

A Psychotherapeutic Approach to Working with Motor Neurone Disease

Dr John Ashworth
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MND Psychology service

- Established June 2016
- 70 people accessed service to date:
 - Patients and family members (80%/20%)
 - Approximately equal number of women/men
 - Mean age 66 years (range 41-85 years)
 - Support until end of life (50%)

Existential themes

Four givens:

Death

Freedom

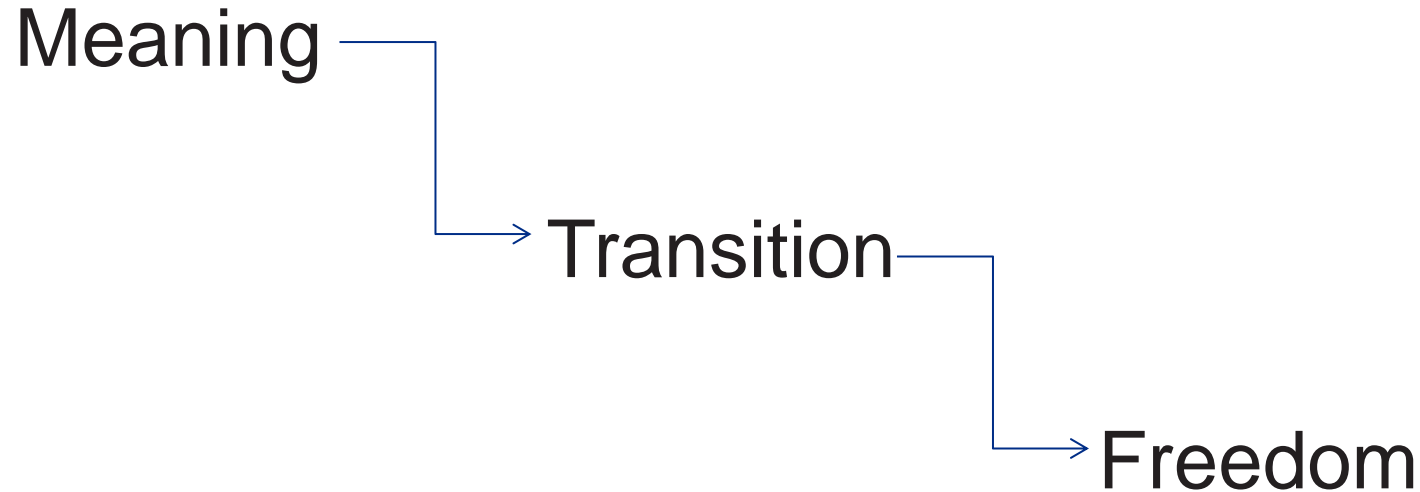
Isolation

Meaninglessness

Meaning

- Meaning in transition (fantasies about what cannot be tolerated extinguished)
- Why psychology/why communicate (reduction of isolation)
- Importance of relationships
- Avoid wasting time on meaningless tasks
- Faith / afterlife?

Meaning and freedom



Suicidal ideation

- Active plans to end life (Dignitas)
- Flirtation with non-existence (psychological escapism)

Why me?

- What did I do wrong

Search formulae

Offset fragility of life

Regain control (alternative therapies (bad faith?))

Genetics

- Randomness of life / Unfairness of life

Relationships

- Protecting each other (alienation)
- Talking about taboo
- Circle subject to make safe
- Couples counselling

A good death

- What is a good death
- Revert to meaning

Neuro psychotherapy

- Learning from neuroscience

Frontotemporal dementia

Disinhibition

Apathy

Emotional Lability

Questions?