

The conviviality and the live-with as Occupational Therapy devices

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Abstract: Objective: The conviviality and the live-with process are the subjects of this work, with the purpose to reflect about living as an occupational therapy tool exploring its challenges and possibilities in its different fields. Method: Theoretical reflection in which the concepts of conviviality and tool are briefly presented, to then think about its interface with the profession. To discuss the subject, we sought specialists in the field of Philosophy of Difference, in addition to occupational therapy core intercessors. Results: As a result of the reflections we can state that the meetings are essentially ethical-affective; we consider essential the spaces that embrace differences and the individuals and groups potential of becoming minority for therapeutic-occupational practices and to the enhancement of the experience dimension. In this context, the experiment subject will be defined not only for his/her activity, but by his/her receptivity, willingness and openness to relate with the other, for experiencing the world and himself/herself. Conclusion: This perspective considers the conviviality and the live-with as occupational therapy tools, which are related in the creation of spaces of relation and the creation of becoming existence.

Keywords: *Occupational Therapy, Socialization, Group Practice, Strategies.*

A convivência e o *com-viver* como dispositivos para a Terapia Ocupacional

Resumo: Objetivo: A convivência e os processos de *com-viver* são os temas deste trabalho, com o objetivo de refletir sobre a convivência como um dispositivo para a terapia ocupacional em diferentes campos de sua atuação profissional, explorando seus desafios e possibilidades. Método: Trata-se de uma reflexão teórica, na qual são apresentados brevemente os conceitos de convivência e dispositivo, para, posteriormente pensar sua interface com a profissão. Para refletirmos sobre essa temática, recorremos aos teóricos do campo da Filosofia da Diferença, além de intercessores do núcleo da terapia ocupacional. Resultados: Como resultados da reflexão, podemos apontar que os encontros são essencialmente ético-afetivos e que consideramos que os espaços propiciadores da convivência com o outro, onde possam ser acolhidas as diferenças e as potencialidades do devir minoritário de indivíduos e grupos, são essenciais para as práticas terapêutico-ocupacionais e para a valorização da dimensão da experiência. Nesse contexto, o sujeito da experiência se definiria não apenas por sua atividade, mas por sua receptividade, por sua disponibilidade, e por sua abertura para relacionar-se com o outro, para a experimentação do mundo e de si. Conclusão: Nesta perspectiva, consideram-se a convivência e o *com-viver* como dispositivos para a terapia ocupacional, que se entrelaçam na criação de espaços de relação e de produção de existência na potência e em devir.

Palavras-chave: *Terapia Ocupacional, Socialização, Prática de Grupo, Estratégias.*

1 Introduction

This essay seeks to reflect on the possible correlations between the theoretical notion of conviviality and interventions in occupational therapy since this strategy is implicated in the work of the occupational therapist. Also, it seeks to explore how living experiences and living together can work as tools of our professional practice.

For Foucault (1992), every tool includes a heterogeneous set of discourses, institutions, architectural organizations, regulatory decisions, laws, administrative measures, statements, and philosophical and moral propositions. The tool is the network that can be established between these elements. For Deleuze (1996) and from his re-reading of Foucault, a tool is, first of all, a multilinear set composed of lines of different nature: lines of visibility and enunciation (machines to make see and speak), besides the lines of force and subjectivization (which include the dimensions of power and creation).

It was necessary to dive into the theme and its correlates to discuss conviviality as a tool, as well as its contextualization and articulation with occupational therapy, based on the Philosophy of the Difference (FERIGATO, 2013).

Although not explicitly stated, it is important to clarify that the practices of conviviality have already been a fertile field for the construction of knowledge in occupational therapy, as well as an important instrument for the strengthening of public policies. Among them, there is the SUS (Unified Health System) and SUAS (Single Social Assistance System), the policies in the area of Education and Culture, among others, especially when we think of the creation of collective spaces for the construction and strengthening networks of care, personal and social support, social protection, sociability, creative collaboration and/or co-creation.

