

ABSTRACTS

Attachment Theory

Children's appraisal of their attachment relations with mothers and homeroom teachers and adaptive functioning in middle-childhood: Teacher-student relations from an attachment perspective

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Research has repeatedly shown an association between the quality of mother-child attachment relationships and psycho-social and adaptive behavioral functioning in the school environment. The present study examines the extent to which children's appraisal of the homeroom teacher as an attachment figure also relates to adaptive functioning in elementary school. The study particularly focuses on the extent to which the quality of homeroom teacher-child attachment relationships provides a unique explanation for the differences of psycho-social and behavioral functioning among children. This extends beyond the differences in adaptive functioning of children explained by the quality of mother-child attachment relationships. At the beginning of the school year a sample of 86 children from 4th and 5th grades filled out self-report measures of attachment security with their mothers (Kerns, Klepac, & Cole, 1996), of avoidant and preoccupied-ambivalent coping strategies with their mothers (Finnegan, Hodges, & Perry, 1996), and appraisal of their homeroom teacher as an attachment figure (available and rejecting) (Al-Yagon, & Mikulincer, 2006). At the end of the school year their teachers completed the Teacher-Child Rating Scale (T-CRS, Hightower, Work, Cowen, Lotyczewski, Guare & Rohrbeck, 1986), which assesses each child's psycho-social and behavioral functioning. In addition, the child's grades in language and mathematics were collected from school records.

The findings indicate that children reporting a higher security in attachment relationships with their homeroom teacher reveal better adjustment to school, as reflected in a higher level of on-task behavior, motivation, and learning self-regulation. Children reporting a higher tendency towards avoidant attachment relationships with their homeroom teacher display a higher level of behavior problems and social difficulties. Finally, the results indicate that in the specific context of elementary school classrooms, as compared with the quality of mother-child attachment relationships, the quality of homeroom teacher-child attachment relationships constitutes a greater contribution to the explanation of the differences among children in psycho-social and adaptive behavioral functioning.

Key words: attachment relations, psycho-social, adaptive functioning, homeroom teacher, middle-childhood

The development of socialized leaders: An attachment perspective

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Apart from biographies and a few retrospective writings based mainly on memoirs of individuals who were outstanding leaders, studies on the development of leaders in everyday life (e.g., in the community, in the workplace, in social and organizational settings) from childhood to maturity are rarely to be found. Based on the attachment theory (Bowlby, 1969) this article suggests a conceptual framework that fosters an empirical study on the development of "leaders in everyday life" who are "socialized", with motivation to contribute to social or moral causes (House & Howell, 1992) and who are close to their followers – influencing them directly by their presence and daily behavior (Shamir, 1995). The psychological connection between major aspects found in the literature as central to socialized leadership, namely a low level of neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, openness to experiences, optimism and internal locus of control (e.g., Judge, Colbert & Llies, 2004), and the psychological origins of these characteristics, are analyzed. Measures and methodologies (derived from attachment research) are suggested. Theoretical and practical implications of the suggested direction are discussed.

Key words: close socialized leaders, the "Big Five", attachment, secure attachment

Encounters in the looking-glass of time: The contribution of a life story seminar to processes of change in the perception of the "other" as part of identity construction among young Jews and Arabs in Israel

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The field of Jewish-Arab encounter groups in Israel is commonly discussed in academia (Bar-Gal, 2004; Halabi, 2001; Maoz, 2002). Nevertheless, despite the multitude of studies dealing with these encounter groups, longitudinal research in this area is limited. The purpose of this article is to pinpoint, cautiously and with awareness of the inevitable problematic nature of the topic, the cognitive, emotional and behavioral contributions of an encounter group over the course of time. This study is based on a model combining individual and collective spheres in identity construction and focuses on processes of change in the perception of "others". The model uses the "life story telling" method. This attempt to specify and describe an encounter group over time is based upon results of a longitudinal,

qualitative study that tracked a group of twenty Jewish and Arab university students over a period of four years.

