EXISTENTIAL THERAPY IN SOCIAL

Sosyal Hizmette Varoluşçu Terapi

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ABSTRACT

Social work is a profession and science that aims to increase community welfare in micro, mezzo and macro dimensions, to protect and respect human rights, to ensure social justice and social development. Making people's lives better, protecting and supporting them, promoting social justice and finding solutions to social problems are among the main goals of social work. Social workers use various intervention approaches to achieve these goals. One of these approaches is existential therapy. Existential therapy is a psychotherapy approach that aims to discover the meaning, purpose and essence of life. This approach, which combines existential philosophical thought and psychotherapy, aims to question the individual's inner world, values, beliefs and experiences. Humanity has been in search of the meaning of life and existential questioning for most of its life. In some cases, this process can create new problems. However, the individual can gain functionality by finding solutions to problems and gaining meaning in life. This article, which is based on a literature review, will try to explain the historical process, leading names, basic assumptions and aims of existential therapy. It will be tried to explain how the social work approach can be in the perspective of existential therapy and its application example through a fictional case.

Keywords: Social work, social worker, social investigation report, existentialism, existential therapy

ÖZET

Sosyal hizmet, mikro, mezzo ve makro boyutta toplum refahını artırmayı, insan haklarını korumayı ve bu haklara saygı gösterilmesini, toplumsal adaletin sağlanmasını ve toplumsal gelişmeyi amaçlayan bir meslek ve bilim dalıdır. İnsanların yaşamlarını daha iyi hale getirmek, onları korumak ve desteklemek, toplumsal adaleti teşvik etmek ve toplumsal sorunlara çözüm bulmak sosyal hizmetin temel amaçlarındandır. Sosyal hizmet uzmanları, bu amaçların gerçekleştirilebilmesi için çeşitli müdahale yaklaşımları kullanırlar. Bu yaklaşımlardan biri de varoluşçu terapidir. Varoluşçu terapi, yaşamın anlamını, amacını ve özünü keşfetmeyi amaçlayan bir psikoterapi yaklaşımıdır. Varoluşsal felsefi düşünce ve psikoterapiyi birleştiren bu yaklaşımda bireyin içsel dünyasını, değerlerini, inançlarını ve deneyimlerini sorgulaması hedeflenir. İnsanlık, yaşamının büyük bir kısmında hayatın anlamının arayışı ve varoluşsal sorgulamalar içerisinde olmuştur. Bu süreç bazı durumlarda yeni sorunlar ortaya çıkarabilmektedir. Ancak sorunların çözümünün bulunması ve yaşamın anlam kazanması ile birey de işlevselliğini kazanabilmektedir. Literatür taraması yöntemiyle hazırlanan bu makalede varoluşçu terapinin tarihsel süreci, önde gelen isimleri, temel varsayımları ve amaçları anlatılmaya çalışılacaktır. Varoluşçu terapi perspektifinde sosyal hizmet yaklaşımının nasıl olabileceği ve uygulama örneği kurgu bir vaka üzerinden açıklanmaya çalışılacaktır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Sosyal hizmet, sosyal hizmet uzmanı, sosyal inceleme raporu, varoluşçuluk, varoluşçu terapi

INTRODUCTION

Many definitions of social work have been changed over the years. These definitions have changed according to different situations experienced and accepted. Social work, which is a systematic way for individuals and groups to adapt to society in a healthy way, is based on profession-specific knowledge, skills and fixed principles as in other professions (Truell, 2014). According to the joint definition of the International Federation of Social Workers (IFSW) and the International Association of Schools of Social Work (IASSW), the definition of social work is as follows:

> *"Social work is a practice-based profession and academic discipline that promotes social change and development, social cohesion, empowerment and liberation of people. The principles of social justice, human rights, collective responsibility and respect for diversity are central to social work. Underpinned by social work theories, social sciences, humanities and local knowledge, social work brings people and structures together to address life's challenges and promote well-being. The above definition can be expanded at national and/or regional levels." (International Federation of Social Workers, 2014)".*

Human beings have been social beings helping each other even in the earliest times of history. The range and effectiveness of this assistance has changed over time. The first application examples in the history of social work were mostly based on volunteerism. Later, with increasing and changing needs, it became a profession by establishing its boundaries and principles (Danış & Büber, 2018). With the acceptance of social work as a profession, scientific acceptance stages have been passed. There are many approaches and theories used in social work practices. This article will focus on the existential approach and try to explain the history, scope, application forms and theory of the approach through a case example.

