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A psychoanalytic study on the repetition and persistence of women in toxic heterosexual relationships.

A psychoanalytic study on the repetition and persistence of young and adult women in toxic heterosexual relationships

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Summary

This study seeks to shed light on the relational dynamics of toxic romantic relationships, analyzing the repetition and persistence of women in this context, understanding them not as a conscious choice, but as the manifestation of complex psychic processes. The study addresses the mechanics of how the subject can find themselves trapped in destructive cycles, experiencing the return of unprocessed experiences that manifest in relationships. The research, with a qualitative approach, uses bibliographic review as a methodology to deepen the understanding of the topic. Grounded in psychoanalysis, it explores concepts such as Freud's *Repetition Compulsion* and Lacan's theory of *Lack* in the constitution of the subject. The analysis seeks to explore how the idealization of the love object and the search for repairing affective experiences from childhood are articulated with sociocultural constructions that teach love as sacrifice and tolerance. The results attest that the repetitive and perennial dynamic is the result of a tangle of unconscious mechanisms, ingrained beliefs, and internalized social norms. In short, by investigating the psychic roots and patterns of dysfunctional behaviors, this work contributes to understanding how the mind, even when entrenched in these cycles, can create pathways to more conscious and healthy choices.

Keywords: Psychoanalysis; repetition; toxic relationships; psychological suffering; permanence; feminine; love.

Abstract

This study seeks to shed light on the relational dynamics of toxic romantic attachments, analyzing the repetition and persistence of women in this context, understanding them not as a conscious choice, but as the manifestation of complex psychic processes. The study addresses the mechanics of how an individual may find themselves trapped in destructive cycles, experiencing the return of unprocessed experiences that manifest in relationships. The research, which uses a qualitative approach, employs a literature review as a methodology to deepen the understanding of the subject. Grounded in psychoanalysis, it explores concepts such as Freud's *Compulsion to Repeat* and Lacan's theory of *Lack* in the constitution of the subject. The analysis seeks to explore how the idealization of the romantic object and the pursuit of repairing childhood affective experiences intersect with sociocultural constructions that teach love as being about sacrifice and tolerance. The results attest that the repetitive and enduring dynamics are the result of a tangle of unconscious mechanisms, ingrained beliefs, and internalized social norms. In short, by investigating the psychic roots and patterns of dysfunctional behaviors, the work contributes to the understanding of how the mind, even rooted in these cycles, can create new pathways for more conscious and healthy choices.

Keywords: Psychoanalysis; repetition; toxic relationships; psychological suffering; permanence; feminine; love.



INTRODUCTION

Romantic relationships occupy a central place in the subjective constitution of the human being.

From childhood, the individual is shaped by affective experiences that mold their way of being.

To connect, desire, and give meaning to love. When these initial bonds are marked by absence,

Rejection, neglect, or excessive idealization can generate psychological scars that repeat themselves over time.

of adult life, especially in the realm of love. In many cases, these marks manifest themselves in

Toxic relationships are a form of bonding permeated by emotional manipulation, affective dependence, power imbalance, and constant suffering. It is within this context that the present study is situated, which...

seeks to understand the unconscious and sociocultural mechanisms that lead women to repeat and

To remain in relationships marked by pain, even when aware of the harm involved.

The phenomenon of toxic relationships goes beyond the realm of rational choice. Many women

even those who recognize the suffering present in these relationships still find it difficult to...

to disconnect, which reveals the presence of unconscious forces at play. Psychoanalysis, since Freud,

It offers a privileged lens for understanding these repetitions, as it investigates the motivations.

unconscious factors that determine seemingly irrational behaviors and choices. Freud (2011)

In *Remembering, Repeating and Working Through*, he describes the compulsion to repeat as a tendency of the subject to

To relive unprocessed experiences in an unconscious attempt to control or repair them. Thus,

Many women end up seeking in their current partner a reunion with figures from the past, such as their fathers.

Absent caregivers, ambivalent caregivers, or childhood relationships marked by lack and waiting.

The relevance of this study lies in giving visibility to a psychological suffering that, although

Silent, it's extremely common. Toxic relationships aren't limited to situations of abuse.

explicit or physical violence, but they also encompass subtle dynamics of dependence, guilt and

Self-annihilation. Remaining in this type of relationship directly affects self-esteem and self-perception.

Self-worth and the ability to establish healthy boundaries. As Pereira (2023) states, the woman

Those who find themselves trapped in a toxic relationship often internalize the idea that love is...

To endure, and that suffering is part of love. This belief, sustained by centuries of constructions

Patriarchal, religious, and moral discourses reinforce the idea that women should sacrifice themselves for...

The relationship continues, even when the bond destroys it.

The choice of Psychoanalysis as the theoretical basis for this research is justified by its capacity.

to articulate the individual and the collective, the conscious and the unconscious, desire and symptom. The approach

Psychoanalysis allows us to understand how childhood experiences, internalized ideals, and

Unconscious identifications intertwine with the cultural and social demands that shape the

female subjectivity. The woman who repeats toxic relationships, therefore, does not do so out of weakness or

not through ignorance, but through a complex psychic dynamic that unconsciously seeks to repair shortcomings and

repeating primal scenes of love and rejection. This is a movement where suffering,



Paradoxically, it becomes familiar and, therefore, difficult to abandon.

The rationale for this work is based on the clinical and social relevance of the topic. In the field Clinically, understanding the psychological factors that sustain remaining in unhealthy relationships is... fundamental to improving the reception and therapeutic interventions aimed at the public. In the social sphere, discussing these repetitions contributes to strengthening the autonomy of women. women and for the deconstruction of cultural patterns that normalize inequality and suffering. as components of love. Women remaining in toxic relationships is also a phenomenon. social, as it reflects internalized discourses of submission, idealization, and the need for approval. masculine, inherited from a patriarchal structure that historically defines the value of women based on... based on their ability to please and serve.

Furthermore, this research has an educational character, as it arises from personal concerns and Clinical and social observations reveal the recurrence of these dynamics in different contexts. The realization that many women, of different ages, backgrounds, and experiences, The same type of bond, even while acknowledging the suffering, indicates that the problem transcends the level... individual. It is a repetitive structure that is updated in each new relationship and that finds its roots in the psychic constitution of the subject, in the way he learned to love, desire and be. loved.

