

## Adolescents' learning about caring for themselves: the return to parental teachings

### Aprendizagem dos adolescentes sobre cuidado de si mesmos: o retorno aos ensinamentos parentais

Adriana María Ramírez Barrientos

Universidad de Antioquia. Medellín, Antioquia, Colômbia. ORCID: 0000-0002-7330-6671. adriana.ramirez@udea.edu.co

**RESUMO | INTRODUÇÃO:** Pesquisa realizada com adolescentes em que o cuidado de si mesmo é identificado como uma construção nas relações parentais. **Objetivo:** Analisar o aprendizado de cuidado de si mesmo num grupo de adolescentes e a maneira em que hospedam as orientações parentais em suas vidas cotidianas. **METODOLOGIA:** qualitativo-etnográfico; as técnicas de coleta de dados foram por meio de grupos focais e entrevistas semi-estruturadas. Os participantes eram adolescentes com idades entre 16 e 19 anos. **RESULTADOS:** para os adolescentes o ensinamento pelos pais está enquadrado nas normas e pautas para evitar os enganos na tomada de decisões; considerar e aceitar estes ensinamentos, é caminhar para o próprio conhecimento de si mesmos. **DISCUSSÃO:** As relações parentais estão condicionadas pelo poder e controle que os pais exercem sobre seus filhos através da regulação da norma, sendo um aspecto de fixação e tensão para os adolescentes. Viver a experiência de ser adolescente, de reconhecer o erro, é o que os define como sujeitos e recreia possibilidades para tomar decisões e atuar em frente às circunstâncias cotidianas. **CONSIDERAÇÕES FINAIS:** Os adolescentes aprendem através de suas próprias experiências a cuidar de si mesmos. Os ensinamentos recebidos pelos pais formam seu sistema de valores, o qual é resignificado por meio da conduta que promovem na cada experiência vivida; esta resignificação contribui com novas formas de pensar e atuar, definindo sua identidade e a maneira como assumem sua vida.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** Adolescente. Família. Parentalidad. Relações familiares.

**ABSTRACT | INTRODUCTION:** Research conducted with adolescents where identifies the care of himself same like construction in the parental relations. **OBJECTIVE:** analyze the learning of self care of adolescents in late stage and the way in which narratives of parents are taken into account in the daily life. **METHOD:** qualitative- ethnographic; focus groups and semi-structured interviews were carried out. The participants were adolescents between the ages of 16 and 19. **RESULTS:** For adolescents taught by parents is framed in the rules and guidelines to avoid mistakes in decision making; To consider and accept these teachings is to walk to the self-knowledge of themselves. **DISCUSSION:** Parental relationships are conditioned by the power and control that parents exert on their children through the regulation of the norm, being an aspect of restraint and tension for adolescents. To Live the experience of being a teenager, of recognizing the error, is what defines them as subjects and recreates possibilities to make decisions and act in the face of everyday circumstances. **CONCLUSION:** Teenagers learn through their own experiences to take care of themselves. The teachings received by the parents form their system of values, which is resignified through the conduct that they promote in each lived experience; This resignification brings new ways of thinking and acting, defining its identity and how it assumes its life.

**KEYWORDS:** Adolescent. Family. Parenting; family relationships.

## Introduction

Adolescence as a vital stage of the human cycle is characterized by the search and conformation of an identity, in most cases, part of an external model. This model is chosen by adolescents in agreement with the psychological, affective and social needs they're experimenting. The response that this young people may assume when facing each circumstance, comes from childhood's pre-existing learnings that are transmitted from the family environment. Diaz and Mejía (2017), describe that certain aptitudes are necessary to integrate the human development of an individual, and they are grouped in three categories: a. social abilities: assertive communication and empathy in interpersonal relationships; b. cognitive abilities: those who denote decision making, critical and creative thinking; y c. abilities for the control of emotions: practices that let the adolescent know his feelings and recognize the moments in which he must handle them in an appropriate way.

Authors such as Berger (2016), confer that the development of adolescence starts with puberty, understood as the phase where there's a fast physical growth and sexual maturation that ends childhood and results in a person with the physical and physiological capacity to carry out the human reproduction. In that sense, the hormonal response not only has effect on the body but on the emotions; manifestations of anger or sadness are combined with reactions, and this chain activates behaviors and conducts that in some cases, are dangerous for the health and integrity of the adolescent.

