

The impact of destructive parental relationships on children's mental health



<https://doi.org/10.56238/innovhealthknow-023>

Floyd Siqueira Campos

Graduated in Psychology from Faculdade Pitágoras Ipatinga, Post-Graduation in Clinical Psychology and Teaching of Higher Education, Specialization/Post-Graduation in Sexual Psychology, Post-Graduation in Traffic Psychology and continuing education in Freudian Psychoanalysis. She currently works as an independent researcher and Clinical Psychologist. She has experience in the area of Psychology, with emphasis on Psychoanalytic Clinic, working mainly on the following topics: Intrafamily Abuse, Sexual and Psychological Abuse, Abusive / Destructive Relationships, Sexuality, Gender and Diversity, Mental Health, Individual, Couple and Family Therapy, Clinical and Social Intervention Projects

ABSTRACT

This literature review seeks to understand destructive parental relationships, contextualizing these relationships, not forgetting the concepts necessary to understand the topic, such as the classification of different types of abuse. The effects

of destructive relationships and intrafamily abuse on the children's mental health and, finally, the short and long-term psychological consequences for victims of intrafamily abuse and the negative impacts that may arise in the future relationships of these children, who are adults, were also investigated. as children who grow up in environments of destructive parental relationships are more likely to develop emotional disorders, compromising their mental health and judgment to interrupt the cycle of violence. For the work to reach its objective, it was necessary to use books, articles, monographs, dissertations, among others, configuring a bibliographic research, which allowed the understanding of how harmful the abuses of destructive parental relationships are in the mental health of individuals and the need awareness of the signs of intrafamily abuse and measures that can be taken so that it does not happen or is repeated in future generations.

Keywords: Destructive Relationships, Gaslighting, Psychological Violence, Intrafamily Abuse.

1 INTRODUCTION

The theme of the present work is the impact of destructive parental relationships on the mental health of children, which in its great majority comes loaded with patterns of behaviors and attitudes that lead to physical and/or emotional abuse. Often the individual who finds himself within a destructive relationship, almost always has to deal with contradictory and often shameful feelings before recognizing and even realizing that he is living a destructive relationship.

Individuals who grow up in environments of destructive parental relationships are more likely to develop emotional disorders compromising not only mental health but also their discernment to interrupt the cycle of violence, since in many cases the abuse may be too subtle to be noticed.

The relevance of this study is due to the scarcity of discussions about the impact of manipulation and control in a relationship, making it essential that we know the behavioral patterns that cause abuse, be it physical, verbal, sexual or psychological, and knowledge is necessary so that through it it is possible to teach children how to avoid these abuses in their own lives.



Therefore, it is essential to learn to detect and identify these abuses within relationships, because our psyche is constituted by the relationships that we establish throughout our lives and once the subject can distinguish these behaviors it is possible to better understand the impact of these destructive relationships on the mental health of the individual himself and seek solutions for taking action, in order to minimize suffering and improve reality by interrupting the cycle of violence.

Thus, this work has as general objective to explain the harmful effects of parental relationships on the mental health of children, distributed in three specific objectives that aim to conceptualize a destructive relationship, contextualize the effects of the relationship on the mental health of children and discuss the negative impacts on the future relationships of these adult children.

As a methodology we used in this research a qualitative and descriptive bibliographic review, using books by the authors, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, Avery Neal, Jorgelina Albano and Dr. Robin Stern, considering the relevance of these authors within the chosen theme in addition to scientific publications of the last 10 years, using the database of the digital library SCIELO and searches of scientific publications in the Google Scholar platform, through the descriptors; destructive relationships, psychological violence, gaslighting, intrafamily abuse.

This monograph research is structured in five chapters from this introduction. A subsequent chapter referring to the theoretical conceptualization of a destructive relationship is subsequent, with the objective of identifying patterns of behavior of individuals who practice abuse and violence in their relationships. To make a parallel, the next chapter deals with the effects of such relationships on the mental health of children, followed by another chapter where it seeks to analyze the negative impacts on the future relationships of these adult children and ending the last chapter with the final considerations of all the research done during the work.

2 CONCEPTUALIZING A DESTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP

Domestic violence is a recurring issue in the public discussion, mainly because it brings up the issue of gender violence. This subject is of interest to all citizens, either because of the woman's potential to recognize herself in an abusive/destructive relationship, or perhaps to revise her concepts in child-rearing.

Violence is a serious social problem that affects the entire population. According to Day et al. (2003), domestic violence of an intrafamily nature is often accompanied by secrecy and denial. It is necessary to identify what the abuse would be, so that it can be typified in the destructive relationship. From there, it is possible to deal with the problem in intra-family relationships and its consequences on the mental health of children.

As well defined by Avery Neal (2018, p17.)



Abuse is improper treatment or mistreatment... It happens in all types of relationships and includes any behavior or attitude whose intent is to frighten, intimidate, terrorize, manipulate, hurt, humiliate, blame, revile, or hurt someone. This includes all controlling or isolating behaviors.

