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Emotional Cartographies of Adolescence. The Specificity of Group Psychotherapy for Teenagers

The teenager's process of social adaptation cannot be easily subsumed under ready-made patterns, thanks to whom numerous crises and breakdowns could be easily drawn on a developmental map of the adolescence period. Both parents and psychotherapists are frequently forced to revise their interpretations of problems experienced by the teenagers they are taking care of. In vain one tries to sketch a kind of universal path of growing up, on which a parent or a psychotherapist should push a child they consider troublesome. There are children more adult than adults and teenagers whose dramatic psychic crises happen to bear a great developmental resources. A psychotherapist must carefully examine their own predictions regarding their work with a group of teenagers. During this workshop we will present the specificity of this work. We will present exemplary group situations and focus on traps waiting for a psychotherapist of adolescents. We will analyse methods of resolving therapeutic impasses. We will also try to delineate the difference between an adolescent and adult patient, which will hopefully become a starting point of a discussion about discrepancies between the patients' chronological age and the actual stage of their psycho-emotional development.