Even though it's true that young people are transformed in men and women initiating with their physical and sexual development, cerebral maturation comes after this first changes. The sexual characteristics that differentiate masculinity from femininity, permit that men and women experience an increase of sexual interest as the body matures and the hormonal levels rise, therefore, the sexual behavior and thoughts of this adolescents are strongly influenced by culture and desire to experiment. In relation to brain development, Güemes, Ceñal and Hidalgo (2017), describe that "it has been observed that the zones of the adolescent brain that look for reward, are developed before the zones related with planning and emotional control" (p.11); which means that experimentation, exploration and dangerous behavior in this phase of the development, are more

of a normative character than a pathological one. They also state that adolescent's brains have great capacity to adapt to new changes, which would explain the real possibilities to modify and adopt new conducts.

In fact, adolescence brings the support of an ideal in which the young person hopes to find the reason of his place in the world to consolidate his life project. If the basis received to build his identity are insufficient, his establishment as an individual will be vague and lacking a structure, and will result in poor response mechanisms to demands and needs that must be faced in each daily event (Berger, 2016).

This process is determining in the family cycle, since family is the social mechanism that provides security and transmits those cultural habits and guidelines for the well-development and conservation of inter-subjective relations (Rojas, Mendez and Álvarez, 2016). In this same line Alzate (2014) describes family as the first and fundamental expression of social nature in men.

The basis taught by parents at home, considers values, norms, social standards, duties and rights as the most appropriate way to carry out raising; the expected outcome is for them to be accepted and productive children for society. One of the most preponderant elements in a father's role, is precisely the caring of children. Something to consider historically is that caring has been defined as a practice that men has built as a product of his experiences and significations, nevertheless, families are diverse and hence diverse children grow, children who are influenced by different contexts that have an impact in their conducts, decisions and relationships (Rojas, Méndez and Álvarez, 2016).

Caring is a natural thing that's related to behaviors, attitudes and the values system of each individual; because of that, the caring of children comes from parents learning from their own experiences and from their parental model; Blanco and Licona (2016) define it as an structure interceded by the culture that determines the patterns of family living and the responsibilities of each one of its members. They consider also, the diverse manifestations that emerge during interaction according to the own characteristics of the individuals that conform it, with the objective to conserve cohesion and family well-being.

In this sense, family becomes the first social agent with whom adolescents live experiences of physical and emotional care. Parents are the ones who derive in children conducts and habits of self-care, therefore this apprentices add elements that with the passing of experiences, they shape and define as attributes of behavior and decision making. In what concerns practice and family interaction, once a system is conformed, -in this case family- the structure and way they relate between each other must be known, and at the same time to observe how it influences the social environment in that system, meaning, how the system (family), looks immersed in the supra system (environment). The result of this intern and extern interrelation of the family system, determines its own dynamic in relation to patterns, learnings and conducts of its members (Castillo, Sibaja, Carpintero and Romero-Acosta, 2015).

The family system from an evolutionary perspective, has been product of big structural transformations given the plurality in its conformation and the roles and functions that have been assumed by both sexes in a diverse way according to the system's internal needs. For this reason, beyond the typology that defines it, previous transactions, composition and its dynamics, it constitutes the cultural capital inherited by children and afterwards the way in which they replicate it in their interactions with other individuals (Villalba, 2015; Díaz-Alzate and Mejía-Zapata, 2018).

Some national and international studies, have analyzed adolescent's behavior in terms of dangerous conducts, which seem to be interpreted as a rupture in self-care. These include: beginning of sexual relations at early age, adolescent motherhood, consumption of psychoactive drugs, suicide and juvenile violence, among others. Situations that alter not just daily life, life projects and adolescent's health, but the parental relation in affective and communicative terms, creating terrible consequences for the filial bond (Cogollo & Gómez-Bustamante, 2013; Campo, Silva, Meneses, Castillo, Navarrete, 2004; Plasín and Goicochea, 2012).

In this same line, the majority of studies are oriented towards knowledge, identification, and comprehension of causes and effects of adolescent behavior in direction to alteration and physical affliction (Contini, Coronel, Lacunza, Mejail &

Caballero, 2014). Other authors like Hernández, (2018) describe subjects of equal transcendence and mention situations that go beyond the private familiar context, that have an influence in the caring of young people and a direct relation with other socializing agents such as: mechanisms of social and genre exclusion, differences between regulation and accomplishment of the legislation that protects them and reaffirms them as citizens of right, the boundless social consumption, models of production and trends in the global market, education and work opportunities, aspects that have transformed the concept of caring for the newer generations, and therefore, the mechanisms of response to their individual and familiar necessities.

