

# *Psychoanalytic view of neurotic forms of love object choice* \_\_\_\_\_

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The way of building relationships and choosing a partner in life can not be something random between two people who decide to spend part of their lives together. Of course, many of our experiences in life lead us to certain choices.

Sigmund Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, goes further when he says that partner selection is determined by the early relationship between child and parent. Even Freud in his essay “On some neurotic mechanisms in jealousy, paranoia and homosexuality” (1922) says that “these jealousies take root in the depths of the unconscious, take back the earliest movements of infantile affectivity and originate from the Oedipus complex” (p. 217). The roots for this are found in the triangle of the child-mother-father relationship and the phallic stage where the child shows the most pronounced closeness to the parent of the opposite sex (all this a necessary and indispensable process). The way of expressing love between parents and consequently the expression as triumphant in front of the child with the word “I took mom/dad” can affect that in adulthood, the individual develops pathological behavior. Every behavior, from what we explained to the choice of the object of love, has its roots in early relationships.

Freud in his essay ‘On Narcissism’ (1922) (p. 76-104) talks about two ways of selecting the object of love:

- 1 - Choosing the object of love according to the narcissistic type:
  - a - A person who is like us.
  - b - A person who is like us in the past.

- c - A person who represents an idealized image of himself in the future.
- 2 - Choosing the object of love according to attachment:
  - a - A woman who cares for and nourishes her.
  - b - A man who protects.

According to Freud, the narcissistic type of partner selection in life is more common in women and refers to the search for a partner, a fulfillment or fulfillment of self-love (p. 89, On Narcissism). This, according to Freud, explains why women constantly need to express love to them, or in other words, they want to be loved more than they want to be. Based on this we can say that women are looking for a partner who is less narcissistic than them and is willing to invest from his libido, energy towards their object which is himself, so they are attracted and look for a partner who pays attention to him and shows him him. The demand for representation in the presence of other individuals may have other unconscious roots related to the child-mother-father triangle. An unresolved issue in childhood due to love for the father and jealousy for the mother, may be the impetus for women to show pathological desire to look 'chosen'.

"The selection of the object of love according to the form of attachment is based on the fixation on the figure of one of the parents during the infantile period of development." This, according to Freud in "Three Essays on Sexuality" (1922) is more prevalent among men who try to seek the mother or part of the infantile experience experienced in childhood, in every woman they have in life" (p.151,152 Three essays on sexuality (1922). By searching for the elements of the first infant relationship experienced in childhood, we understand the effort to fulfill the image of the mother through the elements of care, unconditional love, child care within them, acceptance to be weak and small in moments certain. However, the woman they have selected loses its importance when it starts and acquires the characteristics of a mother with elements such as restrictive, reprimanding, punishing and, most importantly, not showing love. Based on this, we can say that what men are looking for is: to be forgiven by their partner despite their shortcomings and above all what they are looking for is a kind of hidden instinctual desire to gain the partner's pride which is based on the relationship infantile with the mother and compliments with the desired attention of the mother in infancy. This also explains why men suffer criticism from their partner in a relationship, criticism which can be perceived by the man as the end of the partner's love for him.

The relationship with the mother is essential for each of the sexes in the infantile stage of development. For women it is very important how love is treated towards the object of love, which at an early age is the father and how rivalry with the mother is treated. In the pre-oedipal stage, girls enjoy a deep connection with the mother, which serves as a form of internalization of the values, characteristics

and image of the woman whom she will project later in life. The Oedipus phase is then characterized by a rivalry and hatred towards the figure of the mother as an attempt to defeat the competition and replace it in the love for the father. Parental behavior and treatment at this stage is very essential in building the character of the child. Typical behaviors which were mentioned above, such as: expression of love in the couple by making children jealous, can cause a stagnation in the phallic stage precisely in the Electra complex. This can prompt individuals to project pathological behaviors driven by an unresolved element during this phase of life. We base this argument on what Freud says: “The pre-Oedipal connection phase is decisive for the future of the woman because during that period preparations are made for the acquisition of the characteristics with which she will fulfill her role in society” (p. 168, Introduction to Psychoanalysis). Just as the pre-Oedipal phase is important for the acquisition of feminine characteristics by the mother, so the post-Oedipus phase with hostility and rivalry towards the mother enjoys invaluable importance and serves as a prerequisite for a happy future marriage, elements which are preserved in it the unconscious. But as Freud points out, “any relationship will experience moments when the enmity and rivalry carried by the infant relationship between mother and daughter is projected onto the spouse at a certain stage of life. For Freud, if this is experienced in the beginning of the relationship, it is likely that the second part of the relationship will be happy. There is also a phase of calm that is reached after the birth of the first child where the female learns to share the object of love, now not orienting everyone towards herself. By directing it towards the child, the female somehow gives up her narcissism. (p.168, Introduction to psychoanalysis). In cases where the first child is male, the female manages to feel a fulfillment after the replacement of what is called the conflict of the Oedipus complex in childhood. Now the woman has what she did not have as a child, a man has been born, whose roots stem from the desire to have a penis. This means a release of the relationship after the birth of the first child, especially if the gender of the child is male.

