

Parents and children: a two-way street¹

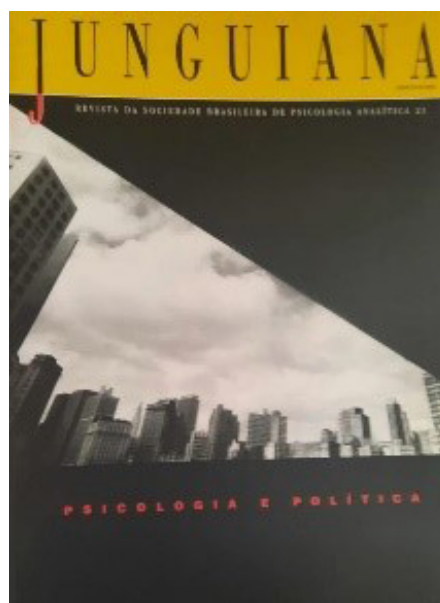
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Abstract

The author discusses some aspects of the parent-child relationship, the so called “two-way street”. The importance of this issue is emphasized because psychology has widely discussed parent-child relationships but child-parent relationships have been neglected. Archetypal parental roles and cross-projections between children and parents are discussed as an important aspect of the complexity of this issue, due to their clinical importance. Some process complications are highlighted, such as the risks of grandparenting, the risk of role reversal between parents and children and late adolescence. The symbolic understanding of the popular saying “Once your child is raised, double work awaits” is also discussed in this article. The “double work” represented by the “raised child” is as-

sociated with the painful process that parents have to go through regarding the projection of the archetypal parental roles of the child (Cm and Cf) on their children. ■

Keywords
late adolescence, reversal of archetypal parental roles, grandparenting, parent-child relationship.



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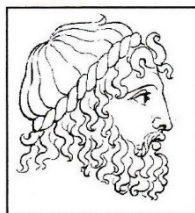
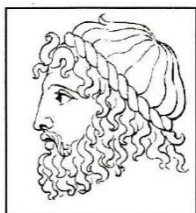
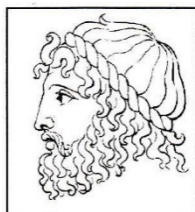
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Parents and children: a two-way street

Introduction

Once your child is raised,
double work awaits
(Brazilian saying).

Psychology has much discussed the parent-child relationship, emphasizing the importance of parents in the psychological development of their children. The influence of parents in the creative structuring of their children's personality or in creating pathology is widely known.



But what if we consider the reciprocal? In other words, what would be the influence of children on their parents' personality?

If the individuation process takes place throughout human existence, there will be a long time during which children and parents will be adults developing and interacting. We do not share with the other species of the zoological scale the characteristic of ceasing to recognize each other as parents and children after a certain age.

What price do we pay for this? Since we continue to recognize ourselves as children and parents throughout our existence, what would be the influence of children in the parenting process? What could be our symbolic understanding of the popular saying "Once your child is raised, double work awaits"?

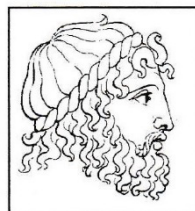
Parents, roles and parental archetypes

Becoming a father or a mother is among the most intense experiences in a human being's life, and it may be a deeply lived one. It is indescribable, initiatory, fascinating.

According to Jung's analytical psychology, this experience, like others, is based on the mobilization of symbols that stem from parental archetypes, namely the great mother archetype and the father archetype.

Both the personal human mother and the personal human father are great humanizers of these two archetypes for their children. Thus, both the personal mother and father have for their children a very intense strength and consequential power that are archetypal. For the child, the mother and the father are like gods, powerful beings who have enormous importance in their development.

For parents, a child has a kind of divine power.



If a father or a mother could be seen by the young child as they really are, that is, as human

beings with qualities and flaws, such idealization would probably not occur. We know that the real parents do not have the power over a child that is bestowed on them by small children, although they would very often like to have it.

By humanizing the great mother archetype for their children, parents will be developing in their consciousnesses the M role (donor of matriarchal care to themselves and to the other). Similarly, by humanizing the father archetype, they will be developing in their consciousnesses the F role (donor of patriarchal care to themselves and to the other), as we have already described in previous articles.

