

The Pains of Grief and Psychic Suffering: A State of Orphaning

Mauro Trevisan*

Department of Psychology, Estacio de Brasilia University Center, Brazil

Abstract

Introduction

This article is the result of a doctoral research in psychology, where this part presents the concept of mourning and its subjectivity. The mourning process goes through stages, phases, states or even stages. It also reports on the elaboration process and psychic suffering in the process of death and mourning and the symbiosis that exists between the entities, the greater the affective bond, the greater the symbiotic degree, and in this sense the elaboration process will be more painful.

Objectives

To describe about human suffering arising from loss and mourning, to propose a reflection on the meaning of orphanity. methodology: qualitative, with exploratory method and literature review technique.

Conclusion

The formation of the person in contemporaneity reflects a fragile, compulsive existence, with little or almost no solid internal content. It is necessary to learn from the losses, whenever we go through an event we come out stronger or weakened, today we have many support networks that in other times did not exist, so even in adversity, in times of difficulty, it is still possible to find a meaning for life.

Opinion

Human Suffering and the Pains of Mourning

The loss process is subjective with regard to the reactions of each. Therefore, taking care of human pain and suffering, managing losses, is not an easy task, because we work with human beings moved by emotions much more and not just for reason. It is highlighted that caring for and managing people in their losses is an arduous task. The reactions may be as varied as possible, the human being is a strange, singular in his subjectivity.

The process of mourning elaboration is defined by specific terms, each author will consider the process of elaboration of mourning by stages, stages, states, tasks. The terms proposed by the authors imply a distinction: in relation to the phase, it may refer to something in development; internships refer to a specific moment of a continuous process; in relation to the state is a set of conditions in which they are at a certain time, it is the physical condition of a person or some part of his body. It is worth remembering, from the perspective of mourning, these phases and stages are not linear, the concept of tasks is related to the idea of mission, officio, the author who considers tasks of mourning, *Wordem(1998)*, according to him, the mourning is not linear, will depend on each individual.

The dimension of suffering can be considered psychic and social, in the case of psychic suffering, there may be multiple factors between critical situations, one of which is coping with one's own death. Faced with the suffering of loss, feelings arise characterized by mood swings, imbalance, loss of dreams and hopes to reorganize before the world. With regard to the social dimension of suffering, it "is marked by isolation, creating communication difficulties felt in the dying process" (*Pessini, 2002, p. 62*).

Feelings are inevitable in a bereaved, more often in adults. The studies by *Parkes (1998)*, one of the authorities on the subject, on grief have contributed significantly to the understanding of these phenomena thanks to the depth of their research focused on the various stages of mourning and the process of loss [1]. This topic will specifically point out the so-called pains of grief, especially psychic suffering.

Adults, unlike children, are aware of their actions, as *Parkes (1998)* reports, and know that there is no point in looking for someone who has died [1]. But this does not prevent this adult from going through the strong experience that drives them to demand, intaking the so-called stages, phases or states in which the authors classify grief. The bereaved goes through different moments during the mourning period not only because of their uniqueness, but also because each individual has different perceptions and feelings.

The psychic dimension, cited by *Pessini (2007)*, is reflected in *Parkes' analysis of grief pain [2]*. Therefore, *Parkes (1998)* found that one of the most striking traits of grief is not deep-stage depression, but the acute stages of pain, with a lot of anxiety and psychic pain [1]. It is common for the bereaved at this stage to cry and miss the person who died. In such cases, pain starts a few hours or days after loss, and can range from five to fourteen days.

Over time, it is possible for its frequency to decrease, and only reappears when the bereaved suffers some stimulus that brings loss to the mind. Among the stimuli that can provoke the resumption of this memory, we highlight opening a drawer and finding a photograph or some belongs, or, in a conversation with another friendly person, remember what the person who died did. This is the process called elaboration and that can also mean demand.

This period is considered to be searchable, either physically or by memories. "Situations promote a persistent and obstructive desire for the person who has died, and seek with thoughts that only cause more pain" [1]. The affective investment



that exists between peers can cause an even greater pain or difficulty in accepting loss, separation, and leads the person not to conform and to seek the person who left.

In a symbiotic relationship, for example, between parents and children, the pain of loss becomes very intense. This is observed in statements, where the bereaved children report that, a few months after the parents' death, they continued to look for them and make certain routes, once a week, passing in places where they frequented as a supermarket, when the parents were alive. They report that this process continued for a period of three months. As they left work, they passed through this place – the children reported – hoping to see the mother or father they lost. Some children interviewed stated that this attitude warmed their spirit and, when he arrived at the establishment, he had the feeling that the mother or father would be there, or would soon arrive.

This representation of the place where both were going to give the mourners the sensation of reunion. It is what *Parkes (1998)* called insight, according to which the bereaved adult has a strong impulse to look for the person who died or go to meet him [1].

The Sense of Orphaning in the Face of Loss

In view of the respective findings, it is important to reflect that coming into the world permeates, almost always unconsciously, the inexorable presence of a future death. And talking about death means entering the field of loss and grieving processes. The affective investment towards the next that leaves us puts us before reviving the phenomenon of bonding and separation that accompanies us from the remote childhood. When one part of this life one loses the conviviality, which causes pain, sadness and longing. The experience in times of pandemic, made us reflect, that in the loss of a father or mother we are facing orphanship.

This term comes from the Greek word *orphanós*, which literally means devoid, deprived of. In the existential philosophical sense, *Faria & Amaral (2017)* point the experience of orphanity to a being devoid of meaning, superficial, that does not manifest itself, does not emerge in its potentialities, in being in the world (in *der Welt sein*) and paradoxically in being greater than the very world that surrounds it, as *Kierkegaard* attests.