HISTORY OF THE EXISTENTIAL APPROACH

The search for existence dates back to the beginning of human history. Humanity, which has been engaged in existential research in every period of the past, has created philosophical thought currents by conducting deep research on the purposes and reasons for existence. While many people realize that existence is a special situation in itself and that they can actually live a better, more functional and more productive life by realizing the characteristics they have, they can drift into a void with the lack of this awareness (Çelik, 2017).

Existentialism historically dates from the late 19th to the mid-20th century and includes many important figures and philosophical developments.

The Danish philosopher Kierkegaard was one of the early pioneers of existentialism in the early 19th century. He worked on the concepts of individual faith, freedom and the search for meaning. Kierkegaard, considered one of the pioneering thinkers of existentialism, has been one of the influential

names in philosophy and theology. Kierkegaard emphasized the belief and freedom of the individual. In his studies, he argued that an individual's beliefs and decisions are closely related to personal experiences (Cauly, 2006).

Towards the end of the 19th century, the German philosopher Nietzsche, who laid the foundations of existentialism, contributed to the development of existentialist thought with concepts such as "The Death of God" and "Superior Morality". According to him, people are no longer bound to each other by absolute moral values or meanings. Nietzsche's ideas have had a significant impact on the reshaping of will, power and values (Corey, 2008).

Sartre is one of the most important figures of existentialist philosophy. He emphasized concepts such as freedom, choice and the importance of responsibility. His thoughts are mostly shaped around the principle of "Being precedes essence". Sartre emphasized human freedom and responsibility. According to his ideas, human beings have no essence or predetermined destiny; each individual creates their own existence and values. Sartre's most famous work "Being and Nothingness" is considered one of the fundamental texts of existentialism (Eliason, Samide, Williams, & Lepore, 2010).

Albert Camus is also one of the important representatives of existentialism. He focused on the meaninglessness of existence and how humans cope with this meaninglessness. Camus's novel "The Stranger" deals with the main themes of existentialism and, at the same time, his novel "The Plague" shows how people are in a search to cope with an existential crisis. In his works, Camus tried to explain the meaninglessness of this world and the loneliness of man in this world. French writer Camus worked on the concept of "meaninglessness" of existentialism. In his works such as "The Stranger" and "The Discourse of Sisyphus", he explored the relationship between existentialism and meaninglessness (Beyazyüz, 2020).

Martin Heidegger contributed to existential analysis by discussing the basic concepts of existentialism in his work "Being and Time". Heidegger's grounding in phenomenology contributed greatly to the development of existentialism. In his work "Being and Time", he analyzed the meaning of being and the human experience of existence. Heidegger also addressed what meaning humans contribute to the world and how this meaning entails existential responsibility (Eliason, Samide, Williams, & Lepore, 2010).

Viktor Frankl, an Austrian neurologist and psychiatrist, is best known for his book Man's Search for Meaning. Based on his experiences in Nazi concentration camps during the Holocaust, Frankl examined the human search for meaning and the human capacity to cope with pain and hardship. Frankl, who developed the psychotherapy approach known as logotherapy, argued that the human search for meaning is a fundamental element of life (Frankl, 2020).

Rollo May was an American psychologist and a figure who made important contributions to existentialism. May wrote on existential issues such as human freedom, liberty and responsibility. He also

argued in his book "The Courage to Create" that creativity is a central element of existence. In the field of psychotherapy, he developed existential therapy (Corey, 2008).

Irvin Yalom is an American psychiatrist and author. He is especially known in the field of group therapy and existential therapy. His books such as "The Theory and Practice of Group Psychotherapy" are recognized as one of the fundamental texts in the field of group therapy. Yalom deeply analyzed the human fear of death, the search for meaning and relationships. He also dealt with psychological and existential themes in his stories and fictional texts (Corey, 2008).

BASIC CONCEPTS AND PROPOSITIONS IN EXISTENTIAL THERAPY

In existentialist thought, it is essential for human beings to be able to make decisions with their free will, to know themselves and to make decisions on their own. The concept of freedom depends on the exercise of free will and the ability to make choices. There can be no restriction or control in the stages such as thinking, believing and deciding. Existentialism is part of man's effort to understand himself and the world more deeply. People try to add meaning to their lives by creating their own values (Küpeli & Şahin, 2018).