It should be noted that there is no defined profile of an abuser, which makes it more difficult to identify them; and how abuse is prevalent across all races, ethnicities, age groups, religions, socioeconomic and family backgrounds; It's not a simple matter. With this, often relationships that do not seem right are confusing and it is imperative that people know what is an acceptable treatment or not (NEAL, 2018).

In this tuning fork brings to the fore a very widespread concept today that is *gaslighting*. It is a type of emotional manipulation, in which a gaslighter (*one who practices gaslighting, who needs to be right to preserve his own sense of identity and power in the world*), tries to convince the gaslightee love pair (which allows the *gaslighter* to define his sense of reality because he idealizes him and seeks his approval) that his memories are confused, or that you are misunderstanding or misinterpreting your own behavior and motivations, creating doubts in your mind that leave you vulnerable and confused. *Gaslighters* can be men or women, spouses or lovers, chefs or colleagues, parents or siblings, but what they all have in common is the ability to make the other question their own perceptions of reality. Gaslighting is always generated by two people: a *gaslighter, who sows confusion* and doubt, and a gaslightee, who is willing to doubt his own perceptions to maintain the relationship (STERN, 2019.).

Stern (2019) still points out to us that *gaslighting* can happen in various ways and that they will not always seem like an abuse, sometimes it presents itself in a very subtle way, even seeming a kindness, the author also mentions that although looking externally it seems a work of a single and abusive *gaslighter*, there is a mutual and continuous participation of the abuser with the subject who is being abused, which means that the person holds the key to get out of the situation of suffering in which he finds himself, although this is an arduous and difficult path.

As a consequence of living in an environment where relationships are abusive/destructive, the child/adolescent/child tends to repeat the pattern of maintaining a destructive relationship after growing up. Or they may intentionally try to avoid the same destructive dynamic they experienced in childhood by choosing a partner who mistreats them in a different way. Since "aggressive and controlling relationships are confusing when you are in them. Living in an abusive relationship is traumatic and the consequences difficult to manage" (NEAL, 2018, p.13).

It is necessary to understand that there are various forms of abuse and violence, and these are not only seen in loving relationships, but can extend to all types of bonds whether they are family or not. In the literature there are many studies that characterize the dimensions of abuse and violence and their consequences for the physical and mental health and well-being of the individuals involved.



It is known that the family is the first group in which the individual creates affective bonds and learns patterns of behaviors that will eventually guide his life for some time. Often the first indications of abuse and violence that a subject experiences come from the family institution. The family can be characterized by "a basic unit of development of experiences, of achievement or failure, of health or disease" (FERRARI, 2002, p. 28).

It is understood that abusive families are those that include violence in their dynamics, the characteristics of these families are; the secret, the silence, the social isolation, the lack of limits allowing the abuse of power and the omission in the exercise of the maternal/paternal function (BRASIL, 2001; Day et al., 2003; VIEIRA, 2015)

With regard to the various types of abuse and violence that occur within family institutions, the four most common forms of intrafamily violence are physical, psychological, neglect and sexual violence. Intrafamily violence can be defined as:

Any action or omission that harms the well-being, physical, psychological integrity or freedom and right to full development of a family member. It can be committed inside and outside the home, by any member of the family who is in a power relationship with the person attacked. It also includes the function of father or mother, even without blood ties (DAY et al. 2003, p.10).

This means that in intrafamily violence the damage caused to the subject, be it physical, emotional, sexual, social, among others, will always be associated with an intimate and familiar bond between the victim and his aggressor and that its construction is done gradually within a historical, psychological and social context, being impossible to point out a single cause. It should also be noted that violence, whatever it may be, is always a matter of violation of human rights, being correlated to different problems, complex and of a different nature, that is, "violence is not a natural phenomenon as some want, but on the contrary, built and transmitted to the new generations" (FERRARI, 2002, p.75).

Physical violence consists of damage caused to the individual through physical force, usually aggressions such as slaps, kicks and beatings, and may also be through some type of weapon or instrument that can cause both external and internal injuries. The consequences of aggression affect the physical and emotional health of the individuals who are affected by it, being practiced more often with victims who are defenseless, unprotected, fragile and also applied with a disciplinary character. Thus, children, adolescents and women are more likely to suffer violence (BRASIL, 2001; DAY et al., 2003)

As Avery Neal put it, quoting Gavin De Becker in his book *Virtues of Fear: Warning Signs That Protect Us from Violence*.

It is understandable that the perspectives of men and women on security are so diferentes_ men and women live in different worlds [...] deep down, men fear that women will laugh at



them, while deep down, women fear that men will kill them (BECKER, 1999 apud NEAL, 2018, p.20).

In addition to the family, the individual is surrounded by various social groups throughout his life. Therefore, it is not up to us to try to understand the individual by a single aspect, that is, it is impossible to see him in isolation, since his identity is both individual and social, both working together at the same time in the formulation of a subject as a whole.

