Considerations About the Psychic Processes of Grief

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SUMMARY

Death is seen as taboo in the present day, generating suffering, denial, guilt and anxiety, unleashing types of mourning that affect the psyche, significantly altering the way people see life, as well as their re-significances in the face of the loss of the other, with death being the only experience established in the certainty of definitive separation and mourning as a unique event lived in the peculiarity of each one. This article aims to understand the psychic mechanisms underlying the process of mourning, seeking to clarify that this process is a psychic phenomenon and necessary considering its psychosocial, affective and cognitive effects, as well as its reactions from attachment, identification and anguish. The present work is based on a survey of bibliographical research and is anchored in sources such as: books, contemplating classic and contemporary authors, and articles found in databases of scientific recognition such as Scielo and BVSpsi.

Keywords: Mourning, Attachment, Identification, Anguish, Death.

1. INTRODUCTION

Throughout the whole development process of man it is common to encounter a series of losses, such as unplanned projects, emergence or aggravation of chronic diseases in the course of life, breaches of relationships and, finally, the death of friends and relatives. For Moura (2006) the death loss is a great suffering, because there are several other losses that accompany this event, not limited only to the loved one, but the fear of what can not be controlled, the finitude of life. Any broken bond is certainly painful and all individuals are subject to this experience, death being the only experience established in the certainty of definitive separation and mourning as a process experienced at some time by all some day. Who loses something or someone, lives the sadness of absence and has to adapt to a new reality. (PARKES, 2009).

For Silva et.al. (2007: 98), "the death of those who like it causes profound disruptions, and adjustments are necessary in the way the world is perceived and plans are made to continue living in it." According to the authors, the death of a loved one causes a great deal of disorganization in several aspects, be it in the economic, social and family sphere, being an important process of mental, emotional and even social reorganization. Faced with death and mourning, the individual will probably feel disoriented and nothing will be deeper and more painful than the sense of loss. In this 'painful' state, the feeling is that nothing else or anyone can fill the void that so distresses the mourner. (GANNZERT, CORREIA, 2011).

For Parkes (2009) it is important to understand the effects of mourning on the psychological and physical health of the bereaved individual, as well as the factors that influence their reactions, such as attachment, the subject's perception of the beloved object and its identification with the person who lost.
Through this work it is necessary to understand the construction of the process of mourning within the perspectives of causal sequences, which are innumerable losses that explain the imminent psychological risks in the bereaved person. According to Parkes (1998), mourning is understood as an important psychosocial transition, impacting on all areas of human influence.

Freud (1917) points out that in mourning there is loss of interest in the external world, profoundly distressing discouragement and inhibition of all and any activity and still points out that after a great loss, there will be no substitute, even if that emptiness is filled, but still something it will remain, and that is the only way to perpetuate that love that will not be abandoned.

The knowledge of the finitude of man challenges the representation of death as an interdicted theme, reflecting that only through death as an existential category does life become life rather than living it, clarifying that this process is a psychic phenomenon and necessary considering the its psychosocial, affective and cognitive effects, since mourning is considered as a unique event lived in the peculiarity of each one.

Thus, this work aims, from a bibliographical review, to discuss the psychic mechanisms underlying the process of grief. For this will be used theorists who work the mourning from the theory of Bowlby and theoreticians that has as basis for analysis of the loss to Freudo-Lacanian psychoanalysis.

Research, organization, use of techniques and data analysis are sinequa non conditions for the elucidation of a research (PRODANOV; FREITAS, 2013). Thus, it is necessary to choose an epistemological path that will approach the phenomenon. According to Lakatos; Marconi (2010) bibliographic research is not a repetition of what has already been said or written about a certain subject, but provides the understanding of a theme from a new approach or approach, thus providing new insights and reflections on the same subject matter. In this context, we opt for the research with the privilege of qualitative techniques and it is based on a research of bibliographical survey that will approach the "Thematic of the Mourning", anchored in sources like: books, contemplating classic and contemporary authors, and articles, found in the bases scientific data such as Scielo and BVSpsi, in order to base the research to contribute to the production of knowledge, especially in the specialties that deal with the issue of death. From there, we intend to analyze the references, leveraging the main sources, that is, the most cited authors, forming the backbone of this work, which is backed up in the exploratory research.