Annie Reich in the article “Narcissistic object choice in women” while talking about the narcissistic choices of the object of love by women explains that: love (partner)”. Based on this I can say that women who have not had enough appreciation and attention during infantile intercourse may develop unhealthy forms of relationship building in adulthood. Given what Annie Reich pointed out that women who approach partner selection from an extreme addiction attribute to him the characteristics of fantasy experienced during childhood, we can hypothesize that these individuals during childhood may have experienced a underestimation of the fact that they are female, may have had a brother who was overestimated for the fact that he is male and has a penis, may have always felt incapable of receiving the object of love from the mother, despite their efforts.

Sometimes we can find women who during childhood, in that important infantile experience have developed a form to get the attention of the object of love (in that case the father), for example: through flattery, complaints, excessive femininity, etc., this form is also projected in adulthood as they choose the partner in life. Women who approach the choice of the object of love from an extreme addiction generally have a magnificent ideal ego or a weak ego, which both enjoy an exaggerated sense of self-criticism and inferiority, I think because they failed to master the object of love, inferiority which can only be fulfilled by an overrated partner. As a result of the inability to express her aggressive feelings, the woman in these cases sublimates them into masochistic behavior by easily accepting submission, even demanding it. It is by surrendering to a partner that dominates it, it is in these cases that the female manages to fulfill her inferiority, and separation from such an object can cause trauma up to conversion or psychotic disorders. To stop this, we encounter cases in which women who persistently seek dominance to the point of excessive display of masculinity by their partner, either admitting to being a second choice or admitting to being betrayed. In these cases these women suffer less because the event that happened in the present is not a feeling unknown to them. Praying for submission makes them feel valued, and only in this way do they gain importance in a relationship.

Before relating the elements to the above wording, it is necessary to clarify what is found to be healthy in attractions through partners in a relationship. Based on the Freudian premise: "in so many years of study I do not know what a woman wants", so that a woman does not know what she wants and at the same time wants many things she does not want. This is for a woman the strongest instinctive weapon that activates in the partner two very important elements: a) the masculine ability of being programmed to be complementary to the needs of the partner and b) promotes the display of masculine features through occasional outbursts aggressive. By activating the latter in the partner, the female displays her ability to calm her partner through her femininity, showing in a form the dominance, but not only, emphasizing once again her narcissism. It seems like a struggle for dominance (which the female just does not love anymore) but no, it is such a magical spiral rooted within both sexes as complementary to each other and two incomplete halves separately. This is found to be a healthy form of relationship building between a couple.

The aspect that we will relate to is through what we have clarified so far, the form of selection of the partner in life, ie the object of love, by women, and the tendency to choose a category of men who present certain characteristics which we will try to we clarify. In order to have a clearer mention of the mentioned categories of men, we can refer to them with names such as: strong, those who feel nothing for you, thugs, gangsters, those who deal with dirty work, etc. We will relate this

to what Freud refers to as male motivators: power, power, sex. What we see today in building relationships based on therapeutic experience but not only, from the numerous conversations in the auditorium, as well as from many focus groups realized, I can say that I find a pathological form of selection of the object of love by both sexes. Of course this was not discovered and did not develop now, but the current social conditions affect their highlighting and why not have influenced their formation.

The tendency to attract the category of men we labeled above comes as a form of acceptance of submission, i.e. a masochistic form of relationship building by accepting and seeking submission. Based on what Annie Reich has emphasized about the selection of the object of love based on an extreme form of addiction, as well as the overestimation of the object of love, we find women who select as object of love exactly the men we labeled above. Focusing on the elements of male power, power and perceived sexual ability, is nothing else and does not go beyond the pathological form of selection of the object of love, labeling this selection absolutely as pathological where there is essentially only acceptance of submission. , or as Annie Reich pointed out, masochistic. A stagnation in the phallic stage, an unquenchable desire for the male genital organ, a lost fight with the mother in infancy, a pronounced lack of attention to her needs, etc., foster and form the dependent character and pronounced tendency in the search for a male to overestimate it, as the only form of reliving its non-existence during the phallic phase. In this form, only by being ignored, by being oppressed do they feel worthwhile?

