



Call for Paper

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“Education for Wellbeing”

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Neoliberal logic, defined by the standardization of practices, the constant assessment of performances, and the maximization of profits, has turned the workplaces of social and health educators into contexts in which the workers may feel constantly exposed to judgement or the assessment of their capacities as a means of exchange for economic compensation, having already exhausted all other expectations of value, such as human or social recognition. The post-pandemic historical moment is characterized by widespread conflicts (wars, xenophobia, deviance, delinquency, etc.) that led many young and not-so-young people to see the foundations of their identity as persons crumbled: for these reasons, many people have been forced to reconstruct it, day by day, giving new shape to those intentions that the actual socio-economic and cultural deprivation undermines. Fragility has thus become an indelible and widespread mark of our humanity, requiring, when it becomes unbearable, the help and support of professionals capable of offering an accompaniment that could prevent the most vulnerable from slipping into the meaninglessness of behaviour and choices. The anxiety that sometimes turns into rage and violence among adolescents, the recurrence of femicide, the lack of responsibility in the exercise of parental and caring duties, the rapid spread of drug addiction, mental distress, loneliness, and existential suffering are just some of the inhumanities that characterise the current contexts as expressions of a "society of discomfort" (Ehrenberg, 2010).

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At the same time, in our focus on planning, managing, and implementing ways to accompany fragility, we lost sight of the fact that professionals of care are exposed daily to pervasive suffering that undermines their personal and existential equilibrium. The well-being of professionals of care has only recently become the subject of attention in the psychological, sociological, and educational literature. Recent studies and reflections have been able to coin terms such as burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, but also emotional elevation, and compassion satisfaction (Stamm, 2013; Figley, 2013; Maslach, Schaufeli, Leiter, 2001). For these reasons, to educate and to educate ourselves how to live a life of wellbeing, and work, while maintaining this wellbeing, this type of education becomes necessary practice that should be included in the pedagogical reflections and actions. With this aim in mind, the discussion between different disciplinary fields would greatly benefit from a more open pedagogy (a practical-poetic science in dialogue with philosophy, medicine, psychology, sociology, law, biology) as the core of epistemological reflection that has to be taken up and strengthened in order to implement a new thought about the paradigm of health and promotion of well-being that care workers refer daily in their work (Orefice, 2020). Taking up Gadamer's question, we could ask: "Where is health hidden?" (Gadamer, 1994). This is a question that is still very relevant today, when the concept of "health" has come to be understood by the public mainly in terms of physical condition, the absence of disease, and less and less in terms of the ability to transmit the assumptions of a healthy education and well-being. Is it enough to look at 'health' from a physical point of view, without reflecting on the state of well-being? As we find in everyday life, a physically healthy person is not always healthy from a psychological, existential, relational point of view, but rather, as confirmed by the many stories of discomfort and hidden suffering, a state of well-being refers to the ability and awareness of knowing how to recognise and experience one's own emotions, of knowing how to cultivate positive emotions and professional satisfaction, of striving to build a personal, relational, family balance, harmony with oneself and with others, combined with the ability to activate meaningful dynamics in relation to one's own life. As the field of arts-based research stressed (Howley, Gauferberg, King, 2020; Brown, Sawyer,



Norris, 2016; Lang, 2013), the practices of cultural research and fruition, care interventions with cultural, artistic and social implants, are productive for health and well-being precisely because they are able to refer to the person's state of balance at a social and relational level, to activate his or her ability to know how to cultivate positive relationships and engagement in the community, to care for oneself and others, drawing on a set of experiences of connection between the body and the dimensions of one's interiority.

Feeling well while helping requires several preconditions that are as much related to the practitioner as to the context in which he or she works.