Thus, the overall objective of this research is to analyze unconscious and sociocultural factors. that contribute to the repetition and persistence of women in toxic relationships, in light of Psychoanalysis. Specifically, the aim is to: identify the main psychic mechanisms that underpin the permanence of these bonds; understanding how childhood experiences and models Family relationships influence emotional bonds in adulthood; and to analyze how low self-esteem, The fear of loneliness and the idealization of the partner reinforce the maintenance of these relationships. These objectives They aim not only at a theoretical understanding of the phenomenon, but also at opening up pathways for... new listening and clinical intervention practices, centered on the uniqueness of the female experience.

Regarding methodology, this work is based on a literature review. of a qualitative and exploratory nature. This choice allows for gathering, comparing, and analyzing. Relevant theoretical works on the subject, focusing on the contributions of Psychoanalysis and other authors. contemporary works that engage with the unconscious and sociocultural aspects of love and repetition. Classic works by Freud, Lacan, and contemporary authors such as Suy (2022), Ferrante, and Sousa will be used. (2021), Pereira (2023), among others, articulating theory and phenomenon. The literature review makes possible to understand the current state of research on the topic and to identify knowledge gaps that justify further reflection on the recurring pattern of women in toxic relationships.

Furthermore, the methodology will allow for discussion of the topic from an interdisciplinary perspective, integrating Concepts of psychoanalysis with contributions from social psychology and gender theories. The analysis of the works.



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It will be conducted through critical reading and theoretical note-taking, seeking to extract categories from the texts.

meanings that highlight the forms of repetition, the mechanisms of idealization, and the effects of

Culture regarding female subjectivity. The intention is not to offer ready-made answers, but to shed light on the subject.

about the psychic and symbolic functioning that sustains the persistence of suffering, revealing

How the unconscious intertwines with social narratives of love, duty, and surrender.

Understanding these dynamics is also important because of their potential.

Transformative. Identifying the mechanisms that keep a woman trapped in the cycle of repetition is the

The first step towards change. By recognizing the pattern and its origins, the woman can give it new meaning.

your story, strengthen your Self and rebuild your ways of loving in a more conscious and

autonomous. Psychoanalysis, in this sense, offers a path to elaboration: by talking about what one...

By repeating, the subject listens to themselves and takes ownership of their own history, making room for the new.

The topic is particularly relevant in a contemporary context where relationships

Interpersonal relationships are marked by paradoxes: excessive exposure and, at the same time, the fear of

intimacy; the desire for freedom and the persistence of emotional dependence; the search for love and the

The difficulty of supporting it in a healthy way. Social media, romantic idealizations, and...

Aesthetic standards reinforce unrealistic expectations about love and the body, fueling dynamics of

Comparison and external validation. In this scenario, understanding the unconscious roots of repetition.

It becomes a fundamental tool for emotional emancipation.

The ChatGPT artificial intelligence tool was used to prepare this.

This work aims to help you produce more fluent text and structure topics.

and to help find up-to-date articles and materials on the topic. Technology was used as a

This is a complement to, and not a substitute for, critical analysis and the development of authorship in research.

In summary, this introduction aims to situate the reader within the proposed field of investigation:

To understand, from a psychoanalytic perspective, why so many women remain in relationships that...

They fall ill, even while acknowledging their suffering. More than pointing out causes, this work proposes a

Listening — listening to the unconscious, to pain, and to history repeating itself. In doing so, it intends

to contribute to the academic, clinical, and social debate on love, desire, and female autonomy,

reaffirming that understanding is the first step to transformation.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF ROMANTIC RELATIONSHIPS

Throughout the years and across cultures, the motivation for union between two people has remained.

The prospect of joining together in a relationship has been influenced by multiple factors.

The authors who shed light on this phenomenon point out a diversity of motivations.

To establish this link, "over the years, romantic relationships have been interpreted in various ways."

ways, from a form of ensuring the continuity of the species, to a strategy for



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to strengthen political alliances and/or romanticism” (RÜDIGER 2012 *apud* MATOS; DE OLIVEIRA; (PAQUIELA, 2023, p. 24097), this perspective demonstrates that relationships are a product of resulting from various cultural and symbolic constructions over a period of years, cultural issues and social dynamics within society. These dynamics reflect how societies have organized themselves and the way in which... This constitution has an impact on the present, in addition to the attribution of affective bonds.

Regarding this aspect, Matos, De Oliveira and Paquiela (2023) establish that relationships Romantic relationships can be described as emotional bonds formed between people that may stem from... different family backgrounds that are linked by their feelings of love. These bonds can It can take many forms, such as dating, marriage, stable cohabitation, or even relationships. more informal. In addition to affection, such relationships are expected to be sustained by elements fundamental aspects such as trust, respect, complicity, and reciprocity are essential. for balance and quality of life as a couple. Given what has been presented, it is emphasized that... Romantic relationships are a space for emotional and affective exchanges between individuals. Where the The individual is confronted both with others and with their own standards of love.

Delving deeper into the subject, one understands that it is a complex and challenging dynamic in which Romantic relationships are traversed by seemingly opposing tendencies: the desire to merge with the another [reason] is the preservation of one's own identity. Corroborating this reflection, the authors add... what:

A romantic relationship is constituted as a phenomenon of opposing movements, in which detachment and mutual admiration result in a form of understanding and comprehension within the established couple. From this perspective, a healthy relationship would be one in which each individual has their own identity and desires to do good to the loved one, without expecting reward (ROSSET, 2004 *apud* ALMEIDA; RODRIGUES; SILVA, 2008 p. 85).

This view raises the question that mature love does not consist in recognizing the other as a separate individual, endowed with their own desires and limitations, but that this human being Despite these issues, it maintains an emotional connection with inherent respect.

Looking at it from a psychological perspective, the idea expressed in this view of the relationship is that a Balance between self and others is necessary to maintain a healthy relationship. When there is respect and Exchanges, love creates an emblematic space between the two people involved. But, if the connection is Based on actions such as dependency, idealization, or the desire to fill a void, the union can be... to create inequality and result in pain, distress, suffering, and excess.

As Almeida, Rodrigues and Silva (2008) explain, love considered healthy does not It is based on fusion and possession, but on the interest in caring for the other without annihilating oneself or annihilating the other. maintaining the bond through freedom and acceptance of the other's individuality. The approach of Psychoanalysis proposes that love is conceived as an encounter between two desiring subjects.

The authors corroborate this idea when they emphasize that:

In a romantic relationship, people experience intense moments together and practice living together.



