

THE PORTRAIT OF THE GOOD PARENT

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Abstract: The most important thing for good family relationships is to know the rules for good communications. For good communications the couple must first of all love themselves. They must know that it will sometime be very challenging. They must know that to give love it is work, and hard work. They must know that there is a connection between satisfaction in marriage and the ability of the parents to advance their family harmoniously.

Keyword: Communication. Family. Love. Couple. Relationship.

1. Expectations

The ideal parent (Stern, 1998) is understanding and supportive, educates, expresses feelings, cares and is compassionate. The research shows that future parents paint a portrait that describes a good mother and father. In contrast, parents of small children and adolescents express different expectations from good mothers and fathers. The differences in the attitude to the good father vs. the good mother were highlighted depending on the gender of the interviewee.

2. Positive communication

There is connection between satisfaction in marriage and the ability of the parent a synchronized interaction with their offspring (Shahar-Freiss, 2011). Furthermore, mothers produce better synchronized interaction with their offspring and display more positive communication during said interaction than fathers, and so the child reacts and there is a more positive communication during the interaction with the mothers.

3. Space for Independence

In a comparison between mothers and fathers, in instances of separation and in the trust they project towards their children, it has been found that differences appear between the relationships with the youngsters with their mothers and fathers (Noi-Savar, 2006). The father provided greater space for independence and respected more the son's distance than the mother did. However, the relationship of the youngster with his mother needed to go through a process of distancing, so that he could see his mother as an individual.

4. The individual, and the family as a single unit.

Hallie (1982), believes that the problems of the individual, and his troubles are directly related to the problems of the family as a whole. Moving the emphasis from the individual to the family, and treating the family allows a change in the balance of power and help in rebalancing families under stress. Hallie claims that the family has the power to support the development of each of its children, although we are living in a time where parental authority has been weakened.

Minushin (1982), also adheres to family treatment claiming that the individual is not an isolated unit, but a part who acts, who responds and is dependent upon both internal and external components together. The source of the problem in the individual is greater than we presume, and so are the possibilities for intervention.

The conduct of the woman in the partnership and family

1. Women as humans

"The Authority for the advancement of the status of women" in the Prime Minister's office has presented details showing that about 90% of women who were murdered within the Jewish population were mothers (Proney, 2009). The motives are suggested according to the following: anger that the woman, the

mother, did not satisfy her partner's will in one aspect or another; her fear of 'disappearing'; jealousy of the children being preferred more; not acknowledging the female independent state and the perception of her as a man's tool. Paradoxically, together with her being the 'designer' of the family, the woman is also perceived as the exclusive figure responsible for her children's deeds, mainly the negative ones. The accepted manner for the presentation of the female in the beginning of the twentieth century was Freud's observation of the woman as a "lacking man", man's "negative" opposite and a hysterical inferior being. At the same time, it is argued that a calm mother raises calm children, who know how to conduct themselves democratically. In addition, mothers enable the preservation of the society's and the individual's humanity.

2. Sharing and Equality

Partnership and parenthood are also influenced by the underlying currents which strengthen women and shape new agendas. A woman from the old world, who previously accepted patriarchal thought as obligatory, did not observe reality in the same manner (Granot, 2001). The feminist culture, which encouraged women to be strong, to demand and stand up for their rights – a notion which led to more alienation - moderates women's demands today and urges them to combine sharing and equality, that only independent women can initiate. The new feminism needn't be militaristic, since women are no longer victims in need of protection. The future feminism will have wise and clear new ways for self-fulfillment both in the world of achievements and partnership.

Moreover, partners and parents in the family are hurt by the unequal treatment of women, although they can have a higher level of skill and ability than men. Even though many employed women are more educated than men, the stereotypical perception which displays the woman as a second provider in the family causes a

devaluation of her worth and professionalism and damages her promotion chances. The benefits given to women are indirectly related to the limitation of women's promotion course, the discrimination against women in their childbearing years, the gap in salary, their low representation in the high channels and the fact that the rate of unemployment is higher among women. Also, the "glass ceiling" for women in this country is harder to break than in the West (Khanik, 1998).

3. Awareness and Avoiding Mental Fatigue

Women are generally less satisfied with their marriage than men as a result of a high level of mental fatigue (Atchley, 1992). One of the explanations for that is having high and unrealistic expectations for married life. When these are not fulfilled, dissatisfaction prevails (Pines, 1987). Another explanation lies in intense stress women are under, due to their need to live up to home and job requirements. In addition, women experience more distress as a result of conformation to social norms.