Regarding to the concept of caring itself, it covers the human being beyond of a condition of risk for health. Self-care appears as an offer of respect towards oneself and auto-comprehension, expressed in the attitude that the individual must adopt to face life and the world (Hallal, 1998). From Foucault's perspective (Foucault, 2001), its affirmed that is the way in which each individual assumes itself in the world, how he relates to others and with its surroundings through actions and conducts that give him new learnings and meanings. He takes into consideration the origins and ways in which every person recreates strategies based in experiences and learnings that modify their behavior and in turn, define their identity.

The purpose of this study was based in the following questions: How is the relation between adolescents and parents and the way it influences their behavior and decision making? What do adolescents consider they have learned from parents for their own lives? And, how do adolescents define the diverse ways they have learnt to take care of themselves?

In second place, it's centered in the construction of comprehensive knowledge of how teenagers interpret and signify the caring of themselves in face of lived experiences, the lecture they do of obtained learnings from their parents and the way in which those tools are meaningful in their experiences. Finally, this investigation pretends to build a bibliographical reference to orientate new investigative proposals in the social area, to nourish other perspectives related to adolescents and the caring of themselves.

## Methodology

This qualitative study with an ethnographic focus, is oriented towards the comprehension of experiences lived by teenagers and learnings for their self-care, according to the lecture of their parents lessons. In this sense, spatiality, corporeality, temporality and rationality as basic elements, permit the investigator to know in a detailed and rigorous way what adolescents do -self-care practices- and what that means in their daily life -perspective and learnings- (Restrepo, 2016).

Investigative work was oriented towards teenage population, for which reason an Educative Institution was chosen, given the concrete possibility to obtain a greater participation by the population of interest. Once the approbation was obtained for the fieldwork by the Committee of Ethics of the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Antioquia- (September 2015, Medellín), the Principal of a Public School of basic high school located in Medellín (Antioquia), was contacted and gave the authorization to realize the investigative process.

The criteria for selection was: teenagers between the ages of 16-19, enrolled in the school, that were in the last grade of formation (11th grade). Additionally they had to live with at least one of their parents and voluntarily wished to participate in the study. To achieve participation an encounter took place with two groups of students who were explained in detail the approval of free participation, plus parents' consent for minors of 18 years. Once the number of minors who accepted to participate was known, telephonic contact was made with the father or mother to explain the objective of the investigation in which their children will be participants, and through them, a consent format was delivered to be signed. Doubts were cleared out and it was explained to parents and teens that the information obtained would be used for academic purposes only, rigorously protected, to maintain the privacy and their anonymity. Additionally that the information would not be used with evaluative purposes or behavioral informs for the parents or school.

This investigations considers ethical lineaments following the Ethical regulations in investigation with human beings in Colombia, which is regulated by the Resolution 008430 of the Ministry of Health- 1993.

All international directives are invoked to carry out investigations with human beings.

In what concerns the techniques used to access the voice of participants, there were made:

**Focus groups:** Three encounters were effectuated with the focus groups, conformed by a number between 4 and 5 participants. During the first encounter, participants made identification cards with pseudonyms, which permitted to organize the transcription of data and later identify testimonies expressed by participants. In each encounter, different didactics were effectuated (workshops, discussions and surveys), consequently, for every moment, with video and audio support, valuable information related to the topic was obtained about experiences narrated by participants.

On completion the focus groups, all information was transcribed, codes in letters and numbers were used to identify each participant and in this way, the first protocol was built, obtained thanks to this recollection tool. It should be noted that since the data analysis started, with detailed reading of the transcribed protocol, there were identified meaningful units that led to the formation of codes that afterwards, were fed with other similar data; once finished this first stage, the process of interviews started.

**Semi-structured interviews:** For the realization of this second technical recollection, 3 adolescents participated (2 boys and 1 girl) because at the moment they were done, it also was the closure of the academic year, and those were the ones who agreed to be interviewed. Each participant was interviewed at a library external to school and in different dates, so as to ensure the protection of their identities: recordings of interviews were transcribed by the investigator, information with which was built the second protocol, and once it was analyzed, work continued on the construction of codes identified previously; it was necessary to have a second moment of interviews to achieve the saturation of data.