Therefore, the performance of mother and father by parents in relation to their children, that is, the performance of parental roles is archetypal, as it bears the power of archetypes.

The child, the child role and parental archetypes

The great mother archetype is psychologically dominant in a small child. The relationship between the mother (or adult caregiver) and the child is under the influence of symbols that stem from the great mother archetype. This archetype is strongly constellated on the ego-self axis, as described by Neumann (1991), from the time of conception onward. We may argue that while the structuring process of the M role (adult matriarchal role) is being expanded in the mother's (or caregiver's) consciousness, in the child's consciousness a complementary role is being structured, namely the Cm role (receiving role of the matriarchal care of the other and later of oneself), thus forming the matriarchal circuit, as discussed in a previous article.

In this way, both poles of this relationship, namely parents and children, are being structured in their consciousnesses by the symbolic function of the same archetype – that of the great mother. The same structuring process occurs with the constellation of the father archet-

type between the personal parents (and/or adult caregiver) and the child. This is how the F and Cf roles, or patriarchal circuit, are structured, as we have also already discussed. Thus, both parents and children are invested with the symbols of the same archetypes, that is, parents and children are humanizers of the parental archetypes for one another.

Therefore, if on the one hand parents are invested with the power of the archetype in the relationship with their children, on the other hand children are also invested with the same power in relation to their parents.

So, although the real child is just as human as their parents and thus has qualities and flaws, for the parents the child has a kind of divine power; they are special in the same way that parents are special for small children; they have the power that stems from the archetype. This cross-humanization of archetypes between parents and children guarantees the necessary cross-idealization between parents and children.

Parents and children, idealizations and power

Throughout their psychological development, children need to learn how to be their own mother and father in order to achieve their autonomy. In other words, part of their development is to become capable of caring for themselves matriarchally and patriarchally.

While the adult archetypal roles of mother (M) and father (F) are placed (deposited or projected – the terms “deposition” and “projection” will be used for the great mother archetype and the father archetype respectively, due to the different functioning between the poles in the matriarchal and patriarchal dynamics) in the personal parents, the child experiences a kind of psychological dependence on these parents. Growing or developing implies “withdrawing” these depositions-projections, that is, removing the M and F roles from the parents and

structuring them in their own consciousness. As long as personal parents are encased in these roles, they remain idealized and have great power over their children, and therefore cannot be regarded as human. If this idealization is positive, parents are regarded as gods; if negative, as demons. In either case, they are always very powerful. For the child, who later adolescents and becomes an adult, developing means being able to become themselves and no longer “someone’s child”.

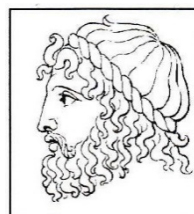
When an adult becomes a mother or a father, they experience a fascination in relation to their child. All of us parents know what happens to us when our child is born. Passion, fascination, devotion are words and as such are not enough to describe such a deep and complex experience as that of becoming a father and a mother.

From the beginning, the C roles (both Cm and Cf) deposited-projected on the child make that child special for the parents. For these parents, the child is different from all the other children; he or she is unique, as if magnetized. The child is idealized and has enormous power over the parents, which is greater than any other child’s; it is a power capable of arousing not only love and affection, but also concern, attention, care, etc.

This power also pertains to the archetype. In other words, during the time that the child takes on the roles of Cm and Cf, they are not seen as human by the parents, they take on the roles of the child of the parental archetypes or the divine child archetype, as Jung called it, with all its splendor and force, thus becoming very powerful. This power is sometimes so great that the child controls and tyrannizes the parents, exercising an abuse of power, which Guggenbühl-Craig (1978) describes in his “Power in the helping professions”. This interplay of archetypal roles between parents and children is fundamental for the optimal psychological development of both the child and the parents. And as long as these roles are polarly deposit-

ed-projected (M and F on the parents and Cm and Cf on the children), the cross-idealization remains active. This cross-idealization is crucial for all development and more particularly for the development of a healthy, positive narcissism, which every human being needs. Self-confidence, a sense of personal security, the access to one’s own creativity largely depend on the smooth running of these cross-structures.

When an adult becomes a mother or a father, they experience a fascination in relation to their child.



