

Aspetti psichiatrici del lavoratore oggetto di *mobbing*

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KEY WORDS

Mobbing; cognitive therapy

SUMMARY

«Psychiatric aspects in workers subject to mobbing». **Background:** *Mobbing in the language of ethologists means a particular behaviour of a group of animals consisting of several members forming an alliance against a single animal, in order to eliminate this animal away from the group. This term has been adopted in current usage to mean a kind of relationship at the workplace that, by aggressive and underhand means, aims at influencing or expelling the person. The term "bossing" is used to indicate a negative action, under the meaning described above, made by one or more senior persons, or possibly by the employer. In the Italian Parliament, under the current legislature, several bills are pending regarding this problem. Besides the aspects of topical interest in the problem, there are first and foremost the different kinds of reaction-adaptation to mobbing, according to the type of individual internal working models in action, that can be anxious/avoiding, anxious/resistant or disorganised.* **Objectives:** *The purpose of our study was a clinical evaluation of the different ways of adaptation-reaction to a mobbing-type relationship at the workplace, and of the type of internal working models found among the examined patients.* **Methods:** *A clinical interview was carried out with 40 patients who, over a period of 12 months of observation, came to request a clinical assessment, for medical-legal reasons, of their psycho-pathological state and ways to react to adverse situations at the workplace, such as a mobbing or bossing.* **Results:** *Besides the psychological and relational effects of mobbing, the reactions of the examined subjects to mobbing are also described, considering also the different cognitive self-organization possibilities, according to the individual internal working model, regarding patterns of attachment in adult age. The most frequent internal working model seems to be the one related to resistant attachment, followed by the avoidance and lastly - rarely - the disorganized model. Furthermore we observed among these subjects a certain deficit in meta-cognitive capacity of self reflection and decentralization.* **Conclusions:** *Cognitive therapy is proposed as the most effective of therapeutic approaches, associated with symptomatic psycho-pharmacological therapy as needed. Initial clinical results on cognitive therapy of these patients are reported. The individual type of internal working model seems to be the critical element in mobbing reaction and, besides specific intervention plans regarding relationship in the workplace, individual psychotherapy appears to be the best instrument of treatment and prevention of the psychopathologic effects caused by mobbing.*
