

23. the socks philosophy.

...one must guess the painter in order to understand the picture...⁸⁴

This very brief ride across time, physics and care-work, suggests as every single word defining each single approach makes sense. These words and approaches represent miles-stones in care work. They are the corner-stones.

All the praxis and principles suggested and/or supported by these definitions are precious, valuable and effective, even under the cover of newspeak here and there.

During my work with both individuals and groups, I try my best to always follow the suggestions I learnt from my Latin professor. As each single word has its own peculiar mean and translation, I suggest to follow a path to signify words for what they mean, under an holistic approach.

My challenge is to transfer and adapt the grammar of care-work to different contexts in order to foster new horizons and new points of view, and to originate new projects and open new roads⁸⁵.

A care-giver should be skilled enough and sufficiently aware of its inner-competence to feel free to use them all to meet the person real needs.

The question is not on the ideas in abstract. When the structure is the

⁸⁴ Ref.: F. Nietzsche, *Schopenhauer as educator*, 1874

⁸⁵ For this purpose I created and use Multipolis as a tool for training, supervision and group-work session since 2006; it is aimed to favour the awareness raising of the way people handle the relation of care on issues as the care-work approach with people experiencing homelessness, violence and abuses, disabilities and parenting children with disabilities. Outputs of the training, supervisions and group work sessions, together with projects presentations are available on www.multipolis.eu

core, it is all about the net results. It is the same logic than when one buy some cheese: it is of basic importance to know what is the gross weight, because people do not want to pay for the envelope, for the superstructure. The result is the net weight of the cheese, its quantity, quality, and taste. The net result is the only thing that counts. Considering the impact and the net results as part of the core variables in the evaluation analysis might lead to open new developments.

During training or supervisions, I often introduce the following brief digression.

Every morning, each person starts the day with its own personal habits. Each one wakes up and follows a certain routine. Some tends to lazily lay in bed as long as possible. Others get up straight. The time for washing and dressing up varies. Having breakfast is again personal. Some drink a tea. Others, black coffee. Some, just water. Not necessarily in this order.

At a certain, precise moment, it comes the time to deal with a choice. It won't be the first nor the last of the day. Considering the weather and the agenda, each person chooses whether to wear socks or not. And what socks. Some opens their very organised drawers: socks are ordered by shape, colours, length. Other drawers are chaotic. Sometimes socks never saw a drawer, they are just around when one needs them. No matter how socks are stored. No matter if and what socks one chooses. Each of us will spend the entire day wearing them on. A choice is needed, aware of it or not.

I call this, the socks dilemma.

Lately in the evening, one estimates the net qualitative result of the day. If one has been comfortable, or not. A wrong shape, an in-paired colour, a too-warm or a chilly one, or too a laddered pantyhose may have caused some embarrassments. Embarrassment usually impacts negatively on the net result of one day.

One chooses a pair of socks in the morning, and keep them on all day long: they can influence how we pass through the entire day. As known by every person whose feet sweat because socks are heavy. As

experienced by every one whose attention was distracted by that “almost” invisible little hole.

Socks might influence the net quality of the day.

Socks are important in defining the quality of a day in our life, and maybe this is the reason why people usually recognise them a certain dignity. Aware of it, or not.

If people recognise dignity and importance to socks, they should consider as much dignity and importance to all other valuable things that happens, influences and implies the quality of their life.

The individuals-in-need to whom we offer our care-work, they deserve at least twice the same attention. And importance. And dignity. Aware of it, or not.

I call this, the “socks philosophy”: if a given sock is enough to make our day, just image what is the dignity of all other occurring aspects. And importance. And dignity. Aware of it, or not.

When I work with individuals, couples, families or groups, I use to clarify that if socks are a reason good enough to make one's day, then we should consider all the rest with the deserved attention. Every single aspect of every single day in every single life is always significant, valuable, worth, dignified. Just as every single living thing, individuals-in-need deserve attention.

They deserve the recognition of dignity and importance at least twice as much as we do when we choose our socks. They are human-beings who deserves respect and dignity in a community-based environment.

Because they are. Because of their essence.

And because a socks-philosophy is always better than a philosophy that “socks”.

End of the digression.