This can also be understood in other forms. We pointed out above that the female form of love is more pronounced than the narcissistic form, something that connects them to themselves or that they are the object of love, to be needed more than they want. The wrong tendency in choosing the object of love is observed in those relationships where women feel proud of their husband's power / sexual ability and promote this as a narcissistic form of saying that they are the ones who deserve it, but also as a form of saying that they are the chosen ones and the others are "mom". This goes even further in the reasoning given to the importance of male dominance over them in a relationship, overshadowing the importance of communication and compromise as a healthy form of relationship development. Doing so, thus appreciating dominance, is the only form from which they can feel valuable because earlier in the early stage of development, only by acknowledging submission have they been important in the family. I reiterate, the search for validity in the manifestation of the partner's instinctive aggression, be it through "shouting, restraint, persistent search for jealousy on the part of the partner, the pathological desire for him to be desired by others but chosen to be you again, or even the manifestation of sexual aggression; they are nothing but pathological

forms of experiencing a relationship, the roots of which we must persistently seek in what is experienced in the phallic stage of development.

The tendency to appear in front of an audience marked as more seductive women, as a form of challenging other women so that the position in the partner's arms is not threatened, is explained by the motive of the fear of substitution that the woman may have experienced during childhood age. The roots of this incorrect display of relationship building are again in the incorrect mother-daughter relationship and stagnation in the phallic stage, precisely in what we call the Oedipus and Electra complex, where the child has constantly experienced the fear of losing position as father's favorite from mother's risk. The tendency to be seductive is just a form of expression, other forms of expression are those mentioned above: flattery, excessive femininity, flattery, tendency to be dominant, complaints, attraction, etc. Each of these forms can be used as a form to attract a partner in life, but which all lie within the boundaries of the unhealthy form of choosing the object of love.

It is culturally unacceptable for women to act casually and based on what they feel they are doing. Given this very simple premise, and making the connection with the narcissistic form of the selection of the object of love by women, that one of the forms was the selection based on an idealized image of oneself in the future (above, point c), we note a tendency to pathologically select the object of love when its actions are generally instinctive and well thought out, or to be more precise, they feel attracted to those actions which are a manifestation of id, which for the woman has been unacceptable during childhood because she was not a boy and did not enjoy the 'magnificent attribute' of having a penis.

To continue with a detailed analysis of how men choose the object of love we will start from what Freud (1909-1910) spoke about the psychic impulses that push a neurotic man to select the object of his love at "A special type of choice of object made by men" on his book "Three essays on sexuality".

Freud points out that such psychic impulses are often encountered even in persons with normal mental health.

**1 - Rivalry: The existence of an injured party.** A man would never choose as a partner a woman who is free and has no interest in him, but only the one through whom he would realize the right of domination as a husband.

Some relationships can start from scratch, where no one expects something to happen between two individuals, this is due to some impulses which are completely unconscious. A category of men whom Freud described as neurotic in choosing the object of love may begin to feel attracted to a woman for whom they have not previously agreed, just because someone else is interested in it. This falls into the category of "rivalry or existence of an injured party". Based on this root of the unconscious, we find through observations and therapeutic work

such an approach to building relationships by men. Also due to the unconscious impulse of rivalry we see men who show a pronounced need for the partner to be attractive as a condition for building the relationship, so that others talk about it or see it constantly, as a form of showing in persistently dominating other men. An unresolved issue in the Oedipus complex and a strong childhood feeling that the child experienced growing up that the mother belongs to someone else (the father) and that he finds it impossible to receive her love, lead to the formation of this neurosis in men. In this way, the selection of the object of love based on rivalry, complements in men the feeling of the injured third party.

**2 - Jealousy:** A woman who is rumored to be: “A woman who is chaste and whose reputation is pure is never an attraction to be able to raise her to the status of an object of love”, but only a woman whose fidelity and credibility is open to doubt.

Improper explanations for the nature of sexual intercourse between parents, open intimate relations between partners in the eyes of parents, keeping children in the bedroom until a great age of their development, can promote in children the formation of this neurosis which appears in adulthood. For children, but also for every adult, the mother is a symbol of purity, honesty and chastity. Children facing experiences that can damage this image of the mother in their mind, for example through the thought: “my mother also has sex like everyone else”, or “kisses, explicit sexual hugs”, can lead to formation of this neurosis. Expressions of love between partners should be oriented more towards the values of respect, courtesy, care, etc. than clear manifestations of actions of a sexual nature but without neglecting the latter. The appearance of sexual acts in the eyes of children is important in conveying the message to male children to build the idea that the mother is the father and thus activates the Oedipus complex, during the pre-Oedipal stage the male child will assimilate the values of the father so to be the mother’s favorite, and at this point the need arises to display caring and respectful behaviors in order for the child to acquire these values. The Oedipal stage where the child displays feelings of rivalry with the father helps him project love to another woman outside his circle, which coincides with the latent and then genital stage where the first pleasures begin.