When parents do not function as this kind of “fascinated audience” for their children, the child’s development is affected, as Alice Miller (1997) tells us in “The drama of the gifted child”. However, if this fascination is unduly prolonged or prevents a more adequate look from the parents, there will also be problems with the constitution of the child’s primary narcissism, as I discuss in “*A mãe-coruja*” (1992)¹.

Is the reverse also true?

In my view, parents have as much need to feel loved, wanted, needed, favored by their children as children do. Naturally, the manifestation of this need is different in children and in adults. Parents, as adults, already have, or could have, a wider relational universe of broader and more diversified interests. However, if we focus on mothering or fathering, the child is extremely active in this “conquest”. In order to do their best, parents also need to feel “chosen” by their children. We are aware of the drama experienced by the mother (parents) of an autistic

¹ “*Mãe-coruja*” is a Brazilian idiom that describes a proud, over-protective mother (TN).

child when she does not feel reciprocated in her love and thus experiences a kind of “myth of impossible love” in relation to her mothering, as Ceres Araújo (2000) discusses in her valuable work on autism.

Deidealization depends on the child's development.



This highly necessary cross-fascination takes place at the expense of the cross-archetypal roles, which keep the cross-idealizations and the ensuing cross-power of one over the other active.

Parents who are quite powerful in their existential processes tend to “get off their high horse” if something serious happens to their children. In fact, children have enormous power to make their parents feel good or bad, fulfilled or deeply anxious and guilty.

Parents and children as individuals – the necessary deidealization

Psychology has widely discussed the necessary deidealization of parents for their children's growth. In adolescence, with the activation of the hero archetype, this process is quite noticeable; it brings about a well-known turbulence in the relationship between children and parents. This deidealization is difficult, but the child's development in search of their own identity depends on it. With this progressive deidealization, parents become less powerful and more human for their children as they structure their own M and F roles and become capable of taking care of themselves matriarchally and patriarchally. Thus, the children become less dependent on their parents due to the “withdrawal” of the M and F roles

that were “clothing” the parents and giving them archetypal power.

However, psychology has spoken less about the other way on this street, that is, the necessary process of deidealization of children by parents. In other animal species, when the offspring reaches a certain age (which varies from species to species), the recognition of the parents by their young and of the young by the parents ceases. From a certain stage onward, animals of other species no longer recognize one another and therefore no longer behave like parents and offspring, as we have already discussed in the article “*Mãe-coruja*” (1992). But in the human species, with the existence of consciousness and the ego, this process is extremely complicated. As humans, we are further removed from some of our instincts, from some of our more natural, animal behaviors. This, however, sometimes leads us to pay very high prices, ranging from dramatic to tragic.

While children are becoming adult and independent, parents are necessarily aging.

The maintenance by parents of the roles Cm and Cf deposited-projected on the children makes the latter remain idealized and powerful, with the power of the archetype. It is as if the divine child archetype remained deposited in the child. And this is an extremely dangerous process for both sides – for the parents and for the children. In senescence, parents are, in a way, more fragile physically and sometimes emotionally. If the C roles (Cm and Cf) remain deposited-projected on the children, they remain ambiguous in the consciousness of the needy (infantilized) and powerful parents, and as the parents are fragile, events ranging from dramatic to tragic can occur in a kind of late adolescence.

The need for the withdrawal of these roles is imposed by the individuation process itself. Parents have to symbolically die as idealized and powerful parents to their children, just as children have to symbolically die as ideal-

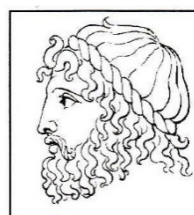
ized and powerful children to their parents. This is a natural event in the individuation process. And this is how parents of adult children, when withdrawing the C roles (Cm and Cf) deposited on their children, can take care of themselves, can make room for the child in themselves. In other words, it is by withdrawing these projections on their children that parents can deidealize them; they can then become their own children, taking care of their own fragilities; they can withdraw the symbol of the divine child archetype, making room for it in themselves. This is how parents of adult children have to be their own parents and can remain creative.