2. FIGHT AND DEATH

2.1 FIGHTING AND DEATH THROUGH TIMES

Moura (2006) brings a vision of history about death and mourning to the present day. It is based on the studies of Ariés (2003) in the course of antiquity until the nineteenth century. In Old Age the terminally ill were veiled at home together with their families, as well as in the presence of children, nothing was hidden about death. In the Middle Ages, the growing number of epidemics and diseases that were infectious and non-curative, favored the coexistence of people with death, since it was constant and became part of daily life. Accustomed to this phenomenon, death did not cause much commotion.

From the mid-nineteenth century, Ariés (2003) points out that death no longer happens at home, within the reach of the eyes of the family, but in the hospital. Possibly this change has influenced the way people
began to experience mourning from the death of a loved one, resulting in a great distance between the living and the dead, bringing anguish and often despair, making it difficult to elaborate mourning. According to Elias (1993) death is pushed further and further into the background of social life during the civilizing impulse.

Ariés (2003) warns that "repressing pain", the prohibition of public manifestation and the obligation to suffer alone and in secret, aggravate the suffering of the mourner. When there are no spaces for the family to express itself, the feeling of loneliness widens, bringing suffering and anguish. (Silva et al., 2007). Another factor that according to Ariés (2003) is of great importance is the transference of compassion to the relative of the deceased (formerly addressed to the deceased himself). However, talking about death caused pain to the mourner. Hence the behavior of people avoided the subject. "The prohibition of death and mourning would be, therefore, closely related to the fact that the mourner was stunned by work or, on the contrary, to reach the limit of madness" (Ariés, 2003). Death is thus feared, for it signifies a complete annulment of the life instinct. Fear of death as other phobias can result from internal events, that is, from unresolved conflicting situations. In fact, it is not external objects or situations that create in people the fear of death, but the phantasmatic idea of a permanent and eternal Self that would be annihilated with death, so it is important to realize the effects of mourning on the psychological health of the mourner, as well as the factors that influence their reactions, such as attachment, the subject's perception of the loved object and their identification with the person they lost.

2.2 MOURNING AND ADDICTION

Mourning is experienced in several contexts in which attachment becomes a preponderant factor in the loss and representation of love, which is the deepest source of pleasure in life, whereas the loss of those we love is the deepest source of pain. (PARKES, 2009, p.11).

According to Parkes (2009), the risk of being linked to someone brings insecurity, fear and discomfort to the possibility of losing. Once established this bond, some scholars claim that it is very difficult to be broken, in this way, it is by the nature of the bond that resists the breaking. (PARKES, 2009). Every loss situation experienced by the adult, in fact, is a repetition of an old loss, through the way that child lived and made the first losses of life, having a significant value and great influence in the way the adult will future. (NEIVA, 2016).

Through the Havard Survey, which involved 59 young widows and widowers Parkes and Weiss, the[(1983), p.39 apud PARKES] noted that the intensity of suffering is associated with the risk factors that the bereaved person is exposed to. These have identified personal vulnerability, relationship with the deceased person, events and circumstances leading to death, as well as death itself and social support. The research presented that the attachment to the lost person is a determining factor in the reactions to the mourning, generating two different types of problematic reactions:

- The relationship of dependence, which indicates the possibility of chronic mourning;
- The ambivalent relationship, which indicated the possibility of conflicting mourning.

"Chronic" mourning according to Parkes (2009) is intense from the beginning remaining a long period in this stage of emptiness. Conflicting mourning requires a time of assimilation, a delay in settling in, reaching its apex some time after death and reacting to feelings of anger and / or guilt.
Parkes further adds that there are types of attachments regarding grief reactions, being directly proportional to the link developed and the type generated. Based on the Parkes (2009) studies on attachment strength and attachment safety, it brings a new look at the mother-infant bond, observing the effect of separation, developing a systematic method of observing and classifying attachment patterns by intensifying their studies in relationships of "love" between mother and baby on a scientific footing and demonstrating the peculiar way in which mothers love their babies enabling a profound effect on how babies will see themselves and the world, classifying the types of attachments as:

1 - Insurance

2 - Unsafe

   - anxious / ambivalent
   - avoidant
   - disorganized / disoriented

### 2.1.1 SECURE ACCESS

Parents who are sensitive and responsive to the baby's safety needs, giving a stable basis for the child to explore the world, these children tolerate short separations without much suffering and respond quickly and warmly to the mother (Ainsworth, 2009, p.24 apud PARKES) when she returns and comforts them. Once these patterns established in the first two years of life remain markedly stable and are predictors of the quality of the relationship with the other during childhood, helping to make the child sensitive and secure to others. In this sense Parkes (2009, p.48) points out that "by loving his baby, the mother will teach him to separate from her. Seen from this focus, the most arduous test of a loving relationship can be very successful in the success we achieve by surviving the death of those we love."

