

This session was held on Saturday night one week later. It lasted three and a half hours. In this session the husband and the wife expressed the effects of the first session as follows: (1) Both of them felt peace and relaxation. (2) They gained awareness regarding themselves and the course of their marriage. (3) G realized that past painful experiences occupied her mind all the time, and that she wanted to get rid of them. (4) C stated that his reasonable solution suggestions aimed at saving their marriage started to attract the attention of his spouse through this counseling. (5) Both of them realized that a hope that their marriage could be saved emerged. The counselor asked them to tell what had happened since the first session and whether they had done their homework. G was impatient again, but she told the obsessive past experiences, this time without crying. C interrupted her, saying that they were supposed to tell what they thought then instead of talking about the future. At this point they had a discussion about telling the events caused by a misunderstanding. When G started to tell that their son did not have a healthy relationship with his father and accused the man of it, the counselor stated that the nature of the relationship between the father and the son would be addressed in other sessions, and added that they would work on their emotions regarding the current session. G started to talk about the injustice she suffered in the past by citing incidents, and told what she did with regards to them in detail. When the counselor projected the content of her talk and her feelings, G realized that the unfinished matters had transformed into an obsession for her and led her into a vicious cycle, continuing to affect her psychological health adversely until today. The counselor allowed G to experience a catharsis: she started to cry uncontrollably, and at the same time said that she blamed her husband and her family for the negative effects of her spouse's mother, her psychological breakdown, her completely worn out state, her anger caused by lack of marital satisfaction, her bitterness, her aggrieved status, her unfortunate life, as a result of which she became unable to build healthy relationships with other people. However, she continued to talk about past experiences in detail instead of answering the counselor's questions and asked questions to her spouse and wanted him to approve their truthfulness. When C said "Listen to the counselor, answer her questions", she gathered herself and wanted to answer the question. However, what she said was not the answer but another detail from the past. This was the expression of a detail which was like a missed line from a painful experience of the past. When the counselor said that she had heard this detail many times, she added new details and continued to tell the story hastily. The counselor decided to hold an individual session with G in which she would be able to talk about these painful past experiences in detail. She asked G. to talk to her as if the counselor was the mother of her spouse, who made her suffer very much, and to tell her show which punishments she would give to her. G stated that she would not punish her, and that she expected others to do that, and that as a result of her illnesses she was half handicapped, and that her punishment was given by God. When the counselor asked G what she was feeling now and whether she