Albeit difficult, the process of deidealization of parents by their children, which begins in adolescence, seems to me to be easier. The adolescent child is heading toward adulthood, which is full of mishaps but also highly valued attractions, while in the deidealization of children by parents, the latter are heading toward senescence, toward old age, which is so enormously devalued in our culture. And senescent parents are heading toward death, which is always feared and sometimes denied by human beings, given its mysterious and unknown condition. It seems to me that the parents' clinging to their children as if they were still young is in part a defense against these experiences. But we know that there are defenses whose maintenance exposes us more than protects us.

Another vicissitude that seems to me to encumber this other way on the same arduous street of deidealization is that the deidealization of parents by their children is a process that is better known by the collective consciousness and therefore less feared. Psychology has helped a lot in this regard. The collective consciousness has already integrated the fact that, for example, adolescents are hard work and part of it is the "brush-off" that they give their parents. But the collective consciousness knows little about this other way on the same street. Parents and children know little about the nat-

ural and necessary deidealization of children by parents. And ignorance increases guilt and suffering. Much of this natural experience is often repressed. Parents feel obliged to continue taking care of their adult children as if they were not grown-up, and children, as if they were still young, feel obliged to keep their parents idealized. Consequently, the cross-power game also keeps being played.

**There are children who are enablers
and children who are inhibitors of
their processes.**



This kind of complication in the natural process of cross-deidealization often leads to dramatic, if not tragic, events, as we have unfortunately so often seen in actual parricides, matricides and filicides. I certainly do not believe in reducing any behavior to a single understanding, much less homicide or suicide. But I believe that this factor must be present and it is up to psychology to deal with it further.

**The importance of children in the
development of parents**

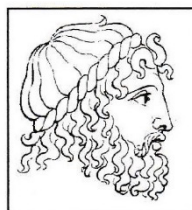
The importance of parents in the development of their children has been widely discussed, as we have already mentioned. But what about the reverse?

Obviously, I do not mean to say that fatherhood or motherhood is a compulsory event in the individuation process. Undoubtedly, though, due to the enormous symbolic and emotional mobilization they bring about, fathering and mothering are very strong experiences in our existential process. We have already discussed how much the arrival of a child offers the chance

of expanding the structuring of the M and F roles in the parents' consciousness. We know how much children arouse in their parents the mobilization of their achievements, growth, acquisition – in short, how much archetypal mobilization children have the power to provoke in their parents. But it seems necessary to discuss other aspects that have been little mentioned regarding parents in relation to their children. For example, how much children can facilitate or hinder their parents' process.

We know that human beings are not all created equal. Thus, for certain parents, there are children who are enablers and children who are inhibitors of their processes. Other times, the same child has enabling and hindering aspects. Several factors can be considered in this diversity – for example, typology, as discussed by Nairo Vargas (1981) with regard to the dynamics of couples. Depending on the typology of parents and children and how they are integrated, the interaction between them may be enabled or hindered. For instance, if in the mother-daughter relationship one is an introvert and the other an extrovert, there is a huge risk that one will find the other inappropriate and so, due to the depositions-projections and the ensuing power that has already been discussed, one will tend to castrate the other. Supposing the daughter has developed intellectually more than the mother, which happens quite often; when she tries to castrate her mother, scolding her for her introversion or extroversion, she succeeds. By keeping her daughter powerful, the mother believes that the daughter must be right and therefore the mother must fit in. Or else, at other times, open warfare breaks out between mother and daughter, to the detriment of both. For instance, if a daughter is a thinking type and her mother is a feeling type, the daughter's perception of her mother as unintelligent is taken seriously by the mother of the powerful daughter. All these typological interactions can be quite complicated.

There may be children who are from the same “psychological family” as their parents and other children who are not.



In addition to typology, I find it important to consider the personality characteristics of children and parents. As Jung said, there is the biological family and the psychological family, that is, the family that we have the function of finding and that is comprised of our “peers”. Therefore, there may be children who are from the same “psychological family” as their parents and others who are not. The same child may have similar as well as very different and even opposite characteristics to the parents, bringing both richness and complexity to the relationship. The differences that sometimes lead a family member to feel like the “ugly duckling” may be related to the father or mother. Keeping a child very powerful can contribute greatly to this father or mother not discovering themselves as a “swan”, which hinders their process. At other times, the child who has been kept powerful, being different from their parents, can lead them to make a forced adaptation, that is, to develop a persona approved by the child, or to remain very undervalued.

