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Rahul Atul Bhope

Instrumentation and Control Engineering, National Institute of Technology

Tiruchirappalli, India,

dev.rahulatulbhope@gmail.com

Negative Therapeutic Reaction and prolonged Illness due to guilt

Abstract :

Study of Negative Therapeutic Reaction and hence prolonged illness due to guilt. A direct relation has been drawn between guilt and the desire for illness and hence citing an example which states the following. The moral factor being responsible for the guilt and the desire of suffering (Donald L. Carveth, 1918). The subject feels satisfaction in the sufferings. The theory of Karma is one of the factors which support this study. The therapy shows positive results as soon as the guilt is overcome, which at times is extremely difficult. The study shows how the subject expresses a negative therapeutic reaction due to her guilt and eventually her condition getting better when she overcomes her guilt.

Keywords – Guilt, Illness, Moral Factor, Negative Therapeutic Reaction, Overcoming guilt.

I. INTRODUCTION

It has been observed that there are certain people who behave in quite a peculiar fashion during the work of analysis. When one speaks hopefully to them or expresses satisfaction with the progress of the treatment, they show signs of discontent and their condition invariably worsens. One begins by regarding this as defiance and as an attempt to prove their superiority over the physician, but later one comes to take a deeper and equitable view one becomes convinced that not only such people can endure any praise or appreciation,

but they also react inversely to the progress of the treatment. Every partial solution that ought to result, and in other people does result, in an improvement or a temporary suspension of symptoms produces in them for the time being an exacerbation of their illness; they get worse during the treatment instead of getting better. They exhibit what is known as a negative therapeutic reaction . If we analyze what Freud says we can derive that the person's condition deteriorates during his treatment even if the physician treats another patient with the same symptoms and the reaction is positive. The person does not endure any praise or appreciation because his guilt constantly reminds him of the ills done by the person in the past and he feels disgruntled. If the praise or appreciation he receives is somehow related to the wrong deeds he/she has committed, then it adds to further disgruntlement. The person gets satisfaction in being ill and feels that he can overcome his guilt by his sufferings in the present. A direct relation between guilt and the desire for illness has been proposed here.

The direct relation can also be derived from the moral factor we have been endowed upon in the past. The direct relation can be the cause of guilt due to moral ills done by a person in the past. The person thinks that he can overcome his guilt by enduring the illness he is affected by. A direct reference can be taken from the theory of Karma which states that the spiritual principle of cause and effect where intent and actions of an individual (cause) influence the future of that individual (effect) and Good intent and good deed contribute to good karma and future happiness, while bad intent and bad deed contribute to bad karma and future suffering.

It has also been observed that whenever the moral ills of the person are revealed, or when the person overcomes the guilt (which is extremely challenging), he starts acting positively towards the therapeutic reaction by the physician. This result proves that it's the mind that plays the dominant role between the physical suffering and the mental pressure.

II. HYPOTHESIS

The researcher proposes: -

- i) The Negative therapeutic reaction due to guilt
- ii) Positive reaction to the therapeutic reaction on overcoming the guilt.

The first hypothesis deals with the Negative therapeutic reaction due to guilt, the guilt being a result of the moral factor and the theory of Karma.

The second hypothesis states the fact that the subject shows positive therapeutic reaction as he overcomes the guilt.

III. BACKGROUND

The subject here is a middle-aged woman who has been married since the past 10 years, she lives in a joint family along with her husband, her brother-in-law, his wife and their two children a boy and a girl, the boy being 5 years old and the girl being 2. The subject's husband approaches a psychologist to discuss the illness of his wife; the researcher here is the observer and draws conclusions about various facts. The symptoms include high fever, frequent fits where she iterates a call for help and prolonged insomnia. The subject had to be given sleep injections, saline drips and various other medicines. The researcher is a good friend of the psychiatrist and the doctor treating the subject. The subject lives in an orthodox Indian household in a village where the concepts of IVF (In vitro fertilization) and surrogacy are considered a taboo and are not even spoken about.

