**Therapist's gender at the first session of family therapy and couple therapy.**

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In psychotherapy, there are some factors that play significant role in the preliminary establishing of a relation during the first session. These include institutional context, appearance related to the socioeconomically status, gender and others. Significance of therapists' gender is particularly important in family therapy and couple therapy where their cultural and personal beliefs are directly triggered and which impact their perception of gender roles in family and couples.

The aim of the present research was to establish if and how therapist's gender impacts the first session of family therapy and couple therapy. Another research question focused on how a therapist defines the basic gender roles of woman, man, mother, father, daughter, son, spouse. The presentation will show one example of family therapy and one example of couple therapy presented from the perspective of a dialogue at a therapeutic session. The examples will be accompanied by a description of the sessions prepared by the therapists using the Interpersonal Process Recall method. Both the session and the interview transcripts were subsequently subjected to content analysis and conversational analysis.

The presentation will show the results of the analysis demonstrating the influence of the therapists gender on: the manner of conducting a conversation with a: woman, man, mother, father, child expressed by: providing particular conversation members space during the session, specific intervention types, the impact of the beliefs related to gender on therapeutic interventions. The research also accounts for the emotional reactions of the therapist connected with particular engagement in relations resulting from gender, as well as sharing some specific beliefs associated with gender roles. The analysis also considered the mutual interaction between the personal self connected with the therapist's gender and their professional self.

**Gender in psychotherapy in the Polish cultural context**

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The meaning of gender in psychotherapy has been the subject of worldwide research since the 70s. The research projects have covered a number of issues such as how gender impacts a therapeutic alliance, topics covered during therapy, and the effectiveness of therapy. In Poland, for various reasons, gender problems have been generally avoided for decades. Strong position of the Catholic Church that is very actively present in the everyday social and political life being one of those. This special context hindered any discussion on problems such as domestic violence, sexual harassment, and other gender-related issues. Any critical debate on such matters seemed to be considered a threat to traditional family values embedded in the Catholic religion.

Polish political, social, and cultural transformation of 1989 and incorporation of Poland into the European Union structures have created new space for discussion on phenomena that were previously marginalized. Since the mid-90s, Polish universities have been offering gender studies, have conducted gender-related research and organized seminars. Although gender analyses developed in numerous academic disciplines such as sociology, philosophy, anthropology of culture, literature, they have not penetrated into psychiatry and psychotherapy in the same degree. Reasons for this phenomenon are very complex. They seem to be related, among other things, to the saturation of psychotherapy with medical discourse. Medical discourse causes sociological and cultural perspective to be in a tension against the biological perspective. This is particularly visible while examining gender-related issues. Additionally, gender problems are usually associated with a feministic perspective, which for the general audience in our country causes ambivalence, prejudice or an open hostility. The language used in gender studies with its changes in the understanding of concepts, certain profoundness and some radicalism in the depiction of gender-related issues does not help the situation. In consequence, gender analyses are subject of psychotherapists' consideration and their research and studies only in a limited degree.

The aim of the presentation is to discuss the results of a survey conducted among Polish psychotherapists and family therapists. The survey was intended to establish to what degree gender-related elements are subjects of their consideration both in their therapeutic and supervisory roles. Survey questions were aimed to examine how matters related to one's own gender and gender-related roles influence therapy process and to what degree this influence is identified. The analysis incorporated the impact of therapist's age, sex, job seniority, used therapeutic approach as well as practiced forms of therapy. One of the important questions concerned gender-related family assumptions identified by the psychotherapist.