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MENTAL HEALTH AND INCLUSION AS PROTECTIVE FACTORS

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Abstract: The article addresses the increase in mental health disorders, focusing on anxiety as an emotional response characterized by excessive worries. Anxiety, when persistent, can become a disorder, affecting thoughts, behaviors and emotional well-being, manifesting itself in physical problems. The study “Mental Health and Inclusion as Protective Factors,” analyzes the interference of anxiety in professional and emotional life. It aims to investigate the role of public bodies in preventing mental health problems, identifying strategies to alleviate symptoms and promote awareness. The research involves a semi-structured interview with an anxious young woman, highlighting the significant influence of anxiety and the importance of physical exercise. They conclude by highlighting the need for awareness, understanding and support to build an empathetic society in the face of growing emotional challenges.

Keywords: Inclusion. Mental health. Society.

INTRODUCTION

Currently, it is possible to notice a considerable increase in mental health disorders, and this approach aims to enrich the formation of a more informed and compassionate society in the face of mental challenges, recognizing the equal importance of mental health in relation to physical health. Mental health, often underestimated due to its ‘invisible’ nature, contrasts with obvious physical limitations. This lack of visibility can generate unrealistic expectations about its functioning and coping strategies, leading to doubts about the real impact of pain and even questions about one’s own adequacy in dealing with this suffering.

It is imperative to understand the complexity of mental health, recognize the need for care and attention, seeking to reduce stigma and expand understanding of these complex conditions. According to JUNIOR

(2021, p.6) it is important to understand our limitations, promoting a culture of generosity and tolerance.

In social inclusion, social beliefs can complicate the search for treatments. Psychology suggests accepting emotions, developing habits for well-being. Social inclusion ensures rights, opportunities and resources for everyone, regardless of personal characteristics. (CAMARGO; MAGALHÃES, 2020)

It is important to highlight how a person facing an anxiety disorder feels when they do not receive the appropriate diagnosis or necessary follow-up. Therefore, in the preparation of this article, the person who voluntarily made themselves available for research brings questions and reflections that are crucial for a more egalitarian society.

During the interview, the young woman was calm and expressed herself clearly and objectively. This is notable, since, due to social taboos surrounding the topic, people do not always feel comfortable enough to discuss the subject. Anxiety, being a natural response of the body to situations of danger, stress or challenge, in some cases, can become disproportionate, chronic and negatively affect the quality of life.

METHODOLOGY

This article adopts a qualitative methodological approach with a descriptive character, based on bibliographical research, and focuses on the theme “Mental Health and Inclusion as Protective Factors”. This methodological choice is motivated by the significant increase in the number of people affected by anxiety. The research was conducted through a semi-structured interview with a 20-year-old girl who faced anxiety attacks.

During the interview process, we treat the topic with extreme caution, respecting the

limits of the person interviewed. We avoided pressuring her for information that she did not feel comfortable sharing, as we understand that understanding and supporting people with anxiety requires sensitivity, empathy and acceptance.

RESULT

We discuss below the interview with the young woman about her experience with anxiety, exploring seven aspects of mental health and inclusion as protective factors, followed by the analysis of the data collected.

1. How would you describe the relationship between your mental health and emotional balance in your daily life, and how do these aspects influence your quality of life?

R= Coping with anxiety often proves to be challenging, significantly impacting my daily life, such as studies, work and interpersonal relationships.

2. Is there anything specific related to anxiety that you wish people understood or knew?

R= I would like people to understand that it is not easy to live with worries and negative thoughts and that dealing with the imbalance in mental health linked to anxiety is difficult, especially for those who do not experience the condition, which they may mistakenly interpret as simple stress. It is very important that those who do not experience mental health problems understand and support, rather than criticize, those who do experience these conditions.

3. Have you ever sought support to face these feelings?

R= Not yet, but I intend to do so.

4. How extensive is the impact of anxiety on your professional life?

R= To maintain focus becomes incredibly challenging at certain times, compromising professional performance. Additional effort is required to perform everyday tasks that a person without anxiety performs more easily.

5. Have you found strategies or activities that help alleviate your symptoms?

R= Certainly, volleyball, for example, has had a significant impact on my life. By practicing it, I can put aside my worries and give myself completely to the activity. We noticed in the interviewee's response that physical activities offer a healthy way to channel the energy accumulated due to anxiety.

6. Was there anything in particular that triggered this feeling?

R= I believe that some past traumas actually contributed to intensifying this feeling. However, I am not open to reporting what they were, as it is a hypothesis, since I have not yet sought therapies.

7. Is there anything in particular you'd like to share about what you're going through?

R= No.

It was evidenced in the interview that the lack of mental health directly affects performance on a personal and social level. According to LOPES, SANTOS (2018, p.3) Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) is defined by persistent anxious symptoms that impact a wide range of behaviors in different everyday situations. Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD) is marked by persistent anxious symptoms that impact the patient's various behaviors. Given this scenario, additional effort is needed in the workplace to effectively deal with responsibilities, preventing anxiety

from further compromising your life in all aspects.

According to the authors (NUNES, SOARES, SARMENTO, et al., 2020, p.169), insertion into the community is a challenge for those who face mental disorders, generating stigma and isolation, dealing with feelings little understood by society, as well as by themselves. For a person who suffers from anxiety, it presents a considerable challenge.

An excellent means of social insertion for the subject is physical exercise, as stated by ARAUJO, (2006), it turns out that regular practice can produce antidepressant and anxiolytic effects and protect the body from the harmful effects of stress on physical and mental health". They are also a gentle way of introducing people who have these disorders into the social environment, bringing them a feeling of usefulness and protection in groups.

It is essential to welcome and listen with respect and attention, practicing empathetic listening when communicating with people in mental distress (JUNIOR (2006). Recognizing the need for specialized help is the first courageous step towards recovery from anxiety, and health professional's mental health, such as psychologists and psychiatrists, play a crucial role in this process. Citing NUNES, SOARES, SARMENTO et al. (2020, p.168), welcoming is a health practice that establishes bonds and emotional ties, being a reference for care.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The foundations of this research were supported, since, according to its results, mental health disorders, such as anxiety, have a significant impact on the emotional and professional quality of life of those affected. The importance of promoting awareness and adopting a welcoming attitude towards individuals who face mental challenges is highlighted, privileging listening with respect and attention.

The Psychosocial Care Network, which provides care to the population in the area of mental health, is made up, among others, of the following units: Basic Health Unit (UBS), Mobile Emergency Care System (SAMU), the Psychosocial Care Centers (CAPS) which are intended to care for people with severe mental suffering, including that resulting from the use of alcohol and other drugs, whether in crisis situations or in psychosocial rehabilitation processes, offering care to the population, carrying out clinical monitoring and social reintegration of users for access to work, leisure, exercising civil rights and strengthening family and community ties.

Therefore, this study provides an in-depth understanding of the intersection between mental health and social inclusion. The urgency for awareness, understanding and support is highlighted to shape a more empathetic and informed society, where mental health care is a priority. In a world faced with increasing emotional challenges, it is imperative to join forces in promoting mental well-being and inclusion, contributing to the construction of a more welcoming environment for everyone.

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