- The organisational climate can become a place in which psychological security is lacking (Edmondson, 1999), where the perception of being able to express one's own essence and creativity and to continue learning from the experiences and stimuli of the environment as well as from the scientific literature is gradually challenged by neoliberal and profit-maximising logics (Ashforth, Rogers, 2016). The constant control of resources in order to reduce costs, the constant references to competition in a system with strong meritocratic pressures (Lewig, Dollard, 2003), have dismantled and challenged the solidaristic intentions and the creativity of actions that define the essence of the educational helping professions. However, from a pedagogical point of view, we now know that the psychological and identity security of the worker can be guaranteed through actions that also concern coordinators and managers and not only individuals, through the implementation of training and accompanying projects and interventions to promote well-being at work and the ability to personally express one's competences (Bobbo, Ius, 2022).
- The educational relationship itself has become an object of standardisation, transformed into an object measurable in terms of hours of commitment, degree of proximity, number of operators, and practices admitted according to the available costs. It has also been eroded by the lack of human resources, accompanied by the increase in requests for help



from marginalised populations, once apparently able to face the challenges of life without any fragility, now made vulnerable by contextual historical events. The cultural, aesthetic approach, which avoids any kind of standardising logic, offers opportunities for creative freedom that can be as helpful to the fragile as to the practitioner (Bruzzone, Zannini, 2021).

- The increasing complexity of situations of fragility that every educator must face, often without any training or pedagogical supervision to support his or her actions, increasingly challenges the ability of operators to express emotional work that does not expose them to the development of harmful vicarious disorders (Hochschild, 2022). Unspoken emotions, unrehearsed emotions that one is forced to express, can become the basis of an emotional dissonance that is able to damage people's ethical and psychological integrity (Marone, Musaio, Pesare, 2023). The mediation, interpretation, understanding and processing of complex emotions can offer a way to rediscover oneself and one's intentionality (Bobbo, Rigoni, 2022).

To sum up, in today's contexts, training operators to a real well-being cannot and should no longer be conceived exclusively as training them to protect themselves, to keep the "right" distance, to find a hiding place where nothing can disturb them. Pedagogy is a reflection pervaded with promotion, growth and hope, and as such it must be able to offer operators opportunities to find in themselves and in communities of colleagues such human and relational resources as to enable them to regain their own path of human growth: a kind of empowerment. As they hand this power, or rather ability, down, to each individual operator and to work communities within organisations, those abilities need to face up to the growing complexity of contexts, utilizing creativity, farsightedness, divergent thinking, and a critical approach.

The call aims to collect contributions on the outlined topic, which may fall into one of the following categories:

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- theoretical contributions;
- qualitative or quantitative research, experimental or observational;
- educational or clinical experiences of a practical procedural nature;
- narrations coming from practices or reflections made by professionals, concerning the topics underlined by this call.

Beyond the theoretical contributions and empirical studies, this call also aims to collect practical experiences of an international nature, which allow us to reflect on the multiple meanings that support and nourish the helping relationship, in order to offer practitioners opportunities to rediscover the meaning of doing as a career. Moreover, for the first time, the journal will accept as a part of a specific section, ~~also~~ narration of practices or reflection coming from operators. The reading of these narrations may help professionals to develop a greater pedagogical awareness, in order to implement 'educational' interventions that are appropriate both to the needs of individual patients and to their own personal wellbeing. An increasingly recurrent narrative in services is conditioned by 'administrative', objectifying, and neutral issues, bound by respect for procedures and processes, but scarcely reflective of the hard work and potential of caring, which should instead be valorised as an essential dimension of the helping professions.

The following deadlines are suggested to interested authors:

- Submission of an abstract (max. 1000 characters including spaces) by 15 June 2024
- Submission of the paper (subject to acceptance of the abstract) no later than 15 September 2024

Editors will accept contributions abiding by the following characteristics:

- Scientific article: should be not less than 30.000 and not more than 45.000 characters, including all references and footnotes. Authors should prepare an abstract of max 2000 characters both in Italian and in English. In both languages, Authors should select and insert five keywords too.



- Educational experiences or projects: should be no longer than 35.000 characters including all references and footnotes.
- Narration of practices or reflections: text should be no longer than 10.000 characters.

To redact your contribution before the submission, please use a word file. The test font employed must be Times New Roman 12, interline 1.5. JHCEP adheres to APA style for references. To enable the blind peer review, authors of scientific articles must remove any reference to oneself or one's affiliations in the text of the article, in the footnotes and in the final bibliography. Authors should send two different files containing:

- In the first: title of the contribution, name, and affiliation of all the authors, first author's contacts (email is preferred); a note indicating every author's role in the different parts of the contribution would be appreciated. This file must be named: **HCEP-name of the first author.docx**
- In the second: the title and the text of the article. This file must be named: **HCEP-first tree word of the title of the article.docx**.

Abstracts and papers should be sent to the official address of the journal: hcep.fisppa@unipd.it