

# Resilience and diversity in individuation

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## Abstract

*This paper explores and correlates the concepts of individuation and resilience, initially through the observation of the vegetation of the Cerrado Rupestre in Jalapão and of the Veredas in Chapada dos Veadeiros. The experience amidst the flora of Jalapão leads to reflection on individuation in challenging conditions, bringing into question the socially pre-established models. To discuss the problem of social molds and expectations, three cases of women who discuss the decision of motherhood in the analysis are presented. Although each case addresses different paths and choices, they all reflect upon resilience and the impact of adverse experiences on the formation of identity. The author highlights the importance of not romanticizing adversity but celebrating the uniqueness of each trajectory and the ability to flourish, even in difficult conditions. ■*

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## *Resiliência e diversidade na individuação*

### **Resumo**

O artigo explora e correlaciona os conceitos de individuação e resiliência, inicialmente através da observação da vegetação do Cerrado Rupestre no Jalapão e das Veredas na Chapada dos Veadeiros. A experiência em meio à flora do Jalapão leva à reflexão sobre a individuação em condições desafiadoras, trazendo o questionamento dos moldes socialmente pré-estabelecidos. Para debater o problema dos moldes e expectativas sociais, são trazidos três casos de mulheres que discutem a decisão da maternidade na análise. Embora cada caso aborde diferentes caminhos e escolhas, todas refletem sobre a resiliência e o impacto de experiências adversas na formação da identidade. A autora destaca a importância de não romantizar a adversidade, mas celebrar a singularidade de cada trajetória e a capacidade de florescer, mesmo em condições difíceis. ■

**Palavras-chave:** individuação; resiliência; arquétipo materno; árvore; psicologia analítica.

## *Resiliencia y diversidad en la individuación*

### **Resumen**

El artículo explora y correlaciona los conceptos de individuación y resiliencia, inicialmente a través de la observación de la vegetación del Cerrado Rupestre en Jalapão y de las Veredas en Chapada dos Veadeiros. La experiencia en medio de la flora de Jalapão lleva a la reflexión sobre la individuación en condiciones desafiantes, planteando cuestionamientos sobre los moldes socialmente preestablecidos. Para debatir el problema de los moldes y expectativas sociales, se presentan tres casos de mujeres que discuten la decisión de la maternidad en el análisis. Aunque cada caso aborda diferentes caminos y elecciones, todas reflexionan sobre la resiliencia y el impacto de experiencias adversas en la formación de la identidad. La autora destaca la importancia de no romantizar la adversidad, sino celebrar la singularidad de cada trayectoria y la capacidad de florecer, incluso en condiciones difíciles. ■

**Palabras claves:** individuación; resiliencia; arquetipo materno; árbol; psicología analítica.

*"I came to sing about this land  
Before anything else, I warn  
I bring machete, raw passion  
And good rocks in the archive  
There are people who go crazy and scream  
I sing, chirp and whistle  
If this street were mine  
The ipê tree would be alive"*

Ná Ozzetti, Dante Ozzetti e Itamar  
Assumpção, 1999

The concept of resilience has permeated my work for decades. In the field of Analytical Psychology, my first publication about it was in 2011. But it was on a family trip, observing the biome called Cerrado Rupestre, a very dry savanna in Jalapão, Tocantins, and the Veredas—immortalized by Guimarães Rosa—in Chapada dos Veadeiros, Goiás, that I had the broader understanding of the concept, combining it with the concept of individuation.

Jalapão is a semiarid region, interspersed with spots of higher humidity, located in the eastern part

of the State of Tocantins. Its vegetation is characterized as a savanna, with a wide range of humidity, from Veredas—the most humid areas, constituted of strips of higher vegetation meandering the drier savanna, denouncing the subterranean watercourse—to the Cerrado Rupestre. This one is present in the higher area, and so, dryer, compounded by irregular vegetation and bushes, in rocky outcrop areas. The arboreal cover varies from 5% to 20%, and the median height varies from 2 to 4 meters (Instituto Chico Mendes de Conservação da Biodiversidade [ICMBio], n.d.). The trees found in more humid savanna or even in Atlantic Forest, as *araçá*, which in these biomes can reach 6 meters high, are also found in Cerrado Rupestre, but are much shorter (Pinto et al., 2009). These trees, which can measure up from half a meter

to a meter and a half, and in other biomes can reach almost ten meters, are popularly called “natural bonsais”. Like a true bonsai, they are plants with complete development, capable of generating fruit, but with characteristics adapted to the shallow, poorer, and dryer soil.

