



COLLABORATIVE HERMENEUTICS IN PHENOMENOLOGICAL-INTERVENTION RESEARCH ON COLLEGE STUDENTS IN PSYCHIC SUFFERING

Hermenêutica colaborativa na pesquisa fenomenológica interventiva com universitários em sofrimento psíquico

Abstract: This study exemplifies the use of the Collaborative Hermeneutics method through a research aiming to describe processes involved in intervention groups with undergraduate students in psychic suffering, intending to understand their experiences when participating in these groups; point out crossings involved in processes; and identify possible reaches in the (trans)formation in subjectivation modes of the students. Two groups were facilitated during eight meetings, at a school service, and directed by two psychology students, who were supervised weekly. The collection instrument was the Version of Sense. The results, analyzed from a hermeneutic phenomenological perspective, indicated as Units of Sense: feeling of surprise when facing problems and difficulties in common; reflection on the past, relating it to the present and looking to the future; learning the need to take own choices and have the courage to change; acceptance of own difficulties; and recognizing the autonomy of own change potentials. It was concluded that: in this space for listening and speaking of the interventional research, the students weaved meanings that allowed to cope with their difficulties and the collective construction of protective factors; supervision of processes was a *sine qua non* for facilitators to take care of their own ability to care.

Keywords: Psychic Suffering; Higher Education; Group Processes; School Service; Phenomenological Research.

Resumen: En el artículo se ejemplifica el uso del método de la Hermenéutica Colaborativa por intermedio de investigación que describió objetivamente procesos involucrados en grupos intervencionistas con universitarios en sufrimiento psíquico, buscando comprender sus experiencias al participar de esos grupos; señalar los cruces involucrados en los procesos; identificar posibles alcances en la (tras)formación en modos de subjetivación de los universitarios. Dos grupos fueron facilitados durante ocho encuentros cada uno, tuvieron lugar en un servicio escolar, fueron conducidos por dos estudiantes de psicología, que eran supervisadas semanalmente. El instrumento de recolección fue la Versión de Sentido. Los resultados, analizados en una perspectiva fenomenológica hermenéutica, señalaban como Unidades de Sentido: sentimiento de sorpresa frente a problemas y dificultades en común; reflexión sobre el pasado, relacionándolo con el presente y en perspectiva del futuro; aprendizaje de la necesidad de asumir las decisiones y tener el coraje para cambiar; aceptación de las propias dificultades; y reconocimiento de la autonomía de las potencialidades propias del cambio. Se concluye que: en ese espacio de escucha y habla de la investigación intervencionista, los universitarios tejieron sentidos que viabilizaron el enfrentamiento de sus dificultades y la construcción colectiva de factores de protección; la supervisión de los procesos fue condición *sine qua non* para que las facilitadoras cuidasen de la propia capacidad de cuidar.

Keywords: Psychic Suffering; Higher Education; Group Processes; School Service; Phenomenological Research.

Resumo: O presente artigo exemplifica o uso do método da Hermenêutica Colaborativa através de uma pesquisa que objetivou descrever processos envolvidos em grupos interventivos com universitários em sofrimento psíquico, pretendendo compreender suas experiências ao participarem desses grupos; apontar atravessamentos envolvidos nos processos; e identificar possíveis alcances na (trans)formação em modos de subjetivação dos universitários. Dois grupos foram facilitados durante oito encontros cada, ocorreram em um serviço escola, foram conduzidos por duas estudantes de Psicologia, que eram supervisionadas semanalmente. O instrumento de coleta foi a Versão de Sentido. Os resultados, analisados em uma perspectiva fenomenológica hermenêutica, apontaram como Unidades de Sentido: sentimento de surpresa diante de problemas e dificuldades em comum; reflexão sobre o passado, relacionando-o com o presente e perspectivando o futuro; aprendizagem da necessidade de assumir as próprias escolhas e ter coragem para mudar; aceitação das próprias dificuldades; e reconhecimento da autonomia dos próprios potenciais de mudança. Concluiu-se que: nesse espaço de escuta e fala da pesquisa interventiva, os universitários teceram sentidos que viabilizaram o enfrentamento de suas dificuldades e a construção coletiva de fatores de proteção; a supervisão dos processos foi condição *sine qua non* para que as facilitadoras cuidassem da própria capacidade de cuidar.

Palavras-chave: Sofrimento Psíquico; Ensino Superior; Processos Grupais; Serviço Escola; Pesquisa Fenomenológica.

