

Arousal also leads to associations and results in the activation of many new schemes, especially when attention is explicitly focused on the task of making sense of the aroused emotions. Thus it is the combination of arousing, regulating, symbolizing, and reflecting that carries forward the process of change

CASE EXAMPLE

The client begins therapy explaining her presenting problem:

"I've been feeling quite depressed, I think, most of my life, but this has been a particularly bad year and I lost a few people who were close to me and helped me in my personal life, and I just felt that even though I had crisis in the past with depression, I've always seemed to be able to bounce back, you know, and I'm having a hard time this year and . . ."

She says that her husband also suffers from depression and was hospitalized against his will following police involvement earlier in the year. At that time her sister called the police because his behavior was unpredictable and he appeared violent. As a result of the police intervention her husband was hospitalized and prohibited from living in the home for a number of months:

"Yes, it was very upsetting because he became violent—not so much toward me, but he would break things and smash things and his personality changed completely, because he's not that type of a person—very gentle, kind person—so that happened and I found my family very nonsupportive, and I guess that's—and because they're not like that, so basically their attitude was well get a divorce, get rid of him."

She, however, had decided to stand by her husband and support him through his difficult time, and thereby became alienated from her family. She reports her current relationship with her husband to be draining at times but solid nonetheless:

C: I'm fine with him. I find it draining because I'm not feeling good, but I go out of my way to try to—when he's having a bad day—to make him feel better and I find that he just doesn't have what it takes at this point to give it back.

T: To give it back, so sometimes you sort of maybe feel there's nothing left.

C: Right, but I'm not angry at him about that. I think I'm more angry at my family.

Historically, her family situation left the family in their midst, a very important part of her family and her role, getting much of the affective support from her parents. In her current view of her sisters:

C: Most of my depression I think is because I don't feel close to my family. I was married very young, they all were very close to me. I'm sort of like the nomad in the family. I'm 36. I moved around a lot and I don't know you know it's just not the same as I had.

T: But you felt outside.

C: Yes, they ostracized me.

T: So it's not only feeling ostracized?

C: Yes, yes, my older sister didn't like me. My other sister and I used to be very close, but anymore and I don't understand it. I don't understand of being around a depressed person.

T: And you're saying it was hard for them to have you? They were saying, yes, yes.

C: Settled down.

T: And you felt kind of dumped? It was very bad—

C: Depressed. Sometimes I feel like I'm alone.

From the exploration of her family situation throughout her childhood and adolescence, she sees herself as alone and unsupported by her parents and often judges her family as physically and emotionally abusive and abandoned.

In terms of her emotional state, the client is able to focus on her feelings. In the therapist's empathic response, however, she tends to avoid (as in the case of her sisters). In fact, there appears to be a pattern where she moves into states of helpless, hopeless, and many emotions of sadness or