With the construction of protocols, this information was taken to the Software Atlas Ti-v7 to be analyzed, and it permitted the categorization of obtained patterns, and in this sense, to search the different thematic meanings. This work led to codes that gave way to the final structure of three meaningful

dimensions: (i) the citizen in the paternal relationship, (ii) self-care and (iii) parental norms.

For a better comprehension of results, adolescent's testimonies are named and identified with letter "A", that means the initial letter to the word adolescent, followed by another letter of the alphabet in minuscule to determine the order of the participant, and lastly, the age in years: example: A.b-18 years.

## Results and Discussion

Family is a social system conformed by human beings to attend needs, such as affective, biological and psychological ones; it structures a network of relations between members and determines its function dynamics. According to the vital cycle in which family is found, the relational network could be modified as many times as needed, this is what probably occurs in families with adolescent children. Aspects such as socialization, couple relationships, alcohol consumption and psychoactive substances, just like sexuality, are developed based on what the teenager obtains from its family, whether he tends to imitate what he learns or he decides to go against family habits.

To understand family relationships between parents and adolescents, parts from the premise suggested by Bertalanffy (1992), who considers that every living organism is a system, conformed by parts and processes that interact between each other, in determined contexts. To comprehend the systematic reading of family, implies to comprehend the relation amongst the behavior of its individuals and their responses, focalizing in interactions, roles, functioning forms and organization.

In this regard, adolescent's family system, is in permanent pursuit of agreements and norm reestablishment, since it's in this moment of the family vital cycle in which usually there's more presence of family conflicts, violent situations among parents and children and dangerous conducts. This augments the possibility of greater familiar dissociation (Muñoz and Graña, 2001; Güemes, et al., 2017).

## Caring in the parental relationship

Daily lived situations by adolescents, take diverse interpretations from a social, communicational, behavioral and relational point of view. Adolescents consider that it's a stage of difficulties and disagreements with parents, and in other occasions, of support and caring. On that matter, one of the adolescents said:

*[...] mom and dad, are a reference for us, they're in charge of taking care of us; they're the core [...]*  
(A.a-17 years)

For adolescents, the caring received from parents is motivated by the amount of changes and new situations they find themselves faced to, and in the ones there can be difficulties in decision making. This is a reason why some parents assume the role of caregivers, searching for dialogue spaces and giving advices.

*[...]My dad once told me a very beautiful quote: -my grandfather was someone, my dad was someone better than my grandfather, I tried to be someone better than my dad and you have to be someone better than me [...]*  
(A.b-18 years).

Through communication, individuals link in a social and cultural consciousness, as a basis for their identity in the environment they interact with (Medina, Álvarez and Hernández, 2017). For this reason, the way in which people talk, write, read and listen, makes part of a whole conventional system that connects them socially and, under this standards, creates realities and relations between ones and others. In words of Watzlawick (1985) it's affirmed that "every conduct in a situation of interaction, has a message value, in other words, it's communication, it's deducted that as much as you try, you can't stop communicating" (p.50).

For Medina, et al., (2017) family communication reflects patterns of interaction amongst its members, the way in which they exchange informative or normative messages, and at the same time, the cohesion and connection between individuals. Its prevailing that exists a mutual comprehension in the family group, centered in correcting achievement of roles, and the realization of tasks by each member; this means that emitted communication must be

clear, direct and enough, and that receptors are in disposition to avoid distortions. Communication is an indispensable element to identify and resolve family problems.

In moments of interaction, some of the teens consider that their parents are representative and receive their unconditional support. Even though both figures might not always be present (mother and father) the one that is, assumes responsibility to accompany, thereby, to provide care.

*[...] for me my mom is very important, because my dad died when I was 4 years old, so I've always been with my mom, only my mom has been present [...]* (A.c-18 years).

This way, the affective bond is dominant in the maintenance of parental relations as a measure of protection and security, and even though it might be thought that social and culturally it's more necessary in the childhood phase, as children grow and become self-sufficient, they believe they still need support and affection from their parents.

*[...] not for the fact of being this age, already old, means that I don't need my parents, otherwise, they still are very important for me and I know that they do what they do because they love me and take care of me [...]* (A.a-17 years).