4. Customs as a Shaping Factor

Partnership and parenthood are influenced by the place women receive in the family structure (Nardy, 1989). The innocence of some women means that there are those who do not acknowledge that femininity can entail giving up on basic human characteristics which one requires for the sake of sanity, the full expression in the world, together with the price they pay: financial dependence, low self-esteem, lack of personal assertiveness, giving up on financial independence; all these act alongside political, organizational factors, rules and norms.

5. Women's Issues are Always Men's Issues Too

The existing gender issue, i.e. the unequal treatment towards women, can make women fear being ignored or misunderstood, thus preferring to lose their voice and keep the domestic peace (Gilligan, 1982). Nowadays, there is an active argument regarding the “canon” of relationships between women and men and the relationships of men and women with their children. Furthermore, the penetration of women into the professional field breaks a historical cycle of violence and control. The current gender issues deal with the ways we know, hear, see and speak. Men frequently speak as if they live unconnected with women hence the care for the relationship is grasped mainly as “women's issues”. Traditionally, women surrendered to the male judgment and measures (Hate, 1991). 98% of the women claimed they would have liked to change the foundation of their marriage, improve their emotional relations with their partners. They also would have wanted more communication and to be including their partners' thoughts, plans and issues, and also that their partners would have shown more interest in theirs.

6. The Need to Discover the Golden Path in Motherhood

The argument that mothers should be totally devoted is wrong. Mothers should discover the golden path to the growth of their children in an optimal way without dismissing themselves (Berman, 2004).

7. Self-Image as an Influencing Factor

There are clear differences between mothers who had suffered sexual abuse in their childhood and other mothers in all aspects of parental conduct (Cohen, 1995). There are also meaningful differences in the functions of cooperation between parents, family communication and parental self-image, where mothers who had suffered sexual abuse function less well.

8. Motherhood is a Social Structuring

The way mothers treat their children is built on practices and ideas invented by individuals and groups, influenced by interests and various conditions of their creators and alter from a period to period and from place to place (Phoenix, Walt, 1994).

The idea of Mother's Love is an invention, or a type of a "modern fraud", that bourgeois patriarchal society is responsible to (Shefez, Hewez, 1992). An accepted way to display the female role is that pregnancy, giving birth and raising children are a source of a universal motherly drive, therefore, it is expected that they would combat with all their might to preserve the peace of their children and the world (Rodik, 1980). Reality shows that things aren't unequivocal. Sometimes love is conceived during taking care of the child.

9. The Feminine Power

Alongside the occurring discourse regarding the role of women in the modern world, motherhood could be a source of power. The current depressing and echoing ideologies derive from factors of status, race, ethnicity, politics, culture etc...(Collins, 1994).

Male Conduct in Partnership and Parenthood

In his book "Emile", Jean Jacques Rousseau argues that men who father children and provide for them fulfill only a third of their duties. In fact, it is fathers' duty to bring children into the world: bringing more humans to their race, friendly creatures to society and citizens to the country. Whoever is unable to fulfill these duties, isn't entitled to be a father. It isn't poverty nor work and cherishing of the

humanity that discharge him from providing for his children and raising them himself (Russo, 2009).

There are some exceptional communities, such as in the islands of the Pacific Ocean, in which free relationships are conducted. Fathers show neither envy towards other men nor indifference towards shared children. They all become one group which supports, cooperates and contributes to the survival of the children (Hill & Hortado, 1996).

The perception of machismo masculinity is thought to alter to a humanist observation based on giving up on the masculine superiority and adopting flexibility in the patterns of thoughts, behavior and emotion. This flexibility is to constitute a combination between the masculine and feminine components and thus enables man to conduct himself better for his own sake, as well as his family's and the society's (Nardy, 1992).

The approach perceiving men as fulfilling a secondary role in the family is erroneous (Scheir & Tyanda, 1993). For example, many black and Hispanic men in Chicago provide financial support for their children despite their hard financial state. Those fathers are aware of their chances of success related to their education and their status in the work market.

