Reading for Recovery:
Person-centered bibliotherapy

LIS: Reader-centered approach

- reading as a creative & developmental activity
- literature of all kinds as a life-support system
- library as a safe, supportive, common place
- people can meet and talk to each other
- share personal life-experience
- reach personalized information

Encounter

Personal Growth

Expression Sharing

Support Empowerment

Empathy Acceptance

Understanding Insight

PSY: Person-centered approach

- therapist/counselor/facilitator and client as partners
- clients’ encouragement to focus on their current, appropriate understanding of themselves
- emphasis on the person’s current perception and how she/he lives in the here-and-now
- client’s capacity for self-healing and personal growth leading towards self-actualization
- deep interpersonal encounters fostering empathy, acceptance, positive self-concept, self-confidence

Implementation

The postgraduate bibliotherapy education program of the University of Pécs (Hungary) follows the “person-centered” model applied in expressive arts therapies, combining it with the reader-centered approach of the British RAYS model for creative bibliotherapy.

Definition of bibliotherapy and the experience of therapeutic reading and writing from the viewpoint of the creative/expressive and group process phenomena (see Laura J. Cohen, Irvin D. Yalom, Natalie Rogers, James W. Pennebaker).

THE AIM

of the two-year-long (395 hours) continuing professional training program in bibliotherapy is to offer advanced knowledge and skills in the fields of biblio-/poetry therapy, creative writing, and reading for wellbeing.

ON COMPLETION

of the qualification the trainees will be able to plan and facilitate the interactive use of imaginative literature, non-fiction materials and creative writing, promoting personal growth for people from various age groups in different social contexts, living with or without mental health problems.

INTENSIVE INSTRUCTION

in major disciplinary fields necessary for bibliotherapist practitioners working in developmental or clinical context e.g., basics of psychotherapy and mental health, group dynamics, selection and interactive use of materials, bibliotherapy for special target groups, and supervision.

100 hours of peer experience is an essential part of training, and sets the “Pécs School” apart from others in this field. Bibliotherapy workshops and field visits offered as further opportunities for exploring group processes and facilitation techniques.

AVAILABLE FOR

BA or MA degree holders in arts and humanities, teacher training, mental health care, medical sciences, business & economy, law, pastoration.

APPLICATION

in bibliotherapy groups offered in public libraries, schools, hospitals, community settings, care homes, shelter houses, prisons, and in support groups for women, parents, bereavement, substance abuse etc.

Judit Béres, PhD
Department of Library & Information Science, Faculty of Cultural Sciences, Education & Regional Development
University of Pécs, Hungary