

Mourning through Poetry: Discovering the Lost Love object and Symbolization of Desire

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Abstract : Deborah was referred for psychoanalytic psychotherapy following a suicide attempt and depression. She began a fascinating journey spanning more than 10 years. During therapy, many questions arose concerning the suicidal episode, which she could not register consciously. The author tried to understand the reasons for her depression and the attempted suicide through the unconscious process in the therapeutic relationship and through the music and poetry that she brought to sessions. In this paper, the author describes the process of listening for the signifiers of semiotic and symbolic language, both metaphoric and metonymic, as revealed in poetry and music according to the theories of Kristeva and Lacan. The poetry enabled the patient to retrieve childhood memories, experience the movement from unconscious to conscious, and mourn through the experience of transference and countertransference in the therapeutic relationship. Also illustrated is the transition from singing the music to more symbolic language, turning the patient's sensory experience into language, and connecting her personal experience with the culture of her past. The patient's mourning and the lost love objects are discussed through the prism of classical and object relations theories.

Keywords : depression, lost love object, psychoanalytic psychotherapy, suicide attempt, symbolization of desire

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