

## PROJECT TITLE:

### “ LET’S LULL WITH THE WORDS”

(Experimental Laboratory of reflective writing on parenting)

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## Premise

Narrative Medicine lays its foundations on the value of words, starting from the need to take into consideration, for the treatment, the personal aspects of the patient.

Writing "helps doctors, nurses, social workers and therapists to improve the efficacy of care through the development of the capacity for attention, reflection, representation and affiliation with patients and colleagues" (Rita Charon).

## Introduction

Entering the world of "life stories" means entering into a world of meanings that the user wishes to communicate to us by placing the facts in a certain way rather than in another. Fragments of desires and personal needs are obtained from the baggage of memories on which to activate a future project. Memories come to life and life is made through memories. From these reflections comes the idea of creating an experimental autobiographical laboratory aimed at mothers and fathers waiting for a child. In the context of care relationships, self-writing can become a powerful tool, a precious resource for accessing and welcoming questions, requests for listening, feelings of fragility and fear. Personal writing in the wake of one's own life is transformed into shared experience, and helps to alleviate the loneliness of the person. The laboratory can become a new space for educational, thought and project relationships to be shared with everyone.

## **General objective**

Autobiographical writing utilizes the profound link that exists between self-narration and personal identity, so that telling oneself becomes the principle of organization and synthesis of the Self. Through the narration we will investigate the emotions that accompany the transition to parenting. The latter refers to a series of themes such as the representation of being in relation to the internal image of father and mother, the constitution of a representation of one's child, of oneself in the role of parent and of the relationship of oneself with the child: in one word, who has matured adulthood

(Demetrius, 2005, see Margiotta and Zambianchi, 2011, Margiotta, 2013). Narrating one's own experience of pregnancy and waiting affects the traditional ways in which the parental couple experiences the fantasies, the worries, the hopes, the emotions that lead to the assumption of the role and parental functions.

Entering your own life stories, improving your knowledge and understanding of yourself and your own history allows you to build a more effective and satisfying relationship with your children. As Mariani suggests (2007), there are many questions that a sensitive parent, motivated to evolve, poses: "What are the meanings of becoming a parent and of living parenting?" Participants in the course will try to give answers to these questions. through their narratives.

## **Objectives for the people involved:**

- Elaborate the experiences of motherhood to give "meaning" and "meaning" to the experiences through the re-elaboration of the same.
- To bring out their memories and their expectations
- Develop tools to decode hidden messages that the person often carries with him.
- Improving the complicity between a person and a professional.
- Improve the relationship within the constituted group.
- To provide women and their partner with an instrument to become participants and co-responsible for their new role as parents
- Encourage the capacity for expression through the narrative tool, such as autobiographical writing / narration of personal experiences, in order to favor empowerment paths also in innovative ways.
- Improve active listening skills.
- Enhance the tool of Narrative Medicine to promote humanization and the empathic relationship between the operator and the person
- Improve the ability to grasp, as much as possible, the needs of women and offer the resources to meet them through the possible activation of a network of services.
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## **Methodology and tools**

During the workshop activities, the participants will be invited by the facilitator to speak and write about themselves starting from narrative, visual, filmic, photographic and object suggestions, in order to stimulate memories and stimulate autobiographical production. In the setting will be used a grid prepared in the form of semi-structured interview, or the story can take place in a free and spontaneous form behind input, suggestions or experiences lived from their childhood, friendships, relationships with others, school and work experience, the relationship with one's parents, the relationship with one's motherhood, etc.

The meetings will end with the sharing of the emotions experienced in the elaboration of their writings among the participants as an indispensable moment for the strengthening of their personal identity.

Method used: Reflecting.

## **To whom it is addressed**

- Women at the first experience or later experience and companions (in the role of parent).
- Dads involved in the experience of parenting alongside the mother, if they shared the idea of experimenting together.