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and interaction with others allows them to explore a variety of feelings and emotions, which can contribute to the development of their interpersonal skills. (ADOLPHO, 2017 *apud* MATOS; DE OLIVEIRA; PAQUIELA, 2023, p. 24098).

This concept highlights that romantic relationships are one of the most... complex aspects of human affectivity, involving emotional, social, and symbolic factors that They transcend simple attraction between two people. Thus, situating the romantic relationship as a historical and symbolic formation, not just a biological one, thinking in terms of how that is Articulating unconscious dynamics and subjective demands, the psychoanalytic perspective is used. to assist with this document.

1.1 Understanding Toxic Relationships

Toxic relationships, according to Ferrante and Souza (2021), are characterized as affective connections marked by harmful behaviors, emotional imbalance, and dynamics of control and submission, which compromise the well-being of one or both of those involved. It is therefore understood that such conflicts are different from occasional natural clashes in. Regardless of the relationship, the indicated behaviors remain within behavioral conditions. specific, causing suffering and potentially becoming a form of severe harm. In accordance with Still according to the authors' study, Ferrante and Souza (2021) observe that these dysfunctional ties are They are characterized by the constant repetition of attitudes that harm emotional integrity, such as Manipulation, devaluation, excessive jealousy, social isolation, or emotional instability. From this From a psychoanalytic point of view, one can assume that these dynamics... They are sustained by unconscious psychic mechanisms, which hinder the possibility of breaking free from the The bond remains even when the suffering becomes unbearable. However, although these toxic relationships can take root and occur in different contexts, such as family in the broadest sense of While this study focuses specifically on professional and social relationships, it also examines romantic relationships. Therefore, choosing or remaining in toxic relationships is not a conscious and rational choice. but rather a response to profound subjective processes, which are inscribed in the emotional history of The subject and the ways in which he learned to love and be loved.

The sociocultural impact

Considering the cultural impact on society, as Pereira (2023, pp. 09–10) points out, Men are culturally viewed as those who hold power and occupy the dominant position. In relationships, while women are socially assigned the role of serving, caring, and tolerating, both within the context of the marital relationship as well as in the care of children. When analyzing this phenomenon, one can... to realize that this cultural construct favors the internalization of an ideal based on total selflessness, in which the woman is taught to sacrifice herself for the relationship. Often, it is believed that the true



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Love endures all things, including pain, suffering, and even violence. The author adds to this.

The idea behind stating that this romanticized discourse contributes to many women remaining in harmful relationships, supporting the belief that enduring the unbearable is a demonstration of affection and commitment.

Gender relations are one of the main axes that structure subjectivity, through which encompasses everything from socialization processes to how each individual experiences relationships.

Emotional factors are influenced. Delving deeper into the subject, it's important to emphasize:

Gender relations are omnipresent in our society, organizing the dynamics of power and affection between individuals. Adolescents are subject to these norms in a particular way, since they are in an important stage of subjective constitution and experience of their first affective-sexual bonds. (COSTA et al., 2023 p. 249)

From this point of view, it is understood that gender is not just a social category, but it is also a symbolic instrument that permeates individual construction and, unconsciously, creates ways of desiring, relating to oneself and other people, and understanding love.

Zanello (2022) emphasizes that girls are often taught that love should be the focus of their lives, and on the other hand, the boys learn to have diverse interests and to connect love with achievement, control, and performance. And these models, learned from the inside out, become unconscious organizing principles that shape romantic preferences and attachment styles in adult life. These roles of submission, care, and emotional dependence, contemplated in early affective experiences and the unconscious internalization of sociocultural norms are many. Sometimes reproduced by young and adult women without knowing why.

In the field of psychoanalysis, it is recognized that subjectivity is shaped in initial encounters with love, desire and appreciation, especially with the primary caregivers and the environment in which is introduced. This process is also marked during adolescence, a period characterized by intense psychological and physical changes, which makes it an ideal place for the socialization of cultural norms and the influence received from family, school, and media. In this phase, the individual seeks to affirm its identity and connect with love, within a symbolic framework that was presented to him and the way he interprets this movement.

Understanding the genesis of these structures is essential to consider that both women and young women and adults alike remain in toxic relationships, and this experience is not a coincidence, but rather an unconscious repetition of what was learned as a legitimate way to position oneself in romantic relationships.

Zanello's research (2022) implies that female subjectivity is constructed culturally through the device of love. According to this concept, women are raised to... feeling socially as if they were on the "shelf of love," therefore, their self-acceptance and social approval depends on the possibility that a man will see them on the shelf and select them.



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This perspective is fundamental to understanding the direct effect of such a construction on the act of remaining in a toxic relationship is an important point for this work. The phenomenon that...

The author's work primarily deals with the perspective of self-worth that women have. She perceives- if an internalization of beliefs, in which it can be a ruin not to be chosen by the other and not

Being in a relationship is seen as a failure; these internalized conceptions can...

This implies that the woman remains in the relationship even when suffering, for fear of returning to her previous position.

on the shelf and labeled as unsold or failed. This threat operates in such a way

It is significant that the suffering of remaining in a harmful relationship, although intense, can be

psychologically masked as less devastating than the fear of leaving the relationship. Author Zanello

(2022) further explains that many women feel invalidated when they break up, as if they had no belongings.

The potential is neither to "keep a man" nor to "fix" him, understanding this as an inability.

personal. This social construct also interacts with aspects that position women as the

responsible for the relationship working and that having a relationship is the result of success in

life.

Social norms have a significant impact on romantic relationships. According to

As Jacinto, Felipe and Souza (2024) point out, such norms influence the way relationships

are perceived, especially when reinforcing the romanticization of love and the belief that

Romantic relationships should be maintained at all costs. Therefore, this passage...

This relates to the present work, showing that there is a sociocultural influence associated with repetition.

and the persistence of women in toxic relationships. In this regard, the authors highlight:

This norm can be especially dangerous in the context of abusive relationships, because

It reinforces the idea that the partner must be "saved" or that true love is that which...

withstands all adversity, even if that adversity includes behaviors

harmful. (JACINTO; FELIPE; SOUZA, 2024, p. 6766)

In this logic, it becomes clear that women are exposed to factors that contribute to them

confuses normal conflicts that occur in relationships with harmful ones, leading it to remain even

more so in harmful relationships and in confusing love with suffering, due to internalization.

that if it is true it will endure, encouraging women to invest even more in relationships.

loving and focusing your libidinal energy on this endeavor.