was relieved, she said that “she was considerably relieved, that she cannot hurt her anymore, and she was inconcealably happy”. C stated that he was sorry because that was her mother, that people cannot change their characters, that he was able to accept them as they were, but that G failed to do the same, as a result of which they ended up that way. G defended herself and argued that she was right. When the counselor stated that C’s mother was handicapped and was unable to hurt anyone, G argued that she was still hurting others even in that state. When the counselor projected that G was stuck in the past, that this caused an emotional burden for both of them, that they were experiencing a state of burnout, they both realized the truth and stated that the past wore them out. G and C continuously mentioned the trust they had in the counselor and the sessions. They said that they did their homework for that reason. After the first session, they had a conflict on the third day. When their little daughter fell on her head during the dinner, they had a discussion as to who was closest to the child and who should have intervened at once. They told the details. After this conflict, they apologized from each other. When the counselor asked about this incident, they both said that they were satisfied, and that showing respect to each other made them happy. When G talked about the details of a past event, C got angry and became defensive. The third person was mentioned again. G asked the counselor: “Wouldn’t you do the same thing if you were me?” In order to help her understand that her intention was to gain the approval of the counselor and to support her position and to keep C in a guilty position, the counselor said “This is your life and we are working together here to improve a negative situation related to your marriage”. As a result, G realized the function of the counseling session and the counselor’s neutral position, which caused her to hesitate for a moment. At this point, C relaxed and smiled briefly. The counselor reminded these principles and stated that “searching for a crime or a culprit, judging, interpreting, punishing others, etc. were not a part of the psychological counseling sessions”. Both of them stated that they performed their roles and duties and endeavored not to make any mistakes since the first session, save for the said conflict, and that this helped them to realize the value of the psychological support and awareness in their commitment to and belief in their marriage. The counselor asked G to write down the negative incidents, events, attitudes, behaviors and emotions relating to the past until the next session. She also asked C to write down his feelings of anger, hate and violence. Both of them agreed to this task, and stated that they would apologize if they mistreated the other person. They maintained their union in the same environment just like the normal conditions. The counselor observed that employing the principles of being unbiased, non-judgmental, transparent, coherent, and the principles of unconditional acceptance, valuing and respecting the other, creating a democratic environment, empathetic understanding, and listening relaxed the couples and increased their trust in the counselor and the counseling process, and the family provided feedback in the same vein. In this session, D (their two-year-old baby) walked towards the counselor and fell on the floor and started to cry, at which point the counselor took her in her arms and soothed her, which affected the couple. Although C had decided to end the marriage and did not want the birth of a child under such circumstances, G gave birth to her, as a result of which C did not show sufficient affection to the baby. C wanted to prove that he was determined to end the marriage despite the baby in every situation. When he was unable to do this with words, he told, he expressed this feeling through the actions. He did not care about D since he was very angry with G. He was plagued with the state of being burnout in relation to his own problems, and he did not want any connections with the married he wanted to end. He accused G of this. G accused C of not performing his fatherhood duties whereas C said that she gave birth to D to guarantee the continuity of their marriage. The parties discussed whether D would be able to grow in a healthy manner within this environment of conflict. Towards the end of the session, the counselor observed that C exhibited love, care and compassion towards D as he held her in his arms. C, who started to sincerely experience his role as a father, told that he started to feel happy in part. G was very happy with this result. She became very emotional in relation to the continuity of their marriage and asked the counselor for help. When the third person was mentioned, the parties became angry again. The counselor said that it was not necessary to mention the third person at this stage, and that they would work on that matter in the coming sessions, as a result of which the “being accused – guilt – accusing” cycle was frozen. They started to take responsibility for the conflicts, discussions, and the behavioral models which they would apply.

2.3. Third session

At the personal session which was held one week later upon G’s request, C’s mother and brothers and their spouses were discussed. G told that C’s mother had psychological problems, and since C was the first son to get

married, their marriage was hurt most. However, she was not crying all the time as she did in the first two sessions. When the counselor told this to her, she expressed her positive feelings toward the counselor and the counseling sessions. She had become open to new experiences and realized that she wanted to let go of the past. She understood that this situation caused pain for her and made her unhappy at all times. Now she wanted a healthy family environment and be happy. During the 3-hour session, G talked about events which she could not tell in previous sessions in detail, and was relieved. She rid herself of the comparisons with other brother's spouses and from the injustice she suffered. She started to attach more importance to listening and understanding. Her apathy towards her environment seemed to disappear. The family session which took place one week later lasted three and a half hours. In this session, C stated that G did not comply with the decisions taken in the previous sessions and maintained her obsessions. He also stated that she did not do the homework assigned by the counselor. As a result, a discussion – defense occurred. The counselor suggested that first G and then C express their complaints. G was stuck in details and she digressed from the main issues and continued with her obsessions, as a result of which the counselor summarized them and reflected them on her. The unsolved problems which occupied G's mind are as follows: (1) Education of the child, (2) violence (here she said that she suffered physically, and that her pride was hurt, and that as a result she felt rage, hatred and cruelty. She stated that nothing can be solved by wife battering). (3) Talking about past experiences continuously (obsessions). G realized that these were obsessions but stated that she did not know how to avoid them. She said that she used these obsessions unconsciously in the face of C's reactions (like a record). She realized that she used them to make C angry, to punish him, and to defend herself when someone wanted to silence him. (4) Feeling of worthlessness. (5) Not being liked and inability to make C happy. G was not only unhappy; she also blamed herself for C's relationship with someone else. She asked herself why G did not prefer her, and questioned whether she had the features to make him happy, and eventually turned this into a problem.

