Exclusion from the labor market: a kind of violence∗

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Summary. *The present economic crisis sees women as one of the categories most excluded from the labor market. This exclusion, involving marginalization from relational opportunities and loss of the emancipation condition, which used to create social visibility, can be experienced as personal violence. The consequence may result in bio-psycho-relational discomfort. In order to generate new resources, a process of group co-construction will lead to give visibility to one's own potentials and develop the ability to be flexible, encouraging empowerment.*
The workshop will create an experiential moment which makes reference to a project directed to women in search of work. Actions will be aimed, in a group context, at reorganizing the perceptive social atom through sociometric activities, by mapping abilities, skills, desires, life mission.

Key words: exclusion from work, relationship distress, re-meaning, co-construction, empowerment.

It is widely known that in the present economic crisis women are, together with the young people and the immigrants, the category most excluded from the labor market (ISTAT, 2011). This is not a new

phenomenon, and is actually continuously growing. So first of all let's start from work, from its redefinition. Work, that for many of the past generations has been a place of self-realization, self-research and self-definition (Jaques, 1955), for most women today has got the meaning of loss, exploitation, deprivation, cancellation of the distinction between time for life and time for work. In other words, it is a form of violence itself.

We are witnessing major changes: new organizational forms emerge and the same nature of work changes. In these quick and continuous transformations one can notice a sort of overlapping between personal and working spheres. The exclusion from the labor market, which means largely exclusion from the relational opportunities that the job itself offers, can be experienced as personal violence (UNGA, 2006) which undermines the creative flow. Now that the market is time-limited, fragmented, insecure, unstable, this ends up in expropriation and isolation (Sennet, 1999). The result is a precariousness – a working and existential one – that pushes down to the present, taking away time and space for sharing, which must therefore be re-designed and re-built.

The new situations thus created, which affect society as a whole, burden mainly on the most disadvantaged categories; among them, those who immediately suffer the effects in a more vehement way are the women, as they − with the loss of the laborer status − are thrown into a state of darkening of the emancipation condition, which was already believed acquired and that at least used to make them socially visible (Zincone, 1993). The questioning of this even recent conquest can create in women, exposed to strong objective and subjective pressure, bio-psycho-relational discomfort (Crepet, 1990).

It is thus necessary to intervene, with the creation of shared spaces that foster the ability to reflect on personal and working experience, in order to re-build a sense of work, to give visibility to one's own resources and develop the ability to be flexible, through a process of group co-construction (Ruscazio & Greco, 2012). The group can actually express in a less stereotyped way and can access insights that allow taking new roles, as, like Moreno said, «every action is interaction of roles» (Moreno, 1953). And, at the same time, give voice to desires and life mission; hence making it possible to expand the possibilities, that is favoring empowerment (Zimmerman, 1990).

Through the method of Sociodrama (Moreno, 1946), the aim is therefore:
- to turn what can be perceived as a personal failure into a change of route, which can identify new resources and activate the individual and group resilience compared to the initial perception;

- to develop initiative and tolerance when facing frustration;
- to become aware of oneself, of one's own abilities and desires;
- to interact with others, through specific instructions;
- to develop and apply criteria for self-assessment;
- to start a route from the transformation of dreams, through desires, skills and knowledge, towards the goal of work;
- to act on the self subjectivity in order to discover the uniqueness of one's predispositions;
- to discover and develop creativity, as a crucial competence to conduct one's life;
- to focus on personal development more than on professional qualifications;
- to encourage the ability of creative problem solving, of efficient communication and self-organization in crisis situations.

The general aim of the activity developed through the sociodramatic method is, therefore, the acquisition of new relational competences, through the re-discovery of aptitudes, potentials and synergies in a context of intrapersonal and interpersonal awareness.

The proposal of the workshop is to create an experiential moment which makes reference to an experienced project, active for years and still in progress in Italy, developed in conjunction with the Job Centers of the Provinces of Pisa and Livorno (De Marino, & Panetta, 2008), and directed to women in search of work.

The focus of the project was, for all levels (from the preparatory stages until the final ones of synthesis and sharing): inclusion/interaction. An action-research (Barbier, 2007) of "doing with" rather than "doing for". Actions will be aimed, in the group context, at reorganizing the perceptive social atom (Menegazzo, 1995) of each participant through sociometric activities (Moreno, 1953), with the purpose of mapping abilities, skills, desires, life mission.

The main steps of the route – which takes place along a *continuum* – will accompany the attention of the participants towards the intentional realization of new connections and new points of view, making it possible to amplify the vision as well as the personal and context perceptions.

The way to achieve the overall purpose is carried out through some basic steps (Scharmer, 2009):
- helping to re-direct the attention to the issue, in order to look at the system from a point of view that lets one see how habitual actions contribute to the problem/crisis;
- bringing participants to a deeper place of peace, where one can abandon the old and start intentionally a new connection;

- co-startup: listening to what life calls us to do, connecting with people and contexts related to that call;
- co-experience: going to places of higher potential; observe, listen with open mind and heart (availability);
- co-presence: opening to deeper source of knowledge and connecting to the future that is disclosing;
- co-creation: building future possibilities to be explored in practice;
- co-development: to develop an ecosystem of innovation while maintaining the space that connects people globally.

In other words, the output from a situation of isolation and marginalization («I live the violence as mine») passes through the activation of dynamics of renewed connection and fluid communication, able to create extension of perceptions, and in turn activating a generative process, expression of the sense of the feminine (Irigaray, 1992).

The group can activate, through Sociodrama, latent potential relationships and then start a process of personal and group change (Baratti & De Marino, 2009).

Fundamental is the choice of the group methodology in reading the needs of the participants. In a time in which the lack of employment can lead to subjective and objective isolation, the group becomes a driving force which can create links between institutions and groups, acting as a mediator and interlocutor in the dialogue between the person and the institution (Marra, 2004).

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