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Introduction

Some studies, such as Munari, Padilha, Motta and Medeiros (2007), point out the importance of group processes as an object of study for clinical practice in Psychology. On the subject, Nery and Fortunato (2008), when discussing interventional research of groups, proposed that this type of study contains a multiplicity of factors that require methods and techniques closer to the socio-historical-cultural reality studied. These ideas guide this article, which was written in order to demonstrate, from an interventional research with university students in psychological distress, the use of the collaborative hermeneutics method (Macêdo, 2015) as a possibility of clinical action humanist-phenomenological in Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), more specifically in psychology school-services.

We start from scientific indicators that point to psychic suffering in university students as a public health issue, as proposed by Padovani et al (2014). There are several denouncing studies in the world and in Brazil (some of them Auerbach, 2016 and FONAPRACE, 2014), that is, studies that evidence risk factors to which these subjects are exposed, including highlighting anxiety and depression as the pathologies that most affect this community. However, few of these studies are proposed on how protection factors can be made possible in the HEI in order to promote health and quality of life to university students.

Thus, we argue that we need to go beyond an epistemological reading that discusses the phenomenon nowadays, invading the world of life where things happen and can happen concretely. And why do we urgently need to think about how to enable protective factors? Because young people, in the university context, may be living, as Macêdo (2018) warns, an unbearable ness of psychic suffering, often facing a void of meaning, possibly related to an erratic care due to the culture of the weakening of social ties and the failure of solidarity in academies.

The method of Collaborative Hermeneutics (Macêdo, 2015) emerged in the bulge of the humanist-phenomenological clinic of the work, but today it has been consolidating itself as a method of research and intervention, mainly in group actions. Based on Merleau-Ponty's philosophical precepts and Gadamer's philosophical hermeneutics, it is based on some concepts of Carl Rogers' Humanist Psychology, and proposes the creation of listening and speaking spaces for subjects who share the same social reality can resignify it, through a relative awareness of the experiences and meanings of the experience, of the strengthening of the power to act in the face of the social conditions in which they live and the joint construction of coping strategies of this reality for health promotion and maintenance.

In the process, it would be up to the researcher to read the modes of subjectivation in view of the ways of life and relationships established in the social context investigated; share meanings, because their condition of life and social reality is the girder of dialogue; listen to your own experience of the world as a given of tradition and not refrain from it; consider that tradition goes beyond empathy; and, contesting truths together with those surveyed, to immerse ourselves in the world of shared experience to produce new meanings, to build, together with them, coping strategies (Nascimento & Macêdo, 2019; Macêdo, 2015).

The methodological proposal of Macedo (2015) suggests to be restricted to a clinician in Psychology, and not to any professional, given the technical and ethical specificity of a psychologist to deal with possible cognitive and affective mobilizations of one or more subjects when sharing their experiences in the context of interventional research. With this prerogative, the author proposes that the route take place in a hermeneutic circle, where the researcher explores with the collaborators the meaning of the investigated experience; advances through a historical rescue, to enable the respondents to subjectively appropriate past personal characteristics that can enable the confrontation of adversities present in their social realities; and, in the continuity of the process, be able, with them, to build projects of human happiness.

The method has been used in interventional actions in health services and in public and private universities in the São Francisco Valley (Macêdo, Souza & Lima, 2018; Souza & Macêdo, 2018; Macêdo, 2018; Birth & Macêdo, 2019). Among these actions, we highlight those carried out by NuCEU (Center for Care for University Students of the Semiárid), which appeared in 2018 at the Federal University of Vale do São Francisco (Macêdo, 2019). With a team composed of supervising teachers of internship, psychologists and other collaborating professionals and psychology students between 4th and 10th period, the core has been promoting lectures, workshops, individual accompaniments, psychological shift, intervention groups, including investing in actions of prevention and postvention of suicide among university students.

Macêdo (2019) argues that the main impasse that NuCEU members face is that those who provide the services are also students, who share the social reality of academic life and social conditions of life similar to those who receive the services: others University students. Without denying the possibility of vulnerability of future psychologists, it recognizes that this is a potentiating alternative for the conduct



of services, especially for interventional groups, because the action promoted with the use of the hermeneutic method collaborative allows tradition to be something in favor of a conjoint production of senses (a tessitura that enables the collective construction of protective factors), but highlights the importance of weekly supervision, which should also be focused on the production of senses and encouraging the care of the ability to care for psychology students.

Having put this, in the following lines, we present an interventional research carried out with the same method in NuCEU. To this end, we will situate the psychological suffering of the university student in contemporary times, besides exposing studies and actions carried out by some researchers.

