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THE WORK IN COMMUNITIES

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Abstract

In this paper, subjective well-being aspects and the needs of overcoming barriers to conquer and to keep quality of life are seen as a way of reaching states of satisfaction and happiness. The dimension of subjective well-being is respectively integrated with cognitive, affective and social aspects. It is explained the phenomenon of the thought as an intermittent succession of images organized by the mind in the field of the memory; images that come from the environment and are registered in our memory thanks to the body's experience of space and time. By this way perception allows the mind to process sensations into symbolic meanings. As a consequence, the signs found in the environment and the experiences changed by people are continuously built through the mind and by the memory. The change between people is then a change of subjective images organized by the mind, according to their life experience. It is a collaborative work through which partnerships are built. To see others, however, demands a reading of 'the others'. How is that possible?

Key-words – Subjective well-being and satisfaction; quality of life, community; social work; alterity.

Content

In order to talk about well-being in communities it deems necessary to expose the common sense of well-being. Succinctly, well-being means “to be good with the life itself”, “to be good with ourselves”, “to be good in our skin”. To be good with life itself is somehow to be satisfied with what we have, what we are, or what we do.

In such terms, we understand that a person that experiences well-being is a person who has, is, or does something that likes and is perfectly satisfied with.

However, a person would have, would be or would do something that he or she likes without thinking before of what to have, to be or to do for living? Does a person have to think of how and what to choose for having, being and doing? Finally, if to think about what to have, to be and to do is a crucial need for living decisions, what options environment can offer nowadays?

Through this idea, the feeling of satisfaction is directly linked to the capacity of social acting. A person who acts is a person capable of thinking to overcome barriers, to succeed desires of having, being and doing. Even to find the right words to be told at the right moment obliges the action of the thought, argues Hannah Arendt (1999).

Let us think about the production of thoughts. Thought is biologically limited to the brain and its capacity to project images registered in the memory. Limits are present by the process of organization of images according to the brain function. Images that are (re)cognized as mnemonic registers by the mind. These registers are made through human body perception, according to life experiences (Bergson, 1999).

The projection of thought, thus, is a group of images that are overexposed continuously and can form infinite new organizations of images (Deleuze and Gattary, 1980). No longer, the thought's projection may determine possible readings, depending on what we know (Bakhtine, 1977).

Now, we know what we understand and we may only understand what we are capable of reading from the signs of the world. These signs are images given continuously by the environment and its culture.

Finally, the reading of the world suggests, as consequence, that a person may need to be capable to learn, to think and to signify worldly signs to use it to make good decisions before the choices given by the environment.

Everything that has an appearance is a sign to be comprehended (Dilthey, 1944). Therefore, even a person is an identity sign. We can say, thus, we also "read" people - meanwhile people "read" us as well.

This change of reading among people is the inter-subjective reading (Dartigues, 1973). A sort of reading that has its representation in the changing of actions among people. We could even better say actions of changing, as long as one always acts to change interests with others (Laborit, 1976).

In this sense, the other can also be seen as a barrier that must be overcome. Evidently, overcoming barriers demands a thoughtful action that will depend upon what we do know and perceive from the others as signs of personality, character, culture and situational conditions found in the environment.

This rich inter-subjective experience is the main stone of the phenomenology (Dartigues, 1973) for what one perceives another who perceives the first one. One acts to another who acts with the first one by a mutual perception.

Now, let's see a refutable but not less instigating reading about people whose biography represents to our worldly imaginary big collective causes: Gandhi had a jejunum (fasting) to seek the attention of the world by his suffering, and his act induces us to think about the way he fought for his freedom, while redemption had its foundation in the optimism to persevere in suffering, as far as this was the way he obtained the Satisfaction of freedom for his nation; Mother Teresa gave up her comfort and lived the need of others in her Christian assistance practice, and her acts direct us to think that to persevere in humble attitude with optimism as far as the practice of love by forgetting ourselves is way to find Happiness in God; Robin Hood, according to the legend, robbed riches with a lot of Satisfaction, having the perspective that acting in this way he brought justice to his people in need of true smiles.

How can we consider the value of each act of those known names mentioned above in our imaginary? What worldly signs are exposed in those situations? How can we project continuous comprehensive behavior signs in the environment context they lived in?

