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Título: **Comparative study of the discourse of hearing mothers of deaf children. Detection of different moments after being informed about the diagnosis and diverse therapeutic strategies**

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- I. Aim:** To study, in six mothers, wishes and defenses, as well as their state, in the moment after being informed about the deafness of their children.
- II. Sample:** In the six cases (Mónica, Cristina, Amelia, Carla, Susana y Azucena), the narration, during one interview, of the moment after receiving the diagnosis of their daughters' handicap. Additional note: two of the mothers were married but they were in a situation of extreme loneliness; two of them divorced and some years later they found new couples; and, the other two had a stable marriage.
- III. Method:** David Liberman Algorithm (DLA), which allows to investigate, in the discourse, wishes and defenses, as well as their state.
- IV. Procedure:** 1) To detect the sequence of wishes and defenses, as well as their state, in each mother in the sequence of moments that follow the acknowledgement of the diagnosis, 2) To compare the results
- V. Analysis:**

In the six cases we could detect three different moments in the psychic processing of the diagnosis of deafness in their daughters.

- a. Moment of shock: direct manifestations related to the trauma
- b. Moment of recovery from the shock: first strategies to cope with the shock
- c. Moment of reconnection to reality: acceptance of the diagnosis and global reorganization

In the second and third moments, there is a difference in the psychic processing related to the daughters and to the couples.

The following tables resume the analysis of the wishes (Table 1) and the defenses (Table 2), as well as their dominance (Table 3) in the mothers, in the sequence of moments stated above.

V.1. Wishes

Table 1.

Moments	Mónica	Cristina	Amelia	Carla	Susana	Azucena
Shock	O2 (Eg.: “ <i>I would have all the time of life to cry about it</i> ”)	O2 + IL (Eg.: “ <i>I started crying in anxiety and ate with no control</i> ”)	IL (Eg.: “ <i>I melted</i> ”) IL (Eg.: “ <i>The diagnosis was a surprise for me</i> ”)	IL (Eg.: “ <i>I couldn’t say a word for the first 4 or 5 days. I cried. I felt I had been thrown a bucket of cold water</i> ”) O1 (Eg.: “ <i>I couldn’t believe it</i> ”) O2 (Eg.: “ <i>I was mad at myself and angry with her, too I felt guilty</i> ”)	IL (relief) A2 (Eg.: “ <i>The diagnosis of deafness when she was 4 allowed us to equip her with earphones</i> ”) O2 (Eg.: “ <i>It was very moving to see her smile when she heard the water for the first time</i> ”)	O2 (Eg.: “ <i>I felt distressed</i> ”) IL + O2: (Eg.: “ <i>I loosened something that was there, unresolved, that I didn’t know what it was... I cried a lot</i> ”) O2 (Eg.: “ <i>Then, the feeling changed: we felt guilty</i> ”) O2 (Eg.: “ <i>The mixed up feelings begin to get clear and you can understand them</i> ”)

Recovery from the shock	Daughter	O1 (Eg.: <i>"It is a lie that in this world there is room for everyone"</i>)	A2 (Eg.: <i>"I started Reading to get information"</i>) O1 (Eg.: <i>"I had flashes of divine confirmation"</i>)	A2 (Eg.: <i>"I enrolled her in a school for deaf children"</i>)	FG (Eg.: <i>"IG showed me a video of a deaf implanted child. I thought this could also happen to my daughter"</i>) O2 (Eg.: <i>"I cried for years"</i>)	A2 (Eg.: <i>"I saw that she had a million problems..."</i>) O2 (Eg.: <i>"Then, I was depressed more frequently than him"</i>)	O2 + IL (Eg.: <i>"You feel sad when you lose something but I realized that she hadn't lost anything, I relaxed"</i>)
	Couple	They divorce	(He gets sick)	A2 (Eg.: <i>"I wasted lots of energy in my marriage. I needed it for my daughter"</i>) IL (Eg.: <i>"The diagnosis gave me the strength to leave my couple"</i>)	IL (Eg.: <i>"I was overwhelmed: my daughter, my job, the house ..."</i>) A2 (Eg.: <i>"When you have this kind of trouble, the other one is either a friend or a foe. He was a foe: I had to choose."</i>)	FU: (Eg.: <i>"We were together in all this: always by my side, but with some friction"</i>) O1 (Eg.: <i>"One thinks that the other one is optimistic but really the other one in a denier"</i>) FG (Eg.: <i>"He is a very special father with Mercedes"</i>)	O1 (Eg.: <i>"For my couple it was very hard to acknowledge and to begin to talk about the deafness"</i>)

Reconnection to reality and reorganization	Daughter	IL (Eg.: “I started working three times more than what I had been working”)	O1 + A1 + IL (Eg.: “I consulted professionals that only took my money and lied to me; I felt I wanted to strangle them”)	A1 (Eg.: “I will have to keep fighting for my daughter’s rights”)	FG (Eg.: “We can now communicate. She is more like the daughter I had imagined”)	FG + O1 (Eg.: “We found a speech pathologist that moved her brain”)	FG (Eg.: “Sign language changed her life. It was fantastic because her vocabulary improved, she could achieve a comprehension that she couldn’t get otherwise”)
	Couple	(He dies)	O2 (Eg.: “My husband was like a butler for me”)	FG (Eg.: “I could build a new family with my new husband”)	FG (Eg.: “With O. and the girls, we are a family”)	O1 (Eg.: “He overprotected her always and he still does”)	FG + O1 (Eg.: “This was like a gift for us because we could see that a person can sense the world in a completely different way”) O1 (Eg.: “He compensated intellectually and began to get more involved”)

V.2. Defenses

Table 2.