People live in a world built on the masculine as a universal umbrella and the only voice that stands out. They embody their masculine voice as the central axis of everything they do and assume it as given and immovable, because the other voice that should have been the threads of culture has been silenced, not only in their daily doing, but in their desires and freedom. And that's why it's important to be aware that "culture doesn't make people. People make the culture. If an entire humanity of women is not part of our culture, then we have to change our culture" (ADICHE, 2014, p.17).

Often the gender distinction confers on the masculine being more crude characteristics, that is, the man is seen as the holder of power and physical strength and the feminine being angelic characteristics, which refer to fragility and submission. These so-called masculine and feminine characteristics end up validating male domination over women as something normal in society and authorizing all kinds of violence against them, as if it were part of a natural phenomenon between men and women. In this way many women suffer physical and psychological violence from their loving peers and understand that it is an acceptable dynamic in their daily lives (LIMA, 2011).

By rescuing history it is possible to perceive that the struggle of women in relation to male physical and psychological domination comes from ancient times. All violence and oppression were rooted in society through the foundation of the traditional family model, which always brought the wife as the husband's property to produce children and take care of the house (MCCANN et al., 2019).

In this way both children and wives were the property of husbands. Children were seen as cheap investments of labor, which could generate good profits for men in the ruling classes. It was up to women to bear children by ensuring the cheap labor that men aspired to (MCCANN et al., 2019).

The women's struggle becomes a very significant and fundamental part of the class struggle. For it was only possible for the man to grow intellectually, financially and professionally in his tasks with paid work because the women were simultaneously performing a supportive, unpaid work of all domestic activities related to the maintenance of the house, as well as of its residents, that is, it is easy to understand that both jobs are equally necessary, although only one is actually valued (MCCANN et al., 2019).

According to Stern (2019), emotional abuse is very commonly accepted as character building and from there everything is allowed. Violence then determines the pattern of intrafamily relationships; Emphasizing that by violence, it is understood the concept of hierarchical asymmetric relationship, of



power with the purpose of domination, exploitation and the denial of the freedom and equality of the other.

The main way of reproduction of abusive behaviors is communication, through phrases such as; "It's for your own good", "No one will believe you", "Deep down you like it", "You need to learn things from an early age". These phrases are said at times when the child goes towards the adult, seeking affection and protection, but receives humiliation, disrespect and violence. Often this visible difficulty of communication can be a result of the lack of limit of the parents, but on the other hand it may be because they can not (or do not know) find other ways to communicate the feelings, as a consequence the plot of silence is established, which favors the continuity and reproduction of violence. That is, all members maintain this silence. The child, because he thinks that no one can protect him, mainly because he sees the mother aware of the aggressions and does nothing to interrupt and the partner for fear of reprisals or of losing the love of the aggressor. The family itself has difficulties recognizing and accepting limits including itself in a relationship based on mind games in which the aggressor has the ability to distort things, lack of responsibility, depreciation and use of the tactic of biting and blowing (ALBANO, 2020; NEAL, 2018).

The abuser has a low level of empathy, he is unable to put himself in the shoes of others [...] Their value system is completely distorted. Abusers often do not respond to the needs of their partner or children. Everything revolves around him, and if he feels harmed [...] he will probably cause problems. For one abuser, the needs of the other are at least inconvenient (NEAL. 2018, p.37).

In this way it is important to have the understanding that the victims of a destructive relationship, loaded with violence and abuse do not enter into such relationships aware of what the relationship will become. As explained earlier, these abusive relationships are established gradually and in subtle ways and get worse over time, making it impossible for the victim without any prior knowledge of the signs of what would be an abusive relationship to perceive within them. That is why it is important to conceive of what would be a destructive relationship, the analysis of the signs, the patterns of behavior that in the course of coexistence walk in the opposite direction to the goal of an ideal relationship where both feel respected and valued.

3 THE EFFECTS OF THE DESTRUCTIVE RELATIONSHIP ON THE MENTAL HEALTH OF CHILDREN

It becomes necessary to highlight the importance of beliefs in defining the roles of our society, the world divided between male and female; A dichotomy that turned out to be functional for the maintenance of certain rules and ignored the essence to focus on the roles that each one should assume. In this way it is imperative to emphasize that sons and daughters of couples who live destructive relationships suffer intense interference of this relationship not only in their mental health but also in



their ability to break the cycle of abuse and establish healthy relationships (ADICHE, 2014; ALBANO, 2020; NEAL, 2018).

It is known that some destructive relationships are established between a woman with abusive behavior and a man being a victim of such a situation, but in its vast majority such relationships are constituted of an abusive man - in view of the structural machismo and the cultural patriarchy in which we are inserted - and the woman who, being placed in the role of submissive, victim of the situation. Because of this, the analysis to be made focuses primarily on the consequences of living in an abusive routine on women's mental health (NEAL, 2018; STERN, 2019).

According to Neal (2018), the most important thing one can do for a daughter is to set an example of healthy relationships at home. That's where it all starts. Some girls from abusive families end up becoming extremely firm and do not tolerate anyone messing with them. But this is by far an exception to the rule. Most girls grow up observing their mother's behavior in the family relationship, then reproduce the same attitudes in their own relationship.