2.4. Fourth Session

In this session, G and C complained about the failure of their son S at school. When they talked about S's study habits and his general situation at school, G and C expressed their differences regarding education. They discussed and realized that contradiction between the father's "disciplined" attitude and the mother's emotional approach which was more suitable to S's study habits had an important influence on S's failure. S, on the other hand, stated that he was beaten by his father since he failed to comply with his father's disciplinary rules, and that he hated studying. C stated that he was worried that his son would not have a profession in the future, and that since his own profession was based on discipline, his life philosophy was based on "discipline". When we went in to S's room, we saw that he had all the equipment that a student needed. The father had prepared a timetable on his own which laid down the daily study hours outside the school based on the lessons S took that semester, and asked S to comply with that program very strictly. When we analyzed the timetable, we saw that S was supposed to do a short repetition for every lesson he attended that day so as to answer the question "What have I learned about this course today". And then he was supposed to make necessary preparations for the lesson in the timetable and to study so that he would be prepared for the next day's lessons. C stated that he had told S that if S studied according to the timetable he would guarantee entering the university and that he could even enter the department he wanted, but that S did not understand its importance. C said that he proved his point by giving examples from his professional life. However, G said that S's psychological state was not suitable for that, and that S needed to rest and listen to music after returning home from school. C said that this was also included in the program and showed the parts of the timetable in which S could rest, listen to music or perform sports activities. He insisted that S only wanted to listen to music, watch TV, perform sports activities and hang out with his friends all day. When S stated that this program was not suitable for him, the counselor wanted him to prepare a timetable which would be suitable. Then S's timetable was compared to that of the father, and the differences between them were discussed. According to C, S's timetable was far from being serious because it did not serve to the child's objective, and it reduced the amount of studying to a minimum. He said that his timetable included three hours of sports activities, and that the empathy day of the week was dedicated to free activities entirely. According to S, that was a very strict program and was difficult to apply because it was hard to stick to it every single minute. When a lesson was missed, the following lesson would be affected adversely, as a result of which he would not have studied completely, which would lead to unrest in turn.

When his father's supervision was added to this, S felt fear. This mood affected his success at school and his behaviors. When the father's and mother's attention was drawn to this point, the mother emphasized that SA could be successful only according to his mood and personality, that his own timetable was suitable for him, and that he would designate his own success. The two different theses were analyzed during this session and it was decided that determining a study program exactly and laying down study skills was a major objective for S. The student complained that he was tired of the pressure of his parents, and that he lost the desire to study. He said that the books he was supposed to read (fables, stories, novels, classical and cultural books etc.) were selected by his father and that he was forced to read them. He said that he really liked and read some of them, but he added that he preferred that he was not forced to read them at all times. When S realized that he did not have any self-control, he mentioned some of his successful friends. When it was pointed out that being managed and controlled by the father was an externally controlled form of studying, the mother and S stated that S lost the desire to study. S stated that he was relieved because he expressed that he did not have a robot-like inner mechanism that allowed him to study like clockwork.