Existentialist philosophy is rooted in the view that "existence precedes essence", a view that Rallo May has further elaborated with the proposition that "Man does not only grow with the system established by nature. At the same time, the individual also contributes to the growth of this system". Every human being is an individual with a unique nature or a being on the way to becoming an individual. The human being is the only being in the known universe that tries to create its development on the way to becoming an individual by adding essence to its existence (İlgar & İlgar, 2019).

An existentialist perspective can sometimes be acquired and practiced without even realizing it. There are many professionals in different cultures who adopt this attitude even if they do not identify themselves as such. Existentialism in psychotherapy is not only acquired through education or theoretical knowledge. It usually does not develop before middle age and may or may not be formed in the personality of the therapist. Existential psychotherapy is therefore considered an attitude, not a method (Geçtan, 1990).

The concept of Dasein, developed by Martin Heidegger, literally means "being"/"existence". Dasein defines human existence not only in the sense of a mere being, but also as a being that tries to understand its own existence and interacts with the world with this consciousness (Duyan, 2018). The concept of existence is defined in German within the following four main dimensions: umwelt, mitwelt, eigenwelt and überwelt.

Umwelt: German for "the world around". Van Deurzen defined this world as the natural world and the physical biological dimensional place where one would probably behave instinctively. Rollo May, on the other hand, defined it as the world that is generally referred to as the environment today. It

is argued that every human being experiences several challenges or concerns within the physical world, such as nature (life and death), experiences (pleasure and pain), the personal body (health and illness), the universe (harmony and chaos) (Rozzi, 2020). Umwelt refers to the awareness of physical sensations such as pleasure, pain, and hunger; however, it is often considered a motivational component of experiences. Umwelt encompasses the biological and motivational structure or formation of an individual's lived world (Olivares, Peterson, & Hess, 2007).

Mitwelt: This concept, which we can consider as the social world, means "together with the world" in German. Human experience takes place in social, political and cultural environments. To a certain extent, private relationships and ordinary daily encounters with other people, especially in the social sphere, are also part of this world. In other words, it is the universe of human relations. Challenges or concerns that people may experience in this dimension include conflicts such as love/hate in society, superiority or subordination with other people, acceptance or rejection of the self, belonging to a culture or being excluded (Rozzi, 2020).

Eigenwelt: Describes our experiences of the personal/psychological world and means "personal world" in German. This area, also called the private world, is where there is privacy. It includes privacy and special relationships with ourselves and our loved ones. The challenges of the individual in this world include the concepts of personality, identity and freedom, individual strengths and weaknesses, self-actualization or dissociation, self-confidence or anxiety (Rozzi, 2020).

Überwelt: This area, called the spiritual world, means "upper world" in German. It is the area where the individual's connection with abstract and metaphysical aspects takes place. The challenges faced by the individual in this world are semantic conflicts between the concepts of eternity, good and evil, rightness/wrongness, meaning/voidness and right/wrong (Rozzi, 2020).

HUMAN NATURE APPROACH

Existential therapy is a form of therapy consisting of a set of methods that are distant from the evaluation of people's personalities, focusing on the current situation of individuals and their perception of life. Existential therapy, which emphasizes the importance of being alive and the dignity of the individual, supports finding the meaning of being human and exploring and revealing new aspects of the individual. Based on assumptions about human nature, it is an approach that aims to eliminate the lostness of the individual who has lost the meaning of his/her existence, who feels empty and lonely. Existential therapists focus on understanding the individual and the situation rather than setting fixed, rigid rules in the counseling process (Corey, 2008).

The individual is a being in constant communication with his/her environment. The necessity of this communication stems from the fact that it exists. No matter how much the individual tries to isolate himself from his environment, the life he exists in does not allow ruptures and this communication

remains continuous. Since the individual is in constant interaction with his environment and society, he is in different searches in different periods. Human existential searches are not something that happens all at once. Different quests and questions arise at different times and places in life (İlgar & İlgar, 2019).

According to the existentialist approach, the conditions in which the individual exists are dimensioned by six basic propositions:

-Having the Capacity for Self-Awareness

If an individual can increase their existential awareness, they can increase their capacity to make choices and free decisions. The more self-awareness increases, the more liberated the individual can be in shaping his/her own life and perception of life. By increasing our awareness in the following areas, we increase our life capacity.

