



# **FUNDACIÓN CENTRO SAN JUAN DE JERUSALÉN**

***Mi hijo, mi espejo***

***Limites, contención en crisis***



**QUITO - ECUADOR  
2020**

## SEVENTH DISCUSSION GROUP

TOPIC: “My son, my mirror”, “Limits, support in crisis”

DATE: Thursday, July 2, 2020

FOR: Parents

### Objectives:

- Raise parents' awareness of the vital influence that their personality and parenting method have on the all round development of their children.
- Consider how limits and routines are one of the most important security bases for children and adolescents while they grow.



*Conversatorio para padres*

*-Mi hijo, mi espejo*  
*-Límites, contención en crisis*



**Evento Gratuito**  
*Inscríbete*

Certificado digital \$5 dólares

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Psicóloga Infantil y  
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*Jueves 2 julio 18:00 horas / Via Zoom*

Pst. David Díaz  
Psicólogo Infantil y  
Psicorrehabilitador



### 1. Limits, support in crisis

#### ❖ What is an emotional crisis?

it is a temporary state of disorganization, emotional confusion AND lack of control which happens to a person after experiencing an adverse event AND that causes different levels of discomfort and tension, thus affecting their daily performance and making it difficult for them to handle situations

#### ❖ What is emotional support?



It is a set of basic procedures that aim to reassure and stimulate the confidence of a person who is affected by a strong emotional crisis, it is a primary support intervention carried out in a moment of crisis.

That is, emotional support is **validating** the emotions of young people and adolescents through **mentoring** and offering, as much as we can, alternative ways to express feelings and means to solve problems.

Emotional support **does not mean not allowing** people to express their emotions or denying them, **it means** helping to release their emotions and guiding them towards a route that helps them. To do this, it is important to make the person in crisis understand that we want to help them express what they feel.



David explains that it is always important for adults (mom, dad, teachers or professionals who work with children and families) to explain the importance of being able to express themselves. Sometimes even children come to think that they can only express positive emotions, but when they are sad or angry, they don't talk about it.

This works well with children with severe disabilities. The adult can identify the features of the child's face, where they will show if they are angry, sad or happy through their expression. The adult can then explain what the child feels and relate it to the why they feel that way.



Support has two important avenues:



- **The empathic attitude:** which is the ability to momentarily put oneself in the other person's shoes.



- **Active listening:** This is the ability to pay attention to the message given out by the other person.

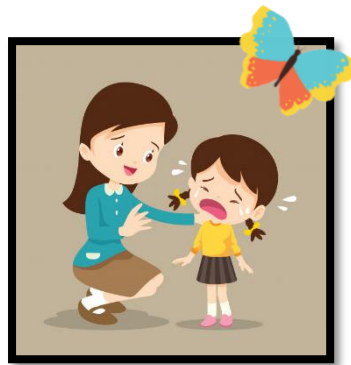


It is important to know that you don't have to be a psychologist to give emotional support, we are supporting the other person just by listening carefully and without prejudice. David mentions that we must be careful about emotional support **IT IS NOT** judging, scolding or invalidating the emotions of other people, saying, for example: don't be sad, don't cry, there's no two ways about it. At that time, the priority is to listen and guide the person in crisis.

Remember that a crisis is something very personal, so what may be considered a crisis by some, might not be for others; this depends on many things like family history, self esteem, and who is talking about it.

## ❖ How do you provide emotional support?

- **Empathy:** listening to the other person and being able to put ourselves in their shoes. This includes taking into account the tone of voice, pauses, silences and their posture; these characteristics will give us useful information about what they want to communicate



- **Active and respectful listening:** knowing how to listen carefully and not judge, using accessible language; for example: I understand that you feel afraid, I understand why you feel worried

- **Positive consideration:** Bear in mind that the person is doing the best they can according to their characteristics and their level of awareness. We must watch their body language and how they say things.



- **Mirroring feelings:** observe, mirror and encourage the expression of feelings and emotions, show enough calm to give them security.

## 2. My son, my mirror

In the field of psychology, when parents seek therapy to find help for their children because of problems with their behavior, problems in their socialization or the teacher makes constant complaints about the child; go through this procedure:

- Agree appointment with the parents

- **First interview with parents only**

- o Reason for consultation
- o Child's history
- o Overview of the family environment

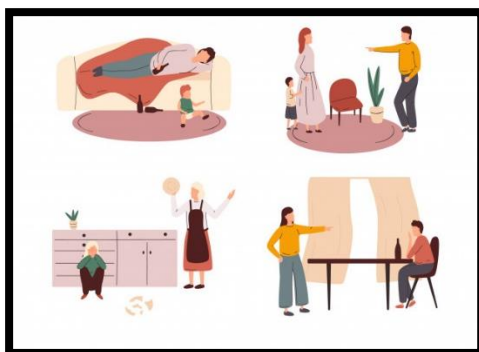
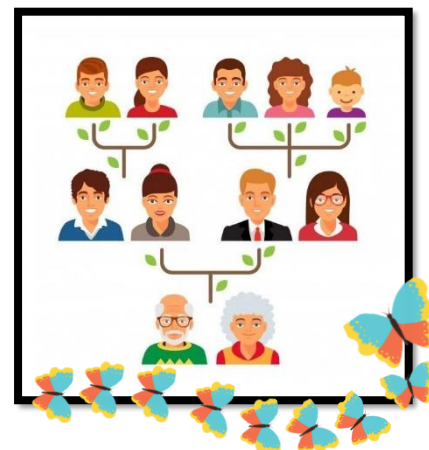


- **Decision-making**

- o Family therapy (group or individual)
- o Child therapy with parental support at least once a month
- o Parent/child therapy

- ❖ **My son, my mirror, how does this happen?**

- o **Hereditary factors:** Made up of genetics, which is something stable, we come born with it, we have important predispositions, but it is not definitive or determining. They are characteristics established in our genetic makeup, predisposition to be in some way the same or similar to our parents. These predispositions of temperament with which we are born, are strengthened or diminished depending on the environment that surrounds us.