However, as Kuss (2014) states, this idea that having another will be enough and everything

It will fit together, like the other half of an orange is illusory, because love doesn't eliminate lack. Love doesn't have...

The power to heal what seems to be missing, because that lack is part of who the individual is. In

In an attempt to cope with this void, one often projects onto the other the expectation that they will fill the void.

something that completely fulfills, as if it could restore what is perceived as missing,

even without knowing exactly what it is. In this way, it is understood that this idealization may have a



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profound psychic effect: the erasure of one's own desire. By idealizing the other as a figure of

In order to achieve completeness, the subject shifts their focus not to what they desire, but to what the other person represents, whether it be...

as a savior, as a source of meaning, or as an answer to its lack. With this, the question ceases to arise.

"What do I want?", and then begins to live according to "What do I need the other person to be for me?".

Often, the person molds themselves to keep this fantasy alive, renouncing parts of themselves.

The same. When you place the expectation on another person to fill what you feel is lacking, you end up leaving...

to listen to their own desires. Their focus begins to revolve around what the other person represents, and thus,

Their desire weakens, becoming trapped in the illusion that the other can complete them. Consequently, the

The risk that this idealization ultimately paves the way for the silencing of desire and for the repetition of...

relationships marked by frustration, whether in the relentless search for the right person, highlighting the

Repetition, whether it's remaining in harmful relationships because you believe you've already found it.

This idea that one person can complete another begins very early, even in childhood.

When the baby feels hungry or uncomfortable, he cries, and then the mother, or whoever fulfills that role,

It appears to meet your demand. At this initial moment, what Freud (1996) describes as occurs.

an initial experience of satisfaction, from which the baby creates an image of completeness,

believing that the other person can fulfill all their needs. Thus, the feeling is formed that

There is someone capable of filling all the voids. However, as the child grows, they realize that the other person doesn't

always respond as expected. It is at this point that frustration sets in and, with

She, what Lacan (1998) calls lack, the realization that the object of desire is unattainable. For

According to the author, it is precisely this absence of the absolute object that inaugurates desire and constitutes the subject.

The child, then, ceases to live in the illusion of completeness and begins to desire, driven by that which...

lack. Later, this dynamic reappears in the realm of love. As Kuss (2014) explains, love

It doesn't have the power to eliminate the feeling that something is missing. Instead, love is a way of...

To deal with this lack, to give it some meaning, even if it continues to exist. Love, then,

It doesn't completely fill the void, but it helps to bear it.

When this fantasy of completeness is not questioned, it can lead the person to enter and

to remain in harmful relationships, believing that with a little more effort, the partner...

She will finally become what she envisioned. This is very common in women who, from a young age,

They learned to put themselves in the place of those who care, wait, and persevere. Even in the face of clear signs of

Despite their suffering, they continue to believe that love can fix the other person or transform the relationship.

COMPULSION TO REPEAT AND PERMANENCE

In psychoanalysis, this insistence can be understood as a repetition, a return.

unconscious resemblance to old, unresolved situations. Freud (2011), in his text Remembering, Repeating and

Elaborate describes this mechanism as a way of reliving past affections in the present.



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Given this, it's understandable why women can become trapped in these relational patterns.

an unconscious attempt to reenact and try to produce a different outcome for the early events and past events.

Regarding repetition, Bernardino, De Matos and Da Rosa (2024) point out that choices do not They are not the result of chance nor do they depend solely on reason. Unconscious processes and patterns that They persist across generations, exerting a strong influence on them, determining everything from Our worldviews, and even how we create our emotional and social bonds, are all part of this reflection. This provides direct support to the present study, insofar as it suggests that emotional choices are not made. not only through conscious decisions, but also through deeper psychological processes, which They are rooted in individual and family history.

Thus, dependency in harmful relationships can be seen as a repetition. of these unconscious cycles, where, under the influence of psychic imprints from the past, a person tends forming bonds that simply bring back past experiences. From a psychoanalytic perspective. This dynamic unconsciously leads back to repairing unresolved issues left by your... own story.

According to Kuss (2014), based on Lacan's ideas, in love one often seeks something that one can never truly achieve. It's as if there is a continuous effort. If you're always trying to hit a target but failing every time, then you could say that loving also... It's about missing the target. However, in toxic relationships, repetition is often linked to a search... Persistent in seeking something that will never be fully achieved, but which nevertheless sustains the bond. Based on the above, it is understood that the suffering, in this case, is not accidental; it becomes part of the process. of the relationship as a constant attempt to achieve the impossible: to be loved completely and healed by someone who can never occupy that place.

Continuing with this reflection, it becomes clear that even when reality begins to... to show that the partner does not correspond to the idealization created at the beginning of the relationship, many people They continue to insist. This discussion highlights a belief that with time or dedication... Enough is enough, the other person will change and revert to being the "idealized love." This difficulty in breaking the bond. It is based on the fantasy that the right partner is still out there; you just need to be patient for them to reappear. In light of the discussions held, it is clear that the elements discussed underpin the... This study's hypothesis highlights the repetition and permanence of women in these relationships. Harmful behaviors are not maintained solely due to conscious, rational reasons or lack of will, but also because On the contrary, it is possible to perceive that there is something more, something deeper that drives these dynamics and there is a subjective process driving these events.

According to Ferrante and Sousa (2021), in toxic relationships this initial idealization It is usually broken, but the fear of loneliness, the hope of transformation, and emotional attachment prevail.



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They cause the person to persevere, even amidst suffering. As the authors point out...

Also, in some cases, this attachment takes a more serious form, known as pathological love.

The person begins to live for the other, suppressing their own desires and accepting situations.

harmful in the name of a love that, in practice, hurts more than it comforts. This understanding,

This then connects to the idea that the more one suffers, the more one believes that this suffering is a sign of

The depth of the bond, as if true love were necessarily painful.

Through the Lens of Gender

Romantic relationships are one of the areas that manifest themselves in the way feelings and

Desires are felt and organized among people. But these things don't happen only in a...

Organic and neutral, they are formed by something deeper, such as culturally, by the roles of

Gender is learned in society and environment. Boys and girls are taught, from a young age, to be...

Relating in different ways, while women are taught to assume caregiving roles,

Sensitivity, nurturing, and giving—men often adopt the roles of control, strength, and...

rationality.

