

LISTENING TO STORIES, GOING TO THE HEART OF THE SOCIO-CULTURAL CONTEXTS. RESEARCH IN DYNAMIC CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY BEYOND INDIVIDUALS

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Abstract

In this work we highlight the role of research in dynamic-clinical psychology to promote knowledge, analysis and interventions on the relationship between individuals and their contexts. When social circumstances become critical, the comprehension of individual behaviour and intrapsychic mechanisms can help to analyze contextual factors and social processes to reach a global understanding of events. The analysis of narratives represents a sensitive methodology to understanding beliefs, stereotypes, recursive themes, affective symbolizations, collusive dynamics. We will discuss these topics through three case studies beyond the individualistic paradigm:

1. Young high-educated refugees were involved as cultural mediators between the host community and migrants. Through clinical interviews, secondary micro traumatic experiences emerged, due to their exposition to life stories of violence, torture, grief, loss of bonds. A clinical program helped young refugees in restoring their resilience.
2. Young women involved in human trafficking, hosted in women's shelters, were interviewed about their life stories. From the analysis of their narratives, the powerful coercion of archaic beliefs appeared to limit them, impeding recovery of self-determination. This, in turn, keeps them from completely benefiting from the rescue programs they were currently involved in.
3. Key figures in a German city hosting a significant number of refugees were interviewed about their perception of community attitude towards migrants. The emotional text analysis performed on the texts of interviews highlighted the affective symbolization of the migrants as fragile children to be protected, as well as dangerous aliens invading the old men's land.

Our work will accentuate the relationship between research and practice in dynamic-clinical psychology to uncover factors affecting personal, social and cultural processes and its potentially contribution to facing social themes of public interest.