

REFLECTIVE FUNCTIONING AND ATTACHMENT MODELS IN CHILDREN WITH DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIORS DISORDERS AND THEIR PARENTS: SOME QUESTIONS

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The parent's Reflective Function is the ability to understand the behavior of the child in terms of mental states and intentions. A long tradition of research (Fonagy and Target 1995; van Ijzendoorn, 1995; Slade, 2010) linked the quality of parent attachment to the ability to use their internal experience as a guide for sensitive responsiveness. Authors as Meins (2015) linked this aspect to Mind Mindedness, considering it as a prerequisite for maternal sensitivity, namely the mother's propensity to treat the child as a mental agent with intentions, thoughts and specific motivations rather than a creature with needs to satisfy. It is considered that this ability, facilitating the development of sensitivity, promotes the development of secure attachment to the child. Studies on the quality of attachment in mother-child or parents-child underline the open question about intergenerational transmission of attachment and the varying mental ability of parents with secure attachment. The study investigates the role of Mentalization, operationalized as Reflective Functioning in children previously diagnosed with Disruptive Behaviors Disorders (N=17) and in their parents (N=34). Young patients (8-15 years) were administered the *Child Attachment Interview* and *Child and Adolescent Reflective Functional Scale*; parents were administered the *Adult Attachment Interview* and *Reflective Functioning on Adult Attachment Interview*. Over-representation of Disorganized Attachment and low levels of Mentalization, mainly turned to the self, were found in children with Disruptive Behaviour Disorders; Over-representation of Secure Attachment and low levels of Mentalization was

found in parents. This study suggests that Mentalization and Attachment Models may be fundamental elements to be assessed in evaluation and in treatment of clinical conditions in middle childhood and early adolescence.

PERINATAL PERIOD: RESEARCHES AND STUDIES ON ITS COMPLEXITY

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The transition to parenthood, from pregnancy to postpartum period, can be a critical process for both mother and father. The most recent reviews of literature highlight how, during pregnancy, psychological distress, anxious or depressive symptoms can impact on the individual and couple wellbeing, but also on the relationship with the newborn. Many longitudinal studies identify relations between pre and post-partum period and how the mother/father relationship and mother/father-infant relationship can be affected by several “complexity” of the parenthood such as fear of child birth, interaction with the baby and dyadic functioning. This symposium aims to discuss the factors associated to some of the complexity of the perinatal period with to deepen the analysis of the influence of specific variables. In the first contribution, Molgora e Fenaroli analyzed with cluster analysis, in a sample of 255 primiparous women, the relation of the anxious and depressive symptoms and the fear of childbirth. In the second contribution, Agostini and colleagues compared 54 mothers and 38 fathers infant interactions in a group of three months old preterm infants. In the