- Every individual is mortal and we don't have enough time in our lives to fulfill every desire.

- We have the potential to act or not to act at all. Inaction is also a choice.

- We have a partial right to self-determination and we choose our own actions.

- The meaning of existence is not something that is tied to us in a certain way from the very beginning; it is something that we can discover through our personal search.

- Existential concerns are a fundamental part of our lives. When our self-awareness increases, so does our sense of responsibility for the consequences of the choices we make.

- The individual may experience emptiness, meaninglessness, loneliness, guilt and isolation.

Increasing individuals' self-awareness is one of the main goals of all types of therapy. By increasing self-awareness, it is ensured that the person makes peace with his/her existence, gives meaning to life and makes decisions about his/her life and accepts the responsibilities of these decisions (Corey, 2008).

-Freedom and Responsibility

Freedom and responsibility are interrelated concepts. Individuals should be aware of their responsibilities for the situations that arise as a result of their choices as well as realizing that they are free in the choice stages of their lives. We are responsible for the situations we encounter in life, our lives, our choices or our decision not to act. Avoiding this awareness or choosing not to make choices is an existential crime. Being aware that an individual has the freedom to make decisions about his/her own life and being aware of the responsibility for the consequences of the decisions they make enables them to be more self-confident in later decision-making phases. The concepts of freedom and responsibility are complementary to each other (Corey, 2008).

-Struggle to Find Identity and Relations with Others

While the individual strives for a sense of self-awareness and being unique, he/she also interacts with his/her environment and nature. Individuals who fail in their efforts to merge with the environment and nature, to interact with them and to create their existence may become isolated and alienated. In their quest to find their own identities, people can sometimes become alienated from their authentic selves by meeting other people's expectations and values instead of creating their own unique selves. The isolation of the individual is considered among the situations that should be experienced at the point of self-discovery. A person who is left to himself/herself makes a discovery by entering into questions. In this discovery, he/she discovers what his/her self is, whether he/she is dependent on others, and how he/she feels when he/she is alone with himself/herself. People who do not enjoy the time they spend with themselves may display a different identity performance when they interact with others. This can be detrimental to the individual's efforts to find an identity and lead to a life shaped by the expectations of others. Some individuals think that a life dependent on others is safer and that they will be driven into loneliness when they try to search for their own identity. This thought can lead to feelings of fear and anxiety. For this reason, people feel a sense of "doing" instead of a sense of "being" (Corey, 2008).

-Searching for the Meaning of Life

According to existentialists, life is not a place that has meaning on its own. It is the individual himself who makes life meaningful. Life becomes meaningful thanks to the results that people find as a result of their search for meaning in life. Therefore, the meaning of life is shaped within the framework of the results that individuals themselves reach. At the same time, human beings are different from other species because they are in search of meaning in life. The values in people's perceptions of life are sometimes limited to what they get from the environment rather than what they create themselves. When people develop awareness of this situation, they may enter a phase of self-alienation and may want to get out of this situation. However, it is not an easy decision to abandon and change the values they have acquired one way or another. People who only think of changing their existing values without realizing the values they think belong to them may feel fear and anxiety before this change. Fear of isolation and alienation as a result of change may prevent individuals from taking action (Corey, 2008). Individuals search for meaning when the life they live starts to feel meaningless. Frankl (2020) defined this sense of meaninglessness in life as existential emptiness. While the existence of meaning in life is associated with positive concepts such as happiness, social closeness, being healthy, and well-being, the search for meaning is associated with concepts such as anxiety and social isolation (İlgar & İlgar, 2019).

-Anxiety as a Condition of Life

Anxiety has been a part of human life in different dimensions, times and places. There are two types of anxiety: normal and neurotic anxiety. Therapists have argued that anxiety has an important potential for human development. But it is necessary to distinguish between normal anxiety and neurotic anxiety. Normal anxiety is the appropriate response to situations we are confronted with. In other words, this type of anxiety does not put pressure on the individual and can be used as a source of motivation for change. Neurotic anxiety, on the other hand, takes individuals beyond the limits of the controlled anxiety level and negatively affects functionality. Eliminating normal anxiety in the therapeutic process is not among the goals. Anxiety strengthens individuals, refreshes their sense of struggle and encourages them to confront (Corey, 2008).