So Parkes (2009) points out that children have experienced secure attachments as parents will suffer less emotionally after the engagement in adulthood.

From this perspective of attachment, it can be observed that the reaction to mourning is possibly associated with how caregivers help the child to develop a world recognized by them as presumed and the child's need to look for the lost parent.

### 2.2.2 INSECURITY

#### 2.2.2.1 ANSIOUS / AMBIVALENT

Ainsworth (2009, p.24 apud PARKES) has shown that mothers who are insensitive to the needs of their children, who are disheartening, have children who suffer greatly during separation and cling and cry angrily when mothers return.

For Parkes (2009) those who developed this type of attachment during childhood will report intense and lasting mourning, tending to depend on others, right after the engagement.

#### 2.2.2.2 AVOIDER
In this category, mothers are indifferent and unconcerned about the child's needs, do not express feelings, do not tolerate closeness and / or punish attachment behavior, in this way children learn to inhibit their tendencies to approach and cry, considering these children "indifferent". Parkes (2009).

According to Parkes (2009) as adults, they will find it difficult to show affection or crying and will tend to be aggressive and assertive towards others, having difficulty expressing feelings and / or trusting others, inhibiting or delaying the expression of mourning, being more prone to psychosomatic illness after loss.

2.2.2.3 DESORGANIZER / DESORIENTER

Children present contradictory and disorganized activities, may cry when separated, but avoid the mother when she returns, or approach her, and stand still, or fall on the ground. Main and Ainsworth (2009, p.24 apud PARKES).

Research indicates that the mothers of these children had suffered significant losses or other types of trauma before or after the birth of these children and many responded with severe depression. More than 56% of mothers who had lost a parent by death before completing high school had children who had disorganized attachment. Main and Hessen (2009, p.25 apud PARKES).

Parkes (2009) brings in his research that children who have formed disorganized attachments in adulthood will adopt passive modes of coping and will react to mourning by becoming depressed, powerless and potentially suicidal, having difficulty seeking help from friends and family, though seek the help of doctors and others.

Attachment, therefore, brings in the link the basis of the representation of love and also the starting point to understand the psychic suffering that occurs in the loss, where not only the link is configured the connection of the subject before the beloved object, but also its perception and identification with the person who is gone.

2.3 IDENTIFICATION AND MOURNING

The representation of death in the face of pain and suffering of the other is a phenomenon that goes beyond physical loss, beyond the meaning of the non-existence of being, is a peculiar sense that each has for the other "monotropy" Bowlby (1958, p.13, apud PARKES), "love is a bond with one person only. There is no way to substitute for a lost father, son or partner. " Each lost link is unique because it runs through a dimension of representation and lack, that is, the identification of the subject in front of the loss of the other, what function did he have in the other? What part in your life will not exist anymore?

In referring to Freud, (PARKES, 1998) points out that he, at one time, considered identification as a single condition that the id can give up its objects. Ratifying, after ten years that if a person is lost his object of love, or has abdicated it, will often compensate by identifying with that object, formulating that the subject is constituted of parts of the other or others.

In this context, the meaning of the loss gains strength in relation to the roles that were developed during the existence of the other, which forces the bereaved to experience a psychosocial transition, coercing the
change. When one dies, a series of conceptions about the world, which relied on the existence of the other person, to guarantee its validity, suddenly, are not valid. (PARKES, 1998).

According to Freud (1917), even though he is aware of the loss that gave rise to his great suffering, that is, to his melancholic state, the person knows who he lost, but not what he lost in that person. The anguish occurs from the libidinal detachment with a beloved object, and this process is performed little by little, for a space of time and cathexial energy, prolonging this half time, the existence of the lost object.

For Freud (1914) there is a difference between the nature of melancholy and the normal affect of mourning. Freud (2010) distinguishes between the reaction to loss in relation to the disturbance of self-esteem present only in mourning, correlating the two states on the same conditions. Both have a profound discouragement, the cessation of interest in the external world, the loss of the ability to love, and the inhibition of all activity. Freud (1917) asserts that grief does not exist in the unconscious of loss, and that inhibition and loss of interest are explained by the work of mourning, in which the ego is absorbed, and it is the world that becomes poor and empty, already in melancholy is the ego itself.