Diniz & Aires (2018) point out that, with the multiple modifications that characterize contemporaneity, the university began to be configured as a space of intense psychic suffering and possible illness, which affects the academic community, of which university students are part. Graner and Ramos-Cerqueira (2017), Andrade et al (2016), and Padovani et al (2014) attest to the need for a HEI to have projects so that their university students can develop ways of coping with risk factors, which can mitigate, or even prevent, worsening to health. These authors also warn that the urgent need for HEI to be attentive to the demands and offer reception services that assist these subjects in coping and transforming their modes of subjectivation (feeling, thinking and acting).

In the present study, however, we argue that one way to enable a space of this order is the very way of doing research in an interventional way, because it is a type of knowledge production that, at the same time as risk factors are identified, we seek risk factors promote improvements for the subjects involved.

A space in which research can be carried out in this sense is the psychology school-service. In it, one of the challenges faced lately is the increased demand for university users from various courses and institutions, who cannot develop coping strategies, often losing the meaning of life in the face of pressures Contemporary. This community has been affected by mental disorders (Cambricoli & Toledo, 2017). Suicidal behavior has been studied in a young university population, be it the tendency, ideation or even the attempt or effectiveness of suicide and, while the HEIs begin to rethink this issue, teachers and other workers of these institutions do not know how to deal with the phenomenon.

Perhaps, what Bauman (2007) called “liquid times” (whose characteristics are insecurity, fragile bonds, competitiveness, fear, emptiness, weakening of collaboration and uncertainty) may be at the basis of the constitution of the culture of high performance, internalized as a value in all institutions in which the contemporary subject is inserted. Authors such as Padovani et al (2014), Andrade et al (2016), Graner & Ramos Cerqueira (2017) proved the vulnerability of university students from various courses and recognized the need for scientific debate around the theme and interventional proposals in the HEIs environment in Brazil, as a way to strengthen the protective factors.

It is interesting to point out some innovative projects that have been undertaken internationally (for example, those developed in Portugal by RESAPES-AP, 2010) and in Brazil, at the University of São Paulo (USP), in São Paulo; at the University of Brasília (UnB), in the Federal District; and the Federal University of São Francisco Valley (UNIVASF), in Pernambuco.

In 2010, in the city of Aveiro, Portugal, there was an event promoted by RESAPS – AP (Network of Psychological Support Services in Higher Education – Professional Association), an entity that recognizes the need for psychological support to be included in the organizational structure of the country’s HEIs. Since then, in the new versions of the event, the association has highlighted, among others, the importance of an interdisciplinary view in investigations on support systems focused on students’ personal problems and social support as a protective factor in academics.

In Brazil, in the context of interventional research, Oliveira and Ciampone (2008), through an operative group, tried to operationalize directions and strategies to improve the quality of life of nursing students at PUC/SP. Initially, they interviewed these students to guide the triggering themes of five focus group meetings in the second phase of the study. They found that the university was a space of experiences that promote and not promote the quality of life of students, and warned teachers and students to systematize meetings to discuss the individual and collective construction of coping strategies. Many of these students attributed as significant in their quality of life: patterns of family interaction, professional expectations, identity (with regard to self-esteem and self-perception of competencies). The researchers considered that the group moments were potentiating the quality of life of those students and argued that the HEI should think about a curricular reform that involves shared learning strategies, experiences of stress minimization, collective experiences of sensitization regarding the relationships established with colleagues, teachers and teams of professionals of the HEI, also highlighting the need for a space for intervention with teachers for them to help the students in the expression of affections.

At UnB, the concern with the mental health of university students led Osse and Costa (2011) to map the psychosocial conditions and quality of life of students living in student housing. Using self-applicable questionnaires on socio-demographic situation, life events, alcohol and drug use, and suicidal behavior, the authors found that those subjects who depended on institutional resources, in early stages of course, most of them from other states, had anxiety, depression and difficulties in asking for help. As a way of solving problems related to adaptation to academic life, the subjects resorted to alcohol and other drugs. They



noticed that the existing assistance programs at the university did not attend the demands, suggesting emergency actions to expand existing programs and the creation of new services to ensure the university's permanence until the end of the course with a better quality of life. Since then the institution has been investing in these spaces, in an integrated program for the entire academic community (know program on the institutional site mentioned above).

At UNIVASF, Macêdo (2018; 2019) created a project to extend care to university students, in which several intervention groups with university students have been taking place. This extension project, therefore, was the background that motivated the present study. We start from the following questions: how would university students experience the participation in interventional groups? What crossings are involved in these processes? What is the possible reach of these groups in the (trans)formation of the modes of subjectivity of university students?

