

Approaching psychotherapy for people from international Buddhist organisations

Anne Iris Miriam Anders

Psychotherapy addressing the rationalizations by means of decontextualized terms and concepts:

Mindfulness techniques, which are currently widely used in psychosomatics and psychotherapy, pose challenges when treating people coming from Buddhist groups for several reasons. Thus, for their treatment, it is important to take into account decontextualized terms that underlie crucial group dynamics and the effects of damaging neologisms.

Methods:

Mixed method approach with: quantitative and qualitative data.

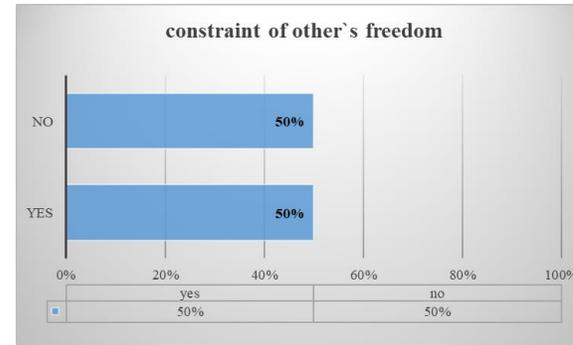
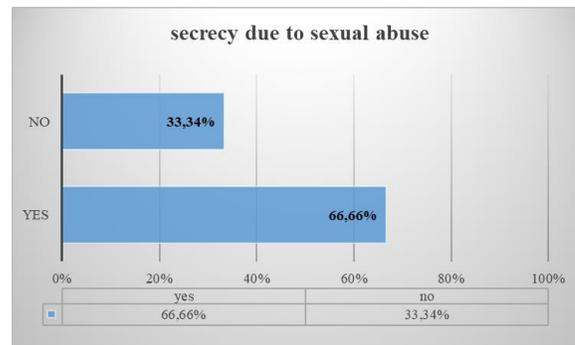
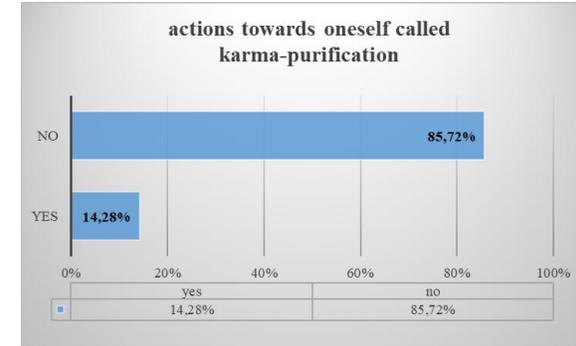
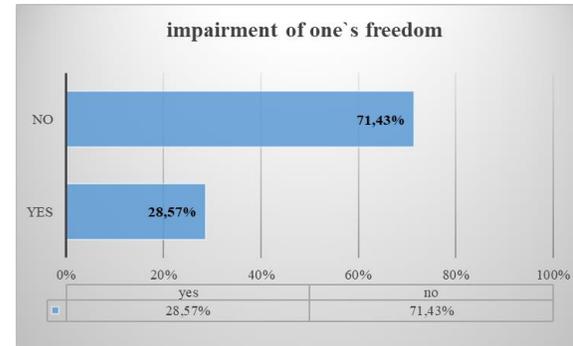
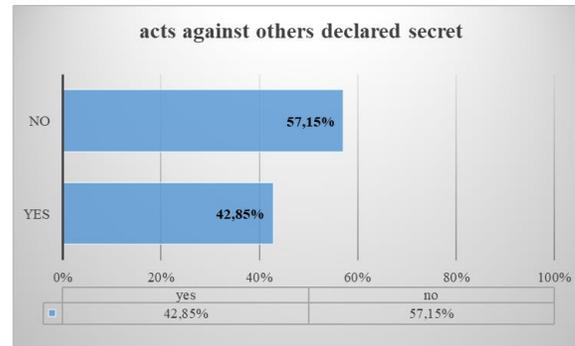
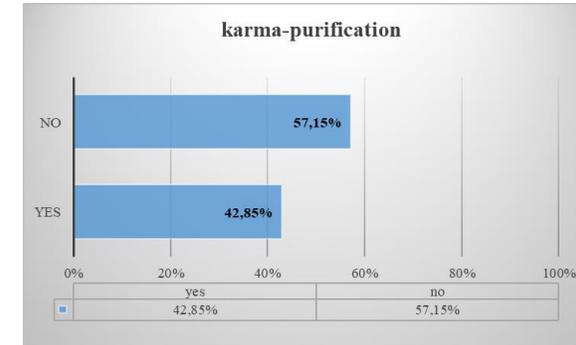
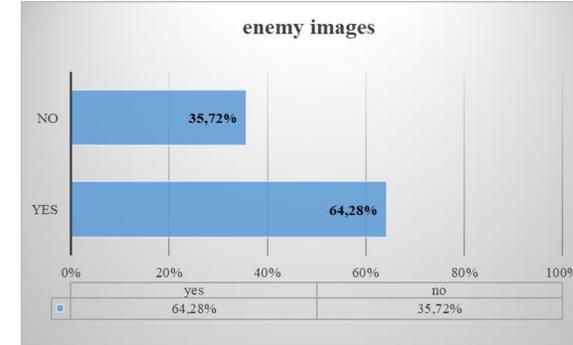
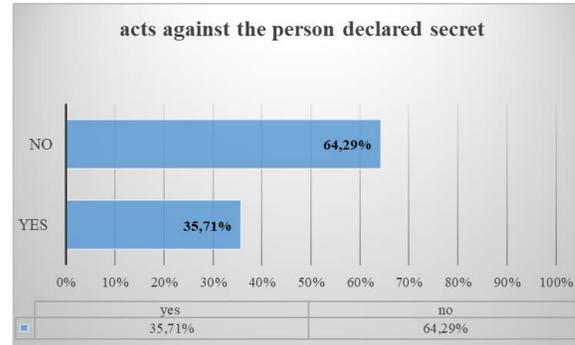
Results of 14 probands:

