



Adolescence and Resilience Despair Overcome

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Perspective

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Perspective

The research I conducted focused on the life story of a teenage girl, which was then evaluated using an analysis grid proposed by Pourtois JP, et al. [1]. This grid made it possible to validate the hypothesis of the implementation of the resilience process. According to these authors, assessing resilience involves examining the process that the subject goes through to move forward after experiencing trauma. Identifying new purposes for social and/or cultural life is at the heart of the resilience process. The latter is developed from an organized system of resources that the subject puts into action. The authors go on to explain that processes and procedures are here closely interdependent and associated within a set of interactive activities between ends to be achieved and means to (re)vitalize or invent. It should also be noted that resilience is long-term and activates diverse resources among those presented in this study. As a preamble, as part of this clinical presentation, I will remain anonymous of the place and the person, as a measure of confidentiality. I will also use an assumed name. I have taken up the essential data of the autobiography of the one I will call here "Mary".

Presentation of Mary

It has been seventeen years since Marie was born in a small village in Ariège, in the south of France. Traumatized by her mother's sudden death at the age of 9, she will be able to say: "It was a morning in 2009, the day before everything was fine and she never woke up. She suffered a cerebral hemorrhage. Her father died a few years later of cancer of the tongue related to tobacco and alcohol, she was then 12 years

old. The latter never recovered from the death of his wife, he smoked incessantly and became an alcoholic. Mary may say, "I was bringing back household money. I worked "under the table" to get him to buy alcohol. He had become evil, beat me and also raped me. She adds: "I was protecting my brother, three years younger, who later moved to the family in Paris. [...] It was then at the death of my "poor father" that I took correspondence courses, and, helped by a nun who taught me mathematics, I was able to arrive at the baccalaureate that I will pass this year. »

Marie is therefore schooled, and all her learning at school is going well. She is a brilliant teenager who is preparing a scientific baccalaureate. She wants to go to medical school. As a miserable child, she wants to "have a situation" as she likes to say: "I want to help people and care for them. This is the reparation that Mary found to give meaning to her life: « I know that, through studies, I will be able to have a suitable job, which I love, and thanks to which I will be able to live. »

Marie is a very smiling, cheerful and lively young woman. Placed in a foster home at the age of 12 after her father's death, she was for some time dazed, shocked by having been violated by her father and the incomprehension of such an act. "He was drunk, he came on top of me in the middle of the night while I was sleeping, how can you do that to your daughter, even if you are suffering? »

She quickly integrated into her new place of life and gradually accepted the rules laid down by the foster family, the latter often having to remind her of her status as a child, she who had been "parentified" very early on as soon as her mother died. Mary was able to forge with them emotional bonds of tenderness. She shows a thirst for a past. She

expresses that she has always had a devotion to the Virgin Mary: "Since mother died, I know that I have a mother in Heaven who accompanies me. Mom gave me the same name as her, so that she could protect me. Marie managed to bounce back at all levels, especially academically. She shows great resources and has a very good socialization. She is one of the resilient children. The words that follow alone evoke what this path to resilience can be. We will now present the results of the analysis of Mary's discourse.

Analysis Results

The aim was to select from a child welfare service an adolescent who was confronted with traumatic life situations or who had been exposed to profoundly destructive living conditions for a long time. The second step in the procedure was to choose a subject according to the way in which he sees his development in relation to the traumatic situation he considers to have suffered. Marie affirms her resilience by declaring that she has overcome her trauma in a personal journey of neo-development. The adolescent's discriminatory variables determined that she identified with at least one of the following statements:

- I consider my life a success despite what I have experienced.
- I feel that what I endured helped me grow.
- Some say it's better to die than to suffer what happened to me, yet I'm glad I'm alive.
- Despite my bustle of life, I love my current life and I feel happy in it.
- Despite the appalling living conditions I faced, I managed to flourish.

The analyses take place in September 2015 and include Marie's interviews and observations over three stages: before her placement, four months after and three years after. They examine and then interpret the information relating to the sum of Marie's inventory of resources before the violence suffered (rape and death of her father) and/or the acquisition (or not) of resources at four months, then three years away from these events leading to her placement in foster care. We therefore evaluated Marie according to a protocol that we detailed in our doctoral thesis with all the clues (emotional, social, cognitive, conative evolution) [2]. Here are the main results.

Emotional Evolution

Marie was always a smiling little girl, able to say that she loved life. Right after foster care, we see emotional involution. The death of his father reminds him of the death of his mother. Added to this was a collapse related to the rape she suffered. Three years later, most of his skills have

been restored, if not increased. Before the trauma and four months after, Marie experienced a post-traumatic emotional collapse. Little by little, she will restore her *joie de vivre* which is described by all the people who can be around her. Despite a painful life story, the girl does not "let herself down" on the period before the rape of her father, then his death, because she has always taken care of her little brother who was "sonray of sunshine". Marie had a good foundation of emotional security in her early childhood and received a safe and containing living environment. At the time of our meeting, three years after the placement, Marie regains all of her dynamism. Her plan to go to medical school carries her.