All these are vicissitudes that greatly influence the development of the parents' personality. The child's gender and sexual orientation may bring about differences in the type of mobilization of the parents' contents. For example, when heterosexual parents have a homosexual child, they could go through intense mobilizations. The loss or illness of a child brings vicissitudes to parents that significantly change their identities. Some events involving their children or their own actions may qualify as abuse for the parents, that is, they may carry a weight greater than the parents' psyche

is able to bear, such as the suicide of a child. As Hillman (1997) states in *The Soul's Code* regarding his "acorn theory", we do not know what we are seeds of. And much less do we know what kind of children-seeds are born from us, or grow with us. All we know is that we are all seeds of the human species. And depending on what seeds they are and what kind of children-seeds the parents have to deal with, their individuations will be greatly affected. Facing children who differ from their parents in values, choices, preferences is different from raising children who are more like their parents.

Children are influenced by multiple factors, of which parents are undoubtedly one of the very important. But relatively so. Children are not at all the result of parents. It seems to me that the omnipotent belief present in the collective consciousness and very much created by psychology itself according to which children are the result of what their parents have done is extremely dangerous. It serves to hamper a broader understanding of the process and its complexity. We know, for example, how much concepts like the "schizophrenogenic mother" created false, useless and dangerous guilt. We know of the great suffering of mothers who had autistic children and felt guilty, no matter how much they were victims of this fact.

Evidently, as we do not have the characteristic of failing to recognize ourselves as parents and children as other species do, as we have already discussed, children will always be important to parents and therefore always have a certain power over them. However, if the depositions-projections of the C roles (Cm and/or Cf) on the children are maintained, they become very powerful in relation to the parents and therefore can exert enormous influence on them, which may be either creative or destructive and pathology-inducing.

The false guilt of parents, which stems from the omnipotent and also false belief that they are greatly responsible for the occasional bad behavior of their young or even adult children,

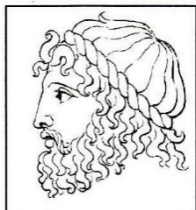
causes parents not to protect themselves from their children's aggressiveness toward them.

Both children and parents are going through the process of individuation, although at different stages; while children are changing from children into adolescents and adults, parents are transforming from adults to senescent.

Thus, due to the cross-depositions-projections of parental roles, the resulting cross-idealization and cross-power between parents and children make children extremely important for the parents' individuation. Children have over their parents the same power that parents have to influence the structure of their children's personality.

Children become more powerful as their parents senesce. And elderly parents do not always have the strength to deal with the inadequacies of their adult children. It is similar, albeit on the other way of the same street, to the fact, widely discussed by psychology, that the child does not have a strong enough structure to deal with their parents' inappropriate attitudes. If, for instance, a family comes to our office with concerns about their young child and the parental couple tells us that they argue a lot, even in front of the child, our attention is immediately drawn to this fact, because we know that the parents' conflict affects the child, who sometimes does not have a strong enough ego to deal with this situation. We may consider that this child is being abused by their parents. Now, to senescent parents, what do arguments between adult siblings, their children, represent? Unfortunately, we often see adult siblings fighting one another over power, money, etc., for instance in family businesses. We see senescent parents still being asked by the different factions of quarrelsome siblings to side with one of them and still being pressured to sign powers of attorney, share donations, etc. However, these parents also often lack psychological strength, or do not have a strong enough ego to deal with this situation. These parents are also being abused. And neither they nor even we therapists often have the readiness to recognize and work on this abuse.

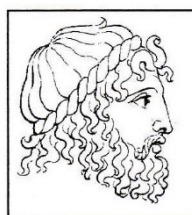
Children have the power to influence their parents' personality structuring.