We believe, therefore, in the potential of an intervention research to answer these questions, because we consider that reflections experienced in group processes in an academic context can be a powerful protective factor

Goals

The general objective of the research was to describe processes involved in interventional groups with university students in psychological distress in a psychology school-service. Specifically, we tried to understand the experiences of these university students by participating in the groups, pointing out crossings involved in the processes and identifying possible reaches of the groups in the (trans) formation in modes of subjectivation of the university students.

Method

Focusing on significations and meanings of human experience for people who experience it, we opted for phenomenological research, in which, in the intersubjective act of investigating, the subjectivities of the researcher and collaborators are involved. We consider that collaborative phenomenological research articulates clinical and research practice, which has already been discussed by authors such as Halling & Rowe (1997), Finlay (2009) and Macêdo (2015).

Specifically, the method used in the present study was Collaborative Hermeneutics (Macêdo, 2015), which emphasizes intersubjectivity and dialogue. In it, the researcher promotes a creative intersubjective action of sharing and resignification of experiences among collaborators, who, incarnated who are in the world by intercorporeity, engage in dialogue and, through a game of questions and answers produce new meanings for their experiences (Souza & Macêdo, 2018).

The conduct of the present study, taking into account the ethical precepts of CNS Resolutions 466/2012 and 510/2016, occurred concomitantly with the performance of interventional groups with university users of a Pernambuco school-service, facilitated by psychology students. We had the support of the Institutional Program of Scientific Initiation Scholarships (PIBIC 2018-2019) of the Federal University of Vale do São Francisco (UNIVASF) and the research was registered by CAEE No. 88562318.2.0000.5196 and approved by opinion No. 2,759,228, dated 07/06/2018, by the Committee on Ethics of the institution. The research involved two studies: one on the process experienced by psychology students in supervision and the one experienced by university users (which is being the focus of this article).

We included in the study users of the school service in question, regardless of sociodemographic data, who had in common to be university students who faced psychological distress, were available to participate voluntarily in the research and who did not undergo, at the time, to any other type of psychological intervention. Those who had a social bond of any order with psychology students and missed more than 25% of the intervention group sessions were excluded.

The research team presented, in a meeting of the school service, the proposal to the supervisors and supervising and, after their consent, the scholarship holder also inserted herself as a facilitator member of the interventions, forming a double with interns and/or extension students, integrating in the supervisions of these groups, performed by a teacher and a psychologist, for two hours per week. After the formation of the groups, the collaborators, university users of the school service, were invited to participate in the research at the first meeting of each group. The meetings took place in previously scheduled rooms and the group process was only started and registered as research material after the collaborators agreed to participate voluntarily, confirming this condition by signing a Free and Informed Consent Form.

The first group was initially composed of four university users, but ended with only two, because two others were excluded from the survey because they missed more than 25% of the meetings. The group was led by the scholarship holder and an intern. The process lasted eight meetings, two hours each, once a week, the last meeting being a moment of individual feedback. The second group had the initial participation of 12 university students (two women and ten men), in the same conditions as the first, but ended with six participants (two women and four men), also due to excess absences.



The instrument used was the Sense's version (SV), which consists, according to its author (Amatuzzi, 1991, 1993, 1996, 2008), in a brief and written account, which expresses the experience lived by the subject, shortly after a meeting. In this sense, the collaborators were asked to express, individually, at the end of each meeting, which was more significant. This material was the basis for the following meetings, configuring itself as a triggering element to raise the sharing of experiences, promoting resignifications in modes of subjectivation. The SV's were analyzed by the research team in the following steps (Amatuzzi, 2009; Macêdo, 2015):

- a) Full reading of the SV by each author in the following meeting of the production of the SV;
- b) Understanding of the significant elements of the experience of dialogue in the group, with the author of the SV confirmation;
- c) Presentification of the meaning of SV, a moment where the group (facilitators and collaborators) sought consensus on the meaning experienced by each one, authenticated by the author of the SV;
- d) Synthesis of individual processes in textual format performed by the research team and sent to collaborators for confirmation, denial or adjustment. When the partial analysis was sent by e-mail to the research collaborator, it was given a period of one week to the collaborator to evaluate the analysis of his process. In the first group, the collaborators answered and confirmed the analysis made of their own process; in the second group, none of the collaborators responded within the requested period, which did not invalidate the analysis performed;
- e) Finally, a final synthesis/analysis was carried out, seeking the apprehender what was common between the processes of the two groups, through the identification of Sense Units (US) by the research team, aiming to respond to the objectives of the study.