Costa et al. (2023) observe that, in dating relationships, girls tend to experience more episodes.

of violence, which indicates greater female exposure to such experiences. This observation

It highlights a fundamental asymmetry in the impact of gender on affective dynamics. Girls are

They are taught to romanticize love, and as such, they are more likely to tolerate aggression, due to a

intensity of feeling that seems to justify the suffering. This process, when viewed through

From a psychoanalytic perspective, it is characterized by a libidinal investment in the other, with mechanisms that...

They block the recognition of toxicity signals, ultimately inducing their repetition and

remaining in these types of relationships.

Costa et al. (2023, p. 249) further reinforce this in their research:

For girls, violence presents itself as a threat that confronts them from multiple angles: not only in the context of romantic and sexual relationships, but also after their breakup, through the media and the experiences of people close to them.

This comment illustrates the depth to which violence affects women and afterwards.

This explains why it is so difficult for most of them to leave their relationships. Violence is not...

It is restricted to the act and presence of the aggressor, but extends metaphorically to the collective body, to the...

Discourses and representations about femininity. Girls carry, from an early age, the burden of having to

Living with the threat from men and the guilt and fear of women. Violence, then, is not just

lived experience, but in fact, normalized, which is why so many women have difficulty leaving it.

troubled relationships

In line with this perspective, the study by Costa et al. (2023, p. 247) demonstrates that



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"It can be stated that situations of violence in affective-sexual relationships among adolescents..."

They are quite diverse, closely related to the construction of masculinities." This quote

shows how the subjective construction of individuals impacts the types of romantic relationships they have.

They remain. The authors further emphasize that:

Another central idea contained in this theme is that boys and girls play distinct roles in affective-sexual relationships, which can be observed, for example, in relationships with aggression and with relationship modalities such as 'hooking up'. Such differences point to the perpetuation of gender inequalities that culminate in disadvantages for girls, although they also place boys in a vulnerable position. (COSTA et al., 2023 p. 247)

This passage is essential for understanding the nuances of how genres behave.

unconsciously, as it illustrates that both boys and girls suffer from cultural norms.

just in different ways. The task of psychoanalysis is to understand how these mechanisms work.

perpetuated in women's unconscious and what other ways are possible to achieve this

elaboration and symbolization. Only when the subject realizes that their suffering has roots in

The unconscious and the ideals that challenge it are what, if possible, can be known and recognized.

Choose other ways to connect and create space for a bond that is not a copy, but an encounter.

with respect and autonomy.

The Family and the Formation of Bonds

This understanding engages with the psychoanalytic perspective, especially with the

Almeida and Neto (2021) notes that the initial stages of a baby's life are

fundamental. Furthermore, it also highlights that the child arrives in the world in a state of total

Caregiver dependency, and the way care is provided, directly influences its development.

psychological. In this sense, it is important to highlight that the affective bonds established in the early stages...

Life experiences not only influence how a person will relate to others in the future, but also...

They also profoundly shape your emotional structure. From this understanding, one realizes

that the absence of a welcoming and supportive environment can leave lasting psychological scars,

which manifest themselves in relational difficulties, low self-esteem, insecurities, fear of abandonment and

even in remaining in toxic relationships. Given this, the importance of these bonds is considered.

primary factors in the subjective constitution of the subject and in the way the individual tends to connect with

Another process that occurs throughout life happens unconsciously.

Furthermore, when considering attachment theory, it becomes clear that when a child is cared for

In a sensitive and consistent manner, it tends to develop a secure attachment model, which favors the

Autonomy, self-confidence, and the ability to establish healthy relationships. However,

Early experiences marked by neglect, rejection, or emotional inconsistency can generate

insecure attachment patterns, which manifest themselves in adulthood in the form of relationships marked



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due to emotional dependency, fear of abandonment, or excessive idealization of the other (Dalbem; Dell'algio, 2005). Given this, the marks of childhood experiences tend to repeat themselves, especially when the individual did not have the opportunity to process or reframe these experiences. In short, it is understood that many women remain in harmful relationships not due to a lack of perception or conscious choice, but because they are trapped in an internalized model of an emotional bond that unconsciously leads them to repeat patterns learned in early childhood. first years of life.

The psychic constitution of the human being differs fundamentally from the instinctive existence of... animals. The author Valeska Zanello (2022) proposes a clear distinction by using the metaphor of the cockroach: in which the animal is born with an instinctive repertoire that guarantees its survival. The human being, on the contrary, is born into a state of helplessness, unable to survive on its own. This condition of absolute dependence is not merely biological, but is based on the need for another, a caregiver who, in addition to providing food, invests in the life of that baby so that he or she may have life and care for them. Give it a place in the symbolic world.

It is this initial dependence that defines the human experience. The baby is not governed by closed instincts, the baby is shaped by the baby, as the author mentions that the baby is shaped by closed instincts. Unlike the cockroach, which is governed by closed instincts, the baby is shaped by the baby, as the author mentions that the baby is shaped by closed instincts. culture and the language that the caregiver presents to it. Unlike the cockroach, which is born knowing, the human beings need to learn everything: they need to be taught how to speak, eat, walk, and dress. The individual is, therefore, a product of what others transmit to them. It is in this process of being "humanized"... through the culture that constitutes the individual, absorbing the norms, values, and social codes. around them via caregiver.

In this primordial relationship of care and teaching, the individual learns not only practical tasks, but also how to relate to others, how to deal with your emotions, desires, challenges and frustrations one encounters along life's journey. The way the caregiver responds or fails to... Responding to a child's needs lays the foundation for their future emotional bonds.

Still reflecting on the influence of family relationships on a child's life, it is important to consider not only how she relates to her caregivers, but also how she perceives the relationship that exists between them. As Kuss (2014, p. 37) points out, "just as important is the relationship of the way a child perceives their relationship with their parents is therefore also the way the child perceives their relationship with them. "Parents." This shows that, from a very early age, the child observes and absorbs aspects of marital life. from parents or guardians, which can directly impact their development. The way they witness affection, conflict, silence, or care among the adults around her contributes to shaping her notion of safety, self-esteem, communication skills, and how to deal with feelings and situations. When the family environment is marked by tension, estrangement, or conflict, the child may... internalizing the idea that love is confused with pain, or even that it is necessary to make an effort.

constantly striving to be loved. Thus, as the individual grows into adulthood, they may have difficulties.

to distinguish between what is love and what is pain, as well as limits and boundaries, repeating, without realizing it, patterns learned in childhood.