*[...] it's just that when you take care of something or someone, it's not just because you have to, but because you feel the inner need to take care of the other because you care for what happens to them [...]* (A.d-18 years).

On that subject, Henao (2012) considers that each behavior of a member of the family, is strengthened by the others, in such way that caring for the other, represents a genuine and innocuous way of interest as a representation of affection and filial love.

*[...] my relationship with my dad is very good, it has been a relation of trust, because he knows who I am; he trusts in what I do and decide for my life, even though sometimes I'm wrong, he gives me advice and always wants the best for me [...]* (A.a-17 years).

However, in certain situations, relationships with parents tend to be very tense; this is represented when they don't believe in the words or actions of adolescents, and fundament them in ideas or facts

that make them doubt of their capacity of decision making.

*[...] there's moments when the relationship with my mom is very tense, there's a problem and I get offended because she's against me or feels something that makes her not trust me [...]* (A.d-18 years).

In this line, interaction between parents and children is conditioned by the communicational sequence that exists among them. Therefore, experiences the parents consider as their children mistakes, complicate the comprehension of the "cause-effect" of the message communicated in that conduct, given that the cause will always be different for the parent and son, just like the effect; which contrasts with the abilities that both have to transmit consistent and clear messages in resolute and effective terms. Having positive communication abilities, facilitates the spontaneous expression of positive and negative feelings that might appear as a result of interaction (Medina, et al.; 2017; Gracia & Musitu, 2000).

It could be deduced that conducts and routines that adolescents live inside their families, orient their daily practices and have as a basis the relationship with each other. This relationship could be defined as a technique that demands exercise, learning "the art of living" - which comes from daily reading actions and their connections with its environment. This practices that adolescents make, look for establishing a way of being, thinking and acting according to their criteria, and they define this as their truth. In Foucault's (1990) words, this references technologies, understood as the origins of practical reason, in which the technologies of the self emerge, understood as the base that:

*permits individuals make by their own or with the help of others, certain number of operations on their body and soul, thoughts, conduct, or any way of being, obtaining a self-transformation with the objective of reaching certain state of happiness (p.48).*

This diversity of practices, is given by a series of techniques that man use to understand themselves and in this way, determine their moments of truth, reason and logic of their actions.

In this sense, relationships and family norms built a series of representations and ways to solve daily problems that come up in interaction. The moment

when crisis takes place and the rules and allegations between parents and children come under tension, is when adolescent and parental postures must consider the capacities of the system to readjust the instability point. It implies, to consider freedoms of opinion and thoughts on both sides, to allow the significant expression of each lived experience as a mechanism of trust and validation of the other. Appealing for agreement instead of imposition, for an adolescent, is to stop being a simple observer and order fulfiller, is to be recognized as an active participant of the world, in a clear sense of caring and accompaniment from parents in this vital life process. In the same line, the validation that adolescents make of their parents experience as true facts and teachings, will be a response of recognition of affection and the parental relationship.

Given the above, adolescents build their way of being, look and feel in relation with others. They become readers of the other, of parents, in consequence during interaction, both of them analyze each other as authors and readers in permanent elaboration.

Although adolescents recognize family as the first social space for learning to take care of themselves, they consider that the stage in which they're in, parents look to maintain of certain way the control of their conducts. This culture that comes from childhood, seems to acquire a second moment to young people at this stage: they add questionings, opinions and parental lineaments, for this reason, they stop being "forced" learnings to edify new ways and ideas of self-care.

Self-care implies identifying what are transgressions and what is freedom; what reaffirms life, and what condemns society. Thus, is possible to affirm that the experience of being mistaken might generate reflections and learnings that adolescents can resignify around self-care, because only at this point, it'll be possible to affirm life as a process of subjectivity of lived experiences. It's there where what really potencies him or demotes him as an individual is plausible (Foucault, 1978; 1983).

Experiences are the only way adolescents can get close to learning about self-care. The experience of carelessness, comes up as the possibility to create a greater conscience of the body, the emotions, meanings and learnings of self-care (Foucault, 1978; 1983; 1990; 1994).

## Self-care

As it has been explained, taking care of oneself is a permanent labor that demands the individual to connect all its resources -physical, ethical and emotional ones- to maintain in balance the thinking, feeling and acting. Nevertheless, to teenagers, this matter goes beyond the control and balance they can have over their bodies and thoughts in certain circumstances. The necessity to experiment being mistaken, is the way some achieve a conscious and meaningful learning of themselves.