As commitments to secrecy hinder people to ask for psychotherapy for long, they were asked on their thoughts about secrecy toward themselves and others.

"When my first teacher made me his regent, he swore me to secrecy. When he sexually abused my best friend, he swore her to secrecy. Being sworn to secrecy was confusing and creepy." [#1]

"In the context of 'group therapy and confidentiality' what happened in the Monday to Thursday group therapy sessions was kept secret from any other individuals who were not in the room at that time. That was where, in the name of personal development, bullying and abuse were carried out by a male student [...]." [#2]

"Again and again, attempts were made to break the will of the people." [#3]



Essential points for psychotherapy: damage through social isolation and the "new concepts, commercialized as 'karma purification'" (2) that "have served to rationalize and conceal abuse as well as to isolate the victims" (2)

Conclusion: in the process of psychotherapeutic treatment structural issues and introjections (1) as well as trained dissociation, which is quite often considered 'advanced meditation', need to be considered.

References:

(1) Anders, A.I.M. (2019a). Psychische Auswirkungen von Machtmissbrauch in buddhistischen Gruppierungen und essenzielle Aspekte bei psychotherapeutischen Interventionen für Betroffene, SFU Forschungsbulletin. 2019; 7/1: 32-49. DOI:10.15135/2019.7.1.32-49

Available in English: Psychological impact of power abuse in buddhist groups and essential aspects in psychotherapeutic interventions for the affected individuals; from: <https://www.en.transstibmed.ethnologie.uni-muenchen.de/publications/index.html>

(2) Anders, A.I.M. (2019b). Silencing and oblivion of psychological trauma, its unconscious aspects, and their impact on the inflation of Vajrayāna. An analysis of cross-group dynamics and recent developments in Buddhist groups based on qualitative data, 10.11.2019 in Religions 2019, 10 (11), 622; pg. 1-23; doi:10.3390/rel10110622 <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/10/11/622/pdf>; <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel10110622>

Grant reference number: 01UL1823X

Copyright © 2021 Anne Iris Miriam Anders
Ludwig-Maximilians-University Munich