Results and Discussion

The initial analysis process by the research team took place differently in both groups. In the first, due to the collaborators being focused on individual issues, the return text was produced separately according to the process experienced by each of them, even if they were experiencing the same group meetings. In the second, due to the collective implication and the reverberation of the comments of each collaborators in the process of others, the constructed analysis was referring to moments experienced collectively, in a synthesis of what was significantly shared, from the perspective of the research team, by the collaborators of that group, being sent the same text of return to all the people who composed it.

During the final analyses, we could understand that the groups (G1 and G2) experienced a maturation process. Therefore, we use pseudonyms referring to types of cheeses, because what differentiates each cheese is its maturation process, flavor, texture and characteristics of its own, depending on the time and how they are prepared. In this sense, in the group process, it was possible to notice that each collaborator, metaphorically, was also in a maturation process, but that, due to their own characteristics, they experienced unique flavors and displeasures and at different times in the group processes. Thus, we named the collaborators of Maasdam, Brie, Gouda, Cablanca, Camembert, Roquefort, Gruyère and Edam.

From the analyses performed, we understand that, despite the initial theme referring to the academic environment, being the inclusion criteria in the group being university student, the process experienced by all collaborators demonstrated that the mobilizing questions did not necessarily permeated university life, because other more prominent issues were related to shared experiences, all of which were essential for the research team's understanding of the SU's of the UVs studied. In order to contribute to the intended objectives, therefore, we will highlight the US's in bold in the following lines.

Initially, we understand that the collaborators had a feeling of surprise in the face of common problems and difficulties. Throughout the meetings, with the proposed activities, which helped them to visit the past, and with the sharing of experiences, they reflected and were surprised to realize how the past was related to the moment they lived at the time of the group. In the very process of sharing the difficulties, they became aware that everyone faced them and that they sometimes referred to their own experience at the moment or with something they have already experienced. Thus, they recognized the need to change their perspective, as shown in the following SV's:

I've seen that everyone has problems and difficulties, not just me. Thus, I keep an eye on paying more attention to the other (Roquefort, G.2).

How much a change of perspective can totally change the meaning of our lives (Camembert, G.2)!

I think that's exactly what needs to make me turn upside down and see my reality and my problems with a new perspective (Cablanca, G.2).



As they entered this process of reviewing the need to change perspectives, they conceived that this caused the meanings of their lives to be changed as well, starting to look at their own reality and personal problems in another way, better understanding which their place in the world. These reflections could be materialized through sharing with other people, through an understanding of what was going on in each one's head, which helped them to be more critical and perceive their own characteristics. This can be conceived as a process of realizing oneself through the discourse of the other, as stated by Macêdo, Souza and Lima (2018), or even Rogers (1970), when theorizing about meeting groups. For example, cablanca VS (G2):

Probably the most significant for me is the interpretation [made by other participants] of personal characteristics that had never crossed my mind.

From these apprehended understandings, another US understood was **Reflection on the past, relating it to the present and envision the future**. Intertwining with what we described earlier, as the meetings were happening, the collaborators began to have different views of what they thought about themselves when they reflected on the present, their personal characteristics, their current place, even bothering to be in the condition they were in. When they thought about it they also anticipated the future, reflecting on what would come, with new perspectives and solutions for change, as we can see in the VS de Brie (G2) – “[...] *The question of change of priorities spoke to me. There is an old need to review them*” -; roquefort (G2.) - *“I feel lost. I don't know if I should live in the present or if it's time to set goals for the future”*-, and of Gouda (G.1) – *“I could remember my past, as a constructive memory that was gradually developing and that today I feel much more secure of the person I am”*.

It is worth remembering here what Gondim proposed (2003) for a qualitative research involving groups. Understanding that focus groups are adequate in the ideographic and hermeneutic approach in qualitative research, the author stressed that this approach gives an account of human experience and that the researcher, in this context, promotes an emancipatory action, the basis for social transformation of people inserted in a given social context. We did not perform a focus group, but an interventional group, but changes in ways of feeling, thinking and acting of university collaborators of this research were noticeable, which gradually favored a process of their transformation.

However, for these solutions and conceptions of change to occur, it was necessary to **learn the need to make their own choices and have the courage to change**. For this, they talked about the prerogative of change of attitude, since they recognized being stuck in old habits, which led to them asking a series of questions: *“the here and now is what I have, what am I doing with it?”* (Camembert, G2); *“if I know what I want, what t stops me from getting there?”* (Edam, G2); *“why don't I feel like going soon?”* (Brie, G2); *“what should I do to find myself?”* (Roquefort, G2). They mentioned that reflecting on these issues together with other people is better, brings the feeling of belonging.

