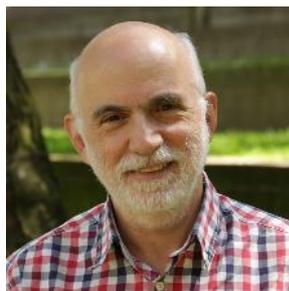




SEMINARIO

“Trauma as a mark and as a sign. A framework for working in *therapeutic synergy* with refugees and other adversity survivors”



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My claim is that the predominant “trauma discourse” in mental health today is based on a linear (causal-reductive) model within which trauma is conceptualised as the result of the exposure to adversity. In this way, psychological trauma is accepted as equivalent to the physical trauma, as a wound, following the injuring of a person’s body. According to this cause-effect formulation, adversity causes trauma. However, I argue that this formula is part of a wider and lengthier process and if our punctuation stops here, we miss the wealth of implications that follow after a person experiences certain traumatising symptoms.

In this presentation, I will present and discuss an epistemological framework beyond the predominant causal-reductive one. Such an approach is enriched by the “meaning attribution processes” that trauma-as-a-sign involves and which lead to additional considerations. The Adversity Grid will be explained as epitomising this approach, where the wide range of responses to adversity are identified, not only the negative ones, thus revealing the complexity, uniqueness and totality of the individuals, families and communities we work with. This framework articulates a balanced perspective which, without minimising the distressing effects, the suffering and trauma, it also includes tangible ways of discerning the resilience (i.e. the retained strengths of those we work with), as well as their “Adversity-Activated Development” (i.e. the new positive gains learned from dealing with the adversity). Such a perspective enables us to collaborate *synergically* with the strengths of the adversity survivors in order to heal their traumatising experiences and to activate their maximum potential.

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ore 11.00 - Aula “Ezio Ponzo”

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