As Suy (2022, pp. 34-35) points out:

Love is something we learn by being loved. It's because someone at some point loved us, even if they loved us badly, that we learn to love, even if we love badly. But our first experiences of love are irremediable. Not in the sense that they necessarily paralyze and condemn us at the same point, but in the sense that no one emerges unscathed from their family. No one comes out untouched from a mother, a father, siblings, etc. Our way of occupying a more or less precious place for someone will serve as a compass to position ourselves in the field of love, in the choices of mature life, even if it is not so mature after all.

The family environment, therefore, does not fatally determine the individual, but inevitably.

the mark, and these marks become inscribed in their psyche. Even so, the subject can, throughout the life, seeking to elaborate on these inscriptions with resources, such as, for example, the therapeutic process, which It offers a space for listening, acceptance, and reinterpretation. It is, therefore, not a condemnation, but of a symbolic legacy that unconsciously guides the construction of desire and ways of relating.

THE INTERNAL STANDARD

Furthermore, it is important to highlight that the superego, in psychoanalytic theory, is the psychic instance... which represents the internalization of norms, values, and prohibitions learned throughout childhood, especially through parental figures. He acts as a kind of internal judge, responsible by censoring desires, imposing ideals, and regulating the subject's conduct.

As highlighted by Oliveira (2018):

The role that the superego assumes in the subject's life is initially exercised by external agents, that is, by authority figures. The influence of the parents governs the child, giving them love and threats of punishment, and only later in development, with the Oedipal process, does the superego take the place of the parental instance, assuming the functions of observing, directing, and threatening the ego, just as the parents did.

This movement shows how the subject comes to carry within themselves the demands, Prohibitions and ideals inherited from the family environment and culture.

In the context of toxic relationships, the superego can become especially rigid, causing... that makes the woman feel guilty for wanting to break up with or distance herself from her partner. However, the The superego is not limited to family influences; it also absorbs cultural and social ideals. Ideals, absorbed and reinforced by the superego, favor the maintenance of dysfunctional beliefs. about herself, about the other person, and about the relationship, contributing to its continued existence. Harmful relationships, even in the face of suffering.



Alienation of the Self Through the Gaze of the Other: Woman as a Desirable Image and Not as a Desiring Subject

6.1 The Gaze that Constitutes and Holds

In contemporary affective relationships, an interesting phenomenon is studied in which the gaze The other becomes a structuring element of female identity. It emerges in the field of the other, that is, Within language, culture, and relationships, the individual desires to be desired, recognized, and loved. The place it occupies in the desire of the other. In relationships, women are driven by the desire to be Accepted, chosen, desired. Therefore, desire itself, a force that originates from the subject, is silenced. This Alienation occurs when one begins to see oneself primarily as a desirable object, and not as a human being. desiring subject

Suy and Dunker (2025, p. 18), in their work *Do I Only Exist in the Gaze of the Other?*, address this dependence on the gaze of others in the constitution of the self: "We discover ourselves when we "We recognize ourselves in the other's gaze." This quote points to the idea that even when one meets... When faced with another person, one also realizes that one is face to face with oneself.

6.2 The Reflection of Alienation

The Norwegian film *The Ugly Half-Sister* (2025), directed by Emilie Blichfeldt, presents a A reimagining of the classic Cinderella story, distinguished by its slant towards the horror subgenre. corporal (*body horror*). The story explores the effects of idealization and the obsessive pursuit of acceptance, in a context where beauty is the main criterion of value in the kingdom where she lives. Elvira, Starring Norwegian actress Lea Myren, the film follows women undergoing torturous cosmetic procedures. painful, revealing the desperate attempt to mold oneself to an unattainable and fantastical ideal, of only in this way can she be desired and chosen by the prince. This narrative directly dialogues From a psychoanalytic perspective, physical suffering concretely manifests psychic pain. of a woman trapped in the need to be loved and recognized.

The film's aesthetic, marked by discomfort and the grotesque metamorphosis of the body, reveals the unconscious dimension of a desire that turns against the subject himself. The scenes that show Elvira, by deforming her own body, serves as a condensed visual representation of this process. self-destructive, since the protagonist does not seek to transform herself willingly, but to To meet the expectations of the male and social gaze, the body ceases to be the dwelling place of the individual. and becomes an object of display. Lacan (1998) says that the gaze has the power to alienate the subject, leading- to identify with one's own image reflected in the desire of the other. The body, in this context, It becomes a surface for recognition, not an expression of desire.

This dynamic confirms the movement described earlier by Kuss (2014), when he says that "To love is to miss the mark." The character misses the mark by confusing love with acceptance, desire with... Approval, salvation, and the gaze of the other upon one's own existence. The figure of the "ugly sister" symbolizes...



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for women who, unable to bear the feeling of lack, transform their bodies into a field of

The battle against one's own imperfection is the ideal. Beauty, in this case, is an attempt at healing.

Impossible. The body is mutilated in the name of an ideal that is never realized.

6.3 Fantasy and the Idealization of Love

Therefore, from its opening scenes, the film establishes Elvira's status as a young woman consumed by romantic ideals and aesthetic pressure, elements that are linked by through their fantasies, which function as a psychological defense mechanism, where the reality of Cruel competition and self-harm are temporarily replaced by a scenario of acceptance and Love. These recurring scenes usually feature Prince Julian, played by Isaac. Calmroth, in a way that contradicts his real and superficial behavior in the film.

Elvira's relationship with the prince is marked by fantasy and idealization. She projects In it, she sees a figure of completeness, without actually knowing it, and believes that she will finally be whole when... for chosen. This idealization reflects a childlike love that has not matured, a love that is still waiting. to be saved, seen and recognized.

Recent research suggests that romantic idealization and myths of perfect love... These factors continue to underpin abusive and unequal relationships, according to Martín Salvador et al. (2021). The most widely accepted myths are those related to the idealization of love, eternal passion, the Marriage and the myth of the soulmate. Such beliefs fuel the female imagination that love True love is that which completes the relationship, where suffering is a natural part of it.

6.4 The Sentimental Education of Women

The figure of Elvira's mother represents the psychic legacy of female alienation. In the scene in who, after her husband's death, claims to be ruined, a widow with sagging breasts, aged, with two Daughters without hope, the film *The Ugly Half-Sister* (2025) representatively presents a scenario. which points to the devaluation of women when they cease to represent the dominant ideal of youth, beauty, and it makes men no longer notice her. The maternal discourse here says something. Furthermore, she laments not only the grief over the death of her partner, but also the loss of social value. demonstrating that the absence of a male figure signifies the loss of self-worth. Without him, she She finds herself mired in financial dependency with nothing to offer but an aging body. Without the functionality of desire, simply waiting for another marriage to save her. Elvira's marriage. It is important not to ignore the internalization of cultural norms that equate love, the feminine care and recognition of the acceptance of "the other," in this case, the masculine, as a a reflection of one's own dignity and identity. This is a compelling point about how the identities of Women are often tied to the men in their lives, obscuring their... Individuality and potential.



