



Mental health and work

Reports show that Freud, when asked by a listener about what would be normal or mental health, replied that a mentally healthy person is one who is able to love and work. Love was seen by the author as an end product of a long process of development⁽¹⁾. It is a short answer, which comprises two delicate and complex spheres of our human lives: affection and work. In this way, the author shows that body and psyche are integrated and inseparable in the Freudian reading, because the living subjectivity (which suffers and rejoices) has a body and it is in it that pain and pleasure are rooted⁽²⁾. Both actions are the axes of our lives with their endless forms of expression in several contexts, from those that are more continent and instigator of human expressiveness to those more restrictive. Similarly, a group of experts of the World Health Organization (WHO) refers to mental health as a state of well-being in which the individual can perform his/her abilities, cope with the normal stress of life, work productively and fruitfully and contribute to the community in which he/she lives⁽³⁾.

The Freudian definition emphasizes the emotional relationships, but without forgetting that there is a subject and his/her body, although a considerable portion of the analytical community understand subject and body as an “insuperable duality” and takes the “noble part” of subjectivity, in other words, the psyche, leaving the care of the body to the psychiatry. However, in theory, such separation cannot be sustained, because there is a “subject body” with his/her expressions of affection for more or less. This separation, similarly to the devaluation of affection, removes much of the current manifestations of malaise of human beings from the psychoanalysis reach. Body and affection have an essential place in the interpretation of human subjectivity and they are also the basis for understanding psychoanalysis as a way to listen to the psyche and a mode of action⁽³⁾. This is perfectly in line with Freud’s vision on disturbances of the spirit, for whom they would be impossibilities of action⁽⁴⁾, caused by “offenses and wounds” to the self-esteem of the individual and whose consequences could be changed through psychoanalysis⁽⁵⁾.

While the Freudian definition emphasizes affective relations, this excerpt of the WHO gives a role of relevance to work, as its main axis, since it gives us a sense that we are useful, necessary and connected to the world. In a world in which the man and labor relations are convulsed, we can understand the growing complaints of mental illness and suffering⁽⁶⁻⁷⁾.

By seeking to convey knowledge on mental health, SMAD endeavors to conduct reports of studies that address the *continuum* of mental illness and health. In this sense, this new volume begins by bringing an article on the teaching of psychiatric nursing and mental health and its limitations given the complexity of the mental disease-health phenomenon.

Following them, another study draws attention to the mental health of the nursing student, understanding that this future professional needs to be well to take care of those who are under his/her care.

The next article focuses on therapeutic workshops as vehicles of expression of subjectivity of individuals with mental disorders. Through artistic and craft activities, the study seeks to rescue and value the healthy aspects of the lives of the participants.

Two other articles address the problem of drug abuse, either in its understanding, from reflections anchored on the psychoanalytic reference, or in the description of the work of therapeutic communities in the promotion of the strengthening of family relations and integration into work. Regarding the latter article, the authors have found certain fragility in the actions related to insertion of users in the workforce as one of the results of the research. The second article, focusing on the psychosocial aspects of work in mental health, draws attention to the care of

the health of the worker in the area.

This is a challenge that concerns not just health professionals but the sectors of society that address work activities and economy. In moments when work settings may negatively interfere in the social relations and the performance of work activities, the mental health of persons may be affected and the outcome of the clash may be strengthening as well as vulnerability, depending on the quality of the support that these persons have received.

Once again, we invite the reader to go through this volume of the SMAD journal assured that the reading will bring additions to the researcher and the care professional, and it will foster reflections that may generate other studies.

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