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POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY 2.0: MEANING TO GROW

The positive-psychology (PP) research aims at understanding the positive, adaptive, fulfilling aspects of human behavior, focusing on strengths and quality of life, rather than an illness. Among the highlighted themes of PP (such as happiness, meaningfulness, and spirituality), Hart and Sasso (2011) mark the engagement in resilience and coping, as a significant theme of the “PP second-generation” (“PP 2.0”). This theme focuses on individuals who are situated in difficulty and limitation, and seeks to characterize the quality of life of people with disabilities (physical, mental or intellectual). The lecture will present the findings of a study concerning the sense of burden and the sense of growth of mothers of adolescents with intellectual disabilities, as it relates to the severity of their children’s retardation. This population is considered to be vulnerable, and these mothers tend to experience a high prevalence of depression, burden and psychological distress. The hypothesis was that among mothers of children with severe mental retardation, the sense of burden will be higher and the sense of growth will be lower. However, no differences in the sense of burden were found between the groups (sever/mild), and the sense of growth among the mothers of adolescents with severe mental retardation was higher. The lecture will afford an extensive presentation of the research findings and insights with regard to the theme of ‘meaning’, providing a bridge between the ‘traditional’ approach, which focuses on the parents’ difficulties and pathologies, and the PP approach that recognizes the strengths and positive ways of coping.

Biography

Osnat Rubin is a senior lecturer, with the specialties including Educational Counseling and Psychology. She is the head of a track of M.A. studies on Counseling and Human Development at the University of Haifa, Israel. She has also been the editor of the peer-reviewed journal KAET (Hebrew). Her fields of research include: counseling and positive-technologies, human development and PP, minorities in education. Rubin founded an organization that develops technologies to assist therapists, and trains counselors to provide online counseling for minorities. Rubin received important grants for her research and publications in these areas.

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