Moreover, in a neoliberal context of production of frightened collectives, social inequalities, disinvestments in public spaces and expropriation of the common, the work for the conviviality is against the other, in an investment betting in strategies that rescue the capacity of political initiative by different social groups, by the restoration of the weak social micropolitical bonds and the production of affective networks (TEIXEIRA, 2004).

In this context, we propose to think of the practices of occupational therapy focused on the production of conviviality spaces, in its possibility to work as events that reopen collective, subjective and sensitive processes, and, at the same time, rescue

the collective being able to operate its production as a creation plan (ESCÓSSIA; TEDESCO, 2009).

In the intersectoral practices area, that is, those that correlate with different fields and knowledge of practices, we understand that some tools can work as authentic techniques of reconstitution and production of the social bond (TEIXEIRA, 2004). Spaces, such as workshops, intervention practices in the city, community centers, and other community experiences can create local instances of collective subjectivization (GUATTARI, 2006), intersecting different knowledge, practices, and experiences.

2 The Conviviality and the *live-with*

Few studies have been specifically designed to work the term conviviality conceptually. However, it is not uncommon for anthropological, psychological and philosophical studies to problematize ways of living from the effort to produce knowledge about the different forms of production of social relationships and life in society.

In anthropology, researchers are dedicated to understanding the way different peoples coexist around the world, to understand how it is possible for the world to continue to be created and recreated without ceasing, in the diversity of cultures and social structures, producing different forms of individual and collective subjectivity (MARTORELL, 1997).

In psychology, different theoretical approaches are prepared to think about subjective production and the constitution of subjects from the analysis of interpersonal relationships and the event of civilization.

Based on the theoretical constructions of Vygotsky, the Ministry of Social Development and Fight against Hunger - MDS, in its booklet on the concept of conviviality and strengthening of bonds, affirms that the world and the acting on it are only possible through Social relationships:

The individual is constituted in the relation with the other, and through this relation, he has the connections established by other people having them also as reference and contribution to the collective. Thus, the forms of intervention that promote meetings that affect people, mobilizing them and causing transformations are relevant. In the same sense, it is important to highlight the relevance of the historical context in this construction, because the objective conditions of life interfere directly in the way people will be

constituted as social individuals, in the choices they will make in producing and reproducing social life (BRASIL, 2013a, p. 17).

This way of perceiving social relationships has strong influences on Spinoza's thinking, who, from the philosophical area, he helps us to understand social relationships and life from the concept of the "meeting." Life includes collective synergy and social and subjective cooperation. Life means affection, intelligence, cooperation, desire - power to affect and be affected (SPINOZA, 2008).

The Spinoza idea of meeting leads us to identify that the nature of meetings is not positive or negative. For him, the meetings are essentially ethical-affective, linked to the idea of composition or decomposition in the relationship between bodies¹, in the immanence of the experience. A good meeting is characterized by the composition, by the increase of the power of a body, and a bad meeting is characterized by the decomposition or by the diminution of the power of acting or the force of existing of a relational body (SPINOZA, 2008).

When Spinoza (2008) proposes that a body is essentially relational, it means that a body is not and will never be fully formed, since it is permanently affected by the world he is part and also in constant transformation and generation. That is, meetings transform the unstable body-form, and the greater the compositional capacity of a body, the greater its power to persevere in existence.

In different public policies, the word "conviviality" has other notions. Based on the imaginary and the experience of the professionals, they are linked to the effect of living together (INFOPÉDIA, 2015), such as social inclusion, networks of support, creation of social bonds, interpersonal relationships, users' rights, production of subjectivity, among others (BRASIL, 2011a, 2011b, 2013b).

This effect of living is only possible from the experience of living with: living with the other, being with the other, which is always more or less different from me, this is an essential step to producing conviviality. This step is not always easy, but it is fundamental. Therefore, we chose to emphasize in the title of this manuscript the orthographic describing the verb to live for "live-with," to emphasize the composition of these words (the connective preposition and the verb to live). We would like to highlight the element "with" as an ante-pose that reinforces the meaning of the verb "to live," as living from the meeting. The prepositions are words that establish a relation between two or more terms

of the sentence, a preposition like this fulfills the function of connecting elements: in the case of the prayers, to connect words; in the case of conviviality, connecting individual and collective subjects as well.