To project images in our minds in an attempt to get their human action into social signs in a meaningful symbolic point of view demands not only to understanding the implicit that ruled their micro-culture in a circumstantial moment of their environmental social time, but also their motivation for what to have, to be and to do for living.

The meaning that a community gives to certain values, managing them all in order to organize how to improve their process of living, is something only comprehensible when we bring up in our mind our own living signs registered as images given in our subjectivity. A cognitive projection made by the action of thinking.

By this process, worldly signs are apprehended and signified very individually thanks to the senses perceived by the body. So, to live someone else's meaningful signs in our subjectivity is to comprehend some senses that the reason unknown how to know; it is to introject someone else's living experience in our own knowledgeable imaginary.

Satisfaction is situated in this affective-cognitive scope, in which we selected, by and in the memory, images full of meanings, rules and representations to organize the conquest of social having, social being and social doing. All signs voluntary chosen to be cultivated by our minds are selected because they affect us positively. It means, we select that that through the senses becomes printed in our memory as a register of moments and ideas of pleasure, satisfaction.

Back to the action of thinking: To think is to select registered signs in the overflowing of images that we dispose in the *continuum* of the mind to decide matters. Thus, to organizing images of significant words in our mind to articulate the thought. Finally we organize the images that we dispose in our memory according to our personality and from what is given to us by the environment.

Research in the field of the positive psychology (Diener et All, 1977; Diener et All, 1998; Csikszentmihalyi, 1999) indicates how much perseverance and good humor contribute to the states of satisfaction and happiness, but there is no way to know how much a person inborn of optimism, extroversion and good humor can dimension a quality of life full of subjective well-being.

That is in reason of, beyond to be inborn with determinant complex characteristics of personality, each person makes part of a permanent individual transformation process by the social insertion. Each person builds the ability to read the environment and everything within, having as a reference the experience of living in it.

It means that although the genetic characteristics are determinant, as long as the way each one receives concretely registers of impression depends upon how a body is biochemically constituted. Environment is crucial for making choices and determining personality along life span (KELLER et All, 2010; COVENTRY et All, 2005; NEALE et MCARDLE, 2000).

In this way, reality is imprinted in each of us in a different way. Just as a same figure stamped on a different ground has its lines in a different pattern once printed in different surfaces, a same reality means very peculiar moods of apprehending and impressing registers, depending upon whom is its receiver.

By living its concrete difficulties, a community develops particular meanings as being a register in its social memory. Though the rules of the structural orders are like hegemonic patterns. It means there is always a "boss" who decides and orders, a leader who centralizes interests. A hierarchy of values in which thoughts seem to be attracted to projected images. A model of thinking that forces people to organize living in a way that should be "positively" followed. An idea of satisfaction form to be achieved and thus chosen.

Even in the cooperatives, communities and associations there is always someone at the head of decisions or who deliberates what should be decided in the order of the day. To participate, by its turn, looks like to be a condition for well-being. The desire to collaborate already promotes an opened spirit to the subjective well-being.

Despite it, the simple intention of collaborating does not allow us to reach a real collaboration. To live well with others we need patience and the human capacity of solidarity. A solidarity that requires us to see others by the other who I am in my Self, knowing to be just another one, in this world of many others who are not me. A solidarity possible by the intersubjective reading.

The satisfaction of being capable to read people and then to realize something that we thought would be done seems to be the crowning of one's biggest power: the power to realize something in the world (Ribeiro, 2001).

Satisfaction of having gotten something is, consequently, the satisfaction of having realized ourselves. As long as when we realize something we leave in its realization an extension of our own knowledge. It cannot be possible without communion, collaboration, and participation. No one realizes something that is not capable to organize within the mind a continuum of surrounding readings. To realize is, thus, a power to manifest or to represent the action of thinking through intersubjective readings.

What sort of relationship between many different people can be grown in a collaborative event? What type of inter-subjective changing is possible to establish? Could people perceive others by what they are in their Self, or people see others by what people are? What kind of readings can I do from others, "despite myself", in my reading? If the satisfaction of realizing something in a collective way depends on good relationship with others, how may we all share ourselves with others. How can we be capable of seeing others beyond limits of being just ourselves?