The life force emanated by this bush, this “natural bonsai” growing amidst the arid climate, the strength of its trunk breaking through the rocky ground, the green insistence of its leaves, all together had a huge impact on me. I felt a great desire of being, living—projecting human feelings onto the plant. Paraphrasing João Cabral de Melo Neto (1956), to see life exploded, unraveling its thread, stubbornly, manufacturing itself, even if small, touched me.

At Veredas, we also observe trees found in other biomes with modified characteristics. Even with more humidity from the watercourse, which is often subterranean, still the resources available to vegetation are scarcer than in tropical forests. That’s why



**Figure 1.** “Natural bonsai” – bush in a rock at Jalapão. Personal archive.



**Figure 2.** The same bush highlighted in figure 1 in a rock at Jalapão. Personal archive.



**Figure 3.** Mango tree at a Vereda in Chapada dos Veadeiros. Personal archive.





**Figure 4.** Fruits from mango tree at a Vereda in Chapada dos Veadeiros, highlighted in figure 3. Personal archive.

I found a “skinny mango tree” in the middle of a Vereda at Chapada dos Veadeiros.

The mango tree I found was bearing fruits—so I could recognize it. Therefore, it is a healthy and complete plant, capable of generating fruit.

Understanding resilience as a “capacity of, once impacted by adversity, to suffer transformations that, in the individuation process, results in more growth than deformity” (Moreira, 2011, p. 37), we could call this mango tree, as well the “natural bonsais”, resilient. More than this, this vegetation urges me to the reflection on individuation: “the ability of a person form for oneself a coherent, unique individual personality, and, moreover, singular in depth and wealth” (Hopcke, 2012, p. 76). Yes, individuation was the emerging concept: a tree that realizes its potential, in this case, a mango tree, a fruit tree that generates fruit. Developing, not despite, but in line with the

environment. Adapted, with the slimmer trunk, more delicate branches, and less leafy, the crown interspersed with the crowns of other trees around it, all of them sharing the humidity of the small watercourse, amidst a harsher climate. However, such harmony with the environment did not prevent it from realizing its potential.

Jacobi (1967, p. 77) explains that “the individuation is a natural process immanent in all living organism”. Coelho (2024) explains that Jung brings the *unus mundus* concept, proposing the human being and the psyche inseparable from the world, including nature, and vegetation. According to this author, the natural landscape images seem to have the potential to evoke in many of us our own nature and our vital representation.

Jung brings the idea of individuation as a process of development of personality, especially in the second half of life, in which the person progressively harmonizes the communication between consciousness and unconsciousness, consolidating the psychic unity. “As the name shows, it is a process or course of development arising out of the conflict between the two fundamental psychic facts” (Jung, 2018a, p. 281, § 523). Coelho (2024) states the similarity of the human individuation process to the trees: these grow into the sky at the same measure that they grow inside the ground, connecting the sky and the underground.

Alvarenga (2008) adds the harmonization among the individual and the collective demands in this equation. Jacobi (1967, p. 78) conceptualizes individuation as “the rising self-awareness of the individual and the society”. Since both consciousness and unconsciousness are in constant contact with the external environment, we cannot imagine that individuation would occur to the detriment of the latter. On the contrary, the individuation happens with the interaction of the individual with the environment. And this includes the adversities, which brings us to the concept of resilience.

Pinheiro (2004) highlights that resilience does not mean invulnerability but has to do with flexibility and ability to overcome. Infante (2005) explains that postulating resilience without reducing it to

invulnerability implies assuming that the individual is affected by adversity but can overcome it. Ralha-Simões (2001) ponders that, going through adversities includes necessarily being impacted by them, otherwise, these would either be unreal adversities, or we would return to the situation of repression in the shadow. If we consider the harmonious contact between the conscious and unconscious conditions of individuation, this underlies resilience. As I reported in 2015, Iraci Galiás, in the lecture at Pontifícia Universidade Católica of São Paulo in 2009, stated that she considers resilience as a potential to the individuation process.

Araújo (2011) resumes the discussion of Manciaux (2007) about resilience as a myth or reality. It is a reality shown in several research including a diversity of methods, quantitative and qualitative, some of them cited above. But it also is an ancestral idea, present in myths and symbolic tales that show the human condition against external forces. This discussion proposes resilience as a mobilizing fundamental myth. When I observe the miniature trees in Jalapão, the mobilization goes far beyond mythology.