- o **Environment around the child:** They are the experiences and information that the child gains from everyday life, what they see and hear. This information strengthens or lowers our temperament, especially during childhood through adolescence.

Carla mentions that the childhood stage is decisive for the formation of personality, since it is here when children are vulnerable for better or for worse, and what the adult gives them in their daily lives will shape their personality, and is the basis for our life.

The role played by the parents or the people who raise the child is fundamental, we can understand this in several ways:

- **Imitation:** Children unconsciously imitate our gestures, actions, our way of communicating, our way of caring for ourselves and our way of being.



*Educating is not teaching, educating is setting an example*



- **Emotional fusion:** between parents and children, which is not only a matter of conduct. Rather, this fusion allows us to observe in our children reflections of our own stress, aspects that we deny of our personality or of our emotional history, unresolved conflicts and also our own signs of well-being and strength.

- **Projecting the unconscious mind:** the child's displays a temperament or behavior exactly opposed to that of its parents. For example, a man who couldn't express himself as a teenager for fear of his parents could have a son who is very rebellious; in other words, whose personality is the polar opposite of his parents' personality.



- **Projecting unfulfilled desires:** parents perform actions to compensate what they could not have or do; for example: an adult who never had the toys they wanted as a child will buy their own child all the toys it wants.

❖ **What should we do with this inheritance?**

Carla mentions that it is important to respect our paternal and maternal ancestors, and those of our spouse, because the child is 50% mother and 50% father. We should also respect their fate, even if it was difficult, and take what we get from them: all of the good things, the strengths, what has helped them in their lives; but also the bad things, that we can use as fertilizer to create our own lives, accepting them with unconditional love. If we accomplish all of this in our life, we will have traveled a great way on the path of peace and it will give us a lot of strength and harmony for our life.



## ❖ Active visualization

Carla carries out an active visualization exercise with the fathers and mothers via Zoom or Facebook with the objective of better understanding the issue in an experiential manner.

Sit comfortably, whoever needs to can close their eyes, take deep breaths.

### - Carrying out the visualization

- Take deep breaths
- Remember and visualize a moment of conflict with your child. What happened? What was the attitude that triggered my rage, anger, sadness, or desperation? What attitude did he or she have? Let's observe and listen.
- Let's reflect: this attitude of theirs, how is it a reflection of me? How is it like me when I act that way? Or is it something that I don't accept in myself, I never let it out, and sometimes I need to?
- Let's remember a little about our own story: was there someone in my family of origin who reacted like my child? Does it resemble the personality of someone in my family, or someone that I don't want them to resemble? Can this behavior I disliked be that of someone in my past, that now enrages me, unbalances me?
- Now, let's write a phrase that answers the following question: what did I learn? What did I come to realize during this visualization?



## What can I do with those feelings?

- Accept the situation, without denying, evading, or rejecting it. Say: "yes, you are here, yes, you are present."
- Take it as an opportunity; say: "thank you for being here, because you make me see things I couldn't see before."
- Create awareness within yourself by observing, listening, and saying: "I am aware of this."
- Reflect, after thinking say: "I take responsibility for this conflict and this will enable us to take action within ourselves."



## Resolution

- To finish, we will look at our child and we will say to him or her: "I have seen reflected in you my past, my suffering, my own conflicts, that's the reason for my actions. I am really sorry, now I'm starting to see you without this burden, as something new, which is your life, and I take responsibility for my past and my own conflicts."
- Let's take a deep breath in and then release it.



## Integration of the experience

- If we manage to do this, we can see our child just as they are, not with reflections of the past, not with things I don't want to accept about myself, and like that we can integrate this experience.



To finish this dialogue, Carla tells Felipe's story, as a personal experience of working with a family, which clearly illustrates the issue at hand.

### ❖ FELIPE'S STORY



5-year-old Felipe came to the Fundación San Juan de Jerusalén classroom every morning with his mother. Every morning he would start crying as he reached the door. In his language, made almost incomprehensible by his disability, he could be heard saying: "Mom, Mom, take me with you." This lasted for the whole school year. Once he managed to settle down he'd have a better day, but the next morning he'd be crying again.

The child psychologist did therapy sessions with him, without much result, so she asked me to work with the mother to find other causes. The mother was skeptical about psychologists but accepted out of love for her child. We started with the daily conflicts, until we reached her personal history, and that's where her child's solution lay.



When the mother was 7 years old, the boy's grandmother left the little girl and her 5-year-old younger sister in an educational institution for girls, for unknown reasons. She remembered that day very well, when with no explanation their mother left them there, and all she retained was the image of her mother leaving without looking back, with the idea that they should live there to be educated.

During her therapy she worked on this feeling of abandonment, which could have felt deadly to a child that age. The feeling stayed with her as she grew up, in her unconscious mind, until her child reflected it back to her every day and her pain came rushing back to the surface. In spite of the fact that she saw her son again each afternoon, the feeling of abandonment wanted to be seen.

After becoming aware of this unresolved conflict and re-exploring the pain and after recognizing her strengths now as an adult, she could psychologically separate her son from this conflict and tell him from her heart: "I'm here and I will always come back to school to fetch you." The child gradually cried less until he completely adapted.