The meeting showed that other people, from other courses and even other cities, can refer us to things that I have experienced, experienced, and be able to live and advise on the possibilities that we must allow ourselves to reflect on the moment or situation that we are passing (Gruyére, G.2).

I feel the group more comfortable opening up and sharing feelings (Brie, G.2).

Recently, similar results were obtained by Diniz and Aires (2018), when investigating a listening group for operative purposes with six students from the Federal University of Recôncavo da Bahia. The group aimed to talk and reflect on the daily of academic life. The researchers evaluated how students felt more comfortable expressing and problematizing their questions with other university students, and characterized this alternative as a network of mutual affective and social support and a possibility of applying care practices in the psychology school service of a university.

With regard to the research we conducted, although they were involved in a process of questioning, the university students recognized that they were on the right track and that they needed to take care before assuming responsibilities, continuing to give small steps in order to take advantage of the opportunities, as can be perceived in the VS of Maasdam (G1): *I have difficulty pointing out what my problem is [...] I have to keep taking my little steps and seize the opportunities*. As also in roquefort (G2): *I realize that in recent weeks I have been able to feel the process of autonomy starting. Today, definitively tying this perception, I feel confident and inspired to continue on this path of change that has just begun*

Therefore, it was necessary to accept their own difficulties, so that collaborators could name and expose the discomforts in the group, express the problems they faced and recognize that these difficulties still influenced their way of functioning. Gruyére (G.2) wrote in one of his VS's: *“what I expect from the process from now on is to better accept my difficulties and potentials.”* And Brie (G.2): *“Difficulties appear, but [you must] keep in mind how to arrive and have perseverance.”*

These SV's may indicate that what Rogers (1961) proposed as phases of a process of therapeutic change was occurring with these collaborators, even if it was not psychotherapy: changes in the perception



of oneself and of the contradictions themselves. After that, there was, then, **recognition of the autonomy of the own potentials for change**. They perceived and understood the process of autonomy they had over their own lives, feeling uncomfortable when they were aware of it. However, although they understood that their problems were their responsibility, they recognized passivity and the need to learn to trust themselves and to position themselves without fear of judgment, reviewing their own priorities, which can be exemplified with Edam VS (G2) and Camembert (G2):

I could see how important it is to learn to trust myself. Learn to position myself without fear of judgment (Edam).

I am pleased to realize my autonomy over my life. But it bothers me a little to know my autonomy about my problems, because so they become my responsibility and it takes courage to be able to change them (Camembert).

Diniz and Aires (2018), in a study mentioned above, highlight the need for the university to develop autonomy to face academic responsibilities, time and personal life management, referring to studies that show the importance of group to assist these students in the resolution of their conflicts and in the distressing experience of the academic context. They emphasized, recalling Pereira (2013) and Nascimento and Galindo (2017), the importance of operative groups, because, „by being used in the field of education, they promote changes in the perception of participants in relation to their problems, collaborating for a collective and active construction of solutions” (p.64). Resaline in Pichon Rivière (2009), they complement the argument that these interventions imply the learning of new ways of existing, which are therapeutic in nature.

Given the results of our research, we risk saying that this may be a consequence of an interventional methodology with therapeutic results, because, by the SV's above, we could perceive a process of change in modes of subjectivation, that is, the process group experience in the research was a clinical process of changes for the collaborators. This statement can be demonstrated in the VS of Roquefort and Cablanca at the last meeting of group 2:

This last meeting helped me to notice the real and effective change that the group indirectly caused in my life. (Roquefort).

Today a cycle closes here so that a new cycle continues to develop in my life. Before this, I've been on terrible days and with all the pillars of my life fragile. Now, I'm managing to see myself as someone who looks out and has more patience with me. I'm returning to being the determined, tenacious Cablanca I used to be. I'm proud of it, but I know I can still improve (Cablanca).

It is worth mentioning here the power that a group has for these changes to be possible. Munari, Padilha, Motta and Medeiros (2007) highlighted that the psychological dimension of the groups would be based on a triad: psychosocial structure, communication process and content. They proposed that group forces can function as primary therapeutic agents, because, regardless of whether it is psychotherapy, some therapeutic factors should always be present in a group process. But this will only occur if there is a climate capable of promoting free and spontaneous emotional interaction, being significant for this to define the role of the facilitator and the members of the group, the type of relationship to be developed, as well as the task to be performed.