In agreement with Deleuze and Guattari (1995, p. 16), we can affirm that "[...] there is no ideal model of conviviality, as there is no homogeneous community. Conviviality is an essentially heterogeneous reality [...]" and marked by the production of differences.

The conviviality outlined in this perspective - between individuals that are constituted as they relate, capable of choice, autonomy and to learn from each other (BRASIL, 2013a), happens from a shared perspective between different fields of knowledge. However, the exercise of conviviality also applies in less favored situations, when, for example, rights are not always guaranteed, and the autonomy of people is compromised by physical, social, cognitive or psychic issues.

Traditionally, the populations assisted by the occupational therapist, such as people with disabilities, in psychological distress or in situations of social vulnerability, the elderly, among others, are examples of conditions in which the conviviality of a potential way for life processes and projects are curtailed, and can be tested alongside the multiple forms of exclusion (economic, social, cultural, occupational, etc.). In cases like these, conviviality can also be traversed by these same processes of exclusion, harassment, and stigma. It is especially in these contexts that we will try to approach the interface between the processes of conviviality and occupational therapy.

3 The Conviviality and the Occupational Therapy: Possible Correlations

From the theoretical constructions we have drawn, we can understand that living together is also a way of existing in the relationship with others, with people, thoughts, environments and things. In this sense, there is a *coexisting ethos*, which differs from one person to another. Understanding *ethos*, in its Greek sense, it is:

An attitude... a way of relating to the current reality [...] and finally a way of thinking and feeling; a way of acting and conducting that at the same time the relation of pertinence and presentation of itself is highlighted (FOUCAULT, 1984, p. 295).

This way of relating each other is defined, among other things, by the marks that we have produced throughout our history, in the meeting with other marks, by our potentialities and limitations in the meeting with the potentialities and limitations of other bodies and materiality. These powers and limits are invited to be expressed in the act of coexisting.

It is not uncommon for occupational therapists to be sought by people “marked” by different limitations (concrete and subjective), to support them in the construction of possible coping strategies (MEDEIROS, 2010). Intervening with these limitations is one of the great contributions of occupational therapy, and most of the theoretical constructions of the profession have helped us to identify and develop techniques for intervening in these occupational and everyday difficulties. However, the greatest challenge is to go beyond this and identify different modes of intervention from the *coexisting powers* of the individual and the collective subject and not only from their limitations.

According to the definition of the University of São Paulo, occupational therapy is a profession that performs its intervention in health, work, and education, and in the social sphere, gathering:

Technologies guided to the independence and autonomy of individuals who, through various problems related to physical, sensorial, mental, psychological and/or social factors, they demonstrate difficulty in insertion and participation in social life (UNIVERSIDADE..., 1997).

One of the main objectives of occupational therapy would be the social insertion of individual and collective subjects through action in their daily lives.

The every day is the space in which life happens, permeated by political, economic and social relationships that cross it. The actions carried out in the daily life are denominated by different terminologies to their application in the field of occupational therapy: doing, activity, occupation, etc., based on different theoretical references (MAGALHÃES, 2013; LIMA; OKUMA; PASTORE, 2013; GALHEIGO, 2003).

Among different authors,

[...] it is recognized the polysemy, the plivocity and the inevitable plurality for the construction of an area that was necessarily marked by diverse practices and knowledge (SILVA, 2013, p. 462).

The term *human activity* is understood as the essence of the human being; Through it, the individual is created and recreated, producing meaning of life in his

praxis, in his doing (FURTADO; MARCONDES, 2013), in the multiple dimensions that constitute life, in an experiential continuum in which truths are produced (QUARENTEI, 2001).

Human activity is a polysemous, complex object and belonging to all, which necessarily remains about other bodies. It is not the property of a professional nucleus. However, it is undeniable that occupational therapy engages in depth knowledge and practices focused on the theme of human activity.