2.5. Fifth Session

In this session G and C put the fundamental subjects of dispute in order of priority upon the counselor's request. According to G, the subjects of dispute were as follows: not being emotional, violence, the psychological oppression of her mother-in-law in the past, feeling of worthlessness, disagreement concerning S's education, C's unwillingness towards little D, economic control. According to C, the list was as follows: lack of understanding and inability to grasp the details, disobedience, planlessness, adverse attitudes and lack of understanding towards his mother and his family, bringing up the past continuously, frequent self-criticism and self-accusation. According to G, the main disagreement concerned "the existence of another woman". However, this was not the case according to C, who stated that this was a result of G's jealousy. G started to prove her point about the third person by citing dates, places and subjects. C stated that this was not an important incident and explained the true nature of the matters G mentioned and wanted the approval of the counselor. The subject matter was frozen and the existence of such a situation was postponed to be analyzed later. The parties became aware of the reasons for the family issues and the marital discord, and the importance of the situation and the psychological health of the parents and the children were underlined. In this session, whenever G spoke, the course of the talk turned to the bad experiences her mother-in-law put her through in the past. C reacted to this every time. With the help of the counselor, G realized that this has become an obsession for her, but she stated that she could not help it. The counselor gave some homework assignments for G and C until the next session. G and C stated that they felt relieved by expressing themselves in this session, but they added that they did not understand each other and that they accused each other. Throughout the session, C jumped to his feet from time to time at tense or emotional moments and exhibited violent behavior models (yelling, gestures, insults, etc.). When this situation was reflected back to him, he told his reasons and stated that he did not have a self-control mechanism. He said that even though he explained himself and told what he wanted, these were not put into practice. G responded by saying that she experienced similar things and that she was not reciprocated either. As a result, some communication skills were practiced. A new dimension which included communication elements (e.g. verbal – nonverbal, form of address, behavior models, respect, love, etc.) was added to the homework.

2.6. Sixth Session

In this session matters related to the economic situation (needs, expenditures and other expenses) were analyzed. C stated that since he brought home the bacon, he had to be interested in economic issue closely G. stated that she did not splurge and enumerated the vital needs. At this point it became apparent that G and C had different views on vital needs. G's explanations revealed that her definition of vital needs was in sharp contrast with C's definition. In this session, whenever G denied an expense item, C produced a file and presented bills, invoices, etc. to prove his point. In this case, G became defensive and started to cry uncontrollably. The counselor's humanistic approach and counseling techniques facilitated the analysis of this situation. The couple agreed to reach an agreement regarding this matter among them. G brought up her mother-in-law's persecution in the past in this session again. She stated

that she was the reason for some of her behaviors which incited C to exhibit wrong and violent actions. When the counselor projected them that they were spending all of their time and energy for these “unfinished matters” and “obsessions” and that as a result they were unable to live their life and their marriage in a loving, peaceful and happy way, both of them accepted this view. However, C stated that because of G’s obsession, he felt wronged, that he was unable to experience marital satisfaction, and that he was forced to find an “exit”. He said that this exit would not be selfish because he thought about his children. As he stated in other session, he said that their little daughter was born because of G and that he considered the baby a drawback. The reason for this was that he was not able to end the marriage whenever he wanted, and that he was unable to start a new life, and that he was “sentenced” to live his life in a monotonous way (work-home-work) with this marriage. If little D was not born, he would have the chance to end the marriage since S was a young man now. When the third person was mentioned, C said that he met her online, that she was a foreigner, that she contributed to the development of his foreign language, and that he was seeking fun after a boring business environment. G on the other hand stated that she did not want to end the marriage, that she caught her husband chatting online from time to time and that C denied that, and that they even spent a summer holiday together. She gave the dates of this holiday and tried to prove it by showing some high amount bills, tickets, etc. In the face of this conflict, the counselor reminded the rules and the matters which were left for future sessions. During this conflict C complained that G talked about the inner-family discussions and the content of these sessions with the neighbors. He stated that the principles of confidentiality and the family dignity and matters which were discussed and agreed upon at the beginning of the session were “violated” and he accused G. G admitted that she did so before the sessions but added that she did not do that anymore. When the counselor projected this to G, she realized her attitude aimed at venting her anger by taking revenge, humiliating and discrediting him. When the counselor asked, C said that he did not want to “salute anyone” in and outside the building complex, in the elevator, or in the garden. He stated that it was impossible to explain himself to so many people, and that he could not give an explanation as to why he did what he did “out of the blue sky”. As the reason for this, he put forward G’s misunderstanding and “the revenge for his mother’s persecution”. He said that the wife of his superior in his workplace was aware of this situation and that this matter was “revealed”. He said that his superior could use this information to stop his promotion in the future, that he could force him to early retirement, as a result of which he could bring less money to home (pay cuts and quarterly salary), which in turn could affect the education of the children. G, on the other hand, said that she discussed their marital conflicts with her neighbors in order to have a brief chat with other women, to share her troubles with them and to blow off steam. She also said that she wanted to learn the opinions of her peers as to the course of action she should take, to gain their support, to benefit from their past experiences, and to tread in their footsteps. She said that she finally understood that being obsessed with the past, and living in the past did not benefit today, here and now, and that she would endeavor to overcome this attitude.