What appears in the process of mourning is a disconnection little by little from the representations that had to the beloved object, giving place to a deviation of reality and to an attachment by means of a hallucinatory psychosis loaded with desire. Each of the memories, and expectations regarding each one. For this reason, the domain of reality is restored fragmented, making this process painful, uncomfortable, and accepted as something natural (FREUD, 1917).

Parkes (1998, p. 128) states that Freud (1923) in "The Ego and Id" developed the notion that withdrawal of the libido connecting one person to another can only happen when the dead person is "reinvested" within the ego, some psychoanalysts consider identification with lost object as a necessary component of mourning. Abraham (1970) wrote a year after he saw the object "hidden in the ego": "The lost object is not gone, for now I carry within me and I can never lose it"

Krupp (1963, p.129, apud PARKES) considered the identification derived from the repeated frustrations and losses of early childhood: "The child tries to become loved to prevent future losses ... From parts of the personality of oth[a criança em desenvolvimento cria]ers to the mosaic of self. "In this view, identification with the lost person is not only a way of delaying awareness of loss; is the necessary condition without which the grief would not end and a new identity would not develop.

In this way, "figures of which the person seems to have abdicated or were lost are kept permanently bound by bonds which could not be even narrower." Rochlin (1965, p.129, apud PARKES).

According to Freud (1917), awareness of loss does not define suffering, but the threat of losing something in that person, so anguish occurs not only in the knowledge of a broken bond, but is installed in the detachment gradually with object, configuring the existence of the lost object.

2.4 ANGUISHNESS AND MOURNING

According to Lacan (1962) the anguish is an affection that I did not deceive. Besset (2007) argues that the threat of the loss of the object and not the loss itself is theorizing of this feeling, therefore, would be a
reaction in response to an imaginary lack or that the anguish is manifested "before something." Catarina (2008) there are different definitions of anguish when it comes to the reaction to an impending loss; another related to castration (the loss of an organ) and the anguish of the loss of love of the loved one or of a real or imaginary error (moral anguish).

Besset (2007) points out that anguish is the presence that escapes any knowledge. Their reactions often somatize, affecting the body of the talking subject. Psychic pain is something annihilating. The body loses its armor, its safety, and decays. A more primitive antidote used by man is the cry, then the resounding words that try to form a bridge between the known reality before and after the loss.

Guilt is a variant of anguish. It is a reaction to the threat that the loved one withdraws his love. Catarina (2008) says that it is the conscience of the punishment for the lack, be it real or imaginary. A psychic trauma can be produced as a result of a brutal or mild loss when added by a series of small losses not felt by the subject that provoke imperceptible pains in which, somatized, lead the individual to a state of tension to the point where a simple innocuous event was enough for this pain to erupt in a conscious way.

This feeling precedes the loss and may also manifest itself soon after the death of a loved one. White (2014) says that love is configured as the substitution of lack. In this context the subject's link to the object occurs in the quest to fill the void. If the role of the constitution of the subject as a missing being was established, allowing the separation "weaning" then the primordial love of the Other fulfilled its role. This function of producing a logical void to which every object choice would later operate as a cover for the lack, allowing the elaboration of the process of mourning, making every living being cling to life. Freud (1917). According to Besset (1998), love veils the affection of anguish. Therefore, clinging to something is an inherent risk of the possibility of losing it at any time by occurring to separation.

2.5 LOVE AND MOURNING

It is believed that, in spite of its limiting character, the nothingness imposed by death enables at the same time, openness to the understanding of new possibilities of meaning and different ways of thinking and acting, through a process of mourning experienced in various contexts family, evidencing in a powerful experience of suffering that can be redefined or translated into more unique possibilities of existence.

Then the living happens to be a trajectory marked by an evolutionary process that establishes some conditions to constitute the human being, beginning with the first cut, the first separation, to move away from an extension link called the umbilical cord, and from there inaugurates the beginning of the loss with all its implications. The constant search of the man to look for something that supposedly will keep him complete is a path that extends throughout life, in view of that loss is the repetition of several other losses, often referring to the sense of credit, to the fear of losing something or someone being that feeling defined as anguish.

