Article: EPA-1194 Topic: P04 - Child and Adolescent Psychiatry

COMPARATIVE STUDY OF STATIC AND DYNAMIC FAMILY REPRESENTATIONS IN PSYCHOSOMATIC FAMILIES. CASE STUDY

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A well-functioning family system is able to change over time, while a dysfunctional one rigidly insists on its behaviour patterns well accustomed to. Thus all the family members become essential parts of this unfavourable condition. The aim of our study was to explore the psychosomatic family members' static and dynamic mental representations about their family. There were altogether three families in our study, one of them with an asthmatic person and the other one with a young adult with panic disorder. The members of the third family were healthy people. Gehring's (2010) Family System Test (FAST) - a figural technique - was used to explore the individuals' family representations. Later the dynamic form of the test was also applied. The results showed more rigid family structure in the cases of the psychosomatic patients. While the family members' static and conflict family representations demonstrated more similarity. In addition, this representation rather reflected the healthy family members' mental representation in the family with a panic patient, while in the other case the joint representation of the family members' mental representations and to a greater extent. The observed types of the family structure confirm the different static representations and cognitive processes by the family members, which raises the significance of the effect of the analysed psychosomatic disorders on the given family system.