1. Mothers should Give Space to Allow the Expanding of the Father's Contribution

In order to change the existing stereotype stating that career is the prime component in the masculine identity, while fatherhood takes only a secondary role, a change should be held in the mother's approach, allowing a much greater

involvement in raising the children, and in the approach of the father, who learned to remain as a sidekick in parenthood (Nardy, 2000). Men nowadays show greater involvement minding their children and grasp fatherhood as an important experience, although their own fathers were only involved in a basic to an intermediate level in their own upbringing. In addition, the mother's occupation is also a factor affecting the level of the father's involvement in raising the children (Shachar&Layush, 2007).

2. Fatherhood as a Challenge

Differences occur between fathers with a confident communication style in their conduct as parents, and fathers without (Kerstein, 1996). Confident fathers perceive parenthood as a challenge, as opposed to a threat among less confident fathers; therefore, their conduct is better. Furthermore, confident fathers showed better conduct in the mental and family adaptation, the level of stress and fatigue, the changes in the partnership and the involvement in child care.

3. The Need for Feminine Intelligence

Many fathers conceal in their hearts distress concerning their parenthood. They sense a mismatch to the parent role as a result of the following: an absence of a figure to identify with during their childhood, work - home conflict, and an ambivalent position of wives towards their husbands' involvement and a critical stand of the fathers themselves about their inability to control more "female" skills in the family (Haim, 1998).

4. The Need for Change in the Working World

Today, men embrace new emotional rules and experience parenthood with much more commitment. This notion is expressed by great frustration from the demanding schedule which doesn't allow them to conduct their parenthood in a

more giving manner. Together with this, it is claimed in research, that without a change in the existing occupational system and without a change in the harsh, inflexible method of employment, apparently the new masculine parenthood will not succeed to exist optimally. It is also claimed in research that the working world is one of the mechanisms which slow the transformation towards new fatherhood (Gershoni, 2004).

5. “Utopian” Fathers Versus “Absent” Fathers

An analysis of the Israeli law concerning the labor laws for fathers and the design of the social policy has shown there was a wide reference to the labor laws for males in the 50s till the 70s of the twentieth century (Peretz, 2007). Legislators acknowledged the need to take care of men in a positive-romantic way. Towards the 80s and 90s and the beginning of the millennium the emphasis was diverted mainly to the labor laws for the salaried. These labor laws were perceived as negative or as a woman’s burden and became additional to a salaried job. Since care was considered as feminine, there was no place for an attempt to test opportunities to ease or develop social programs in order to alter the division of the unequal labor. During the 50s, men as fathers did not receive any reference in the law perceiving them as providers (“absent fathers”). During the 80s, men were identified as “utopian fathers”. The process of legislation is going through a change and enabling men to go on a paternity leave and share it with their partners (supposedly equal fatherhood). However, achieving gender equality in the field of labor and an equal division of the care burden has yet been utilized.

6. The Need for High Parental Capability

The father’s involvement and ability to accept that his children grow stronger the higher his parental ability is (Ulser, 2011). In addition, there is a positive

correlation between parental ability and feelings of patience and acceptance of the children by the father. Married fathers enjoying a low level of anxiety are more involved compared with fathers suffering a high one.

Marriage as a Therapeutic Frame

In average, married people live longer than singles, assuming the reason lies in having a partner to share with their difficulties and stresses in life. Marriage helps people change: to become more sensitive, loving, responsible, and aware of others' needs. Yet, the process of sharing the hurtful and depressing aspects of life is potentially dangerous.

When both partners are stable, independent, strong, confident and believe in their abilities, they would probably seek for help reasonably. However, when they are opposite in disposition, their requirements could generate chaos and much pain for both partners. In fact, each partner expects the other to provide the feeling of security together with the excitement, friendship, practical aid etc. The truth is this type of person brings too many requirements into the marriage.

While one of the partners is a person with an independent and mature character, and the other was previously hurt and immature, the process of help-giving could be efficient and successful. The more mature of the two helps the other, less mature, partner, while later they will be able to continue together as equals. This situation seldom occurs. Mysterious chemistry usually unifies partners, who are considered psychologically as 'twins'. They are, in fact, true partners. They might look different, yet on the inside, the same fragile system is revealed.

Married people are attracted to each other in several ways – general maturity, ability for intimacy, tolerance of anger, sexual 'temperature', vulgarity, spontaneity, honesty, or other psychological aspects.