If parents of young children or even adolescents, for example, are ill and do not take care of themselves, or are addicted to alcohol, gambling or drugs, we therapists readily associate the child's symptomatology with the parents' pathology. These pathologies in parents, when associated with resistance to treatment, often create extremely difficult situations for their children. The collective consciousness recognizes and identifies this abuse, though. But how do parents of children with these pathologies fare? Nervous anorexia, drug addiction, psychotic conditions in children who resist treatment are a real torture for parents. On the one hand, their children's conditions mobilize parents to take care of them, since they really need their help; on the other hand, their children's resistance to treatment or to receiving parental care renders them powerless. However, the collective consciousness, parents and even we therapists do not easily identify this abuse. Powerful children remain framed as "poor little things" in their parents' consciousness, and parents remain feeling guilty, powerless, unable to protect themselves from their children's attacks or even to recognize them. Parents often blame themselves for faults committed against their children that "made" them be like this, and thus carry false guilt and do not see their children's inappropriate attitudes as their own responsibility. In other words, when parents think about the "spilled milk" ("where did I go wrong with my child?"), they do not realize that they are "spilling the milk" by keeping their children powerful and not protecting themselves from their attacks. It is clear

that parents "make mistakes", so to speak, regarding the education of their children; parents are human and subject to many mistakes, and as so they are far from perfection. And thinking about one's own mistakes can be quite helpful. However, overthinking about and expanding the mistakes already made is a defense against realizing the mistakes that are being made.

Grandparents can be structuring for the grandchild's personality and vice versa.



Parents actually are, as Jung (1986) states in "*Sobre os conflitos da alma infantil*" (*Psychic conflicts in a child*, CW17), the first educators of their children. Thus, when treating a child psychotherapeutically, it is necessary to consider if it is not better to treat the parents instead of or in parallel with the children. When so many conditions occur, such as depression, in the treatment of the elderly, it is equally necessary that we ask ourselves the same question. In other words, it is important to consider if it is not convenient to treat, even by counseling the family, for example, adult children instead of or in parallel with the treatment of the elderly. In fact, more and more psychotherapists are sought after to help deal with this demand. We should reflect on this.

But it is interesting that, through training, we are more used to, during an adult patient's anamnesis, giving greater importance to their antecedents – parents and siblings – than to their children. We should review this.

Process complications

Several complications in the process of the necessary withdrawal of the cross-depositions-projections of parental roles between

parents and children can occur. Let us examine some of them, which are quite frequent and seem to us to be of clinical importance:

- a) Grandparenting and its risks;
- b) The reversal of roles;
- c) Late adolescence.

a) Grandparenting and its risks

For parents of adult children, becoming a grandfather or a grandmother also seems to me to be somewhat difficult to describe in words. Like motherhood and fatherhood, it may be an initiatory experience.

Once again the parental archetypes undergo enormous activation. However, this time the grandparents are not the parents. If the family were a company, the parents would then be the executive directors and the grandparents the members of the board. And this transition is not always easy, although it obviously has its upside. Unlike parents, grandparents may not have as many difficult obligations like raising children, disciplining them, etc.

Grandparents can be very structuring for the personality of their grandchildren. They can provide them with a greater sense of belonging to a larger family group, thus increasing their personal security. If the family were a tree, the grandparents would be like the expansion of its roots, thus providing it with greater insertion and security.

Grandchildren can be very structuring for the personality of their grandparents. In addition to bringing the possibility of expanding the grandparents' parental dynamisms, the grandchildren bring renewal, making the grandparents move from the "executive" to the "board" position, as we have already mentioned, which mobilizes the wisdom archetype. There must be a great deal of wisdom in the personality of grandparents so that, in the face of so much mobilization of parental archetypes that grandchildren activate, they can move from the executive (which belongs to the parents) to the board position, as they are

often not able to act as directly as they would like. Faced with the suffering of a grandchild or their vicissitudes, for example, how difficult it is sometimes for grandparents to be mobilized and not be able to act directly according to their own discrimination, knowledge, values, even if they are imaginary ones.

Having sometimes to respect the attitudes or decisions of their son, daughter, son-in-law or daughter-in-law (the child's parents) in relation to their grandchildren requires a lot of flexibility, a lot of reflection, a lot of activation of the political dimension, a lot of humility; in short, a lot of wisdom, which members of any board should always have.

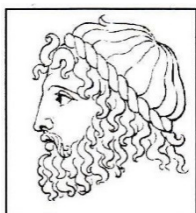
Parents of young children or adolescents cannot always exercise their affection very openly, such is the burden brought on by the concerns of child rearing, setting limits and even asserting themselves professionally, financially or economically. Then, when they become grandparents, affection, for example, emerges and can be exercised.