We believe that the framework of the interventional research, agreed in a TCLE that excelled in the respect, confidentiality and availability of each member, as well as the training received by the facilitators from a humanistic-phenomenological methodology of welcoming, listening and caring; may have contributed to the therapeutic potency of these groups. The students of Psychology facilitators were constantly oriented in supervision so that their listening was based on necessary conditions, such as unconditional positive consideration and authenticity (Rogers, 1961) as well as to favor a dialogical context of conversation so that everyone would be available in an intersubjective dimension (Merleau-Ponty, 1971) to argue and argue against (Gadamer, 1995/2009).

At the end of the process, the collaborators recognized that it was necessary to go around to achieve the objectives, again wondering what their goals were, realizing that without focus the path is not interesting, because any exit can satisfy. Despite feeling lost and afraid to walk new paths, they reported the need to be attentive to the unknown, because in the growth process there are numerous possibilities of evolution and that, gradually, one can learn new possibilities to grow, as stated below:

I go out, of the group meetings, happy. I realize that in these weeks of reflection there have been changes and that now I need to put things into practice, to become habits, and I'm excited to start (Maasdam, G1).

It was very good, because it was a moment to reflect and know that in life we have several possibilities to evolve and know that there are several processes, and that gradually we are developing and growing with new learning (Gouda, G1).



In the process, the weekly supervision of psychology students and PIBIC fellows was essential for conducting both intervention groups. Even though the process experienced by the facilitators is the focus of another study, it is worth highlighting here how the crossings were present throughout the course.

This question points to the studies that Peres, Santos and Coelho (2003 and 2004) conducted when researching the Program of Psychological Emergency Care for Students (PPAPA) of UNESP, in Assis/SP, a free program, aimed exclusively at the internal community of the institution. In 2003, they briefly characterized the service offered and made some considerations about the modalities of care and intervention strategies employed, problematizing, at the end, the management of ethical and technical issues. They explained that the service was provided by students of the 4th and 5th years of the Psychology course and supervised, group or individually, by a psychologist hired by the school service. Psychology students took turns on two three-hour psychological duty, welcoming university students who scheduled appointments or arrived with urgent demands requiring prompt care. The main demands were anxiety, stress, academic pressure, relationship problems and circumstantial adaptation difficulties, which the authors pointed out as „mild” psychic suffering, which made them not to engage with such issues or to resort to a psychotherapeutic service, only wanting to „unburden”, but did not fail to point out more serious demands such as suicidal behavior and abusive use of alcohol and other drugs

It is worth noting that this study was published more than 15 years ago, and, nowadays, according to our experience at NuCEU, we welcome many university students in intense psychological distress, often being narrated from the complaints described above. It seems to us, therefore, that the causes of suffering are apparently the same and that perhaps what changes is how the subject deals with this suffering, experiencing an unbearableness of it (Macêdo, 2018).

In the intervention groups of the present study, however, a subjective mobilization of university students was perceived to seek help, thus recognizing the NuCEU space as an additional possibility in the process of resignification of suffering, restorative of health and preventive of psychic illness.

Also, with regard to prevention, it is worth noting how significant group activities are in the process of adaptation to the university. In the case of the collaborators of this research, we identified how those who were in the beginning of the course and in the process of adaptation to the city and/or the institution recognized how the groups were favoring adaptation to new people and relationships. Let us look, as an example, VS's de Gouda (56 years) and Maasdam (21years), which were able to exchange experiences of personal life and academic life:

Today was very good, in our meeting I was able to express my difficulty, because it is at this moment that these problems are affecting me a little. I hope to find the right way and the most correct possibilities to overcome this nuisance, so that I can act with more freedom of expression (Gouda, G1).

Today I leave with two thoughts that complement each other. The first is about wanting to be the “complete” rose in balance with its thorns, but feel more like the loose leaf, alone, without your support. And the second to be the kite That I’m getting too far away from people with the intention of “protecting me”, and maybe the problem is not the other. And it leads me to be the flower alone (Maasdam, G1).

Peres, Santos and Coelho (2003), in a study already mentioned, highlighted a recurring problem of suffering by distance from home and loved ones in the process of entering academic life, homesickness, emphasizing that there are many individual and life history issues that affect this process. They emphasized that the PPAPA offered the modalities of group and workshop of coexistence, which seemed to us an important intervention for the issue of adaptation.