**3 - Uninterrupted compulsive repetition:** In these love relationships the character of a man is formed, which in a way adapts to any occasion of falling in love. Such links are repeated with the same qualities in different stories as copies of each other.

Cultural approaches with a very strong deterrent and moralistic tendency towards the relationship between the male child and the mother when he shows feelings of affection, love or physical closeness to the mother, influence the



formation of this neurosis. Numerous expressions such as “leave your mother because you are already an adult; enough to kiss the mother; how the boy sits on mom’s lap” etc., can influence the male child to repress the instinctive desire which later in life is projected in love directed only in an emotional and affective aspect. These men in the genital stage of development feel that they can form relationships with any woman which offers them emotional affection. The roots of this lie in the fixation created on the figure of the mother. Generally, these men tend to choose partners who are lower in status than they are, which would ensure the affection and love of the partner.

**4 - Salvation fantasies:** The man is convinced that she needs him, and that without him she would lose all moral control and quickly sink to a miserable level.

It often happens to see a man mature in life and profession, falls in love with a suffering woman or whose social status may be put at risk. The man feels a strong need that the woman needs him and in case he will not save her, she will fall into a miserable condition. In most cases, these men do not manage to fall in love or feel attracted to women who appear self-confident or who may have a built-in career, which conveys the lack of need to get rid of it.

During the phallic stage of development in the early infant relationship, rather than losing the war in trying to win the love of the parent of the opposite sex, for a child, whether girl or boy, leaves irreversible traces (as early as the next day) may have pathological consequences), if he/she (child) mistakenly perceives that \* same-sex parent is not worth fighting \* and directs to him/her feelings of pity, pain, or care. The primary conflict with the same sex is essential in the acquisition of values, norms and characteristics by the child, this as a mechanism to appear “liked” in the eyes of the parent of the opposite sex. These likes that in the genital stage of development, are projected externally on the partners we choose in life!

“I would not have wanted anything more in life than protecting my father,” says Freud. For the man, a weak father, who is not worth fighting to get the mother’s love is the main impetus in the formation of this neurosis in men. This category sees the father as powerless to please the mother and consequently does not fight for him. By not activating rivalry for the father in the struggle for the mother’s love, the male child is not encouraged to take from the father his values and characteristics in order to be the mother’s favorite in her eyes. Thus the male child during the infantile stage of development directs towards the mother the feelings of the fantasy of salvation, which he must bring to the mother god since the father is not enough and he must save her from that condition, and if it is not him, the mother will be with a partner who is not worth it, does not protect her, is weak, is not masculine enough, etc. In these cases we can have reports where the father may be completely indifferent to the partner, not present, does not show love, does not show protective and caring skills towards the partner, etc.



At the end of this part, which is absolutely not exhausted, I can say that whether thoughtfully or even unconsciously, there is a tendency to encourage Albanian youth to act instinctively, as a form of expression of complete freedom, which as we tried to clarify, this freedom often times leads us to various pathologies that we do not always have the willingness and comfort to understand.

What I think is that people are more easily managed through instinct and chaos than through order, and this is known by those who may have certain interests in influencing the culture of a country. To destroy a superego, one must give unconditional freedom to the id, motivating what it portrays as something publicly accepted, promoting it in the media, making it socially acceptable. Wrongly, although nothing goes wrong, the manifestations of the id have now turned into a new superego, and those impulses which the id conveyed hitherto and caused the necessary conflict for the existence of the ego, are no more, and the id must produce other desires, which will certainly be more pathological than the previous ones.

To put it more into practice and to make it more tangible, what until yesterday was socially unacceptable, ie part of the morals of the superego, today is considered something socially desirable and sought after by most young people forming thus a new social “morality” for the generation in which we live. Once this is internalized, the id will produce again and continuously new impulses which have the sole purpose of achieving momentary satisfaction, which is achieved but does not provide stability and guarantee, ie does not fulfill. So the id will continuously produce dark pulses because according to the pleasure principle, the impulses that the id transmits the moment they are met, they widen and deepen the threshold and so the next time the id will transmit a pulse, it will have to be deeper and greater than the former in order to feel the momentary fulfillment. This becomes more difficult the moment we replace the superego, cultural, religious, legal morals, etc.; with elements that id himself has dictated to us.

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