In other words, grandchildren allow grandparents to relive their parental roles but on another level, in another way, along with the necessary wisdom. However, the risks relate precisely to this transition from the "executive" to the "board" position. If the depositions-projections of the Cm and Cf roles on the children were not withdrawn, they will very easily shift from the children to the grandchildren. Thus, grandchildren can be confused with children, with all the resulting complications, as grandparents do not transition to the board, choosing to remain in the executive position.

The competition for children-grandchildren between parents and children, between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law or son-in-law, between father-in-law and daughter-in-law or son-in-law, well known to many of us, seems to me to partly contain this factor. And the arrival of a child brings the possibility or rather the risk of an increase in the power war between parents and children with the use-abuse of the child-grandchild as an object of competition.

The attachment to the role of grandparents-parents thus hinders the continuity of the process of parents of adult children.

Grandchildren allow grandparents to relive their parental roles.



b) The risk of reversal

Another risk that this process poses is that of role reversal, that is, of adult children becoming fathers and/or mothers of their parents in their senescence.

Senile parents will surely need their children and their family as a whole. Old age, being so devalued in our culture, needs better psychological understanding. But the greater risk in my view is that of a reversal of the cross-depositions-projections instead of their withdrawal due to a defensive attitude of children and parents. In other words, senescent parents begin to behave like children of their children, bearing the deposition-projection of the Cm and Cf roles. At the same time, their children begin to behave like parents of their parents, bearing the depositions-projections of the M and F roles.

Roles are thus reversed, as are the care and power relations. There are deviations in this situation both toward the overprotective and controlling children and toward the children who reject their older parents. Even acts of tyranny are often carried out by children in relation to their parents in these situations, which gives rise to a kind of revenge toward the previous phases of this relationship, when the power relation was reversed.

Evidently, senescent parents also often continue to want to overprotect their children, al-

though they are not able to do so anymore, and thus resist the transition from the executive to the board position, which at times gives rise to funny situations. At other times these parents tyrannize their children by making use of the power of the “old”. But I insist on the two-way street of cross-deposition-projection.

c) Late adolescence

Late adolescence is one of the complications of maintaining the cross-idealization for too long.

As cross-deidealization must happen through the development process itself, if it does not occur during the child’s adolescence, it will often occur later. And like everything that happens with a certain delay, it causes greater complication.

In this situation, the adult child has, on the one hand, greater power over their parents, who have less power over the adult child, but on the other hand, due to the maintenance of cross-idealization, the dynamics of cross-dependency is also maintained.

I think it is important to emphasize that in late adolescence, as well as in regular adolescence, the child is not the only one who needs to deidealize their parents, the child is not the only one who is “behind” in this fundamental stage of development. This is just one way of the street. On the other way of the same street, the parents are also “behind” in terms of the necessary deidealization of the child. It is a problem present in both polarities, parents and children, that is, in the relationship between them.

Sometimes rather serious symptoms can occur in both children and parents, prospectively evidencing this necessary cross-deidealization. The child’s need is not only to deidealize the parents but also to be deidealized by them. If this deidealization does not occur, the symptomatology of what we are calling late adolescence appears. In other words, that “brush-off” that the adolescent did not give their parents takes place later through symptoms like inappropriate behaviors that shock the parents or even the onset of more serious conditions.

In my view, this act of prospectively shocking their parents seems directly related to belatedly provoking this necessary deidealization. This process occurs because of the permanence of the cross-depositions-projections of the Cm and Cf roles on the children (by the parents) and of the M and F roles on the parents (by the children).

With regard to the child who is becoming an adult and therefore more independent, it is necessary for parents to withdraw their infantilizing mothering and fathering and redirect them to themselves. In other words, parents of adult children should mother and father themselves, because they are already heading toward senescence and need greater self-care and self-protection.

Conclusions

The reflections contained in this text are but a few on a subject as complex as the relationship between parents and children; they focus on what we call the other way of this street, that is, some of the vicissitudes of the relationship that children establish with their parents.

In general, by focusing more on the relationship between parents and their young children, psychology has emphasized less the importance of this relationship when children are adults. However, with the individuation theory and the understanding that development remains active throughout our existential process, we have instruments to seek to better understand this relationship. The conception of the symbolic dimension of archetypes, which is active throughout our existence, enables this approach.