Results of the seminar suggest that it benefited the participants in various ways: cognitively it afforded the participants greater knowledge and awareness of the conflict with the "other" and personal and collective consequences. Emotionally, by listening to the life story of the "other" it offered the participants the opportunity to express identification and empathy, and on the behavioral level, many participants have continued to promote their interest in issues related to peace psychology. Our results suggest that during the seminar and its aftermath, the participants underwent a process of development and a change in their perception of the "other" as part of their identity construction. Their orientation and way of thinking about the "other" became more "complex". In the paper we discuss the unique contribution of the combined individual and collective model, which uses the life story method, and we suggest applications of this method for different groups and contexts.

Keywords: encounter groups between Jews and Arabs, personal and collective processes, life story telling, qualitative research, longitudinal research, peace psychology

Distress, Assistance and Adaptation

Effectiveness of emotional first aid: Analysis of well-remembered calls which were perceived as successful by trained volunteers

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The focus of this study is the effectiveness of single-session telephonic interactions conducted by trained volunteers who responded to distressful callers. Twelve trained volunteers were requested to write a detailed description of a well remembered successful conversation. In addition they wrote their explanations for the effectiveness of the phone calls. Qualitative analysis of the data revealed that most phone calls described a crisis intervention rather than an emotional support type of help. Two aspects of effectiveness emerged from the analysis: Process and product. The process includes three components: (1) The volunteer forms an authentic relationship with the caller; (2) The volunteer monitors the call but adapts it to the needs of the caller; (3) The volunteer uses emotional, cognitive and behavioral strategies of help. As for the product, two measures have

been identified: (1) Explicit statement of the caller about the effectiveness of the interaction; (2) Changes in the emotional state of the caller from the beginning to the end of the call. The discussion focuses on the conditions that enhance the effectiveness of emotional first aid by telephone and their possible generalization to therapeutic intervention.

Key words: crisis intervention, emotional-first-aid, evaluation of effectiveness, trained volunteers, metaphors

The roles of the psychologist and the educational consultant in the integration process of the ill child in the school system – from the teacher's point of view

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This article is based on a study that purposed to examine the process teachers undergo in coping with the placement of a chronically ill child in their classes, and the factors that affect this process from their point of view. In this article we present the roles of the psychologist and the educational consultant in the integration process of the child as perceived by the teachers. Data were analyzed by means of qualitative analytical induction, whereby data are organized according to primary categories which are corrected, improved and processed as the study progresses. The research population consisted of twenty teachers who were homeroom teachers of a sick child for at least one year from the onset of the disease or for one consecutive school year. The findings reveal an authentic body of knowledge the teachers structured. The results provide comprehensive information about the characteristics of the sick child from the teachers' point of view. This information enabled the creation of a model explaining the sequence of the teacher's coping process and clarified the differences that exist in the renewed inclusion process of a child who suddenly becomes ill in contrast to the inclusion process of a child who is already ill upon arrival. The findings also disclose behavior profiles of the teachers, relating to the child's various ecological environments, which advance or delay effective inclusion, as perceived by the teachers. Teachers, psychologists and consultants can use these profiles to assist in expanding their professional identity in the inclusion process.

Key words: chronic illness, integration, reintegration, sick child, psychologist, educational consultant

The relative effects of child abuse and parental empathic failure on long term psychological adjustment

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Child abuse has been linked to pathogenic parenting, and each has been associated with long-term psychological impairment. This study seeks to contribute to the growing volume of investigations concerned with the identification of possible pathways linking child abuse to symptoms by exploring the mediating role of perceived parental failure of empathy in this association. Child abuse and deficient parental empathy were found to be strongly related to one another and separately predictive of symptoms in a sample of 437 female students. Whereas parental empathic failure was found to mediate the long-term effects of physical and extra-familial sexual abuse, neither it nor incest were capable of predicting most measures of adjustment independently of the other. Findings are discussed in the context of classic developmental psychopathology and trauma resolution theories, and implications for treatment are outlined.

Key words: sexual abuse, physical abuse, psychological maltreatment, parental empathy, long-term effects, treatment