

(2009j) Kazez, R., Melloni, G., Maldavsky D. (2009) "Study of the discourse of two mothers of deaf female adolescents. Comparative analysis of the sequence of moments after being informed about the diagnosis", *40th Annual Meeting of the Society for Psychotherapy Research, Santiago, Chile, 2009*

Study of the discourse of two mothers of deaf female adolescents.

Comparative analysis of the sequence of moments after being informed about the diagnosis

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I. Aim: To study drives and defenses as well as their state in the reaction of two mothers when they received the diagnostic of the handicap of their respective daughters.

II. Sample: In both cases (Mónica, Cristina), the narration (during the first interview) of the moment that follows the acknowledgement of the diagnosis of the daughter's deafness. Additional note: Although both mothers were married, they found themselves in a situation of loneliness.

III. Method: the David Liberman algorithm (DLA), which allows to research drives and defenses as well as their state in the discourse.

IV. Procedure: 1) To detect the sequence of the drives and defenses, as well as their state, in each mother in the sequence of moments after the acknowledgement of the handicap of her daughter. 2) To compare the corresponding outcomes.

V. Analysis

V. 1. Drives: In both cases the discouragement (O2) is the first manifestation that follows the acknowledgement of the diagnosis, but in a second moment each mother uses specific resources to face the impact. Mónica resorts to her lucid thinking (O1), combined with a somatic overstress (LI). Cristina at first starts reading everything she can to obtain information about the handicap (O1), but in a second moment she discovers that there is a God that illuminates her way (O1). She combines this believe with a quarrelsome stand against the world (that expresses her feeling of injustice, A1) and with the idea that she is an object of economical speculation for someone else (IL), for example, the professionals that take care of her daughter (Table 1).

V. 2. Defenses: Functional defenses in accordance with the goal can be observed only in Cristina's case and in two moments. The first one is: "*I started crying in anxiety*"; which this corresponds to an O2 drive. In the second moment an A2 drive can be found, in an attempt of controlling the reality: "*I started reading to get information*", with an O1 drive: "*I had flashes of divine confirmation*" (Table 2).

In Mónica's case, in the second and third moments, her lucid thought ("*It is a lie that in this world there is room for everyone*") allows her to uncover a lie in an idea she used to believe in (failed disavowal) and finally she concludes that it is impossible to find empathic interlocutors in the world. When she confirms the absence of some kind of empathic holding, she concludes that only through her physical stress (successful foreclosure of the affect) she can find a way to solve the traumatic situation (Tables 2 & 3).

In Cristina's case, in the second and third moments, divine illumination (successful disavowal) shows her the path to follow, that is by meeting professionals or finding institutions that might heal her daughter's deafness completely, in an omnipotent way. Finally, reality imposes itself: her daughter is still deaf and she believed in false promises (failed disavowal). She thinks herself as being object of economical speculation (failed foreclosure of the affect). In this moment, A1 and successful disavowal emerges as a quarrelsome stand, but the prevalence is O1 and failed disavowal ("*I consulted professionals that only took my money and lied to me; I felt I wanted to strangle them*") (Tables 2 & 3).

The following tables synthesize the analysis of the drives (Table 1) and the defenses (Table 2) as well as their predominance (Table 3) in the mothers in the sequence of moments after receiving the diagnosis of the handicap in their daughters.

Table 1. Drives

Moments	Mónica	Cristina
First moment	O2 (Ex: " <i>I would have all the time of life to cry about it</i> ")	O2 + IL (Ex: " <i>I started crying in anxiety and I ate with no control</i> ")
Second moment	O1 (Ex " <i>It is a lie that in this world there is room for everyone</i> ")	A2 + O1 (Ex " <i>I started reading to get information</i> " " <i>I had flashes of divine confirmation</i> ")
Third moment	IL (Ex " <i>I started working three times more than what I had been working</i> ")	O1 + A1 + IL (Ex " <i>I consulted professionals that only took my money and lied to me; I felt I wanted to strangle them</i> ")

Table 2. Defenses

Moments	Mónica	Cristina
First moment	Successful disavowal	Successful in accordance with the goal + successful foreclosure of the affect
Second moment	Failed disavowal	Successful in accordance with the goal + Successful disavowal
Third moment	Successful foreclosure of the affect	Failed disavowal + failed foreclosure of the affect

Table 3. Main and complementary defenses and drives

Defenses	Mónica	Cristina
Main defense	Foreclosure of the affect	Disavowal (failed)

	(successful)	
Complementary defenses	Disavowal (successful) Disavowal (failed)	In accordance with the goal (successful) Disavowal (successful) Foreclosure of the affect (failed)
Main drive	IL	O1
Complementary drives	O1 O2	IL O2 A1 A2

IV. Conclusions

We were able to detect three different moments of psychic processing in the outcome that followed the diagnosis of the deafness in the daughters:

1. In the first moment, the discouragement (O2) prevails in both cases. Each mother recurs to specific defenses against it: Mónica, to successful disavowal and Cristina, to successful foreclosure of the affect accompanied by actions in successful accordance with the goal.
2. In the second moment predominates an O1 drive. In Mónica's case it combines with failed disavowal while in Cristina with successful disavowal.
3. In the third moment in Mónica the combination between IL and successful foreclosure of the affect prevails, and Cristina recurs to IL combined with failed foreclosure of the affect, to O1 and failed disavowal (main defense) and to A1 and successful disavowal.

Supported on other studies on helplessness in people (handicaps, psychosomatics) with the DLA, we can predict that in the course of time this combination between foreclosure of the affect and disavowal, together with the recurrence to the IL drive (with the impossibility of symbolization that it leads to), Mónica is in risk of somatic health compromise. In Cristina, IL and foreclosure of the affect can be seen combined with a greater variety of drives (O2, O1, A1, A2) and defenses. In consequence, Cristina shows a greater wealth of psychic resources that may slow somatic damage.