The increase in life expectancy, with the resulting increase in the elderly population, requires and also enables a more accurate psychological look at the relationship between adult children and aging parents or even children who are already aging and relating to parents at more advanced ages. We are often sought out in our offices by families who are lost and suffering with the management of those relationships, for which our culture still has few models. We should reflect on this.

When we consider the popular saying quoted in the introduction, "Once your child is raised, double work awaits", a possible association seems to refer to the laborious task of withdrawing the depositions-projections on the children of the child roles (Cm and Cf) related to parental archetypes.

When children are born and grow up, they certainly are a lot of work to their parents. But when they have grown into adults, their parents' task of withdrawing the mothering and fathering to themselves does seem to be a lot more work. This task requires the recognition of the aging process and the courage to give up the long, practiced, complex and yet so rewarding task of taking care of children. In addition, taking care of another, albeit complicated, is often easier than taking care of ourselves, especially with regard to the issue of the shadow.

But if, on the one hand, it seems that the saying "once your child is raised, double work awaits" does hold true symbolically, we could add to it by saying that the statement "once your child has grown, your work is done" also makes sense. ■

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Resumo

Pais e filhos: uma rua de mão dupla

Neste artigo são discutidos alguns aspectos da relação pais-filhos, focados na importância do filho no desenvolvimento dos pais. A relação filho-adulto e pais é abordada tanto em seu sentido criativo como complicado, gerador de patologia. A relação filhos-pais é associada a outra mão da mesma rua onde a psicologia bastante tem discutido a relação pais-filhos. Daí o título: “Pais e filhos: uma rua de mão dupla”. A compreensão simbólica do ditado popular “filho criado, trabalho dobrado” é buscada. Esse “maior trabalho” dado pelo “filho criado” é associado ao trabalhoso processo de recolhimento necessário que os pais precisam fazer

da deposição-projeção dos papéis parentais arquetípicos de filho, Fm e Fp, sobre os filhos. Também são discutidos a função da idealização cruzada e o consequente jogo de poder cruzado entre filhos e pais. Algumas complicações desse processo de retirada das deposições-projeções pelos pais sobre os filhos são enfocadas pela sua importância clínica, a saber: os riscos dos avós, o risco da inversão de papéis entre pais e filhos e a adolescência tardia. É chamada a atenção para a importância do tema, uma vez que, com o aumento da vida média, a população com mais idade cresceu e sua problemática precisa ser mais bem compreendida. ■

Palavras-chave: adolescência tardia, inversão dos papéis parentais, “vovozice”, relação filhos-pais.

Resumen

Padres e hijos: una calle de dos sentidos

En este artículo se discuten algunos aspectos de la relación padre-hijo, enfocándose en la importancia del niño en el desarrollo de los padres. Se aborda la relación hijo-adulto y padres tanto en su sentido creativo como en su sentido complicado, generador de patologías. La relación padre-hijo está asociada con otra mano en la misma calle donde la psicología ha discutido durante mucho tiempo la relación padre-hijo. De ahí el título: “Padres e hijos: una calle de dos sentidos”. Se busca la comprensión simbólica del dicho popular “hijo criado, trabajo duplicado”. Este “trabajo mayor” dado por el “hijo criado” está asociado al laborioso proceso de recolección necesaria que los padres deben hacer a partir del

deposición-proyección de los roles parentales arquetípicos del hijo, Hm e Hp (hijo de la madre e hijo del padre), en sus hijos. También se discute el papel de la idealización cruzada y el juego de poder cruzado resultante entre hijos y padres. Se destacan, por su importancia clínica, algunas complicaciones de este proceso de eliminación de depositaciones-proyecciones de los padres sobre sus hijos, a saber: los riesgos de los abuelos, el riesgo de inversión de roles entre padres e hijos y la adolescencia tardía. Se llama la atención sobre la importancia del tema, ya que, con el aumento del promedio de vida, la población de mayor edad ha crecido y es necesario comprender mejor sus problemas. ■

Palabras clave: adolescencia tardía, inversión de roles parentales, “abuelices”, relación padre-hijo.

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