It is important to emphasize that experiences that include dynamics of mistreatment and abuse tend to prolong generation after generation. Children who witness and experience the scenarios of a destructive family dynamic end up being influenced by the choices of partners for relationships and marriages they will have as adults. Once these experiences of the family of origin return in a new scenario of a new marital relationship, these cycles of intrafamily abuse can be seen as an acceptable manifestation creating a condition of affinity on the part of the couple (LIMA, 2011).

Albano (2020, p.19), introduces the concept of destructive relationship with the following definition:

To be in hell is to believe that we cannot choose. To be in hell is to believe that the social duty received is an inexorable truth that we cannot change. To be in hell is to live stuck in the molds, the duties, the inherited behaviors and a worldview in which only men can choose the kind of future they want to build outside the home. To be in hell is to feel that the world advances around us, but that we are quiet. To be in hell is to wish to occupy a place that once seemed to be a dream, but not to encourage us to go beyond the limits to transit the path that leads us there.

When a girl watches her mother bow to her father in the relationship she is not expected to be assertive with her boyfriend, moreover, if she is tired of seeing the mother try to explain herself and hope that the father allows himself to do what she really wanted the daughter will believe that she is powerless to make her own decisions. If she witnessed the mother let her husband make all the decisions so as not to provoke arguments, the daughter will doubt her own abilities small and large. If the girl witnessed her father talking to her mother in a degrading manner or assaulting her to teach her a lesson, not only will she probably believe that her mother deserved it when he blames her for provoking him, but she will also be much more likely to tolerate someone treating her in exactly the



same way. As the daughter sees her mother slowly disappear into the darkness, she will believe that this is her fate as well (NEAL, 2018).

Intrafamily violence determines an abusive relationship pattern. It is an action that involves the loss of autonomy, so that people are deprived of manifesting their will, submitting to the desire of the other. It is the denial of the freedom of the other, of equality. This behavior is derived from patriarchal beliefs that include both men and women, and there are still many women who join the voices of patriarchal males, perpetuating the threat to female freedom, in this way it is oriented that women, understand and accept that men treat them in a rude, disrespectful and abusive way, as being "normal" of the male sex, and it is up to the woman to accept with submissiveness and passivity, because it would be the "normal" of the feminine (ALBANO, 2020; NEAL 2018).

In typifying abuse we have; physical abuse or violence; characterized by the use of physical force, causing pain, can be practiced using the body itself giving slaps, kicks or with the use of objects to assist in aggressions, beatings and beatings (GOMIDE, 2010; PAIVA, 2014).

Sexual coercion consists of adopting threatening and insistent behaviors involving or not the use of physical violence, whose intention is to make the person who is suffering the coercion submit to sexual interaction against his will with the one who practices it (PAIVA, 2014).

Sexual abuse can be explicit, involving vaginal penetration, anal, oral sex or masturbation or, implicit or covert, this almost always relates to abuse committed against children and adolescents, includes exposure to sexual scenes inappropriate for their age or sexual suggestions may be from a masturbation, or the act of having sex in front of the child, or display pornography independently in any way, because the abuser sees his victims not as a person, but only as objects to obtain their pleasure and arousal, that is, regardless of whether or not physical-sexual contact occurs, both cases explained above are considered sexual abuse (ANTONI et al., 2011; PAIVA, 2014).

Psychological or emotional abuse is considered one of the most prevalent types of abuse and difficult to be reported or even perceived by individuals who suffer from this type of abuse, as it often comes in a very subtle way. The term *gaslighting* already explained and exemplified in the previous chapter of the present work constitutes a type commonly used for the practice of psychological or emotional abuse. It is noted that the violence practiced in psychological abuse can be verbal or through actions that always consist of humiliation, depreciation or degradation of the individual, in order to cause psychological suffering in the other person (BRAZIL, 2001; PAIVA, 2014; STERN, 2019).

Neglect can be physical, medical and emotional, is a type of abuse characterized by the omission of care and responsibility to those who need help is configured when parents or guardians fail to promote health care, nutrition, personal hygiene, education, housing, support and emotional support, promoting situations that disfavor the healthy development of children, not protecting them from aversive situations (BRASIL, 2001; Day et al., 2003; GOMIDE, 2010).



Such behaviors when experienced by children as a result of a destructive relationship, where violence prevails, cause short- and long-term consequences. Short-term: Physical problems; problems in the development of attachment and affection relationships (avoidance and resistance to attachment, social isolation behavior with deprivation of socialization, depression, self-esteem problem, inadequate reaction to stress); poor perception of oneself, problems in understanding and accepting the emotions of the other (BRASIL, 2001; DAY et al. 2003).

In the long term: They become abusive parents; many engage in criminal conduct; they place the wills of others over their own priorities; he prefers to endure undignified situations rather than put an end to it; difficulty in feeling that they belong somewhere; they hide what they feel; difficulty in making commitments; fear of making mistakes (BRAZIL, 2001; DAY *et al.* 2003).

