


## Research in Psychotherapy and Theory of Subjectivity: Care as its Foundation

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**Abstract:** This theoretical essay, based on González Rey’s Theory of Subjectivity, discusses research on psychotherapy grounded in Theory of Subjectivity, embracing the view that the singularity of psychotherapy — in relation to other practices — is its devotion to care. This paper aims to debate the specificities care imposes on research in Theory of Subjectivity based psychotherapy. The considerations woven represent innovations in this field, whose current view on psychotherapy interpret it as similar to other spaces in which research is also undertake. This article is based on authorial reflections related to Theory of Subjectivity current state. Thus, research in psychotherapy based on Theory of Subjectivity demands of the psychotherapist that he or she develops it as a tool of care, therefore depriving it from the position of main objective that it generally holds in Theory of Subjectivity. Some ethical issues connected to this thesis are also presented.

**Keywords:** psychotherapy, caregivers, qualitative research, subjectivity, clinical psychology

## Pesquisa em Psicoterapia e Teoria da Subjetividade: O Cuidado como Fundamento

**Resumo:** Este estudo teórico, desenvolvido a partir da Teoria da Subjetividade de González Rey, discute a pesquisa na psicoterapia amparada nesse referencial, abraçando a perspectiva de que a particularidade da psicoterapia em relação a outros espaços é que ela é fundamentalmente um espaço de cuidado. Assim, o objetivo deste trabalho foi pensar as especificidades impostas pelo cuidado à pesquisa na psicoterapia baseada na Teoria da Subjetividade. As considerações tecidas representam inovações teóricas nesse arcabouço, que vem entendendo a psicoterapia como semelhante a outros espaços em que a pesquisa também toma forma. Este estudo teórico teve como fonte reflexões autorais produzidas a partir do momento atual da Teoria da Subjetividade. Conclui-se que a pesquisa na psicoterapia amparada nesse referencial exige do psicoterapeuta que a empreenda em prol do cuidado, destituindo-a do lugar de objetivo primordial que ela geralmente ocupa na Teoria da Subjetividade. São apresentados alguns delineamentos éticos conectados a tal conclusão.

**Palavras-chave:** psicoterapia, cuidadores, pesquisa qualitativa, subjetividade, psicologia clínica

## Investigación en Psicoterapia y Teoría de la Subjetividad: El Cuidado como Fundación

**Resumen:** Este estudio teórico, desarrollado desde la Teoría de la Subjetividad de González Rey, discute la investigación en psicoterapia sustentada en este marco. La perspectiva adoptada es que la particularidad de la psicoterapia en relación con otros espacios es que es un espacio de cuidado. El objetivo fue reflexionar sobre las especificidades impuestas por el cuidado en la investigación en psicoterapia desde la Teoría de la Subjetividad. Las consideraciones hechas representan innovaciones en este marco, que entiende la psicoterapia como similar a otros espacios en los que también se concreta la investigación. Este trabajo se construyó en reflexiones autorales producidas desde el momento actual de la Teoría de la Subjetividad. Se concluye que la investigación en psicoterapia basada en este marco exige que el psicoterapeuta la emprenda en favor del cuidado, sacándolo del lugar de objetivo primario que suele ocupar en él. Se presentan algunas pautas éticas relacionadas con esta conclusión.

**Palabras clave:** psicoterapia, cuidadores, investigación cualitativa, subjetividad, psicología clínica

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Although Psychology is a multiple area of knowledge and practice, constituted of different matrices of thought and action, and therefore marked by different epistemologies, theories, and methods, a particular type of psychology has

historically exercised dominance in academia, society, culture, and modes of subjectivation. This is due to the depth and strength of its alliances with various social, cultural, political, ideological, institutional, and economic actors and processes (Parker, 2020). One of the main characteristics of such psychology, henceforth referred to as mainstream psychology, is its division into basic psychology and applied psychology.

Mainstream psychology, based on a universal, essential, static, naturalized, and timeless understanding of reality, including typically human reality (subjectivity, culture, and history), conceives and operates research in Psychology as a set and sequence of neutral and objective protocols and procedures. Their aim is to reveal the truth about human processes due to the mainstream psychology mimicry of natural sciences based on positivism, as well to its adaptation to the power games of collectivities to which it is connected and on which it relies to maintain its hegemonic position. In the meantime, basic psychology is dedicated to reaching the truth about human processes via experimentation in controlled environments of laboratories and/or universities and via mass testing (De Vos, 2012). Applied psychologies, in turn, are dedicated to use this knowledge in a linear logic, through professional practice, in the most diverse contexts.

Hence, in mainstream psychology, psychotherapy is not understood as a space for research and knowledge production, but as a space for the instrumental reproduction of previously developed information, used in professional practice as interventions (González Rey et al., 2016). Psychotherapy is seen this way because of the great variability of phenomena it addresses compared to the phenomena organized in experiments and testing, and because of its impossibility of reaching numerically significant samples as demanded by mainstream psychology. For this type of psychology, the relationship between reality and knowledge is one of identity, so that the truth on human processes is discovered and confirmed by repetition and replication. Thus, within its framework, any legitimate understanding in this regard is far from the singular character of psychotherapy.

Despite the efforts made to separate research from professional practice — supported by the mainstream psychology view that the exercise of the profession does not produce reliable knowledge — psychotherapy has historically been one of the most fruitful fields for generating intelligibility about human processes in Psychology. As examples, there are the work and importance of authors such as Freud, Jung, Perls, Rogers, among many others. However, in the movement of founding schools and approaches to psychotherapy, psychotherapy inherits from mainstream psychology the notion that research and knowledge production — and thus sensitivity, reflection, reflexivity, creativity, spontaneity — are for a few genius and consecrated individuals masters who are then invoked to address and solve any questions, as if their contributions could respond to every human experience and the demands of every historical period (De Vos, 2020).