Thinking about facing adversity resulting in more growth than deformity implies a preexistent form. But which form would it be? Thinking about the mango tree, which one is the correct one: the tall tree, with its strong trunk and leafy crown from the farms of the countryside of São Paulo state (figure 5); the short tree, but with a leafy crown, in a sidewalk of



**Figure 5.** Mango tree at Espírito Santo do Pinhal (SP). Personal archive.

São Paulo City (figure 6); or the skinny tree from a Vereda at Chapada dos Veadeiros (figure 3)?

Which eucalyptus would be considered correct: the one in figure 7, in a farm in the countryside of São Paulo State, or the one in figure 8, in Chapada dos Veadeiros?

Transposing the problem of what is expected as normal to the human being, we do not have smaller troubles. Maybe the effort in defining the normal and the pathological is bringing an excess of patterning in human life. The enlargement of the diagnostic criteria of mental pathologies is taking us to a situation described in the Machado de Assis work. Like Simão Bacamarte, maybe only the DSM-V authors are free of any mental pathology. Or, if everybody is sick, nobody is sick.

Jung (2018a, p. 282, § 524) says that: “How the harmonizing of conscious and unconscious data is to be undertaken cannot be indicated in the form of a recipe”. According to him, it is up to the therapist to attentively observe the emerging symbols, to help the conscious-unconscious harmonize towards totality, more than the suppression of the symptoms. Jung (2018b, p. 18, § 3) still talks about the analytical process getting to the development and progress towards an enigmatic goal. We can notice that when we search for standardization, life drive throws out the perspective. The strength I saw in the bush amidst the arid environment of Jalapão



**Figure 6.** Mango tree on a sidewalk in Vila Mariana, São Paulo City. Personal archive.





**Figure 7.** Eucalyptus in the countryside of Jundiaí (SP).  
Personal archive.



**Figure 8.** Eucalyptus in Chapada dos Veadeiros.  
Personal archive.

escapes the diagnostic manuals. These also exclude the joy that overflows from the extremely leafy eucalyptus amidst the savanna, again running the risk of animism.

However, there must be some limits. Individuation does not occur apart from society but

in a dialectic relation with it, and this fact helps with some contour. It must have some guidance: this is the function of the Self. In the therapeutic relationship, we must observe the signs of the Self—dreams and emergent symbols from unconsciousness—to learn about the individuation path of each one. In the therapeutic work, there is no room for rush: each symbol must be circum-ambulated by both. With due care to avoid ostentation, the therapist must stimulate the exploration of the multiplicity of faces of each problem situation, associating themes, tales, songs, or other symbolic elements that occur in the process, minding to not get so far away from the point. However, it is necessary to trust that an adult client will know how to set the tone and the limit of the process if the analyst is attentive to the signs.

To exemplify the reasoning, I will describe three cases.

A patient I will call Sakura, 36 years old, married, of Japanese descent, born in the countryside of São Paulo state, living in São Paulo City for 11 years, working as an administrative assistant and a foreign trade undergraduate, seeks psychotherapy. Two years prior, she underwent surgery to remove an ovary, and 6 months prior she got a cyst on the other ovary. She feels guilty because she avoided pregnancy, which she tells very emotionally, but discreetly. On the other hand, she says that she never felt it was the right time to have children. She does not feel ready. She always wanted to do differently from her parents: “They brought children into the world without having the conditions to raise them!”. As Severino, the migrant, from Melo Neto, she questioned the meaning of bringing life under the perspective of an adverse living.

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A patient I will call Rose, a 32-years-old lawyer and civil servant born in the metropolitan area of São Paulo, came to see me because she had been dating for 11 years and could not decide whether to get married. They had bought an apartment that would be ready soon, but she could not move in with her boyfriend after it was ready. She fears irreversible

decisions. She does not want children, fears losing the conquered freedom, but fears regretting not having children and gets annoyed by the social pressure to be a mother. She wonders about the right to live her life her own way, if it is not a stubbornness that she would regret later. On the other hand, she overflows with strength and joy of living, which do not fit into very rigid social limits. She talks in a very kind and polite way, choosing the words. However, she conveys strength and conviction in her speech.

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A patient I will call Daisy, a biologist and civil servant born in São Paulo City, Brazil, looks for help given the severe health condition of her youngest sister, an unexpected stroke that left her in a coma. The children of her sister are 5 and 10 years old. Daisy chose not to have children. Her mother had a degenerative illness, and Daisy feared having children with the same disease. Debating maternity was not on her original demand, but the difficulty in concentrating on her work, while taking care of her nephews and tackling the grief for her sister's illness.