It should be emphasized that communication is the basis of the transmission of the concepts of mistaken values that perpetuate the cycle of intrafamily violence. From childhood to adulthood, from parents to loving partners, it is common for women to grow up and have to live suffocating their ideas and thoughts, living daily with neglect and oppression in moments that should be of affection, support and protection, when hearing phrases of the type; "who is going to believe you", "stop drama", "you have to learn things from an early age", "this is not a girl's thing", "right girl does not do this", "deep down you like it" (NEAL. 2018).

To build an egalitarian society and that there are no gender-based power relations, which would consequently move towards the establishment of healthier relationships, a new stance and a real desire for this to happen is necessary. Cultural constructs of what one should or should not be are hard to ban, it's a fact. But it is necessary to generate a new identity in boys and girls. It is necessary to teach sons, especially daughters, that they are not limited to motherhood and home. That they should not apologize for working and that motherhood and work are not mutually exclusive. That the work of taking care of the house and the children has no gender. Teach that both can do everything that biology does not prevent them (ADICHE, 2017).

Women have been taught that to be a mother is to be a woman, they have been taught that they will only be happy and complete with motherhood, they have been taught that this is the biological role of women, they have been taught to avoid independent thoughts and behaviors, they have been encouraged to live seeing themselves as illogical, and in many matters incapable, but the compensation on this side is replaced by the "power" to bear children. And those who are against this thought are judged by an entire oppressive society. It is learned that it is not up to the woman to have control over her body, and her desires, it is not up to the woman to want or not to be a mother. But the damage caused by this oppression also affects the well-being of the children, considering the tensions within the family. A woman who is a mother without desire remains castrated socially, sexually and culturally, living as a slave or as a domestic animal (GREER 1975).



The woman who chooses, for example, not to be a mother is massacred on all sides. The value of the woman is measured by the ability to reproduce, since she does not have or does not want, all her qualities, competencies and capacities are invalidated (MCCANN et al. 2019).

Society needs to abandon the language of "help," for neither men nor women deserve praise or special gratitude since both have chosen to put a child in the world. One must understand that gender roles are absurd and that marriage is not a prize for women. (ADICHIE, 2014)

Neal (2018), points out the importance of teaching women, while they are young, the first warning signs of an abusive relationship. According to the author, most girls (as well as the general population) think that the abusive relationship is one in which the woman suffers physical violence. Tragically, this narrow definition leaves many girls vulnerable as they unconsciously expose themselves to all other types of abuse.

We need to teach about subtle abuse in early adolescence, before our daughters can commit to the relationship. When girls are taught the basics of abusive relationships and how to detect if they live in such a relationship before they commit, they will be much more receptive to information because they will be less defensive. Just as we learn that we should teach them about sexual predators, we need to teach them about aggressive and controlling relationships (NEAL, 2018).

Passing on knowledge to girls about how a destructive relationship is configured is extremely important and helps in two very significant purposes that become indispensable to minimize the effects of these relationships in their lives (NEAL, 2018).

Initially it is necessary to clarify what are acceptable behaviors or not, because most girls do not realize the abusive behavior and have no idea what to expect from a relationship. It is necessary to give support and make sure that the daughter feels supported and safe. With this the daughter will understand that she will not be alone, because from an early age the mother gave her permission to prioritize her life and abandon a harmful dynamic, teaching her how to recognize it. With support and approval it is much more likely that the girl will actually end a situation harmful to herself (ADICHE, 2017; NEAL 2018).

The second purpose concerns the formation of the boys. The fewer girls remain willing to submit to any type of abusive behavior, the more likely it will be that boys will be forced to change negative behaviors (ADICHE, 2017; NEAL 2018).

It is known that this change does not happen immediately overnight, but it is essential and possible that reality changes if girls become more assertive causing a reparation in bad behavior and ending the relationship when it is unhealthy. Girls urgently need to be aware of the power and strength they have (NEAL, 2018).



4 THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS ON THE FUTURE RELATIONSHIPS OF THESE ADULT CHILDRENS

It should be noted that in fact there is no exact term that can cover all types of abuse accurately, especially when one wishes to include and emphasize emotional abuse and its impact. Violence, whether physical or psychological, is always characterized by humiliation, containing numerous sources of heartbreak and in the case of emotional violence, there are reports that these are worse than any type of physical violence, with the capacity to annihilate the subject as a human, ending his subjectivity and identity (BENGHOZI, 2021; NEAL, 2018).

Emotional abuse is always loaded with humiliating and degrading language and behavior, causing enormous damage to the individual who lives in an abusive dynamic. This always has its values and its personality annulled and its freedom is restricted, since the dynamics of abusive relationships includes; threats, insults, constant vigilance of every step, fear, isolation, persecution, excessive messages... All of this affects the emotional well-being of the victim of this destructive relationship (NEAL 2018).