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Upon seeing herself as ruined, the mother reveals that her idealized self was constructed on the basis of...

It depends on the care and attention of men, and thus completely disappears when the husband dies.

Elvira, in turn, internalizes the lesson of her mother's agony and unconsciously learns that...

Salvation and recognition for women revolve around a hero in this work, a prince who can save them from a poor and vulnerable existence. It's noticeable that mother and daughter share...

a transgenerational fantasy that romantic love and the idealization of one's spouse are the pinnacle

Happiness is the way to become whole again when you feel lost and without a way out.

Given that this article focuses on the dynamics of young adulthood and female development,

highlighting the differences in mechanical functioning for each age group, which is particularly

One important point for this work is that it can be observed, from a very early age, that women are embedded in a socialization process that presents love as a central element of their

lives. Whether through family and cultural practices, as Papalia, Feldman and Martorell (2013) say,

(p. 481) "For many young adults, achieving a stable relationship is perceived as a

"A mark of success and psychosocial development." This concept is reinforced by the idea that

Youth represents the time when a woman has the most to offer, be it beauty, vitality, or

Emotional availability should therefore be used as the right time to achieve it.

Ideal love. They grow up, therefore, with the conviction that being in a loving relationship, while

They are still in the prime of their youth; it's a way to prove their worth and secure a place in the sport.

belonging. This perspective explains why many young and adult women get trapped in

Those who have been in troubled and toxic relationships for a significant amount of time understand that this is the best way out.

It's a phase to find a partner, and if they want to end the relationship, they won't find anyone else, because

They will no longer have youth as an attribute.

Emotional investment is almost always directed towards the other person, in a constant movement of

Donation and attempts to meet external expectations, while men are taught to invest.

in themselves, in their bodies, education, and professional life, developing their value through what

They create, conquer, and produce, strengthening their identity around autonomy and action.

Women are taught that their worth lies in how much they please, care for, and nurture their lives, structuring their lives accordingly.

Identity revolves around approval and connection, rarely directing that care and love toward oneself.

same. In other words, while men seek affirmation outside of the relationship, women seek...

within it. Women learn to see themselves as responsible for maintaining relationships, as

If the failure of a relationship represented a personal failing. In this way, love is understood.

not as a healthy and balanced exchange, but as a field of effort and sacrifice, in which the

Suffering is normalized and often romanticized.

Furthermore, the more time passes and youth gives way to adulthood, a

A growing feeling of being behind schedule, as if time were running out to experience the idealized love.



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Social pressure to be in a relationship becomes a marker of worth and competence.

emotional distress, causing many women to feel incomplete or insufficient in the face of its absence.

of a partner or of not being chosen. This perception of being left behind, of being alone.

or “remaining single,” reinforces the urgency of bonding, even in contexts that do not promote it.

well-being or reciprocity.

This reflects what often happens in cases of toxic romantic relationships.

to which so many young girls and adult women are exposed, as discussed in this article.

Children internalize these movements as truth in their early years, possibly becoming...

dependents, repeating patterns of emotional dependence, submission, and fear of loneliness in adulthood.

Elvira demonstrates that she sees herself as a solution to the crisis her family is facing.

incorporating the psychic legacy of that belief, repeating within herself the unconscious desire to repair,

through marriage with one another. The way these cinematic expressions

They highlight the example of the logic of repetition and permanence that this thesis attempts to examine.

6.5 The Belief in Sexualization as the Key to Love

The female body, historically shaped as an object of desire and consumption, is also...

used as a vehicle for hope: the belief that “if he knows me well enough” or “if I

Giving in can guarantee love and attention. In this sense, a woman seeking a relationship with a

A man who doesn't demonstrate real commitment can take on the role of someone who offers his body or his...

Sexuality is driven by the expectation of conquering an idealized person, even if that person is not worthy of that ideal.

ideal. The film is described by The Guardian as “a film hyper-conscious of sexual imagery and

The patriarchal dynamics of the Cinderella story function as an extreme metaphor for this dynamic: the protagonist

Elvira exposes her body in performance to be seen, chosen, and validated.

In reality, this dynamic can be reflected in the relationship between a woman and a casual partner who doesn't...

It demonstrates commitment, but it fuels false hopes by oscillating between disappearing and then returning.

offering crumbs. The woman, driven by the hope that her beauty, her sexuality, or her

Spending time together will cause him to compromise; he may accept positions below what he expects.

whether by giving up a stable emotional bond or accepting to be only a sexual companion. This

Delivery is fueled by internalized cultural messages: “if you are desirable, you will be chosen.”

or “an attractive body puts you on the shelf of love.” The body, in this context, ceases to be an expression.

It is a matter of subjectivity and becomes an instrument of acceptance. The commodity that one is expected to buy.

Attention or a future marriage. Commitment becomes a benefit.

Research on sexualization and objectification indicates that this commodification is not...

harmless. According to Noll et al. (2021), the use of sexualized media and exposure to patterns of

Body beauty is positively associated with self-objectification, negative self-esteem, and symptoms.

anxiety, indicating that the more the body is treated as an object, the more the woman internalizes it.



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this gaze. Furthermore, the experience of sexual objectification is linked to higher levels of body dissatisfaction and risky behaviors, such as disordered eating patterns (Xavier et al., 2020).

In the context of casual dating, the expectation is that the sexualized body will elicit something more. Lasting relationships represent a form of affective commodification: the woman transforms her sexuality into a resource for achieving recognition. However, the gaze of the other remains dominant, and her autonomy is diluted. This perspective fully engages with Zanello's idea (2022). While she strives to be seen, to be desired, to be chosen, the man remains in the position of a consumer or spectator, rarely as an affective collaborator. Thus, love becomes just another... Instead, fantasy takes a backseat, and self-esteem is set aside.

More recent studies also show that self-sexualization can be a double-edged sword. Paula Mendes (2021) and others demonstrate that body surveillance is associated with lower sexual assertiveness and reduced self-esteem, as conscious practices of self-sexualization. In certain contexts, these can be linked to sexual agency. That is, the difference between subordination and active choice is subtle, but significant: when a woman acts only as an object of another's desire, the expectation of reciprocation, love, commitment, and security often leads to draining practices of your autonomy.