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Apparently three women very different among themselves with different demands. However, the three patients share in common adversity histories in childhood and adolescence.

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Sakura is the sixth daughter of an offspring of eight. Her peasant parents lost everything when the patient was 9 years old. She describes her mother as “a woman that made everything out of nothing,” “always managed to have a very tasty meal for the family and anyone in need around.” The house where they lived was in front of the bus stop and her mother always had a hot coffee for anyone who needed it. Her mother, in addition to working on the land, used to sell chicken dumplings at the bus stop. She describes her father as a very hard man. At about the age of 8, Sakura lived with an aunt for two years. After that, she lived with her grandfather

in a Japanese language school. Her grandfather was a caretaker at the school, but also taught Japanese. She already worked to help her mother at an early age and worked helping her grandfather clean the school. After two years he died, and she kept living and working at the Japanese school with a slightly older sister. She describes her grandfather as a tender man. The patient was very ashamed of the other children at the Japanese school, because of her clothes, her bad Japanese knowledge, and because she lost her permanent teeth very early in life.

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Rose also experienced financial deprivation – to the point of food insecurity. She is the first daughter of an offspring of 3, her parents came from the countryside and lost everything when she was very young. Her father was a hard-working man, very dedicated. He graduated in law in order to never be deceived again. Her mother, a hard-working woman as well, managed with her father to secure some financial stability from the time of Rose's adolescence. She started studying at a private school and doing ballet – however, starting at 12, she could not develop the abilities her classmates had developed since the age of 5 or 6. Regarding the financial issue, what brings her the most resentment, are very embarrassing situations, which she knows little of, that her father undergone until the financial stabilization. On the other hand, she talks sadly about her older brothers, sons from the first marriage of her father, for having grown up during times of extreme financial hardship on the part of her father, having fewer opportunities and freedom of choice.

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Daisy is also the first daughter of an offspring of four. Her family was also underprivileged. But she resents more about her mother's illness, which worsen with each pregnancy-puerperal cycle, until, after the fourth child, the couple became convinced of the inconvenience of new pregnancies due to the mother's health. Daisy actively participated in the care and education of her brothers and sisters, due to her mother's difficulties.

She was ashamed of her poorly kept clothes, and of the lack of guidance from her mother regarding caring for her appearance, which her mother could not give her anymore. She felt hopelessly inappropriate.

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These three patients emanated an enormous vital force since the first day. They talk vibrantly, in contrast with their measured and kind ways. They have strong convictions. Sharp, creative minds whose research and information-gathering abilities often challenged the therapeutic process. More than survivors, they are ebullient. Beautiful, each one in their own way: Sakura has a delicate, smooth, and discreet beauty; Rose has an astonishing beauty, sophisticated and erudite; Daisy has a simple and unpretentious beauty, extremely intelligent.

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Sakura met her husband at the Japanese school. He was her only boyfriend. She came with him to São Paulo, to work. They got married. They paid for the wedding party with their own money, and it was the first party in her family. They bought a house for her parents in her hometown and their apartment in São Paulo City. Her husband works as a prosthetist. She admires his work greatly, describing him as “an artist”. Her husband is a homebody, kind, and understanding, which makes her feel guiltier for maybe not wanting to have a child. Her mother died a few years ago. She feels guilty for “not having given her what she deserved.”

At the beginning of the analytical work, the patient had the following dream:

“I was at the bus station saying goodbye to my mother. I was on my knees, asking her to come to my home. So, I got on the bus and left, alone.”

Sakura says this was her first dream with her mother since she passed away, and her mother “didn’t have a friendly face” in the dream. She said her mother had never visited her home and the dream was like a continuation of the last time she saw her mother alive. She wonders if her mother had come to her home, she would feel more protected, and her “mother would see the result of everything

she had desired: we are fine”. It seemed to me that, after this dream, her inside mother finally showed up, and with it, her creativity flourished.

During the analytical work Sakura integrates more with her college friends. Near the end of the course, she takes part in a class barbecue, maybe a little hedonic glance at something she didn’t live in adolescence. She actively takes part in the final course project. It is a multicultural fair, in which each group represents a country and needs to sell a typical product—plus an essay. The patient set up the stand—representing Japan—, made the food, and dressed in a typical costume to offer a better characterization and commercial approach. During the organization, she described the activities with growing joy and enthusiasm. Like in a reverse adolescence, she rescues the ancestral family identity, redefining it. Now, she is not an outcast, a Cinderella before the prince, but she is the one who provides and feeds, in addition to being a decoy. The once “ugly girl” at Japanese school was now the model in traditional dress advertising Japan’s stand at the multicultural fair.