Cruz (2020), points to the fact that the consequences of this invisible violence are devastating for the victims, its psychological effects are greater and more painful than the physical effects, since often the women who can perceive that they are being victims of psychological abuse do not have a consolidated support network to act in the aid of their recovery, Even when they seek legal and police help, they are often ignored, which further aggravates the problem, evidencing the invisibility of a violence that is capable of causing often irreversible damage to women's mental health.

The signs begin slowly, they are always restrictive of the woman's freedom. In general, they do not begin in coexistence, but from the moment the relationship takes shape. The aggressor tries to seduce the woman so that she stops seeing her friends, so that they have no friends and for the sake of love and trust, tell her everything. He shows himself as someone who saves her life and she will always feel indebted to him (ALBANO, 2020, NEAL, 2018).

According to Albano (2020), these beliefs come from the idea of romantic love, with which we grew up, love in which there is always a man who rescues the woman. Also of the religious belief of the family as something untouchable, as a structure that must be maintained in any way. A woman's great pain is not abuse, but accepting that she has been mistreated, acknowledging the fact, and telling herself.

In many cases it ends up being common, as effects of emotional abuse, ideation and suicide attempt this along with a considerable decrease in the woman's self-esteem, the development of depression, phobia, post-traumatic stress, psychic disruption, excessive consumption of alcohol and drugs among others, always complex and devastating culminating in irreparable damage to psychological integrity (CRUZ, 2020).



It is necessary to understand that the devaluation began long before the first blow or the first insult, began in early childhood, without the need to be beaten, but with gestures that made that girl realize that she was not worth much, simply because an adult made her shut up or did not respect her opinion just because she was a girl. A father or a mother who says that the daughter "serves no purpose", that she "only does nonsense", or that "she is too small to opine" about something, is devaluing her, placing her in a category of lesser importance than that of the father, the mother, or any adult who has contact with this girl (ALBANO 2020).

The family is a group that should bring to the child all the necessary support for him to have a healthy physical and mental development, because it is identified as the first environment in which the child participates effectively through his face-to-face relationships, experiencing situations, feelings and performing tasks together that should promote the well-being of all its members, but often the physical punishments given to children in the family context justified in its great majority as a necessary and educational practice is shown to be detrimental to the healthy development of children, domestic violence has consequences at various stages of life and when growing up in a family, with an authoritarian parenting style, with such destructive dynamics these children, as adults, they end up unconsciously entering into relationships that maintain the pattern of abuse, thus perpetuating the destructive relationships of their intimate relationships (JERONYMO et al., 2009).

It is common for abuse in relationships to begin gradually and very subtly and usually the victim is blamed for such behaviors of their peers, there is a legitimation of male violent behaviors against women located in a social, historical and economic context where both play different roles and opportunities, also obtaining a very different social position from each other and violence is evidenced by a posture of competitiveness, control and power, so that men understand that they have the right to resort to violence in order to control and dominate their partners (CHARITY, 2006).

Often violence in relationships can also be misinterpreted by some peers as an act of love, demonstration of affection and care, others justify the abuse due to the conduct of women attributing the use of violence to external causes and out of the control of the abuser, it is worth emphasizing here the danger that is this misinterpretation of abuse in relationships because once jealousy is confused with love, validating the use of violence in any of these cases, violence is manifested and accepted as something normal in their relationships (CARIDADE, 2006).

It is necessary to understand that abuse is a game for the abuser that he manipulates so that he always wins. He makes the rules and doesn't stop until he wins, because winning means having power and control, which are the most important things to him. An abuser is an intimidator trying to make the woman feel small so that he feels bigger. In this way the woman is always in a position of submission and dependence on her partner (ALBANO; 2020. NEAL, 2018).



It can be affirmed that intrafamily violence causes negative impacts on the entire structure of these women victims of these destructive relationships. There is no doubt that intrafamily violence and emotional abuse constitute a serious health problem, both physical and mental, being a serious obstacle to social and economic development, in addition to being an incontestable violation of human rights (BRASIL, 2001).

When a woman accepts what the oppressive society imposes on her, when there are patterns of behavior entitled feminine behaviors or masculine behaviors, that is, there are acceptable behaviors in boys and girls, when she teaches her daughter that it is right for her to shrink and give in to male needs, the negative impact on this woman's life is gigantic and interferes with all her relationships. Since it is up to the woman to satisfy the man, even if for that she needs to annul herself completely and that single women are considered failures, what we have are; many women with acceptance problems, with low self-esteem, a tendency to give up their rights for not knowing them and to accept any kind of violation in an attempt to be good wives, good daughters, in an attempt to be valued and accepted (ADICHE, 2014).

Women are victims, they are mistreated by their partners, they are misunderstood as a social being with needs and wills of their own. As long as men deny women independent thinking, they will continue to hold power, keeping women enslaved, submissive to them, dependent on them for everything (MCCANN, 2019).

While single women are considered failures, married women have the illusion of having a better social status, but they are always regarded as inferior to their husbands, even if there is a mutual interest in building a successful marriage together (MCCANN, 2019).

