

Dynamics of hope in the parental dyad whose child has cancer

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How is hope defined?

- Parental hope
- Thought, expectation, wish, religious or spiritual belief involving a positive outlook towards the future (Conway et al., 2017).
- **"multifaceted concept"** (Sisk et al., 2018)
- E.g: the hope of a cure, the hope of giving as much love as possible, and the hope of maintaining a connection with others.

Why parental hope within the couple ?

- The diagnosis of cancer in a child leads to **psychological and social difficulties** for the parents and changes in the functioning of the couple in terms of **emotional closeness, communication, sexual intimacy, conflict and marital support** (Van Shoors et al., 2016).
 - Hope helps parents to :
 - - **think positively**
 - - **prepare for the worst**
 - **live more calmly through the challenges of cancer**
- (Bally et al., 2014; degrave et al., 2008; Granek et al., 2013).

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« It's almost like hope is the sunrise, you know, once you get through the really, really dark part and hope comes in. It's like it overshadows everything else and there are no shadows »

Parent whose child has cancer (Bally and al., 2014)



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How to do this? Method

- **Qualitative study**
- **Step 1:** Interview grid ; individual and couple experiences, couple adjustment and the nature and function of hope.
- **Step 2:** Interview mother and father separately whose child has cancer
- N: 8 days of parents
- Inclusion criteria:
 - For the child:
 - Be between 1 month and 18 years of age
 - Have been diagnosed with cancer at least one month ago. - Be in treatment or within 5 years of completing treatment
 - For the parent:
 - Be French speaking
 - Participation of both partners in the parental dyad
 - Be in a couple with the other parent interviewed
 - Have read the information letter and given written consent to participate

How to do this? Method

- **Step 3** : Transcription of interviews
- **Step 4** : Analyse using the IPA method
Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis
To understand and analyse the processes that underlie the dynamics of hope in the couple.

Preliminary results

- **Transfert of hope**

Each partner has distinct and complementary roles related to their personalities and skills to overcome the difficulties associated with their child's cancer. The use of these resources allows a transfer of hope within the parental dyad

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Despite the prevailing uncertainty, parents need to follow a precise direction, largely supported by the hope of achieving a specific goal with a more or less distant deadline.

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- **Motor**

Finally, hope is a motor in the common struggle of parenting couples whose mission is to protect and improve the quality of life of their child.

Clinical Challenge

To enable health professionals to understand the needs of parents in terms of hope to improve the support of parents and thus their quality of life.

Thank you for your
attention