2.7. Seventh Session

In this session, the counselor stated that the homework assignments she assigned were not done. The couple blamed each other for this situation. The communication skills were stuck on both verbal and non-verbal messages. It was understood that the communication was forced, debated and stormy since the fifth session. It was concluded that such disputes became inevitable following the session because of the forms of address and behaviors caused by role conflicts (assigning work, controlling, calling the other to account, etc.). G told that she was “beaten” again. C did not deny this situation and gave reasons to prove that “he was forced to act that way”. In this session “communication skills” were practiced. First, they both understood that they had to accept that they were two separate individuals, and that they would not try to change each other, and instead they had to develop their ability to “adapt” to each other and their marriage. With the contribution of the counselor, they understood what “marital satisfaction” meant, and expressed that they wanted to experience such satisfaction. When the counselor asked again, it became clear that they (particularly C) did not intend to end the marriage. This conversation created a feeling of “safety” in G. On the other hand, C criticized himself and analyzed the negative developments in his behaviors starting from the past until present. Both of them became aware of the accusations they made towards each other concerning “marital dissatisfaction”. They also became aware of their “defensive” talks and attitudes towards each other during the sessions. In this session, the notion of “role conflict” was addressed. These roles were

classified according to the requests of the parties and were personalized. Forms of address, manners of speech, and tones of voice which caused conflicts were discussed. Some examples were acted out. A negative situation was taken and the spouses' attitudes towards it and their consequences were discussed. They "constructive and positive" behavioral patterns were discussed and they were applied to the same situation by changing the attitudes. As a result of the projections, the spouses stated that they understood each other's emotions and thoughts and the sources of their behaviors better. For example when G assumed her husband's role, she stated that she understood him better. Similarly, C stated that he understood G better. When G assumed to role of C in relation to a behavior which caused him to beat her, she repeated his thoughts and actions and felt the way C felt and acted the way he acted. This role play made G happy and she laughed loudly. When this situation was projected to her by the counselor, G stated that she became happy because she understood C better. They worked on one of the negative conversations between them. A conflict was handled and the manner of expression was discussed. This conversation was repeated. G and C were satisfied with this practice. C was more willing in relation to the expression of the feelings and was able to say "I love you" (N.B. - In Turkish this sentence employs "present continuous tense" unlike the "present tense" in the English sentence). G, however, delayed the expression of this statement. When this situation was reflected back to her, she said "she did not feel like saying it". She used a different sentence and employed "present tense" for it. She cited the beatings she suffered, her mother-in-law's oppression, feeling of worthlessness and the existence of the third person as reasons for her unwillingness. C accused G for not adapting to here and now. He stated that G's obsessions prevented them from having meaningful dialogues. With the contribution of the Counselor, G became aware of her obsessions once again and realized that they had turned into "habitual behaviors", that she used them as a "defense mechanism" against C's negative stimuli, and that her bursts of anger towards C was in fact aimed at hurting him. In this analysis, G understood that she satisfied her negative feelings by both venting her anger, which relieved her, and hurting C (by making him very angry). This behavioral pattern which usually made her happy did not do in this session. Instead, it made her sad. Then she stated that she understood the value of her marriage and C. G's gaining insight made C happy. But when he stated that he had this awareness which G only acquired now, G stated that this counseling environment increased her awareness, that it helped her gain insight, that she had not been in such an environment before, and that she discovered herself and the sources of her actions anew. When C insisted that his "consciousness", i.e. his awareness of his emotions and actions was continuous, G stated that this made her feel like a "characterless" person. When the counselor focused on "character", this notion was analyzed. Feelings of inadequacy, worthlessness were studied, and the counseling session was ended.