*[...] to take care of yourself, you have to know yourself, if you don't know yourself, then what are you going to take care of? [...] (A.b-18 years).*

Naming the term "oneself" in relation with self-knowledge, implies knowing, in first place, strengths, elements of support to do things right. Knowledge in its basic expression, could be considered as an elemental need that surrounds human existence. Through knowledge is possible to discover the reason and meaning of "something". The manifestation of hidden parts of the world we live in. Driven to the individual plane, self-care is undoubtedly the consciousness of a number of rules, conducts or principles that are truth to who assumes them and prescribes their way of being and acting as an individual (Foucault, 1990).

Adolescents consider that taking care of themselves is defined as having well-being, that is, the accomplished state when you think clearly what you are going to do and then it's carried out. That "knowing to think", that leads to reflection about things they think are convenient for their lives.

*[...] for me strengths consist in knowing how to take care of myself and in what stuff I have to invest my time and capacities [...] (A.e-18 years).*

Consequently, it could be thought that strengths come up from a process of learning that each adolescent lives as an experience of their self-care. When he's able to find the mistake and generate a different thought towards it, he becomes a strategic actor, who disposes of its own capacities and values to assume his self-control.

For this reason, decisions adolescents make regarding to self-care consider two fundamental aspects: circumstances or experiences lived and the mise en scene of those basis learnt at home and other socialization spaces. In the end, what happens is that they are the ones who drive their decisions and actions to achieve or not their well-being.

Foucault (2001), quoting platonic philosophy mentions that the "self" is the knowledge of what's far beyond the capacities, the soul and the passions; it's in certain way, a methodological matter, that leads the individual to understand that is him who's in charge of himself as an object; he is at the same time, subject and object. In this same line, this duality aims to knowing oneself, to discover the differences of the being in a reflexive way. It's a task that in consideration, points the subject to take care of the soul (psykhe) with the purpose of being the best possible for self-knowledge in a fulfillful way.

This relation with the self, implies disposing of all the own resources and articulate them for self-care, -one of the great rules of conduct constituted in the Greco-Roman world- therefore, for Foucault, (2001) this techniques are found in all cultures under different forms and manifestations; described in an adolescent's words:

*[...] caring is bounded to respect, I think that you apply self-care when you know yourself very well and take care of something or someone, when you feel great respect, when you understand the difference between good and bad [...] (A.d-18 years).*

In the learnings given by experience, young people also highlight the importance of weaknesses, not just as a negative thing, but as an opportunity to correct themselves and get ready for a change of behavior and thought. A weakness could be understood as the moment when well-being is lost.

*[...] I think that a weakness is when even though you know something isn't convenient you do it and there's when you are wrong and mess it all up [...] (A.f-16 years).*

Fernández (2018), mentions that in actual modernity, mentioning self-care or going back to beginning of the self, has turned to the installation of certain resistance mechanisms that in part define the subjectivation of the individual; this subjectivity is bounded to the

permanent construction of the identity, the adoption of beliefs that determine each person's own actions, and in this way, the interaction with others as a principle of subjective equivalence. Seen this way, each human being is invited to face its own problems, to examine itself in his thoughts and daily actions. Is for this, that adolescents consider decisions are important in their lives, and when they're the right ones, in other words, when they think to decide, they can foresee the consequences and assume them with responsibility, regardless of the reason or opinion their parents have about it; in this way, it would be a positive practice of self-care.

*[...] caring is like a sensation of being responsible, of knowing what you do or don't do to feel you're doing things right [...] (A.g-17 years).*

All this process of caring comes accompanied by learnings obtained by experiences lived in school, at home, with a group of friends and of their own mistakes. They refer that as they have been taken care by others, they can also take care of important people for them, so caring transcends their lives and others. In this sense, what's transmitted by parents and other significant people, constitutes a system of values and way of thinking: those are elements that remain rooted and outstand before the reflexive process of this situations considered as mistakes.

That process that leads them to have control over themselves or possession of themselves, is referred by Foucault (1990), as the "government of self", the power the subject has over himself to arrange his thoughts and practices to take care of himself. With this concept, self-care could be outlined from an ethical and moral foundation.