Moments		Mónica	Cristina	Amelia	Carla	Susana	Azucena
Shock		Successful disavowal	Successful defense in accordance with the goal + Successful foreclosure of the affect	Failed foreclosure of the affect	Failed disavowal + Failed foreclosure of the affect	Successful defense in accordance with the goal	Successful defense in accordance with the goal + Failed foreclosure of the affect + Failed disavowal + Failed repression
Recovery from the shock	Daughter	Failed disavowal + Successful defense in accordance with the goal	Successful defense in accordance with the goal + Successful disavowal	Successful defense in accordance with the goal + Successful foreclosure of the affect	Successful defense in accordance with the goal + Successful repression + Failed disavowal	Successful defense in accordance with the goal + Failed disavowal	Successful defense in accordance with the goal + Successful disavowal + Successful foreclosure of the affect
	Couple	Failed foreclosure of the affect	Failed foreclosure of the affect	Successful foreclosure of the affect + Successful in accordance with the goal	Successful foreclosure of the affect + Successful in accordance with the goal	Failed repression + Failed disavowal + Successful repression	Successful disavowal

Reconnection to reality and reorganization	Daughter	Successful foreclosure of the affect	Failed disavowal + Failed foreclosure of the affect	Successful defense in accordance with the goal + Successful disavowal	Successful defense in accordance with the goal + Successful repression + Successful disavowal	Successful defense in accordance with the goal + Successful repression	Successful defense in accordance with the goal
	Couple	(He dies) Failed disavowal	Failed disavowal	Successful defense in accordance with the goal	Successful defense in accordance with the goal	Successful defense in accordance with the goal	Successful disavowal + Successful defense in accordance with the goal

Table 3. Dominance and complementarity of defenses and wishes

Defenses	Mónica	Cristina	Amelia	Carla	Susana	Azucena
Main Defense	Successful foreclosure of the affect	Failed disavowal	Successful disavowal	Successful disavowal	Successful defense in accordance with the goal	Successful disavowal
Complementary Defenses	Successful disavowal + Failed disavowal	Successful defense in accordance with the goal + Successful disavowal + Failed foreclosure of the affect	Successful defense in accordance with the goal + Successful disavowal + Successful and failed foreclosure of the affect	Successful defense in accordance with the goal + Successful and failed disavowal + Successful and failed foreclosure	Failed disavowal + Successful repression + Failed repression	Successful foreclosure of the affect + Failed foreclosure of the affect + Successful in accordance defense with the goal +

				of the affect		Failed disavowal + Failed Repression
Main Wish	IL	O1	A2	FG	O1	O2
Complementary Wishes	O1 O2	IL O2 A1 A2	IL A1 A2 FG	IL O1 O2 A2	IL O2 A2 FU FG	IL O1 FG

IV. Conclusions

In the first moment, moment of shock, Monica successfully disavows, Cristina forecloses affection and can use certain defenses in accordance with the goal. Amelia, Carla and Azucena fail to foreclose the affection and Carla y Azucena also fail to disavow. Susana and Azucena can successfully resort to defenses in accordance with the goal and Azucena fails to repress.

In the second and third moments, as we already stated there is a difference in the psychic processing of the trauma in reference to the daughters and to the couples.

Concerning the daughters, in the second moment all the mothers can apply the defenses in accordance with the goal to make the first decisions regarding the treatment they will choose for their deaf children. All of them opt for oralization. They also resort to other defenses such as, disavowal, foreclosure of the affect and repression.

As for the couples, in the second moment, Mónica and Cristina fail to foreclose their affection. Amelia and Carla successfully foreclose the affection and use defenses in accordance with the goal: they divorce. Susana and Azucena strengthen their marriages. Susana successfully represses and, in other situations, fails to repress and disavow. Her husband is involved in the raising of their daughter. Azucena embellishes the situation of her daughter through a successful disavowal.

In the third moment, Mónica finally successfully forecloses her affection, but this defense exposes her to the risk of an organic compromise. Cristina fails to disavow reality and to foreclose her affection and ends feeling that she is victim of professionals that speculate with the treatments. Amelia and Carla, who, at first fail to foreclose the affection, can recur to successful defenses in

accordance with the goal, disavowal and repression, which allow them to develop satisfactory bonds with their deaf children. Susana and Azucena present a great variety of functional defenses and consequently they can successfully cope with reality in an adaptive way through defenses in accordance with the goal: Susana finds an adequate treatment for her daughter and Azucena and all her family learn Argentinian Sign Language.

As for the couples, in the third moment, Monica's husband dies which increases her loneliness and she fails to disavow. Cristina thinks of her husband as a mere butler and also fails to disavow. Amelia and Carla use defenses in accordance with the goal: they find new couples and are able to lead satisfactory lives. Susana and Azucena successfully resort to defenses in accordance with the goal. Azucena successfully disavows because her husband and her, consider the deafness as a gift that permitted them to know other ways of perceiving the world. Susana says that her husband overprotects their daughter, and she is right.

These results allow us to think in which way a psychotherapist can intervene with the mother of a handicapped child, according to the moment of her particular psychic processing of the trauma of the diagnosis.

It seems that not foreclosing the affection in the first moment may lead to a more complex and functional processing in the following stages, that is, to achieve a better bond with their children or, either, to keep and strengthen their marriages or to divorce and build a new family.

When the defenses are more regressive, there is a greater difficulty to cope with the trauma of the diagnosis of the handicap in the daughter and with the unsatisfactory relationship with their husbands. These facts can lead to somatic symptoms or a perception of the reality as speculating or deceiving.

Therefore, these results can be useful to determine the therapeutic goals in the treatment of the mothers. Each moment shows different characteristics that must be considered to be able to establish an empathic therapeutic relationship and to plan an adequate therapeutic strategy, which takes into account the mental condition of the mother regarding both, her daughter and her couple.