Cognitive Evolution

Cognitive evolution was evaluated through its creative potential, realism and lucidity, imagination, playfulness, the use of stress management strategies (coping strategies), personal achievement and organizational skills, which are also significant resources of post-traumatic development. Marie is brilliant academically. She is invested and curious to learn. It is close to a creative imagination in various fields: poetry, writing, drawing. She will even discover the game or rather allow herself to play while she had been parentified as soon as her mother died. The quality of his psycho-educational learning is very satisfactory. Three years after her placement, we can notice an enrichment of her resources in terms of self-fulfilment, playful skills. Marie had already developed coping strategies, but she was able to adapt them better, especially with less rigidity. For example, his sense of organization has become more flexible. Her cognitive resources and its evolution are considerable.

Before the violence suffered and four months after, Mary's speech reveals a brilliant child in learning. Nevertheless, during her placement, post-traumatic clinical signs remain for about four months: she will describe a complete inhibition of her cognitive abilities. The effect of astonishment, of shock, enters a depression. Then, little by little, she shows a resumption of her school adaptation, especially because she clings to her professional project. Marie potentiates the use of the imagination, which helps to distance her from the trauma. It fits very well into reality. Three years after the placement, Marie finished high school. She had very good grades in *Première*.

At the intellectual level, the cognitive resources on which she could rely are fully available, even after the trauma. His ability to act has even developed. She has a philosophy of life that makes her say, "Everything in life is learning to grow. »

Before the trauma and four months after the trauma and placement, the pervasiveness of the affective indicators

confirms the collapse of the traumatic dimension. The ability to show humour is extinguished. The same is true for the ability to represent the future in a reasonable and positive way. This also applies to the tendency to feel the conviction of being loved within one's family and to occupy a place in it which should not be disregarded by anyone.

Three years after the placement, little by little, Marie regains her ability to smile and use humor. She is a dynamique she has always had: "Even when I'm sad, I write, I try to watch funny movies. This allows him to represent the future positively and rationally. The feeling of being loved and having a place of her own remains fragile. It can express being loved as part of a spiritual process. On the other hand, it manifests very great fears of certain types of men, especially those who are violent and/or alcoholic.

His project to pursue medical studies creates a dynamic to meet people to get informed. Before the trauma and four months after the placement, cognitive indicators confirm Marie's resilience. Indeed, she is lucid and aware of the realities that are already revealed before the traumatic episode. She shows a very good academic adaptation, a very great desire to learn which was already manifested before the trauma. It continues to develop cognitively in a favourable way.

Mary does not "let herself be defeated", except in the immediate pervasiveness of the raucous shock. This trend is part of the same dynamic when it comes to being active. The ability to focus on goals and show detachment is very meaningful. The same observation can also be made with regard to the tendency to tidy up or put things in order. Three years after the trauma, Marie is still lucid and aware, as well as able to play and entertain herself. She even developed the notion of playing with girlfriends, she who, since the death of her mother, had not found the time to play and had to take care of her little brother. She now sometimes allows herself outings. The host family helped her lot to achieve this process, where she forbade herself a lot of pleasure. She has developed most of her skills. All these indicators show how much the girl reflects a cognitive development favourable to the process of resilience.

Social Evolution

The analysis of the data from Mary's discourse on social evolution testifies to the potentialities she uses during the process of resilience. To do this, the results analyze sociability (individuation) and sociality (social cohesion) to constitute a positive and interactive social network, identity stability, self-affirmation, empathy and altruism, and finally, the narration of life history. Thanks to the education received from her

early childhood, Marie developed altruism and morality at an early age. She has a psychic integrity that always leads her towards a quest for justice. Very early on, she had to be autonomous. All of his resources were certainly allocated in the post-traumatic space of four months, but little by little his naturalness returned. His storytelling skills (verbal and/or written), his ability to make connections; contribute to the development of a process of resilience.

Before and four months after foster care, Marie's social behaviour is greatly impacted by the traumatic dimension. The tendency to establish relationships, contacts, was very strong before the traumatic event. In the post-traumatic dimension, these elements collapse. Also, Mary feels insecure of herself, does not give herself a role of beloved child. Very early on, she has the place of an adult who has to take care of her little brother to replace the mother.