-Realization of Death and Existence

In the existentialist approach, death is not a negative situation. On the contrary, they argue that it should not be forgotten that death is a part and stage of life. If the individual faces the idea that life has an end and accepts this situation, it will make his/her life more meaningful and livable. If we avoid or run away from the fact that we will die, life will become meaningless and unpleasant. Because even if people do not want to face this phenomenon, it will inevitably turn into a fear of death and will haunt the individual. The individual should be made to establish a balance here and have a healthy confrontation. Because people should accept life by living in the present without constantly thinking about death (Corey, 2008).

The main aim of existential therapy is to help individuals to search for the meaning of their lives and to construct this meaning for themselves, to support them to realize and exercise their freedom, to encourage them to take responsibility for their own choices and actions, to help them understand and cope with their existential anxieties and fears, to guide them to discover their own values and beliefs, to encourage them to live an authentic and creative life, and to help them understand how to define a "good life". This therapy helps people to face their existential issues, understand their inner conflicts and cope with them in a healthier way. The main goal of existential therapy is to enable individuals to lead a more meaningful, free and conscious life (Bakırtaş, 2018).

EXISTENTIAL APPROACH AND SOCIAL WORK

Although there is no single definition, existential philosophies can sometimes be called a way of doing philosophy and sometimes a philosophical thought. Existential therapy is based on this philosophical thought. Basically, it derives from philosophical tendencies that try to explain human and life, and differs from other approaches by focusing on the problems of modern man. In other words, it emerged as a reaction to approaches that treat the individual as an object and argues that the individual should be defined as an authentic and unique being (Çelik, 2017). Existentialism is a philosophy based on per-

sonal experience. Kierkegaard's slogan "Truth is subjectivity" and Sartre's "Being precedes essence" refer to finding the self through personal experience. Heidegger's concept of "dasein" (being in the world) is another concept that advocates the same idea. Two components are generally recognized as necessary for the process of change: rational and experiential observational change. Almost all types of psychotherapy include these components, but they vary.

Experiential components are when clients experience themselves in a new and different way. They may realize that they are being treated differently than they thought they would be by the people they care about in their lives. They may also find new feelings or symptoms emerging within themselves after some searching. The rational components are related to the process of self-understanding. It is about thinking and conceptualizing causal relationships in individuals' past, evaluating how they handle recent situations, and thinking about the meaning of this when they experience themselves in a new way (Krill, 2017).

Clinical social work is defined by the International Association of Social Workers (NASW) as "practices that include diagnostic, preventive, developmental, supportive and rehabilitative services in situations where the functionality of individuals, families and/or groups is threatened or affected by social and psychological stress or health disorders" (Wolberg, 2005).

Existential approaches to social work practice are mostly discussed in Europe and North America. These approaches have been developed to help us understand the basic "being" of human beings. In particular, they aim to understand the serious problems that clients face in their lives, such as the sense of death, acceptance of the death of their closest or beloved family members, acceptance of their own illness and disability, grief experiences, acceptance of the consequences of major disasters, and experiences of alienation, social isolation and discrimination (Tajima, 2014).

SAMPLE CASE STUDY

The case used at this stage is fictional and the case will be handled from the perspective of existential therapy.

Ayşe is a 52-year-old married mother of 2 children. Her husband is a teacher and still working. Ayşe is a retired teacher. They have two sons. As Ayşe had recently started to isolate herself from her friends and her husband, she was referred to therapy on the advice of a close friend. She had previously met with two therapists. As a result of the preliminary analysis of the counselors, it was thought that existential psychotherapy could be a useful approach for Ayşe and she was referred to a counselor specialized in this field.

At the first meeting, general information about her current life was obtained from the conversation. In addition to the above information, Ayşe's children attended university in another province. After their university education, they started working in different cities. She retired 2 years ago. She filled

this gap with her neighbors and voluntary aid activities. In the first session, Ayşe described herself as someone who does not want to communicate with others too much lately and does not want to talk about herself too much. In general, she did not complain of too much dissatisfaction in her daily life, but she stated that a voice inside her kept telling her that she needed to do something. However, she mentioned that she did not know what to do and that she could not easily identify what was troubling her.