In the film *The Ugly Half-Sister*, the final scene in which Elvira bows before the prince and exposing her breasts exemplifies this dynamic. Even in the face of clear signs that the prince does not intend to become sexually or emotionally involved after the arrival of the main character of the protagonist, Agnes, the "beautiful sister," holds onto the hope that visibility or surrender will make the difference. The commodification of the body, in this case, is used as a "bargaining chip" to try to obtain attention and affection. An expectation that is rarely fulfilled in real life.

The consequences for the psyche are significant: internalization of failure, shame, ...and guilt, in addition to a reduced perception of one's own desires and a limitation of genuine intimacy. Xavier et al. (2020) highlight that experiences of sexual objectification are correlated with risky behaviors and increased psychological vulnerability, highlighting the use of the body as the instrument of acceptance carries considerable emotional and cognitive costs.

Therefore, breaking this cycle implies recreating the narrative about the body and desire. The body can express desire, but not needing to carry the burden of emotional survival. When a woman... It places the subject, and not the object on a shelf that needs to be chosen, it preserves autonomy, self-identity, and agency, opening space for more genuine and profound connections.

COPING STRATEGIES

The repetition of toxic patterns and unstable relationships is a reality for many.



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Women. Psychoanalysis offers techniques, such as free association, paths to understanding and Transformations that make it possible to break old cycles when there is commitment and patience. in a process that is not linear. The first fundamental step is to seek therapy, because understanding the Understanding the proper functioning of the mind and body is essential to begin making more conscious choices. In the words of Nasio (2013, p. 45), “The same unconscious that compels us to repeat with serenity Successful behaviors also lead us to compulsively repeat attitudes that lead to... to failure.” In other words, understanding the internal dynamics of repetition is the starting point for change.

there.

Psychoanalysis offers a safe space for the individual to explore their experiences. childhood, family ties and life history, tracing how these experiences shape their desires and behaviors in the present. Barbosa Neto & Rocha (2025) argue that the compulsion to Repetition often stems from repressed or inadequately represented traumas, which This implies that the effective analytical elaboration of these contents, including bringing them to consciousness, becomes condition for its treatment. Barbosa Neto and Rocha (2025) also point out that, understanding These repetitions allow the subject to differentiate between genuine desire and compulsion, opening... Pathways to conscious choices.

In the context of relationships, this means understanding why some women... They assume dependent or benefit-seeking roles, believing that their sexual surrender and availability... Affection, sacrifice, or persistence will cause the partner to commit and take responsibility. Or even... remain. By understanding that this dynamic is linked to old patterns of desire, abandonment and With rejection, the woman begins to distance herself from automatic behavior and starts to choose in a different way. more aware.

Another important point is understanding that the past influences the present, but not It determines the future. Repetition is not the end of destiny, but it can be the starting point, therapy, and... Analysis can open doors for the individual to reflect and reconstruct their path. Psychoanalysis, therefore, It offers tools to transform experiences of pain and frustration into learning and autonomy. Even sublimation. Working through these experiences allows women to understand how their Emotional choices are rooted in unconscious patterns, opening space for more informed decisions. healthy.

Therapy also plays a role in building autonomy and strengthening subjectivity. enabling the individual to recognize themselves before seeking external recognition. Halperin (2025, p. 12) He notes that "analysis provides the individual with a space for reflection on their own Aggressiveness, their needs and desires, creating conditions for more authentic choices." Thus, The woman stops using her body or her sexuality as a currency for acceptance, and begins to position herself... as a subject of desire, no longer as an object of validation.



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Finally, understanding and working with one's own patterns facilitates the creation of new strategies. coping mechanisms in situations of emotional vulnerability. Psychoanalytic therapy promotes Recognizing feelings and needs allows women to identify warning signs. in future relationships and establish clear boundaries. This process of self-knowledge, combined with Analyzing the past is fundamental to breaking the cycle of repetition and opening space for stronger connections. balanced, conscious and satisfying.

Therefore, investing in psychoanalytic therapy means investing in yourself. Understanding how... The past shapes the present; recognizing patterns of repetition and strengthening subjectivity are key steps. Essential for personal transformation. Psychoanalysis not only helps to interpret experiences. previous ones, but it also offers tools to create new life narratives, enabling that May future romantic choices be guided by genuine desire and not by the repetition of past traumas.

CONCLUSION

Given the above, it is observed that the repetition and permanence of women in toxic relationships It involves a complex network of unconscious and sociocultural factors. Understanding this movement It requires a perspective that goes beyond visible behavior. Psychoanalysis allows us to listen to what lies beneath. Behind the repetition: unconscious fantasies, old pains that still reappear, marks from childhood. how the subject was constituted. More than just looking at behavior, the approach invites us to... To understand the individual in their entirety, their psychic structures, their history, their affects and defenses. Intertwined with sociocultural discourses that, from an early age, teach that to love is to yield, to be silent, and to endure. It is in this entanglement that many women end up losing themselves. This articulation Theoretical, therefore, it underpins the proposal of this work and allows for a broader understanding and profound psychological suffering is involved in this type of experience. Even so, it is important to recognize that remaining in a toxic relationship is not limited to those cases in which the woman are unaware of the suffering or do not perceive the harmful dynamics. There are also those who, even Aware of the toxicity of the bond, they continue to repeat the pattern, whether in new relationships or the same one. same. This phenomenon demonstrates that consciousness, by itself, is not enough to stop the repetition, since it operates in deep layers of the psyche and is sustained by affective and emotional imprints. Identity traits built throughout life.

Therefore, this work does not intend to offer definitive answers nor propose elimination. complete repetition, but open space for new research to explore these developments. From a psychoanalytic perspective, repetition does not disappear; on the contrary, it transforms itself. that the subject dissolves and reinvents itself. Perhaps, therefore, the question is not "how to prevent repetition," But how can we promote healthier movements within it, ensuring that each return is not... with the same version of itself. By broadening the understanding of these mechanisms, this study contributes



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to broaden the scope of reflection on female suffering in romantic relationships, the role that

They hold this belief within themselves, asserting that breaking or transforming a toxic bond is a process.

Complex, individual, and always under construction. It requires analysis, elaboration, and reinterpretation of...

plots that link love to pain.

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