

Chapter

NARCISSISM AND OBJECTALITY: CONTRIBUTIONS, CLINICAL IMPLICATIONS, AND LINKS BETWEEN THE MODELS OF SIDNEY BLATT AND HEINZ KOHUT

Rui C. Campos, PhD, and Isabel Mesquita, PhD*

University of Évora, Portugal

ABSTRACT

In this chapter, we present the theories of Sidney Blatt and Heinz Kohut regarding normal and abnormal psychological development, the clinical implications of those theories, and links between them. We begin by describing Blatt's model. In the second section of the chapter, we present Kohut's model of psychological development and how the failure by the object to meet the needs of the self may lead to psychopathology. In the third section, we discuss the clinical implications of both theories. We then look at the links between the two models. Several aspects of the models are compared, such as how they each view psychopathology. The chapter ends with a discussion of the bipolarity of narcissism versus objectality, as applied to psychopathology.

Keywords: Narcissism, Sidney Blatt, Heinz Kohut, objectality

INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, we present the theories of Sidney Blatt and Heinz Kohut about normal and abnormal psychological development, their similarities and divergences, and their clinical implications. We begin by describing the normal developmental process according to Blatt's concepts of *relatedness* and *self-definition* and we describe two configurations of psychopathology: an anaclitic, or object-focused configuration, and an introjective, autonomy-focused or narcissistic configuration. In the second section of the chapter, we

* Department of Psychology, University of Évora, Apartado 94, Évora 7002-554, Portugal. E-mail: rcampos@uevora.pt.