The feeling of being an orphan destroys the unedemand expels the individual to the edges of existence (superficiality). That is, an endless rising and dying as in the punishment of *Prometheus*, who chained to a rock of a distant mountain, was under the scorching sun and the cold moon. He tried to attack him on a daily basis, tear his bowels and eat his liver. During the night the organ regenerated and in the morning was ready for a new voracious attack.

Prometheus was punished because he stole *zeus'* fire and granted it to man. He also took from his memory the memory of death and fed him blind and inconsequential desires as a form of redemption. These acts of *Prometheus* symbolically configure the progression of the process that culminated in existential orphanity, which reminds Christianity of the feeling of orphanship after Adam and Eve ate the forbidden fruit, losing the original divine protection. Both refer to the separation between the divine and human world, the origin of fire and the forbidden fruit (disobedience, science and knowledge), as well as the evils of humanity.

Thus, from the myth of *Prometheus* in dialogue with classical and modern authors such as *Kierkegaard*, *Freud*, *Heidegger*, *Sartre*, *Buber* and others, it is possible to present, in a philosophical and historical perspective, the state of existential orphaning of today. Its direct relationship with the tragic sense of existence, of the attempt to suppress anguish and the fragile consciousness of finitude and transcendence. The formation of the person in contemporaneity reflects a fragile, compulsive existence, with little or almost no solid internal content. A hollow being living on the shores, therefore orphaned of himself.

It can be observed that being an orphan is independent of age. The loss of someone close generates at any stage of life the feeling of orphaning. The loss of the one who left will form a void that must be filled again. This is the period of mourning that needs elaboration and overcoming and can be manifested in the different expressions about loss and mourning.

In some cultures after the period of recollection of a loss of a loved one, family members invite friends and celebrate life through a hearty meal. This ritual signals that death is not the end of life, but a phase inherent in the human condition.

Reorganization

Experiencing the loss of a loved one significantly affects the human being, especially

when the symbiotic degree is stronger among people. The period of mourning is a time, and as *Ecclesiastes* says, "there is a time for everything under heaven", time to live and time to die, time to suffer, but also time to revive, resignify. In fact, reorganization, resignification is the last stage of mourning, when the person transposes that painful moment, and, follows life forward.

Thomas Aquino, in his *Theological Summa* (I-II, q. 36, a.3), emphasizes: "When a person is in suffering, it is natural that the sympathy of a friend will bring him support." Still in this line, *Manzotti (2013)* points out: "there is an exit, even if it is a small flame at the end of the tunnel" [3]. One must be aware that going through the grief and pain of grief and overcoming them is not something that takes place overnight. There must be effort, personal and family, and that the spiritual question is not forgotten: in God and with God "there is a way of restoration".

To reorganize life, to rescue again the meaning of life after loss there is another suggestion that can contribute in this sense, which is to seek help in a religious confession. That is, by way of religious segment develop the spiritual side by prayers, prayers. It is, of course, an encouragement for the soul, to have the confidence, to believe. As *St. Augustine* said: "Crede ut intelligas". Developing the dimension of faith is very important and can certainly contribute at this stage. This references the resiliency process. Resilience is understood as the ability of man to face situations, to overlap and emerge strengthened by adverse experiences. Resilience can be defined as positive adaptation in response to a certain adversity; overcoming it, including. It means not only enduring an adverse situation, but committing to a new life dynamic.

Final Considerations

The theme about death is still little studied in many cultures, but the human being coming to the world permeates, almost always unconsciously, the inexorable presence of a future death. A death education is needed, that this theme be discussed in the academic context, not only in health or psychology courses, but all areas of training should at some point propose reflections on this theme. In the same way that in many cultures this term is not dealt with, in others it is already discussed with a greater openness. Still, speaking of death refers to social representations involving negative figures, in Greek mythology originated the representation of the boatman of death, later the reaper of life.

In this pandemic period, it was observed more frequently the feeling of orphanhood of many people, we experienced the mourning not only of the physical loss of the person, of the family, but a mourning for the social isolation, for the losses that the world has experienced, mourning for the lost work, mourning for the reduction of the salario, mourning for the new way of working immersed in technology, at the same time at home but distant, I fight for the pain of the other, for the thousands of lives that are gone. The formation of the person in contemporaneity reflects a fragile, compulsive existence, with little or almost no solid internal content. It is worth remembering *Viktor Frankl*, who lived in the concentration camps in the Second World War, working from 12 to 14 hours, reports that even in these conditions what gave meaning to life was knowing that they would have some bread crumbs to sanitise their hunger [4]. In a sense, the losses generate the sense of orphanity, affect us, shake us, we must not forget, the longing of those who have left, but life for those who are remains beautiful and beautiful as it has always been, those who have left are only on the other side of the road, regardless of religious confession, it is necessary to believe that the moment of mourning had passed, the longing is , but life goes on. Grateful we should be every day, because we have the opportunity to manifest our thoughts here, to interact, many in this period, will no longer have this opportunity to read, see the sun, because they have left. Every day a new opportunity to start over, and move on.

References

1. Colin Murray Parkes (1998) Luto: estudos sobre a perda na vida adulta. Brazilian Journal of Psychiatry, 21(1): 80-83.
2. Pessine Léo (2007) Humanização da dor e sofrimentos humanos no contexto hospitalar. Bioética 10(2): 51-72.
3. Pe Reginaldo Manzotti (2013) Feridas da alma: a luz e a sabedoria de Deus para superação de nossas dores e limites. In: 2nd (edn.), Rio de Janeiro: Agir, pp. 1-75.
4. (2009) Agostinho De Hipona. Confissões, São Paulo: Vozes, Brazil, pp. 1-39.