Soon after graduating, Sakura decorated the living room of her apartment: she bought a pink fluffy rug “that is nice to step on barefoot” and started sleeping in bed with her husband. She finally allowed herself the comfort and physical closeness of everyday life. She was very touched by the support and comprehension from her husband throughout the process. She started thinking about having a child more as a crowning of this love than an irresponsible act from someone who has no ideal (unreal?) conditions. At this point, she asks for discharge: she wants to have a child with her husband and fears that continuing the therapy might lead her to overthink and give up having children. Some years later, when I reached out to her for permission to this paper, she told me she had given birth to a baby girl. Apparently, as at the end of João Cabral’s poem (1956), life, amidst the challenge of being defended in words, responded with its living presence.

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Throughout therapy, Rose succeeded in moving to the new apartment with her boyfriend. After a while of dissatisfaction with the neighborhood chose by necessity, not by desire, finally they decided to change it for an apartment in the dream neighborhood. This is renovated and decorated exquisitely, including place and toys for the two cats that were adopted throughout the therapeutic process. The cats do not deprive her of the freedom she had conquered: she invests her free time in tours and travels with her husband or with her friends. Rose, at great cost, starts gradually to communicate to her family that she will not have children, while the pressure for a religious marriage wanes. After a long time of ambivalence, Rose resumes studying to prepare herself for a better admission examination in her area, to assume positions she is already performing in practice, but not by right.

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Serendipitously but not by chance, I had two children throughout the analytical process of Daisy. She did not come to therapy to discuss her decision to not have children, but could not help thinking about it, facing two almost consecutive pregnancies of the therapist. Daisy faced the challenge: instead of asking for a discharge from the already three-year-long process, she dived into the subject. She then revealed that she had become pregnant but terminated the pregnancy. She returned to the subject with her husband, worked about her grief and realized how much both mothered her and his nephews. Not only the daughter and the son of her sister who was in a prolonged coma, but all their nephews, at some time, were taken care of by this couple. Both structured the caring polarity of the maternal archetype through caring for their nephews. According to Galiás (2000, p. ) the humanization of the caring polarity of the maternal archetype is a psychic demand for both men and women.

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In the three cases we can see matriarchal wounds, not necessarily due to the lack of the personal mother,

as in the cases of Sakura and Rose. In early childhood, mother and environment get mixed, once this one is intermediated (and introduced) by the former. Mother here is understood as the caregiver or main caregiver, the one who provides care and safety to the baby. Deprivations and difficulties arising from the environment also make up the archetypal image of the mother. In other words, the experience of early childhood in a situation of extreme poverty or the experience of food insecurity are experiences of the great mother archetype in its terrible polarity: the great mother wounded or insufficient (Moreira, 2011).

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The case of Sakura is of a person who, despite reporting a loving mother and good caregiver, shows great matriarchal wounds, which are reflected in her image of the feminine, of the mother, and of the inner child. She always regards herself as insufficient, and unprepared. She perceives herself as lacking creative skills. She is structured through patriarchal dynamism and a strong animus. She is efficient, responsible, and hard-working. She got married at an early age and is in a successful relationship.

Through her relationship with her husband, Sakura begins to heal this wound: her husband is a prosthetist, "an artist", that made her a perfect prosthesis. However, this meeting is still not enough for the rescue, and her reproductive capacity starts to be jeopardized. Finally, the working capacity itself begins to be impaired due to the imbalance. Characteristically at the age of 36, she has the necessity to develop what she left behind. In other words, at the metanoia she is called to reunite with the ugly and frumpy child who was once.

Throughout therapy the mother reappears, first in a dream, still abandoning, letting her go on public transport. Gradually, the ethnic and family identity is restored festively. Later, it allows her to take care of the decoration of the house, making it cozy. The child also appears at parties, in costume. Finally, in the possibility of pregnancy, which she recognizes as a desire and need that does not come from the rational, that transcends the imperative of prudence, but which is so sacred that it cannot be threatened.

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Rose's case is that of a woman who regains her right to take care of herself, to give her inner girl what she was deprived of in childhood and manages to do so as she works through the guilt of not following the socially expected gender script. As Daisy, Rose is extremely careful with her nephew, especially due to her sister's divorce. She is also very caring towards her cousins, brothers, and half-brothers, but especially towards her mother who is starting to be sick. But she does so without falling into the trap of self-abandonment. Gradually, she begins to allow herself to concentrate on preparing for the long-awaited admission examination to the detriment of family commitments. Preparation is just left aside by her so she can dedicate herself to other passions: dance, popular music, and travel. She remains faithful to her own need for freedom, which is respected by her partner.

