

Neuroanatomy of Mourning and Pain: The New Psychotherapeutic Frontiers to Face Suffering

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ABSTRACT

Objectives: The importance of knowing the neuroanatomy of the areas and brain circuits that are activated in case of severe human suffering, such as the affliction for a bereavement or a fear of situations like the one linked to the COVID-19 pandemic, it is of fundamental importance for all the professionals operating in the bio-psycho-social health and wellness sector.

This is more evident in the case of children, as the plasticity of some brain areas and the development of new synaptic connections reaches its peak during the period of childhood. In the stages of adult life, on the other hand, in the case of the female world, the problem of adequate coping with disabling situations of illness or stress is even more important than in the male world. In fact, society entrusts the female world with greater contemporaneity in the assignment of different roles and tasks. Consequently, the impairment in terms of health of the brain areas involved is more disabling in the various tasks and functions.

Several neuroimaging studies with magnetic functional resonance have been conducted on population of people with PTSD versus population of healthy volunteers of control, and also, metabolic studies of nuclear medicine on people with PTSD (PET), in which alterations of the hippocampus with reduction of its volume in people with PTSD.

Methods: How is the antidote to the prolonged effect of dysfunctional reactions produced?

Some therapeutic techniques are aimed at bringing back fears and sufferings that are often not verbalized and unaware, restoring them to a level of awareness through the creation of new 'ways of synaptic connections', which result is the release of chemicals substances such as endorphins. The change is optimized by moving from the primitive limbic areas to areas of the prefrontal cortex, the most evolved and refined system of the brain.

The use of art, fiction, guided fantasies, creation of green spaces, allow an inductive and creative language particularly suitable in the world of childhood and the female universe where well-being is closely linked to the need to express a sensitivity often crushed by affective reality and its consequences.

Results and Conclusion: The words wisely used in therapy, as in the case of inductive words, cause in the anatomical field functional changes aimed at healing, in the same way that pain, fear and suffering, triggered the changes that caused discomfort.

Psychologists, psychotherapists and psychiatrists are called upon to use interventions aimed at activating naturally restorative changes in the same areas of the brain circuit of the pain.

Keywords: COVID-19, Mourning, Inductive words, Children

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