Failure can still transform into an assimilated presence through a process of elaboration not to lose the bonds and affections with the lost object. In the words of the poet Carlos Drummond de Andrade (1987, p.25):

For a long time I thought that absence is lacking. And I was ignorant, the fault. I'm not sorry today. There is no shortage in absence. Absence is a being in me. And I feel it, white, so stuck, snuggled in my arms,
that I laugh and dance and make merry exclamations, because absence, this absence assimilated, nobody robs me more of me.

Therefore, the missing being will always exist even if it justifies its lack in the other, but there will always be a place to fill, a gap, the search for the father, the mother or any other person that has contributed significantly to their perception. The separation that makes it unique is also the cause of absence and the awareness of lack, making the bond existing only in remembrance. According to Freud (1917), the child learns to love other people who remedy their helplessness and satisfy their needs.

According to Zimerman (2010, p.38) another factor that is present in the course of this path is a universal feeling that is called love, being used by many to define various links, bringing in its etymology something interesting of Latin origin, mortis, which is related to the Greek "moros", having among other meanings, also expressed as death, death, death. What makes possible a harmonious correlation with Freud's fundamental principle as to the existence of the "drives of life" as "drives of love" or "Eros" and the drives of death, which he calls "aggressive" or "Thanatos".

Based on this assumption Zimerman (2010) refers that the feeling of love would result from a great predominance of it on the drives of hatred that would be virtually excluded, without (= a) a strong and permanent presence of these drives of death (= mors), that is, a-mors would be without death drive, so love means life (ZIMERMAN, 2010). Then love would be related to death, because according to Parkes (2009), love and mourning are linked, it is not possible to feel the first without running the risk of confronting the second. Therefore, it is only possible to understand mourning through the knowledge of nature and the patterns of love in its varied senses, for the search for a lost link, the anguish of losing it and the lack are inherent in the evolutionary process of man, therefore, a phenomenon necessary to complete the cycle of life.

**FINAL CONSIDERATIONS**

It's just two sides of the same trip ...
The train that arrives is the same train of departure ...
The hour of the meeting is also farewell.
The platform of this season is LIFE.
"Meetings and Farewells"

Concepts show that bereavement is seen as a difficult but comprehensible passage from the point of view of human development, since it is born, grows and dies, following a natural course of the cycle of life. Mourning is having the possibility to reflect on who the people are in a prospect of self-encounter. Freud (1917) points out that the knowledge of human fragility allows the subject to understand himself and that often man must get sick to have access to a truth of this kind. Often this reality can put at risk the subject's mental health at some point and in these cases there is a need for psychological work. Mourning is the response to the rupture of a meaningful bond, in which there was an affective investment between the mourner and the departed entity. Faced with this context, the mourner experiences a series of changes related to the economic, family and social environment, among others, in a particular and singular way, which will be associated with how the bereaved experienced the process (of illness, marital separation, geographic changes, etc.), characterized by causal sequences.
The ambiguity between the certainty of mortality and the uncertainty of the unknown, makes one think about the possibilities of talking about death and love so widely discussed and feared, according to Parkes (1998) mourning, precisely the process of loss is the price that is paid for love.

Love, bond, loss, and lack are part of an epistemological line that engenders the entire process of loss based on the researches and studies of theorists who ground the questions about the process of mourning. The correlation between the theorists about mourning fuses as the discourse has the same objective: to understand the human suffering and the psychic mechanisms underlying the process of mourning for possible interventions, dignifying the being as vulnerable and at the same time changeable, respecting their limits and advancing in what is possible. For some authors love and loss are related to attachment, identifying possible mechanisms developed through links to be formed within the mother-child context, contributing to the understanding of the implications of mourning. Freud (1917) differentiates the reactions of mourning based on the identification of the mourner with the lost object, a function that had in the other the lack of a part in his life that will no longer exist, whereas Lacan (1962) brings structural failure as a factor determinant for the production of anguish in the face of loss. In this connection it is understood that death signals the discontinuity of a life, marked by bonds, by an identification, by a history understood by the hardships of separation. Mourning can have many meanings, but it is still a psychological and necessary phenomenon in the psychological, cognitive and psychosocial point of view of the subject, significantly altering his worldview, as well as bringing to light his more subjective and primitive aspects.

In view of the above, death itself accompanies the subject from birth, when the first losses are inevitable, separation with mother making possible a necessary lack in what refers to a being not extending to the mother, but a subject separated from the mother, autonomous.

Understanding mourning as a process and not as a state brings a new vision to possible interventions, grounded in the knowledge of man with all its peculiarities and challenges around the finitude and the knowledge dealing with the lack.

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