This relationship between government of self and ethical foundation exposed by adolescents as principles or moral values, represent to them the basis and beliefs with which each of them counts, according to their lived experiences. Is for this that they admit that principles grow with the person as they live occurrences. As Deleuze (2015), expresses "the government of the self it's separated both from the diagram of power and the code of knowledge... double disengage... the relation with oneself, acquires independency" (p.98).



The profound description of this ethical individual, is defined by Foucault in three moments: moment of relation with the truth, that constitutes us as subjects of knowledge; moment of relation with power, that makes us establish an own line for decision making as subjects that interact with others, and an ethical moment, by which we instituted ourselves as moral agents (Foucault, 1984).

In short, revealing adolescents daily life, their thoughts, feelings and visions of the world as subjects, involves the comprehension of the family influence, socially and culturally that they have assumed, not only from the lived experience, but what involves the action itself of building and deconstructing learning in each moment lived.

It's the recognition of the particular ways they find to adjudicate sense to their act, the translation that is made of them through the body, social and familiar environments, and the representation they have of self-care around those experiences. To understand at this point that, self-care as reflexive basis of this investigation, indicates orienting an integral look that captures in this adolescents narratives, their strategies of self-care and the way in which other participate in this construction of subjectivities as a foundation of their quotidian realities.

### Parental norms

Norms or regulatory measures for coexistence, according to Barrientos (2018) make part of parental strategies that look for appropriate behavioral responses in their children, therefore, they are adopted and respected by the children. In face of some circumstances, they appear as behaviors regulatory mechanisms that parents consider "inadequate", and this way, they get connected with the action of caring. They are defined by adolescents as:

*[...] directives that indicate what must be done (A.d-18 years); "they are those guidelines that orientate good actions [...]" (A.e-17 years).*

Adolescents consider those are not the same norms as when they were kids, apparently they change because the situations they live today are completely different.

*[...] norms change, apparently because we also change, but still, we have to obey them [...]" (A.h- 17 years).*

Is for this that they are seen by their parents as people with a bigger level of independence, criteria to take care of themselves and make choices. However, they understand that this precautions are necessary to maintain well-being.

This norms they consider correct, generally can be negotiated or flexible, and are seen in a positive way by teenagers, because they make clear the intention of being a standard for care, but at the same time, lets them have freedom to act.

*[...] when you act right and take norms in count, parents trust in you and what you do [...]" (A.g- 17 years)*

*[...] when I go out and have too many drinks, my parents warn me not to get used to it [...]" (A.b-18 años).*

In this way, adolescents consider parents as supports that help them understand the reason of rules: more like a guide and not something imposed.

*[...] my mom is more of a leader than a boss that's only in charge; more than inhibit me with rules, she tries to understand what's best for me"; "I know decisions my mom makes, don't try to make me a saint or not have social life, but they look for my well-being [...]" (A.b- 18 years).*

Nevertheless, the objective of norms is not always to be understood by adolescents; in some circumstances they can be imposed, inflexible or on the contrary, be so flexible they have no limits, which could benefit determined dangerous conducts in adolescents; both are perceived by them as inappropriate. Rules perceived as too flexible might occur for a lack of clarity and unfulfillment of the same:

*[...] parents can't be very relaxed, like showing their children they don't care about what happens to them. There has to be a balance, between I give you your freedom but at the same time I demand from you, and this way I take care of you. [...]" (A.a-17 years).*

Under this perspective, norms are measured by the amount of power and knowledge parents have over children. Power plays an important part in all relationships, it's a strategy or ability to influence or control others, as a possibility to shape, limit, normalize and prohibit conducts that are considered as wrong and are incorrect and blamable social and culturally (Fernández, 2018).

The objective of power is to domain under behavior and memorization patterns of speeches that in the end conduct social practices of subjects. It covers all kind of relationships, it circulates from one context to another and modifies itself through historical processes that happen in each society and relational system.

This way it'll be possible to understand how families regulate power in accordance with their own history and occurrences, and it mutates with each stage of the vital cycle depending on the necessary adjustments to maintain family order. The other case would be when the contrary happens, inflexible and rigid norms are appreciated by adolescents as those that are demanding and imposed by parents who don't accept any type of dialogue.

*[...] it's just that if things are imposed, you don't take care of yourself, you don't act under an imposition, but under something you think and analyze; that's not taking care of someone (A.a-17 years).*

Those rules are shielded in the intention of protecting them from "bad things" that can happen in the streets, and the fact that suppressing them this way usually makes them take the wrong choices, it's overlooked.