**The laboratory is divided into 6 total meetings of two hours each:**

### **Pre-birth:**

**1st meeting:** Opening of the workshop, presentation of the project, the diary and the participants with first autobiographical ideas

**II ° meeting:** We give words to the words to express emotions, feelings and experiences, in the journey of life.

**III ° meeting:** The time of waiting between memories and dreams: being parents today.

### **Post-birth :**

**1st meeting:** Discovering emotional tones: narration of the lived between imaginary and real

**II ° meeting:** New expectations, meeting with the child: affection and parenting

**III meeting:** Valorisation of the Self: awareness of one's own resources and one's own fragility

## **Purpose of the project**

The purpose of this experimental project has pedagogical, educational and educational value, favors a path that goes from one side to recognize, reinforce and enhance the resources already present and, on the other, to develop new personal and professional skills and knowledge of all involved protagonists. The writing workshop allows the person not to feel isolated, to be recognized in his subjectivity, especially in these particular moments of life, such as the birth of a child. Therefore the laboratory is a place of exchange and silent help between future parents. This initiative will improve health care and ensure fairness on the distribution of the determinants of physical and mental well-being of citizens and the community.

## **PARTIAL REPORT**

The project is a process of elaboration and support for conscious parenting. The project started in the ASLTO4 company in the month of October 2017 and involved mothers distributed in several courses, in the pre and post-delivery period, until today the first phase of the project has been activated.

During the meetings there were moments of reflection and dialogue alongside moments in which the participants were involved in writing and figurative art activities to freely stimulate the expression of their emotions.

Therefore we are able to make a partial analysis of the collected data related to pre-birth meetings.

The interest and participation of women has exceeded expectations, taking into account the innovative and experimental projects in the Maternal - Child Department. At the end of the first phase, questionnaires were distributed to the participants to allow them to express judgments concerning the course. The information gathered was useful for identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the project, with a view to its effective improvement.

Particular attention was the recovery and enhancement of the meaning and responsibility of the formative role of being a parent today. This has met an effective need felt by future parents, who experience strong social and relational changes before which they often feel unprepared.

The meetings allowed the participants to acquire new modes of relationship, a deeper ability to listen and dialogue in order to deal more effectively with the role of being a mother.

Women have expressed favorable and satisfying opinions that we like to emphasize with their **own words**:

"It would be nice to do more meetings. The course is very nice and involves you in full "

"Very useful the presence of different professional figures with different backgrounds and points of view that make contributions from multiple perspectives that are certainly enriching"

"It would be nice if the course spread more, because I think it is very useful as an experience of personal expression of approach to motherhood and beyond. The decision to create restricted groups of mothers at meetings has allowed us to safeguard the atmosphere of intimacy."

"The course is like a space of expression and comparison in which from time to time in reality nobody knows exactly what you are going to talk about and this makes us freer to express ourselves"

"Write to look inside and see us then from outside, with greater awareness"

"Sharing not so much what we write, but the emotions we experience at the very moment of our opening up on a blank sheet this allows you to walk unknown paths of our inner life"

"Being together, in a serene, welcoming, free, content and respectful space. Writing and listening. Music and herbal tea ... very beautiful! "

Also we conductors enter this space of absolute expressive authenticity, not only as conductors but as participants, putting into play our emotional expressiveness made of words that lull and relax that change us enrich us and make us grow.

"The women who have experienced this first phase of the project have found real positive changes in relationships in general, underlining how in a short time they have been able to receive real and effective help".

All the meetings were held with great serenity, respect and understanding, and no particular problem was found.

## **6f Future prospect for the search**

Within this experimental laboratory it is expected in the future the realization of a study concerning future prospect research project on the effectiveness of the Narrative Medicine Methodology:

1. The narration as a tool that enriches the informative process that relates to the person's experience and not only its clinical history, contributing to improving the therapeutic alliance between the person and the operator that should be primarily an "alliance of humanity" .
2. Narration as an instrument that allows the person to live their experience with greater awareness.
3. Evaluation of the role of the narration with respect to the modification of the autobiographical memory and the meanings attributed to one's own history according to the type of relationship that is created between the person and the operator.

Strengths