Women who give up their wills, who give up their careers and their intellectual opportunities, for example, to take care of the house and dedicate themselves full-time to the care of children, are considered domestic servants, while women who work outside the home are elevated to the position of partners, since they contribute materially to the support of the family (MCCANN, 2019).

However, even with social achievements and work outside the home, women are still strongly associated with household chores, childcare and household care. Once they gain the autonomy to work outside the home, they start to have a "double shift" of work and have to account for their domestic "obligations", simultaneously exercising work activities at home, without losing their commitment to employment outside the home (LUCAS et al. 2020).

The very idea of "working outside" starts from the principle that women, as if by nature, only have the space of the home and the activities that concern it, such as the care of children and the preparation of food. It was concluded, then, that not only the public/private binomial needs to be dismantled, things that feminists have long taught us, but also the binomial inside/outside (LUCAS et al. 2020, p.104).



The financial instability of women victims of destructive relationships is an aggravating factor that prevents the breaking of the cycle of violence and the liberation of these women. Men earn more than women, are usually inserted in the labor market longer, while women suffer from financial insecurity and are dependent on these men who are the authors of the abuses practiced with them (MCCANN, 2019 - BRASIL 2001).

The poverty of women who are victims of structural oppression causes them to lose their dignity and security. When oppressive institutions and society limit women's economic resources and opportunities and they are forced to work for less pay than they need to survive, it is up to women only to sacrifice themselves for a wage, even if it means endangering their physical or mental health, even if it means giving up their dignity and security. increasingly annihilating their self-love and self-esteem (MCCANN, 2019).

It should be emphasized that many of the damages caused by intrafamily violence and emotional abuse, not only affect the direct victims of this destructive relationship, that is, the sons and daughters of mothers who suffer emotional abuse and intrafamily violence, are more likely to; getting sick, abandoning studies early, developing difficulties in social skills, difficulties in establishing economically, among others (BRASIL, 2001).

Women who manage to break free from a destructive relationship do not emerge unscathed and without sequelae from the exhausting life they had with their abusers. Unfortunately it is common for freedom to be accompanied by a period of feeling anxiety, fear, excessive worry, panic or insomnia, lack of interest in things that normally give pleasure, feeling of defeat among other symptoms that are part of anxiety and depression. There is also a great tendency to stress and the real difficulty of relating again with someone (NEAL, 2018).

Neal (2018) reveals that, abuse is so traumatic that physical symptoms of illness, or injury are not rare and that unfortunately post-traumatic stress after an abusive relationship can last for years and that the longer one lives in an abusive relationship, the more powerless the person feels.

It should be noted that getting out of an abusive relationship is not easy, as has been previously mentioned the dynamics of these relationships involve the victim causing codependency and financial dependence. There is a feeling of sadness, for not being strong enough to leave the relationship, there is embarrassment, for exposing their weaknesses and pains experienced in the family environment, there is emotional and financial insecurity, there is a fear of everything they will have to face to get out of the situation that afflicts them so much. (ALBANO, 2020. NEAL, 2018)

5 FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

Conceptualizing and understanding the characteristics of destructive relationships and their consequences on mental health is important for a movement to break the cycle of violence to happen.



It is believed that the present work contributed to assist in the beginning of this process, through the identification of the different types of abuses and abusers and the characterization of the behaviors that generate conflicts that configure a destructive family dynamic.

It is necessary to break the paradigm that dictates the definitions of male and female roles so that the fight against violence against women happens in a structural and institutional way, proposing changes in the logic of thinking and understanding. Women need to understand and identify early warning signs of different types of abuse, to minimize the negative impacts and destructive effects that these behaviors bring to the lives and health of victims and to maximize action in order to promote the denaturalization of the use of violence in their relationships and as well as to learn to re-signify their experiences to promote the possibility of moving forward for well-being physical and emotional.

Very little is discussed about the impact of manipulation and control in a relationship, especially with regard to the impacts caused on children from these relationships, it is likely that the considerations presented in the present work do not equate to the full dimension of the problem, but may offer a basis for a deepening of the content, since the information obtained in the bibliographic review research adopted for this work sought to give something tangible to which cling with clear and objective information in an attempt to guide those involved through the treacherous waters of this type of relationship, helping to come out of it with a greater sense of being worth in the world.