It was observed that Ayşe felt a little distressed when she realized that with the help of the counselor, she would move on to the stages of self-discovery. Later in the session, she stated that her parents separated when she was 4 years old, her mother took care of her and her 2 siblings, her mother passed away when she was 10 years old and after that her aunts took care of them. She stated that although she lost her parents at a young age, she did not have a very unhappy childhood. The first session was completed without much prolongation and with the client's willingness to continue the sessions.

In the following sessions with Ayşe, it was observed that she was a little more willing to talk. No clear determination was made about the duration of the therapy. Ayşe stated that the fact that the first session was relaxing and non-coercive was effective in continuing the therapy. She stated that she would not have continued if there had been more insistence and questioning.

During the sessions, Ayşe was asked about the routines of her familial and environmental relationships and evaluations about these relationships. Although at first she talked about these routines without commenting, as the sessions progressed, it was observed that she started to describe them with more comment and questioning. She stated that she thought that she did most of the things she did in her life in line with the expectations and needs of others. She stated that she started to question things like "Would it have been different if I had lived differently?" or "Would I have been more successful?". Since she had always been cautious throughout her life and was not very open about her own ideas, sometimes out of fear of not being accepted and sometimes because she did not feel she had enough power, she generally kept her ideas to herself. In the following sessions, she stated that she had actually entered this mindset after the death of her mother and that she realized now that she had isolated herself from her environment.

In the following sessions, Ayşe was asked what had changed in her daily life so far and how this change made her feel. She stated that she felt that she was now able to make free and sincere decisions, even in simple daily activities, that she was at peace with the responsibilities of the decisions she made and that she felt more courageous in approaching the outcome of these responsibilities. She mentioned that this courage strengthened her self-confidence even more.

When asked whether this change was noticed around her, she stated that she received positive feedback and that even she herself was not aware that she had changed so much. She mentioned that she

was noticed more in the community where she was involved in voluntary activities and even felt as if she had become a member again and was meeting people again. She stated that her days are now more enjoyable. She stated that she started to feel as if her previous life was not her own and that she was now in control. She stated that she felt as if she was spending her life under a dim light in a house with all the light bulbs blown out, but one day she decided to go out of the house and buy new light bulbs and turned them all on and witnessed the darkness and haze in her life dissipate.

Since the sessions with Ayşe were planned to end gradually, she was asked for her general evaluation of the process. Although she generally reiterated the evaluations she had made with herself in the last interviews, she mentioned that her anxieties no longer impaired her functionality, on the contrary, they created a sense of struggle, and that she could manage and direct her anxieties rather than the anxieties managing her.

In this series of sessions, Ayşe was helped to get to the root of her existential anxieties, she was helped to realize the real reasons, she was helped to find out how to change under the supervision of the counselor, she was helped to see the effects of the change and the change was monitored. In order not to turn counseling into supervision, the sessions with Ayşe were terminated, but she was informed that she could come and consult on any subject whenever she wanted, and the interview was ended with good wishes.

CONCLUSION and DISCUSSION

From the past to the present, various philosophical thought movements have emerged that have tried to understand human beings, nature, the universe, God, societies, in other words, everything. Since man is a thinking being, he has always been in a state of questioning, and as a result of this questioning, he has caused the formation of various currents of thought by trying to create solutions to the situations he encounters. The existentialist approach is one of these movements. It differs from many other approaches in that it puts the individual at its center and focuses on what the individual's meaning is in his/her existence and how to find this meaning.

Since the existentialist approach deals with seemingly complex situations such as the state of human existence, the meaning of existence, finding this meaning, and the creation of personal existence, and since these situations are very subjective, they can be difficult to understand and explain. For these reasons, existential therapy does not have concrete stages and definitions like other therapy approaches. The complexity and uniqueness of the issue of existence itself is one of the reasons for this. In general, existential therapy deals with issues such as supporting individuals to have the capacity for self-awareness, empowering individuals to realize their freedom and face their responsibilities, developing the individual's efforts to find an identity and increasing their sincerity and awareness in their relationships with other individuals, controlling anxiety, which is and sometimes should be a part of life, understanding and accepting these concepts rather than the corrosive or frightening effects

of death and existence. The main aim of all of these areas is to help people complete the stages of self-actualization.