2.8. Eighth Session

In this session G assumed a defensive attitude towards the personality traits of her family members and her behaviors (particularly those towards C). C on the other hand talked about the negative impression this made on him. When a conflict arose, C started to explain the personality traits, emotions, behaviors, and desires and aims of his family (particularly those of his mother). When G said that "those are wrong and lies", C left the room. When the counselor summarized the situation and reminded the communication skills, G expressed her feelings about the past and started to cry. When G expressed the injustice and the pain she suffered, she felt relieved. She also stated that in the face of all the cruelty she suffered in the hands of her mother-in-law, she cursed (damned) her, as a result of which, she believed, she became paralyzed. She stated that this situation somewhat soothed her pain and anger. C, who knew this situation, resented her, and felt anger towards G. G had kept her intense feelings inside throughout the years, which caused her to develop obsessions, and told them in chronological order every time, as a result of which C called her a "broken record". C expressed the repulsion he felt whenever this broken record was played again and again during every discussion, and said that he wanted to leave the house to avoid hearing it, that he felt fatigued and unhappy, and that he did not want to experience these feelings with the third person, and that he wanted "peace" in summary. But since he put the children and intense work pressure before his feelings, he felt as if he was stuck in a trap. Emotional catharses were experienced during the counseling session. G faced her negative feelings and started to reinforce her positive feelings. She understood the effects of negative behavioral patterns. Activities aimed at extinguishing these negative attitudes and creating new behavioral patterns were performed. Communication skills were revisited again and "role playing" was practiced. As a result, G and C stated that they had come a long way in understanding their own and each other's feelings. They said that they would continue to work

in order to turn these behavioral models into “habits” outside the sessions. At the end of the session, it was observed that G was experiencing an emotional relief. C stated that his ill-temper surfaced as a result of adverse stimuli coming from G, and that he would endeavor not to use his habitual “reaction models” after this session. It was decided that they would stop holding these sessions for a time in order to allow them to apply what they have learned in their marriage and allow the family to reinforce this process.

2.9. Ninth Session

In this session, it was observed that the parties gained insight and developed empathic awareness concerning the redefinition of the marital relationship, and acceptance of the desires, needs, character traits and the problems of themselves and of each other.

2.10. Tenth session

In this session, a happy family portrait was created with the parent and the children. It was observed that they had adopted an approach prepared for problems which was solution-oriented, and that they were willing to act together towards the improvement of their lives and to maintain the marital relationship.

3. Discussion and Conclusion

Intra-family problems are closely linked to the personality traits of spouses and their children, educational and cultural factors, their roles and status, the way in which they perceive and evaluate human relations, and the form of the family. Due to the fact that internal dynamics continue to develop in a negative way within the family system, the problems become unsolvable within a vicious circle. Correcting or changing the errors within an established family order is directly proportional to the degree in which the spouses and the children are ready to a change (Sprenkle,2012). Being open to new experiences and benefiting from psychological counseling play an important role in the continuation of the process. During the family counseling practice, the sessions were spread over a long period of time, which allowed the family members to mature, to define the problems, to adopt new experiences and to transfer them to family life, to understand themselves, to become aware of the psychological, social and emotional desires, wishes and needs of other members, to adopt new constructive behaviors and to develop positive human relationships, thus allowing the creation of fundamental group dynamics. It has been observed that the humanistic approach can be applied in family counseling sessions and that the family develops by becoming aware of their personal and family problems, and gains understanding and empathy which leads to a happier and more peaceful life (Meydan,2013).

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