

Tatjana Sivik

PSYCHOSOMATOLOGY AS A THEORETICAL PARADIGM OF MODERN PSYCHOSOMATIC MEDICINE

Abstract

Science became increasingly “local” and concerned with reductionistic particularities during the century preceding the milleniumshift. However, as a result of more recent scientific developments, a paradigm shift has been noticed in most sciences including medicine and the emphasis is placed upon systemic approaches, holism and nonseparability

Holism studies the behavior of a complex system by treating it as a whole, and not merely analyzing the structure and behavior of its component parts.

Recent rapid development in neuroscience also put forth the notion of holism and non-separability.

Psychosomatic medicine must also acknowledge the inherent nonseparability of the human organism, and apply this to psychosomatic theory.

The thesis of psychosomatology is considered the theoretical foundation of psychosomatic medicine. One might say that psychosomatic medicine is the practical application of psychosomatology.

Psychosomatology is the integrative study of the relationship between all the communication and memory systems of the human organism. A balanced interaction between the different memory and communication systems of the human organism is necessary for the preservation of health, and disturbances in this communication underlies the developments of disease.

There is continuous ongoing exchange of information between and within each of these systems, and all memory and communication systems of the human organism are always activated at all times “...the body is a swarm...” (Hoffmeyer).

In every single cell of every human organism, the sum total of the whole life experience of every living organism since the beginning of time is preserved.

The genetic code of the human body can be likened to an enormous library where all the accumulated life information is collected.

Peptides and electromagnetic impulses can be seen as the bio-chemical alphabet that is the foundation for the relatively simple language used within a system.

Each system is also part of an interactive, interconnected communication system.

However, it is not until the bio-chemical alphabet builds a sentence with meaning, and the sentences become part of a context, that they also become

expressions of the human being and all her functions. The "pure" biochemistry behind each condition or occurrence is meaningless if it is not perceived and interpreted in a meaningful way by the individual (organism) within which it occurs. The bio-psychological language can be disrupted and misinterpreted for various reasons and on different levels.

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Curriculum vitae

Education

In Croatia:

- BA in Literature and Philosophy, University of Zagreb, 1968

In Sweden:

- BA in Sociology and Psychology, 1974
- MS in Psychology 1978
- MA in Psychology 1979
- Psychotherapy license (psychoanalytical training) 1980
- University teacher and supervisor in Psychology and Psychotherapy, from 1981
- Medical School Examination 1989 (Internal Medicine)
- MD, Ph.D. (Department of General Internal Medicine, University of Göteborg), 1992
- Ass. Prof. General Medicine, 1995
- Prof. Psychosomatic Medicine

Jobs (selection)

- Yugoslavian consulate in Göteborg, with responsibility for social issues, 1968-71
- 1974-80 psychologist, psychotherapist and supervisor at a Mental Hospital, Uddevalla, Sweden
- 1980-89 (parallel with Medical School) University teacher in psychology and psychotherapy, and supervisor at Mental Hospitals.
- Research in Psychosomatic Medicine from 1984.
- From 1989 lecturer in Psychosomatic Medicine at the Medical School at the Universities of Göteborg and Stockholm

Current works

..that primarily involve research and treatment:

- Director of Institute of Psychosomatic Medicine, Göteborg
- Head (and founder) of the "Research Institute of Psychosomatic Medicine" (financed by research councils, insurance companies etc.)
- "Coordinator" of psychosomatic-medical research within EU, with co-researchers from Germany, Belgium, Italy, Turkey, Sweden and Norway
- Associated researcher at the dept. of Clinical Bacteriology, University of Upsala
- Associated researcher at the dept. of Orthopedics, University of Göteborg

.. ..that primarily involve teaching and supervision:

- External Lecturer and examiner in Medical Schools (work medicine, psychiatry, general medicine and rehabilitation medicine), as well as in other relevant university departments.
- Extensive lecturing for national and private insurance companies, hospital personnel etc.

Miscellaneous

- Founder and first chairman of The Swedish Association of Psychosomatic Medicine
- President of Baltic Society of Psychosomatic Medicine (Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Russia, Poland, and Norway).
- President Elect and member of the board of ICPM (International College of Psychosomatic Medicine) (President from 2001)
- President of the upcoming 16th ICPM Congress on Psychosomatic Medicine 2001 in Gothenburg.
- Active member of the following associations: Pavlovian Society, SASP (Scand. Ass. for the Study of Pain), IASP (International Ass. for the Study of Pain), American Psychosomatic Society, Swedish Association of Neuroscience
- Chairman of the organization committee of Ciba-Geigy-conference on pain, Göteborg, 1991
- Chairman of the organization committee of National conference of Psychosomatic Medicine, Ronneby, 1993
- Chairman of the organization committee of 2nd Baltic Sea Conference on Psychosomatic Medicine and Public health, Ronneby 1994
- Member of the organization committee of several international congresses (Jerusalem 1995; Gent 1995; New York 1993; Riga 1996; Cairns 1997)
- Member of the editorial board of Journal Advances

