

Analysis of professional practice through the clinical approach as a tool for developing skills at Ostéobio

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SUMMARY/ABSTRACT

In France, the frame of reference with regard to activities and skills of the profession of osteopathy sets hard skills for the conduct in patient caretaking and management of a practice. The soft skills underlying these hard skills, such as emotional intelligence, self-confidence, empathy, etc., are increasingly being recognized, in the world of work, as essential to the development of the hard skills in the profession. These soft skills refer to a psychological dimension that we seek to work on at Ostéobio through the clinical approach initiated in the middle of the 20th century by Balint, and which has since been taken up by a field of training actors in the field of education and social.

To begin with, we will present the fundamentals and principles of this clinical approach to professional practice analyses, inspired by psychoanalysis. Among them are, accounts of circumstances, benevolent questioning of the group, and feedback to be shared with the group, "psychic devices" and developing a reflection on the professional self.

We will then invite the workshop group participants to critically examine experience feedback from participants of the previous years.

1 Osteopathic clinical practice training in France: the development of soft skills in parallel with the referenced hard skills

1.1 French regulatory context

Clinical practice training (CPT) in France has been regulated since 2014. It is based on a frame of reference of the so-called "hard" activities and skills, such as conducting interviews and patient relations, elaborating an osteopathic diagnosis and implementation of intervention strategies. These skills are drawn from knowledge and skills taught and assessed in each teaching unit. They are themselves evaluated and validated during CPT internships, whose number of hours is raised each year of the course to attain 720 hours in the 5th and final year.

It is only since 2014 that accreditation of a trainer in osteopathy in France, has been conditioned by the level of training or duration of practice: a university scholar holder of a Master's degree or equivalent or a holder of a title of Osteopath, in practice for at least 5 years. Professional training in osteopathy is therefore based on a master to student teaching.

1.2 Hard skills and soft skills

Intermediate formative evaluations of knowledge and know-how, in particular osteopathic gestures, organized at Ostéobio during each year of study are, in essence, intended to identify areas for improvement in which

students can make progress. It sometimes happens, however, that teachers complain of catastrophic results from these evaluations with assessments almost solely focused on the reporting of shortcomings.

For instance, I recently pointed out, in agreement with Braccini (Braccini 2020), in a dissertation written for the obtention of a Master's of Educational Sciences degree, the lack of professionalization of the trainer in osteopathy who was recruited solely for their experience as a practitioner, to the advantage of power stakes within osteopathic training institutions. Historically, training has been conducted on the basis of master to student transmission of knowledge, often done without any specific trainer qualification in human sciences.

Training frame of reference based on hard skills serves as a support for these power issues and compels osteopathic students to focus their work on "hard" knowledge and know-how, which they absolutely have to succeed in. However, unfortunately, observations in clinical practice are far from being dithyrambic in terms of the skills ultimately developed to handle the patient

Fortunately, the importance of analyzing and developing soft skills in-between the lines of hard skills is becoming increasingly recognized as being essential for professionalism, providing a source of optimism in this context, and a working axis for quality training.

Yet many, if not all, of these soft or human skills such as problem solving, stress management, emotional intelligence, empathy, confidence or, even motivation, refer to the psyche of the individual. Besides, widely dealt with in psychology journals, this development can only be based on the trainer's specific skills in this area.

2 The clinical approach and the psychoanalytic reference

2.1 A psychoanalytic approach for surprise of a new meaning of the professional

The clinical approach to professional situations experienced at the end of osteopathic studies consists in producing, verbal narratives stemming from both professional and personal "facets" of the self, in group work: it is marked by a stance encouraging paying attention to latent and manifest levels of speech and non-judgment and, is open to the surprise of the new meaning. This analysis plan allows participating professionals to describe a work situation that posed them a challenge, to respond to the group's requests for clarification, then to let themselves go to the psychic associations aroused by this work, in terms of emotions and thoughts.

This approach is not a master to student transmission of knowledge. It leaves room for the exceptional experience of practitioners confronted with the reality of different situations. It widens the field of action of the professional subject matter: in fact, the accounts worked on mobilize links, relationships to the body, to gender identity and to the treatment of vulnerability in the profession of osteopathy. The future professional is lead to say and then think more densely about their practice, with the help of others: their feelings and gestures are linked to a professional situation in which they are the privileged actors and which they elaborate by putting it to work.