They are also similar in the severity of the problems they bring to their marriage. When turning a partner into a therapist, one can exceed the ability of the partner to bear the pain and then there can be a panic, causing everybody to distance themselves due to the pressure of the demands. Then there is worry about the distance, which gives way to anger, demands and stress. The lack of response to these demands can create a transformation in a person like: overworking, dependence on mothers, drinks with friends and affairs.

They try to arouse envy in their partner, thus the relationship deteriorates to be turbulent and full of anger, a jungle of stress, demands and bitterness due to unfulfilled needs. Behind the veil of anger and blame, there are two panicked, frightened, hurt and lonely children pretending to be adults. Despite their awareness of their partners' suffering, they do not admit it. Actually, the anxiety turns into fear and loneliness, where neither party is prepared to show weakness. In the continued struggle, each of the protagonists sees in the other a parental figure. Sometimes the experience of asking for help awakens strong associations for childhood experiences.

A re-awakening of the experiences of the 'old family' is one of the issues that lead to a decline in sex in problematic marriages. Sex is sacrificed on the altar of the couple's need for security. Out of insecurity the couple can start to see each other as a parental figure, as such sex becomes a forbidden and disturbing part of life in mimicry of the homes they were raised in. Sometimes, sex begins to take on an incestuous character, because of the great power of the process of "parenthood" present in married life. It is difficult to be simultaneously one's parent and lover.

It is said that in marriage, the partners can project symbolic images on each other so that they sometimes see the other as mother, father, sibling, and even grandparents. Actually, there can be a recreation of different family relationships in marriage in order to try and resolve some of the problematic issues of the past.

Sometimes, the issue doesn't stop at the partner, the children are pulled in to the attempt to recreate the 'original family'. Partnership and parenthood are often influenced by baggage, beliefs and expectations. Sometimes, the failure of a marriage is due to sticking to myths, blind beliefs and unfulfilled expectations. Standing by these myths, from the belief that they are the essence of marriage and the belief that their fulfillment will bring happiness, can lead to bitter disappointment. Tales like Cinderella and Snow White represent stereotypical line of thought that we need to be rescued from pain and misery and our need to be loved without limits, which can intensify the pain of marriage (Grenold, Tobin, 2003)

Partnership and parenthood in the family is connected to the past and the relationships the couples had with their parents (Scarff, 1990). With the help of a road-map illustrating the important emotional relations of the couple – relations going back in time to the generations of parents and grandparents, and onwards to the new generations, the couple's children – it is possible to create a table of the extended family. This enables us to see in a modified and methodical way, the myths, fantasies, loyalties and the internal instructions for the conduct of the close relationships that each person brings with them to a marriage. This table is called a 'genogram'. With its help a focus on the patterns of life and the private histories that are forced on the relationships, can be created. Using the genogram it is possible to see how aspects of the intimate world of the previous generation return in the current generation. It also points to triangles like father and daughter against mother. A two-against-one pattern happens in all extended-family relationships. There is an important function to the baggage brought into the house and the unresolved issues which hover over a couple's heads. The problems of the past are generally the true source of today's crises. The same characteristics that were an attraction at first, can change into a source of conflict.

Children in the family

Coalitions with one of the children, when a parent is trying to manipulate the other parent, in order to realize childhood needs that are unfulfilled is a solution which comes from the assumption that without children, this parent wouldn't be able to fulfill those needs (Meged, 2004). This child listens to the parent, gives comforts, dedicates time and attention and helps with the younger siblings. They get special treatment from the parent in the coalition and painful treatment from the parent in opposition. This relationship deteriorates constantly. The allied child feels hurt, whereas the other parent feels hatred and can abuse them mentally, physically and even sexually. The rebellion of this child against the other parent can be expressed harshly in disturbed and disturbing behavior. There are parents whose maneuvers, camouflaged coalitions and sophisticated machinations can bring to bear mental illnesses such as anorexia, bulimia and different types of depression and schizophrenia. The active participation of these children in the manipulations can in turn lead them to be manipulative in their own future families, when they abuse their own partners, children or strangers. Violence and abuse can be caused by childhood experiences.

An infant is born into an imperfect family (Meged, 2004). The parents are unable to provide the infant with all it needs. They cannot always be tolerant and loving, and give the child space and freedom to grow. Parents bear the harsh feelings from their own childhood. Sometimes they expect their children to live for them. They need affection, love, acceptance and reassurance no less, and sometimes even more than their children. A child who grew up deprived, "with holes" emotionally yearns for love, acceptance, and reassurance and for space.

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