

Molestie morali nei luoghi di lavoro: nuovi aspetti di un vecchio fenomeno

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KEY WORDS

Mobbing; antisocial behavior; group dynamics; psychosocial risks

SUMMARY

«Antisocial behavior at work: new aspects of an old plague». In the last ten years there has been increasing concern about the well known old practice of victimisation at work, which in recent years has emerged with new characteristics, aims and consequences and is now generally referred to as mobbing behavior. This increased attention seems to be due to increased awareness of individual rights and respect for the dignity of self and others, and to the new economy emphasis on flexibility and reorganizational needs. Moral violence should not be confused with the normal competition and conflicts encountered in work place. Mobbing can be originated by traditional causes such as eliminating an undesired individual or by a precise corporate strategy aimed at reducing the workforce organizations. Mobbing has been recognized as a significant source of individual discomfort and subsequently illness. Lacking specific diagnostic criteria, Post-traumatic Stress Disorder and Adjustment Disorder have been adopted from the international classification of mental diseases (DSM). However, interviews and personality screening highlight specific differences compared with other psychic disorders, not in symptom severity but in the induced loss of parameters which guarantee individual consistency in life, namely self-esteem, event intelligibility, cause-effect relationship, confidence in others, which lead to role and status depletion and eventually acquisition of an invalid personality. The human and economic cost of antisocial behavior at work, with illness, absenteeism and finally unemployment is extremely high for the victims and their families, employers and society. Mobbing control is not only a prevention target but a moral obligation. It should be recognized that interpersonal correctness, respect of individual skills and dignity do not interfere with group efficiency, reorganization, staff reduction and relocation and that these aims can be reached without destroying an individual.

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