This plan welcomes and represents professional practices and knowledge involved in these practices, in a different way: the professional narrative is worked out through the listening of a possible psychic unconsciousness. Here reference is made to a psychoanalytical orientation which considers a professional subject as divided, within them and in their links with others, in the group of practices analysis.

Whereas psychoanalysis is often oriented towards treatment, we have two hitherto unseen parameters in the clinical work plan, founded by M. Balint, from which we draw our inspiration: it lies in the research in training approach, and it intervenes on the professional psychic apparatus, area with which the person exercises a profession of the link to others, through their knowledge and their values.

Balint M. (1960) *Le médecin, son malade et la maladie*, Payot.

This type of work makes it possible to scrutinize both the knowledge received as well as that which is from the practitioner themselves.

From whence emerges their desire to train themselves in the osteopathy discipline, the bodily experience, the terms of relationships with patients and with part of oneself that is utilized, gender, age, bodily presence and finally the link with the patient, which are screened here through osteopathic training.

This work, in relation to a psychoanalytic orientation, takes place in a group: it refers to a unique experience, where a formulation is proposed by the free association of ideas and affects, to tell what comes in connection with the professional situation, opening the perspective of an elaboration of the practice.

We make the assumption that "what comes" must not be restricted. Questions from the hosts and then from the group show that we are listening to a divided professional subject. They bring about their silences just as they do their words and they are directed by the speakers as well as by the group.

It is necessary to reveal the links between thought and emotions, bring forth that part of one's experience as a practitioner, which is linked to unusual ways of feeling and thinking.

3. The PPA (Professional Practice Analysis) plan set up at Ostéobio:

3.1 Sessions Program

- The sessions are spaced one month apart to allow time for reflection, and are offered to a group of a maximum of 12 students:
- Each session lasts two hours.
- The number of sessions depends on the total number of students enrolled for the plan.

3.2 Session contents:

3.2.1 The account of the situation:

One or two student subjects present a situation encountered during clinical practical training which may have put them in a situation of difficulty and challenging. In general, this situation would have made it difficult to mobilize soft skills due to psychic phenomena that the PPA group work will help to analyze and understand.

3.2.2 Questions on the contextual framing:

The clinical situation is specified by a period of questions and answers on the rational context of the unfolding of events.

Associative phase between the presenter and the group:

The addressed situation is critically examined in substance by each participant wishing to do so. These participants thus bring about elements for analysis, from their own experience and through a reflexive approach, on what could have led to this feeling of difficulty.

3.2.3 Feedback.

From the second session, time is set aside, earlier, to offer feedback from those who discussed and analyzed a given situation during the previous session. They report to the group how their reflection has evolved since

then, how it has been utilized and has enabled to bring forth new reflections. These reflections may have helped to shed light on new situations, or may have led to new questions that will be analyzed in the group.

3.3 Framework.

3.3.1 Rules:

- Commit oneself to deliver
- No value judgment
- Commitment up to the end with respect for the group.
- Discretion: what is said in the group remains within the group

3.3.2 Framework specific to Ostéobio: Volunteering as a fundamental criterion.

The plan, has been presented to students entering their 5th and final year, for 2 years now.

Volunteers commit themselves to follow the plan to the end and in compliance with the defined framework.

Since work is carried out from a reflective approach on the unconscious processes existing within the profession, interpreted and analyzed by the group, it appears essential that students who do not wish to participate for personal reasons, be allowed not take part in it as it may turn out to be too difficult for them.

The work is carried out in a group dynamic and requires that anyone who engages oneself in an account, remain bound to the group.

4 Workshop proposal:

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During the workshop, the French regulatory context presented above, the outline of the clinical approach and its application in the plan set up parallel to the Ostéobio clinic will first be presented to the public.

We will then propose to present feedback from one of the participants from previous years, and to bring it to the reflection of the group of participants in the workshop.

Bernard Pechberty and Arnaud Crépin will host this workshop.