- Three years after placement, beyond post-trauma, social behaviour is restored in a very favourable way. Her social behaviours can be seen as fully available resources, although it seems that she has difficulty feeling loved and admired by others.
- Before the trauma and four months after placement, in the area of social functioning, ability to seek help and social supports, the indicators reveal a positive post-traumatic evolution. Similarly, the capacity of *thengagière* is very large in Mary.
- All these developments are driving the resilience process. In terms of self-confidence, the tendency to appreciate her and form a good image of her, some shortcomings remain, because even if she says she appreciates herself, Mary does not find herself "great".
- Three years after the trauma, social indicators show that post-traumatic development has continued to spread to the entire sphere of social development. Most of the clues are potentiated. Only self-esteem and self-image require strengthening. The social resources are evident in Mary.

Conative Evolution

- Marie's conative resources emphasize the importance of emotional intelligence, controlled emotionality, motivation and belief system, which help make sense and transform the subject. They were slightly reduced after the trauma.
- The ability to empathize and emotional intelligence is affected. Nevertheless, motivation and spirituality are resources in which Mary finds remarkable strength, as is her sense of beauty (sense of aesthetics) which is preserved despite a slight inflection. Her conative resources allow her to face and give meaning to the adversity she encounters.

- Before the placement and four months after, on the fold, Mary's collapse was practically generalized. What helps him hold on is "[his] faith." Even if she doesn't understand all about the injustice of her life, she can express her desire to always "hang on." She maintains language skills to verbalize trauma and emotions. Three years after the trauma and placement, the conative dimension has regained its initial development and vitality. Mary will be able to express that events have further strengthened her in her ability to dare things. She feels even more rooted in her prayer life.
- Before the trauma and four months after the placement, the conative indicators highlight Marie's combativeness in the face of the traumatic dimension. The latter inflects most indices, but not significantly. Only the control of its state of affairs has collapsed. Indeed, the girl relives the loss of her mother through the death of her father. The overflow of affects is also linked to the misunderstanding that a father can rape his daughter.
- Three years after the trauma, Marie amplifies her ability to care about the emotional state of others, as does her compassion. She can explain that it is her adherence to the Catholic faith and the way of living it that allows her to go through her traumatic life stages and participates in the process of resilience. She has no doubt about the meaning of her life. His will, stubbornness and perseverance only confirm his ability to be resilient.

Conclusion

Marie's dynamic optimism allowed her not to experience a complete collapse as a result of the violence suffered, the rape and the death of her father. Even if, at the emotional level, a shift is noted, the girl will move towards the acceptance of her experience. Cognitive resources are very significant arguments for resilience. It has a high quality of success in psycho-educational learning. She also has at her disposal a very rich imaginary space that she knows how to mobilize. All these potentialities also promote its resilience process [3].

Marie uses different types of discourse which contribute to the mentalization and distancing of trauma: narration, humour with lots of puns, her ability to turn from delicate events to derision, her poems, theatre. Recently, Marie has been studying the patois of her region: "My father knew how to speak it very well. Born in the countryside, she has very well assimilated and internalized her cultural and social origins. Here too, when she went to college, one could make fun of the young people of her village who were called "retarded", especially in the private school where she attended school, which brought together young people from a very privileged background. She may even say that

this type of attitude made her laugh. The social indicators emanating from her speech show how much she has great skills. The fact of having had a supportive environment during his early childhood contributes a lot. She can describe that her parents were very loved when she was a child. She has developed in her way of being (empathy, compassion, listening, humor) many relationships that have helped her. Her upright and honest conduct has allowed her to maintain a very structuring relational network for her, and the young girl shares common values with her friends. Her spiritual dimension and the nun who supported her a lot, as well as the host family, are guardians of resilience on which Mary can rely and have fostered positive representations that have contributed to her valorization. All these elements make it possible to operate in a favourable way the resilience process.

We are led to conclude that the meeting of a resilience tutor seems to be a significant factor in promoting the emergence of the resilience process in the interaction it allows to build, particularly in its way of being and in its valuing, positive discourse, which serves as an identifying mode. In view of our results, it seems that psychoeducational learning and the various types of discourse participate in being determining protective factors, allowing the subject to resist trauma and to operate a therapeutic approach towards the process of resilience. One of the biases for Marie is the narration, but also the discourse with resilience tutors. When it comes to building resilience sustainably, as Cyrulnik B [4] writes, "when you look at the long duration of an existence, you can predict... surprises".

Mary testifies to new ways of life after the trauma and even to a new life that has opened up to her. This new life is sometimes fragile, but it nevertheless allows us to live again beyond the ordeals of abuse. As Pourtois JP, et al. [5] explain, in an emancipatory paradigm, psycho-educational learning and different types of discourse make it possible to combine the hope given to the teacher to free himself from his past and to act by himself and for others, in his present. And by allowing it to have a future that meets its expectations. This is where theory meets practice.

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