In the same way, conviviality integrates the human experience in a way that interconnects people, actions, and their complexities. Therefore, uniting these universes, we affirm that conviviality can be thought of as an important tool for occupational therapy, characterized as more than a therapeutic-occupational tool or an intervention instrument.

Terms, such as:

An instrument or tool are used to qualify occupational therapy activities. Thus, occupational therapists discriminate between activity and their possible therapeutic character, overcoming the reductionism that accompanied the idea that activities have therapeutic properties (LIMA; OKUMA; PASTORE, 2013, p. 245).

The term *tool* or *instrument* is the idea of a means to achieve certain objectives. On the other hand, the notion of a tool assumes that conviviality produces things - meetings, statements, relations of power and movements of subjectivization - that are already the purpose to which occupational therapy is proposed.

From this reference, conviviality is experiencing a shared time. People live and share the occupation of their time in different spaces and different circumstances of life. When thinking about conviviality as an intervention tool in occupational therapy, we have to consider what would make this tool more effective for social insertion and expansion of the occupational and relational life of individuals and collectives. In this case, it would be insufficient to think of occupation² and conviviality only regarding use and sharing of time.

It is also necessary to think of strategies and unique ways of *occupying spaces*, and above all, the occupation of public spaces or the occupation of collective spaces of conviviality, in other words, through the production of community zones, the production of the common.

The common does not refer to traditional notions of the community or the public; it is based on the communication between

singularities and manifested through the collaborative social processes of production (HARDT; NEGRI, 2012, p. 266).

4 The Conviviality as a Tool for the Occupational Therapy

Besides of a medium, conviviality as an event produces an intervention: to be together, to produce a bond, to *live-with*. This is part of what it is searching. Hence, the notion of the tool: conviviality can produce meetings, give emphasis to subjective production, evidence statements, relations of power and knowledge.

This is not to deny the importance and necessity of the development of tools and instruments of intervention. It is assumed that, as a matter of priority, we are not interested in conviviality as a state of affairs, nor as a technique for the work of occupational therapists. The processes that produce the conviviality and are produced in it are what interests us.

For example, the promotion of situations of inclusive conviviality for a given population, in each territory, produces at the same time part of what we seek to achieve, which is social interaction for people who have limitations, building this experience autonomously, different constructions of oneself, of the other and of the surroundings of this relation. However, it also shows a set of important elements for the intervention of the occupational therapist, such as the relationships of power, knowledge, and production of subjectivity of that population; the dynamics of the territory; the singularities of each subject in composition with a group; strategies already lived or to be created to overcome obstacles; the creation of new forms of relationship, etc.

We believe in the conviviality in its potential to work as a catalyst for processes of transformation, changes (FERIGATO, 2007), as a solo of subjectivization (WEINMANN, 2006) or as a tool for the enhancement of occupational life, as a human activity in the act.

According to Foucault (1992), the work as an act, activity, has the functions: productive, symbolic and training or disciplinary. The individual works for the need to create, to invent in advance the world, which would be his faith in the truth, that leads the subject to desire to establish relationships that always have a degree and a force to transform it into daily struggle, in which any impediment becomes

stress, a crisis factor, decreased self-esteem, among others. In this context,

[...] to rescue the autonomy is to cause the desire to be afloat in us, from the strength of the internal struggle. We need to use force to achieve autonomy, establishing a relation of *recapture* [...] (FURTADO; MARCONDES, 2013, p. 654).

In this sense, producing conviviality, a scene in which different people are willing to *live-with*, can become a tool for occupational therapy, a way of putting different elements in relation, discourses, modes of production of life, intermediated by activities and moments of creation, producing changes.

For Ferreira and Oliver (2010), the experiences of daily living allow the individual to move through different social spaces, moving from one's self to the unknown, to the feelings of pleasure and difficulties of collective life, establishing connections, sharing certain values and new ways to live and to express oneself. That is, it allows the reduction of isolation situations and the inclusion in a set.