In the light of this approach, social work has the same basic objectives. Social work focuses on empowering the individual to determine his/her own destiny, to make free decisions, to protect and increase the mental, physical and social health of the individual in his/her environment. Social workers, who are professional representatives of the science and profession of social work, contribute with their various roles such as counseling, advocacy and guidance in the stages of creating awareness of the individual against the processes that the individual undergoes due to existential neuroses and even in some cases pushing them to existential questioning, supporting them in these search processes and ensuring the formation of the individual's life and self-satisfaction by providing counseling services.
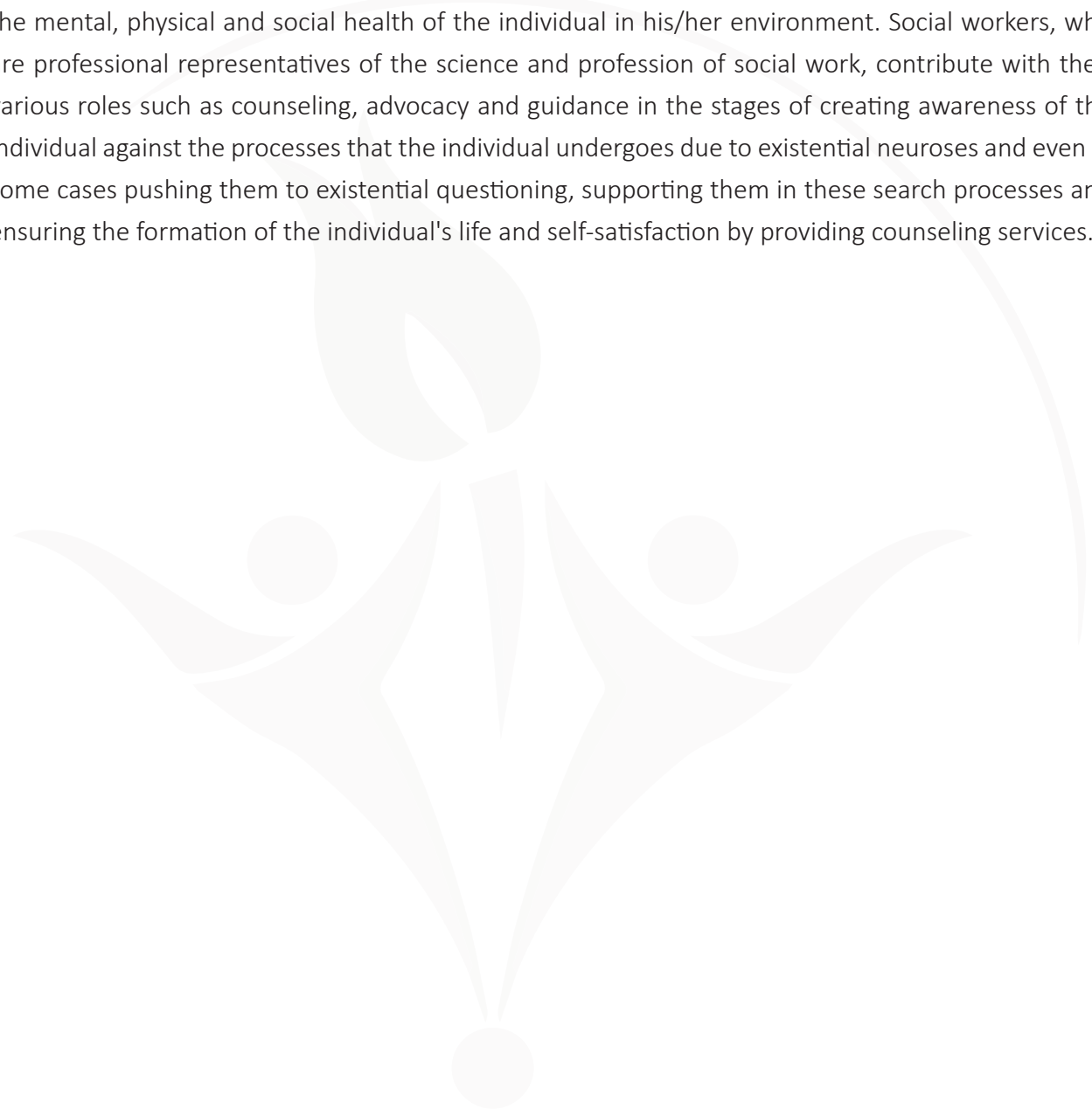
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