That is all theory about the work in community. What about its practice?

The practice of the communitarian work is that you may realize within this text. It means to articulate ideas in a way that people could think things that have being thought before in a different way. It is to dare to re-read the world.

People want to be happy. They want to have things like any others of our time. People are looking for a better quality of life.

Perhaps the biggest difficulty for the collective engagement is to share and to re-create reality, in a way that the social tissue could be decided and acted by one with others within a non hierarchy. In other words, to know how to think collectively or to produce the action of thinking, in a way that the images could be organized in a collective form, in terms of innovating psychosocial realities.

Why the social decision images have to come from only one individual? We are all individuals called by life to overcome barriers.

But, what have we experimented by changing with others?

To see the others compels us to observe their characteristics of personality, character and temperament. It is sure that we feel safer in front of people who seem to be a trustful character and to have a predictable serene temperament. But the personality of each one reveals us as one person deals with feelings that everyone is subjected: anger, envy, jealousy, rejection, potency, anxiety and need. It is throughout personality that we perceive how people create their feelings and... we read their attitudes, by the comprehension of their worldly movement phenomenon.

To see the other "despite myself" compels us an understanding of people without having as a reference our "own belly". To understand people's faults and watch in them what we do not (or do not think) to have is not easy: "none loves other beyond that he has in himself or supposes to have to", wrote Fernando Pessoa.

In a certain way, from our egocentric point of view we desire the other to be an extension of ourselves. In this sense, an action is needed: the solidarity action towards what we have as the most close to the human mind: the real possibility of each one to face self difficulties/limits, having as reference the other's different life and thoughts organization, those that can be so stranger for our reading.

It is in this direction that this article intended to address this idea: in the sense that the action of the work in communities shall have as objective the development of people to overcome barriers. It demands knowledge connected at

the perception we get in front of others, while we perceive ourselves; to know in ourselves that what we need, without the presumption that we could be extended beyond our own skin.

Conclusion

This paper is an invitation to people to think to put apart the presumption that a person can ascend others to the stage that we can project for them. People just develop themselves, developing knowledge, and knowledge happens every moment, at the permanent inter-subjective changing of readings and thoughtful actions.

Nothing will grant, however, the control of how a person will use the knowledge achieved. But living well together demands us to know how to overcome barriers; and to be satisfied with what we have, what we are and what we do, in the limited action of a selfish world.

Positive psychology studies lead us to consider that the state of art in happiness is reached when a person shares moments with family and friends (Diener et All, 1997). As consequence, building a constructive collective satisfaction is not only possible but socially needed.

By this way, it is believed that any sort of cynic living of our times has to be thought. To understand human action in a way of not using knowledge to enslave people with ideas that do not support "the construction of their own". Dependents, how could people be satisfied? To depend upon someone is to be at the chance of someone's mood. The practices of the communitarian work aims to the social demands, by the solidarity. In this perspective, to affect people positively obliges a looking at what people have in themselves - in spite of looking at what I" have in myself "on them". No one's subjectivity is the reference center of how people's life should be.

The objective of this paper is achieved if it affects, somehow, subjectivities that may review how to read groups organization, communities satisfaction and well-being states. Alterity is a key-word for nowadays critical psychosocial studies. A concept of alterity that is asking: is there many "others" to be understood or are we all together, organically, just "one", manifesting a needed particular side of living?

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Dr. Ribeiro worked many years with Art, Culture and Education towards individuals' and communities' work identity. His voluntary work with marginalized youth at II Court for Children and Youth of Rio de Janeiro rendered him a position of Cultural Animator at Rio de Janeiro's Public Schools, from which projects a Motion of Praise and Recognition was given by the Rio de Janeiro's Municipal Chamber in 2000, when he published the book "Cultural Animation - Phenomenological Points and Practical Action". B.Sc. in Education, he developed his academic career in Psychology, following Master's and Doctoral's programs at UFRJ - The Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, thanks to the Brazilian CAPES scholarship program and to Dr. Carlos Américo Alves Pereira supervision. Dr. Ribeiro, member of Brazilian Psychology Society among other international institutions, is an expert in bio-psychosociology and hermeneutics. He is interested in individual and groups development, mediation of conflicts and ethical issues.