Conviviality as a tool of occupational therapy allows to mobilize life in diverse circumstances in which it asks for deviant mobility, "[...] a differential becoming that is felt by a warmth in relationships, by a positive affirmation of creativity [...]" (GUATTARI; ROLNIK, 1986, p. 47). After all, the proliferation of differences, defining the infinite ways of being, and the growing force of homogenization, seek to establish the basis of a unique mode of existence (LIMA, 2003). Creating spaces of relation and production of existence in power by becoming are practices lapidated by occupational therapists in living spaces.

Therefore, it is a question of producing processes of experimentation, accepting the challenge of asserting the body-to-become³, in resistance and at the same time denying the normative, adapted, stratified, disciplined, passive body, seeking to put that disciplined body in relation to unpublished experiences, in escape lines and intensity fields (FERRACINI et al., 2014).

According to Eichelberger (2012), mobilizing life involves thinking of tools that, in their constitution, functioning and use, they produce collective action power, a power that is defined by a plan of possible relationships. It is from this perspective that we think the relationship between occupational therapy and conviviality.

A tool is characterized in this therapeutic-occupational context as its power of irruption of

what is blocked, its potentiality of making see and speak what is presented and what is not explicit, said and unspoken.

If everyday life is an important object for occupational therapy, we know that alongside objects with their stable contours there is a *collective plane* of forces that produce them, a moving plane of the reality of things that cannot be abandoned when it is intended to understand an object (ESCÓSSIA; TEDESCO, 2009).

In this sense, articulating occupational therapy intervention with conviviality strategies may provide greater possibilities of not isolating our object from intervention from its historical articulations and its connections with the world. For this, it is necessary to consider its modulations and its permanent movements. Conviviality provides these movements of potentization and depot. It is necessary to follow these processes, to be aware of the breaches that produce possible interventions.

Considering the meeting as spatiotemporal spawning tops, through the unpredictability of the becoming, running through it, and forging new and effective surfaces and perceptions. To take the meeting as an event, in this sense of the transformation of perceptions and sensibilities, and take it to the most extreme consequences, seeking not to settle in a plan of exchange, sending and receiving of sensitive elements or knowing a priori data (LIMA; ARAGON, 2010, p. 140).

The production of moments of an active conviviality also produces a displacement of the occupational therapist, moving from the place hegemonically constructed in protected settings and applied theoretical references. When *living-with*, we are faced with the possibility of weaving existential territories against the serialization of orthodox health, disciplinary education or hegemonic normative policies (PELBART, 2003).

The occupational therapist is invited to immerse in a specific and complex context, immersion as [...] availability, engulfment, diving and, even a drowning. It is a way of perceiving/feeling a certain space/time that is casual or voluntarily produced (BORGES; ETLIN, 2010, p. 94).

Thus, in a posture of affective receptivity, embodied in real situations, we allow to speak "with" and not only to speak "about" or "to" an object (ALVAREZ; PASSOS, 2009).

The conviviality is the result of a relationship that is produced by hand. The raw material of this artisanal relationship is people, human life, and their experiences, which, through living together, become a lived and shareable product. In this sense, we have two aspects present in this tool and are also expensive aspects of occupational therapy: heterogeneity and the production of difference.

If the bet is in the conviviality, the intervention power occurs in the production of heterogeneous convivial spaces. Gender, diagnostic, age, or economic class heterogeneity of the people involved in the process. The meeting between subjects with different limits and potentialities allows situations to be worked that are part of the process of living each one, in the meeting with the other different, from the different possibilities of producing differences.

Occupational therapy has reversed the disciplinary logic and produced other paths to its practices, which have affirmed the right to difference and finding positivity in the most singular life forms and the most adverse situations, based on the occupational therapist's ethical-political commitment (LIMA, 2003).

We are marking here the affirmation of difference as an important aspect of ethical-political commitment when we think of the interface between conviviality and occupational therapy. It is the difference as the motor of a movement so that it can differ (KASTRUP, 2005), affirming intercessory processes as something that makes contact so that each one can go beyond himself and the other (DELEUZE; GUATTARI, 1995). This exercise is not done to nullify the differences, but rather to reduce inequalities and produce affective networks by including them.