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Daisy initially abandons herself in favor of taking care of her sister and nephews. She even moves to her brother-in-law's house during the week. Gradually she resumes her own life. This does not protect her from suffering the ambivalence of feelings during her nephews' adolescence: the pride in seeing them growing up and the feeling of abandonment for no longer being a central figure in their lives. By recognizing her maternal role towards her nephews, she begins to balance caring for them with getting her own life back on track: she renovated her own apartment, with such care and demands that she embarrassed the architect responsible for the project. Daisy does not let it go. It is her time and her turn. At the same time, she allows herself to undergo plastic surgery to reduce her breasts, the hypertrophy of which caused her not only embarrassment but also back pain. However, the hypertrophy of the patriarchal dynamism had until then prevented her from taking care of herself.

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In all three cases, we see the renovation of the apartment as a metaphor for self-care and the

recovery of a matriarchal wound. All of them taking care of their own nest, thinking about personal comfort—self-care—while reaffirming/rediscovers personal style and preferences. The once adverse environment is remodeled. They discover they have power over the external environment that once hurt them. The concern for the quality of their relationships occurs simultaneously with this process. They all have valuable companions, but the care for the relationship grows as the wounds are tended to. However, caring for relationships does not involve self-abandonment. The poignancy of their vital drives does not allow them to assume the supporting role traditionally relegated to women. Understanding and harmonizing the strength of their desires and needs in domestic coexistence, breaking patterns and discovering new ways of being with their partners permeated the analytical process of the three.

Returning to the issue of resilience, Ralha-Simões (2001) questions whether it is possible to speak of resilience whenever there is physical and psychological survival of the person in the face of risk factors, or whether an individual who not only overcomes adversity but feels happy and at peace with their existence would be resilient.

It is very important not to romanticize adversity. How many happy endings can we count on in cases of child labor, children growing up without oral health or in situations of food insecurity? Here, the resilient exceptions reported reinforce the rule of illness in the face of such aggression arising from social inequalities. In the absence of possibilities of development within childhood learning windows of opportunity, the learning of certain skills cannot always be resumed later. And what impact can this have on the life of an adult? And in the structuring of a society?

A tree does not always survive an eccentric pruning done to give way to electricity cables as in figure 9. However, such pruning is as abundant in the trees of the metropolis as the inequality of opportunities for children's development. Just as the artificially shaped form of the tree is permanent, poor oral health also leads to permanent losses. Smiles cannot always be artistically rescued.



**Figure 9.** Tree on a sidewalk of Vila Clementino.  
Personal archive.

Thinking about individuation, no woman should feel forced to motherhood, since the path to individuation is unique and non-transferable. However, decisions along the way must be guided by internal, integrative dialogue, not in favor of repressing some psychic aspect. In Sakura's case, the decision to become pregnant seemed to respond to an internal calling, which her conscience had difficulty, unilaterally, embracing. Still according to Jung (2018b, p. 18, § 4), "the apparent conclusion of the work with the doctor does not in any way mean the end of the analytical process." The patient had to complete her process alone, far from the patriarchal judgment that she projected in my eyes.

This does not mean, in any way, a form or formula: the other patients, throughout the process, reached

different conclusions. Motherhood can be exercised in many ways. The humanization of the mother archetype, in the caregiving pole, as postulated by Galiás (2000), can occur in the relationship with nephews, students, friends, brothers and sisters for both women and men. Just like so many archetypal demands, which do not have a single form of realization. However, I still have doubts, in Margarida's case, whether the decision not to get pregnant was shadowy/somber or creative. Something that, in any case, is not for me to judge.

More than with a conclusion, I am left with the image of a pink ipê tree in bloom in Ibirapuera Park. The ipê tree only has branches leaning towards the lake, while the branches on the track side of the park appear to have been "pruned" (figure 10). Despite this eccentric pruning, this ipê tree blooms beautifully.



**Figure 10.** Ipe tree at Ibirapuera Park.  
Personal archive.



But what is the limit? How much eccentric pruning can an individual withstand from the environment? How many restrictions will our trees endure

and still flourish? After all, it is no wonder that in the Cerrado Rupestre, the forest cover is incomparably smaller than in the Rain Forest. ■

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