IV. THE STUDY

The researcher to study the case sits in the first sitting with the psychologist. The names of the subject and her family members have not been stated to conceal their identity. The subject's husband narrates her story; the subject couldn't conceive a child even after 10

years of marriage and hence used to remain very dejected. They consulted many doctors, priests and astrologers, but neither the Pundit's concoctions or the astrologer's predictions worked out. On the other hand, the subject's brother-in-law was blessed with 2 children, one boy and a girl and the subject frequently expressed her hatred for both openly in her house. On the contrary her husband used to love them like his own children. Although the subject did not have the good fortune of becoming a mother, her heart was full of maternal qualities. In her heart were present all the latent qualities of a mother's but they had not developed. Her heart was like the soil in which lay the seed but there was no one to water it. Her mind did get drawn toward those children yet when she stumbled upon the fact they were not her children, but somebody else's, in her heart aversion was felt, hatred was aroused, particularly when she saw her husband doting on children who were not his, her malice grew more. Then one fine evening during the months of January, the boy was watching multicolored kites flying in the air from the terrace of his house. The subject was also present there and was watching the children play. Hearing the cheerful laughter of the child all malice inside her was completely lost, she looked at him as her own child and patted his back and showered her love on him by hugging him tightly. Then the boy demanded kites to the subject in a childishly rude manner, which the subject took negatively in an impulsive manner, the boy further said that he would complain to his husband if she doesn't give them kites. The subject became disgruntled and all her malice rose again as she frowned. She cursed the boy and gave him a stern look. Frightened, the boy moved away from her and again longingly watched the flying kites in the sky.

Just then a kite was cut loose and descending from the sky towards the roof, drifted down to the terrace. There were four walls all around the roof. Where the subject was standing, there was the only door which led to and from the terrace. The subject stood blocking that door. The boy saw the kite fly to the terrace. He ran towards the terrace to catch

it. The subject stood watching. The boy ran past the subject almost brushing her and standing two feet away watched the kite. The kite having flown over the terrace fell in the courtyard of the house. Putting a foot on the boundary of the terrace the boy glanced in the courtyard below and seeing the kite fall there he was too overjoyed to contain himself. Swiftly he turned to go down but while turning his foot slipped. He fell, but as he was falling he managed to hold on to the parapet. He climbed on to that shouted for help.

The subject saw all this happen with a pounding heart. She wished to let the boy die and get rid of him forever. Thinking so she ignored him, and the boy began to lose his grip. Fearfully and beseechingly he looked at the subject and begged for help. As the subject's eyes met the boy's, the imploring looks on the boy's face made the subject restless with grief and perturbed, she extended her hand to hold the boy's hand. When her hand just about reached his, the parapet slipped out of his grip. He fell down. The subject let out a shriek and fainted on the terrace.

The boy was miraculously saved by the cot beneath, only his leg was dislocated and had to be set again. Gradually he regained his normal state within a few hours, whereas the subject was not showing any signs of improvement even after medication. Her condition worsened with every passing hour and she would frequently shout in her sleep "My son, I didn't save you. Yes, if I wanted I could have saved you, I delayed" and "Someone please save him". She had very high fever and had to be given a sleep injection. The next day, as soon as she woke up she saw the boy and his leg wrapped in a plaster sleeping in the veranda of her house. She began her usual shouting again and woke up everyone. She was uncontrollable this time and had to be pinned down to her bed. The next few days were smooth as a nurse was appointed to look after her. The subject was unconscious most of the time and the doctor consulted her husband to visit a psychiatrist.

The researcher having read something about guilt in Sigmund Freud's "The Ego and

the ID”, read more case studies about this, understood the case and assisted the psychiatrist. The guilt of not having saved the boy lead to the negative therapeutic reaction and it was so severe that the doctor had to consult a psychiatrist. This went about for 5 days. A day later the subject regained consciousness and met the boy, having seen him in his normal state the subject soon began acting normally and started showing positive results. After a few sittings with the psychiatrist and following her regularized medicine dose the subject recovered completely but started acting differently. When the researcher spoke to the subject and listened to her version of the story he found out that the subject thought that the child was dead, and she was solely responsible for it, the guilt in her mind was overcome when she saw him alive and healthy and started reacting positively towards the therapy. But now she no longer nursed any malice towards the boy and his sister and treated them as her own children.

V. CONCLUSION

The results of the study prove that illness due to guilt results in a negative therapeutic reaction. The subject finds satisfaction in the sufferings and this can also be correlated with the theory of Karma. The subject thinks that she had done something very wrong and hence to reduce her suffering in her next birth she tries to endure the sufferings due to her illness. She at first did not save the boy and this was something she did morally wrong and she collapsed on the terrace. When the subject came to know about the child’s wellbeing she could overcome her guilt that the child did not die.

A possible flaw might be that the researcher has considered only a few case studies and only one real-life study. The behavioral aspects of only one type of a person have been studied here; there are still many people in this cruel and evil world who do not feel guilty at all even after committing a humongous aggravated crime.

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