Homesickness is a state of anguish experienced by those who have left their home and find themselves in a new and unknown environment. In conducting research on the subject, relating it to depression and dissatisfaction in the transition process from high school to university, Terry, Leary and Mehta (2012) argued that, although most university students fit well to university, a high proportion of them experience difficulties that, if unresolved, can lead to homesickness (homesickness), to consequent depression, dissatisfaction to attend classes, low concentration and demotivation to continue the course, which can impair academic performance.

For Thurber and Walton (2012), the transition to university can be a new and exciting experience for many young people, however, it can be a very difficult or even unsustainable experience due to intense homesickness, causing some college students to narrate depression or anxiety. Thus, this intense suffering can exacerbate preexisting mood and anxiety disorders, precipitating new mental and physical health problems. The authors, therefore, pointed out interventional programs such as prevention and treatment strategies for the phenomenon, programs that can result in a healthy, rewarding and productive university experience.

Returning to Peres, Santos and Coelho and the PPAPA/UNESPE, in a 2004 publication, the authors, when tracing the sociodemographic and clinical profile of the users, found that as a space for listening and welcoming, the program offered “a possibility of ventilation of feelings and anxieties” (p.48), but highli-



ghted that most of them were psychology students, requiring a redoubled attention from the trainees who provided service, with regard to ethical and technical issues. For this, the coordinators had three special care: the trainee should not have previous social contact with the user; confidentiality and supervision (to prevent identification between trainee and user from impairing attendance). In the research we carried out these were the care thought from the beginning: the condition of social relationship of any order of students with users as exclusion criterion; secrecy as an ethical aspect of research and practice in Psychology; and supervision as an essential condition for the development of an interventional research in Psychology.

Supervision in psychology school services is an important pillar that supports the formation of future psychologists, and one of its fundamental characteristics is to contemplate aspects related to learning and therapeutic processes (Oliveira et al, 2014). The supervisor's *holding* role (Sei & Paiva, 2011), as one that supports, encourages, guides the trainee's clinical attitude and welcomes their fears and anxieties (Aguirre et al, 2000), in order to help identify demand, differentiate themselves from the client and act professionally, was a *sine qua non* condition in conducting this research, since it helped psychology students sustain conflicts in conducting processes whose subjects experienced social realities too similar to theirs. In addition, *sv*, beyond a research and training tool (as proposed by Amatuzzi, 1991, 1993, 1996, 2008), as supervision instrument, widely used by practitioners of humanist and phenomenological approaches in Psychology (Vieira, Bezerra, Pinheiro and Branco, 2018; Boris, 2008), was also crucial in the present study in view of the processes experienced in the methodological context of Collaborative Hermeneutics.

Final Considerations

The university collaborators of this research indicated psychic suffering in the face of risk factors such as previous life history at the academy, in addition to intra- and interpersonal relationships maintained from the entry into the university context. When having a context of listening and speaking with other university students available, they initially felt surprised to share common problems and difficulties, but, in the course of the group process, by reflecting on the past, relating it to the present and looking to the future, they learned about the need to make their own choices and have the courage to change, accepting their own difficulties and recognizing the autonomy of their own potential changes.

In view of these results, we concluded, mainly, the importance of the interventional character of this research for the collaborators involved, because they could, in this space of listening and speaking, in addition to sharing experiences, take care of their abilities to build possibilities to face their difficulties and the process of change in the face of experience as university students.

For psychology students facilitating the groups, the research was a source of learning because they immersed themselves both in the intervention process and in the supervision process. This opportunity enabled the development of clinical listening, even before entering the mandatory internship; learning about group conducting; and the development of the capacity for critical analysis of the practice itself. It was possible to recognize the other member of the pair of facilitators as a source of learning, besides recognizing other psychology students in the spaces of supervision as support in the midst of the trajectory of becoming a professional.

One of the limits of our research was the lack of sociodemographic data of university students who used NuCEU services, because the only condition considered until this research was completed it was that the user was university student. Data such as, for example, age (we only had access to some), city of origin, have to leave home to study or not, course held, be first graduation or not, marital status, have children or not etc, maybe had greatly facilitated the deepening of some readings of the demands/sufferings faced by the collaborators, as well as helped to guide and/or compare this study with others that have already been carried out in Brazil and in the world.

Despite its limits, however, the results of this study may collaborate with the university where it was held, the Psychology course and the school service in question, in order to reflect on the importance of adopting preventive actions during the student's university life; be able to comply with the national student assistance program; create university support networks; and expand possibilities of training to psychology students, aiming at their future entry into the labor market of the profession.

For future studies, we suggest that research be conducted with a larger number of groups and that seek to understand, together with university collaborators who have participated in interventional groups, the scope of experiences in these groups for their lives, clearly identifying the protective factors developed.



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