REFERENCES

- ADICHIE, Chimamanda Ngozi. Para Educar Crianças Feministas: Um manifesto. Tradução Denise Bottmann. 1 ed. São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 2017. Tradução de: Dear Ijeawele, or A Feminist Manifesto in Fifteen Suggestions.
- ADICHIE, Chimamanda Ngozi. Sejam Todos Feministas. Kindle ed. Companhia das Letras, 2014. 37 p.
- ALBANO, Jorgelina. Sapatos Vermelhos são de Puta: Desafiando as crenças do patriarcado. Tradução Marcia Blasques. 1 ed. Bauru, SP: Astral Cultural, 2020. 240 p. Tradução de: Los zapatos rojos son de puta.
- ANTONI, Clarissa De *et al.* Abuso sexual extrafamiliar: percepções das mães de vítimas. Estudos de Psicologia. Campinas, 2011, p. 97-106. Disponível em: <https://www.scielo.br/j/estpsi/a/vSgt3WFX8qSpCSqL7Rpn4gb/?lang=pt&format=pdf>. Acesso em: 6 nov. 2021.
- BENGHOZI, Pierre. RESILIÊNCIA FAMILIAR E CONJUGAL NUMA PERSPECTIVA PSICANALÍTICA DOS LAÇOS. Psicologia Clínica. Rio de Janeiro, 2015, p. 101-109. Disponível em: <https://www.scielo.br/j/pc/a/RfVgsHKCfTWQt3GGQm95rns/?format=pdf&lang=pt>. Acesso em: 4 nov. 2021.
- BRASIL. Ministério da Saúde. Série Cadernos de Atenção Básica; n. 8. Violência intrafamiliar: orientações para prática em serviço. Brasília, DF. Secretária de Políticas de Saúde: MS, 2001.
- CARIDADE, Sonia ; MACHADO, Carla . Violência na intimidade Juvenil: Da vítima à perpetração. Análise psicológica. 2006, p. 485-493. Disponível em: <http://publicacoes.ispa.pt/index.php/ap/article/viewFile/541/pdf>. Acesso em: 7 nov. 2021.
- CRUZ, Mariana Franco . Violência psicológica contra a mulher: da invisibilidade à violação dos direitos da personalidade . UniCesumar. Maringá, 2020. 122 p. Disponível em: . Acesso em: 7 nov. 2021.
- DAY, Vivian Peres. Violência doméstica e suas diferentes manifestações. Scielo. Rio Grande do Sul, 2004. Disponível em: <https://www.scielo.br/j/rprs/a/5SdJkYSszKYNdzcftfbRTL/?lang=pt>. Acesso em: 27 ago. 2021.
- FERRARI, Dalka Chaves de Almeida; VECINA, Tereza Cristina Cruz. O fim do silêncio na violência familiar: teoria e prática. Editora Agora, v. 1, f. 165, 2001. 330 p.
- GOMIDE, Paula Inez Cunha. Abuso negligência e parricídio: um estudo de caso. Temas em psicologia. Ribeirão Preto, p. 219- 230. Disponível em: <https://www.redalyc.org/pdf/5137/513751435018.pdf>. Acesso em: 5 nov. 2021.
- GREER, Germaine. A Mulher Eunuco. Círculo do Livro, 1975. 436 p.
- JERONYMO, Daniela Viganó Zanoti *et al.* Prevalência de abuso físico na infância e exposição à violência parental em uma amostra brasileira. Cad. Saúde Pública. Rio de Janeiro, 2009. Disponível em: <https://www.scielo.br/j/csp/a/ZXnSJzvGhBgRKgD8znB5GRP/?lang=pt&format=pdf>. Acesso em: 1 nov. 2021.



LIMA, Gabriela Quadros de ; WERLANG, Blanca Suzana Guevara. Mulheres que sofrem violência doméstica: Contribuições da psicanálise. *Psicologia em Estudo*. Maringa, 2011, p. 511-520. Disponível em: <https://www.scielo.br/j/pe/a/GShYc5SHq9SVcrwbyXxbSbT/?lang=pt&format=pdf>. Acesso em: 5 nov. 2021.

LUCAS, Carlos Henrique de *et al.* “A louca dos gatos” ou sobre como gaslaitear o feminino: um estudo sobre a violência psicológica no âmbito do gênero. *Locus - Revista de História*. Juiz de Fora, 2020. 122 p. Disponível em: <https://periodicos.ufjf.br/index.php/locus/article/view/29808/20511>. Acesso em: 9 out. 2021.

MCCANN, Hannah *et al.* O livro do Feminismo. Tradução Ana Rodrigues. 1 ed. Rio de Janeiro: Globo Livros, 2019. 352 p. (As grandes ideias de todos os tempos). Tradução de: *The Feminism Book*.

NEAL, Avery. *Relações Destrutivas: Se ele é bom assim, porque eu me sinto tão mal?*. Tradução Sandra Martha Dolinsky. 1 ed. São Paulo: Gente, 2018. 256 p. Tradução de: *If he's so great, why do I feel so bad?*.

PAIVA, Carla ; FIGUEIREDO, Bárbara. Abuso no relacionamento íntimo: Estudo de prevalência em jovens adultos portugueses. *Psychologica*. Coimbra, 2004, p. 75-107. Disponível em: <https://repositorium.sdum.uminho.pt/bitstream/1822/42111/1/Abuso%20no%20relacionamento%20%282004%29.pdf>. Acesso em: 4 nov. 2021.

STERN, Dra Robin. *O Efeito Gaslight: Como identificar e sobreviver à manipulação velada que os outros usam para controlar sua vida*. Tradução Wendy Campos. 1 ed. Rio de Janeiro: Alta Books, 2019. 304 p. Tradução de: *The Gaslight Effect*.