ABSTRACT

The therapeutic meaning of graduation in student counseling: Being "re-born" by leaving the campus

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In the domain of student counseling graduation has so far often been discussed as a "time limit". Taking the case of a male university student who spent a long campus life, this paper aims to examine what kind of therapeutic meaning leaving the campus could hold for him beyond the simplistic meaning of a time limit. Because of an unresolved issue of self-determination in the family, the client had been unable live his life on his own initiative. But he developed his lively emotions in the safe "womb" of the counseling room (Giegerich, 2010). During that process he became able to sense vivid emotional experiences as something of his own. To leave the university and the counseling room was as difficult for him as the experience of death. By getting over that painful experience, he opened the possibility of being "re-born" by leaving the campus and standing up on his feet. This case suggests the importance of viewing his withdrawal from the university itself as something essential for him to "begin" his inner work.

Key Words: student counseling, graduation, a psychological womb