*[...] When adolescents whose parents are very protective with go out, they want to do everything they haven't been able to do in a long time, so as long as they're more inhibited, the more they are going to do things they shouldn't [...] (A.g- 18 years).*

They also consider:

*[...] if parents don't let a son go out and are totally inflexible with him, he's gonna get tired of that and become rebel, and that rebelliousness can lead him to addictions and bad behaviors [...] (A.a-17 years).*

In face of this inflexible dynamic, the adolescent starts a journey into independence, and tries to get away from parental domination, because he is looking to "get out" from the family nest to begin a pursuit of the exterior world. Family, simultaneously, faces a period of separation from the children, which for some parents, usually is a difficult process to accept and understand. Existing bonds amongst both will determine the progress or stalemate of family interaction.

In this sense, Sánchez, Londoño, Lozano y Chavarria (2015) describe in their investigative work that family structure is defined by the interaction of subjects, which readjusts before new situations happen in each stage of their vital cycle.

For this reason, in tense and divergent situations, parents look to maintain control and balance the relationship with their children: therefore, agreements, fixings and transactions become the keystone to preserve security and stability in parental relationships. On the other hand to control patterns, Blanco and Licona (2016) confer that a paternal pattern that promotes and accompanies their children in decision making, collaborates in the construction of that decision making and accepts them, promulgates successful interactions that create strong parental bonds.

It's also affirmed that in this stage is crucial for parents to reach an agreement in what concerns activities, times, roles and responsibilities with their children, besides strengthen communication channels between the same couple, given that this is perceived by children a protector factor (Ortega, Plancarte, Garrido, Reyes and Torres, 2018). However, society has thought that parents are the ones capable to structure the family environment of children; responsible to create adequate trust relations and affective bonds that answer unbalanced situations that come up in family interaction.

This way, parental exercise is centered in adolescent's behavior as a mechanism to justify actions of control, given that adolescents confirm their conducts in the possibility of living the experience as a natural learning process, which results in being more significant than the complying of parental rules.

In an ideal dimension, as teenagers express, parental relationships should be those who consider freedom as a reflexive practice, as the opportunity to act freely without being judged.

This way is how individuals should take care of themselves so their thoughts and actions are in permanent consonance with their experiences. It's a path that the individual travels, not alone, but in solidarity with its own existence. Therefore, the action of taking care of others -like in the parents' case- it's not by itself a possibility to establish adequate standards for the caring of adolescents, it's exactly the fact of understanding that changes overcome with or without their support, that they'll be undeniably exposed to danger, but with a parental relationship of trust, disposed for permanent dialogue, it will be a support mechanism for the adolescent to overcome in a more appropriate way his learnings (Rodríguez, Echeverría, Alamilla and Trujillo, 2018; Romero and Acosta, 2018).

This might be the adolescent denomination of an ideal parental relationship: one in which they can express their feelings, act without fear of mistake or parental reprobation. A relationship were what's most important is not pointing, but comprehension; benevolence for an individual that can learn from his own mistakes and searches for transformation, reconstruction and tracing new paths that guide him to take care of himself.

## Conclusions

Adolescent learn through their own experiences to take care of themselves. Learnings received by parents make part of their values system that is tested with every experience in which they have to make a decision for their self-care. As long as conduct is aligned to the norm and system of values, relationships with parents are calm and for that matter of trust.

Nevertheless, adolescents see themselves faced to live situations that drive them to act in different ways to established; it's there where this deviation of the agreed and regulated by parents is conceived by the majority of them as mistaken, meaning a foul to self-care. This danger situation, will make the normative dynamic a way to learn from mistakes.

Whilst for adolescents trust shown by parents is the fundamental element for parental relationships, negotiation of rules and permanent communication add up to this filial practices; still, they don't stop recognizing that their close contexts and actual social circumstances tend to facilitate dangerous conducts and determine a constant "struggle" to stay in the beginning of the correct action, complying norms and respect for themselves and others.

Limitations of the present study are given because of the characteristics of the sample, because it could not be representative of scholar environments different from the urban area, where is possible that the population might have other sociocultural characteristics, and likewise, that it can give a greater variability to results. In the same way, the study didn't took into account the inclusion of parents, which could be considered for further investigations.

## Conflict of Interests

Declare not having any type of conflict of interests, neither any political relation, personal or financial that have influenced in the results of this investigation.

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