In the universe of public policies, there are different equipment that already has a wide experience in making conviviality a central tool, spaces that often already count on the contributions of occupational therapists. Among these tools, we can mention Conviviality and Cooperation Centers, Community Centers, Youth Centers, Cultural Centers, Sports Centers, Community Workshops, Toy Rooms and others.

This equipment is very important. However, we seek to affirm that, as far as occupational therapy intervention is concerned, conviviality as a tool can be in the practice of the occupational therapist in all areas of action, with all populations, regardless of equipment especially aimed at this objective.

The promotion of effective meetings of differences and their potency in dealing with problems inherent in life usually cannot be reproduced potentially in

environments that segregate, even if unintentionally. Thus, it is necessary to invent new spaces, intervening in the city, producing actions in networks that flee to networks of specialties, practicing intersectoral policies and beyond the sectors.

5 Conclusion

The text has some correlations between the concept of conviviality and the interventional practices of occupational therapy, including enabling to validate concepts, paths, and actions in a theoretical reference that are already present in the area's performance in the country.

For this, we start from the premise that conviviality occurs initially from the possible meetings in each context and that the potentization and active experimentation of these meetings can be an objective of the practices in occupational therapy.

However, it is emphasized that, just as we did not seek an ideal pattern of conviviality, it was not stated that a territory or a group would only have a powerful living space if it has access to an occupational therapist. The conviviality can take place in any space and time of which are people with the availability to live. In this diagram, the occupational therapist can act as an aggregator, a potentiator of good meetings to increase the relational possibilities, provoking experiences, situations and establishing new possible materiality.

Like a rhizome, conviviality can stabilize around a parish, a church, a bar, a square. It evolves through stems and underground streams, along river valleys or railway lines (DELEUZE; GUATTARI, 1995). At times, closer to the image of a river in constant movement, and in other times, of a railroad that is not flexible, the spaces of conviviality in occupational therapy can be constituted as one more of these points, since the conviviality guides a universe of new connections, without closing in on itself.

Thus, it is possible to understand conviviality as a tool for occupational therapy from the theoretical constructions and, above all, by several systematic empirical experiences of occupational therapists who have already demonstrated the intrinsic power of conviviality practices for the production of networks, intersectionality, creation of social and affective bonds, the production of new experiences and exchanges of social empowerment movements and affirmation of differences; the cultural production and the intervention in the city (GALLETTI, 2004; LIMA, 2004; LOPES; LEÃO, 2002; FERREIRA; OLIVER, 2010; FERIGATO, 2013).

The statement of the production of conviviality in the difference is also to say "yes" to the social insertion, to the possibility of being related to the other, in resistance to the opinion, the neutrality and the crystallization of these same relationships. Therefore, experimenting, a tool, an agency of multiplicities related.

In this construction, the individual of the experience we bring to the scene would be defined not only by his activity but also by his receptivity (FERRACINI et al., 2014), by his availability, his openness to relate to the other, to the experimentation of the world and himself.

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Author's Contributions

Sabrina Helena Ferigato was responsible for the design and structuring of the text. Carla Regina Silva and Gerusa Ferreira Lourenço were responsible for contributions to the text and review of the text. All authors approved the final version of the text.

Notes

- ¹ For Spinoza, “bodies” are open, highly susceptible and changing relational systems, an infinite group of particles relating to stop and motion, and which they have essentially the power to affect and be affected. Human or inhuman bodies are ways, means, and not a state of thing. In this way, the body is defined by the affections that it can generate, manage, receive and exchange (FABIÃO, 2008).
- ² According to the International Society of Occupational Science, “occupation” refers to all activities that occupy people’s time and give meaning to their lives (INTERNATIONAL..., 2013).
- ³ Body in Spinoza (2008): as individuated and finite beings, we are composed of infinitely small particles, grouped in infinite sets, which, in each relation, characterize us. Extensive compositions are made and discarded always, marked by their movements and homes, slowness and speed.