Then, the clinic — with all its subversive potential — remains mostly and contradictorily where it is placed by

mainstream psychology: an instrumentalist space of mere interventionist application and not of original research and knowledge production. Generally, psychotherapists themselves find it difficult to represent and signify their professional practice as a path of theoretical creation, reducing this dimension to a simple declaration of their own affiliation to some school or approach, and losing it in terms of new and different views that can emerge from their lived experiences and thinking. Considering the demands that contemporary times place on psychotherapists in their specific problems and circumstances, which the masters were unable to discuss for they had no opportunity to live them, this dynamic becomes particularly pernicious. Thus, to contemporary psychotherapists must formulate theory and put it into action to navigate contemporary scenarios.

Therefore, it is essential to stress that this type of contestation movement in the field of psychotherapy has taken place since the last decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and through different mobilizations aimed at problematizing and overcoming mainstream psychology. For example: (1) the contributions made to psychological thinking by the critical positions originating from social constructionism and constructivism in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, which concern, in social constructionism, the discussion of knowledge as a discursive practice of a relational nature and connected to the generative character of language; and in social constructivism, the need to think of the subject in their singularity (González Rey, 2007); (2) in some perspectives of psychoanalysis — such as those mobilized by Guattari, Deleuze, Derrida, Castoriadis and Elliot (González Rey, 2007), which have a strong expression and fruitful production at the moment; and (3) in German critical psychology, based on the work of Holzkamp (Toassa & Teo, 2015), as well as Scandinavian critical psychology (Schraube & Hojholt, 2016), both having a remarkable contemporary expression and production (Teo, 2023).

Theory of Subjectivity, using theory, epistemology and method as a cornerstone — which is formed respectively by Theory of Subjectivity itself, Qualitative Epistemology and constructive-interpretive method (González Rey & Mitjans Martínez, 2017) — in its cultural-historical, critical-propositional and complexity milestone, also offers itself as a resource for subverting mainstream psychology and thus as a resource for proposing another path for Psychology (Goulart et al., 2020). In Qualitative Epistemology, the relationship between reality and knowledge is conceived as one of non-identity. Hence, reality, in all its complexity, is understood as being impossible to fully know by any rationale — especially the typical human reality, as human processes from this perspective are recognized as objects that move and transform during any practice that approaches them (González Rey, 2005). Thus, Qualitative Epistemology assumes that the role of knowledge in Psychology is not to seek a supposed truth about human processes, but to produce and advance theoretical representations about them (understood as permanently unfinished and partial), as well as to produce and advance actions connected to them (González Rey, 2019a).

This is not only perfectly possible in professional practice, but also desirable and necessary, in order for it to be sensitive to the people, groups and institutions to which this practice is dedicated, as well as to the issues of society, culture and the historical period in which it is organized. Therefore, in Qualitative Epistemology, research, knowledge production and professional practice are understood as being inseparable and as mutually constitutive processes. Psychotherapy is also interpreted as an extremely privileged space for research and knowledge production, due to: (1) the distinctive quality of the relationship that develops between the psychotherapist and the people they take care of, marked by a significant deepening of trust and dialog; therefore, marked by the possibility of making visible and representing a wide range of subjective processes whose emergence and movement are linked to these conditions; and (2) the privileged time, from medium to long duration, during which the psychotherapist can follow the mobilizations and subjective configurations of the people they care for, as well as the means in which these mobilizations and configurations are organized in their lives.

Based on the theoretical-epistemological-methodological tripod of Theory of Subjectivity, this theoretical study deals with research and knowledge production in psychotherapy grounded in this framework by embracing the perspective that the particularity of psychotherapy is that it is fundamentally a practice of care. Care is represented here as the organization of existential fabrics, the organization of places and ways of/to existing and living. Assuming care as the foundation of psychotherapy means situating it as a space whose delimitation and occupation are primarily its constitution as ethos and of ethos; as human dwelling and trail, and of human dwelling and of trail (Figueiredo, 2015). This position represents a theoretical innovation in Theory of Subjectivity, since psychotherapy has been understood as a space similar to others in which research and knowledge production also are undertake.

Therefore, the specific contours of psychotherapy still need to be qualified in Theory of Subjectivity; consequently, the particularities of research and knowledge production in psychotherapy based on this framework also need to be addressed in their dialog with such contours. This text accomplishes this theoretical movement by considering psychotherapy as care and, in connection with this, dedicating itself to discuss knowledge production in psychotherapy based on Theory of Subjectivity. Thus, this article aims to reflect on specificities imposed by care on psychotherapy research based on the aforementioned theory.

To meet this goal, the next section presents Theory of Subjectivity, Qualitative Epistemology and constructive-interpretive method in psychotherapy in line with the considerations regarding this space of care being necessarily different from other spaces in which research and knowledge production also take place. Lastly, the theoretical contributions made in this study are summarized, presenting some ethical guidelines related to these contributions.

## Theory of Subjectivity, Psychotherapy and Care

Subjectivity is understood in Theory of Subjectivity as a complex system, marked by generation, self-generation, contradiction and unpredictability, and by constant tensions between organization and disorganization, chaos and disorder, connection and rupture (González Rey, 2019b). In this sense, subjectivity is also conceived as a system that is both formation and process (González Rey, 2007). Subjectivity distinction lies on its conformation through the integration of the emotional (individual) and the symbolic (social) in the conditions of culture.

Thus, subjectivity is both individual and social, and these two theoretical categories, “individual subjectivity” and “social subjectivity” — the main ones in Theory of Subjectivity — are only differentiated levels of its configuration (Oliveira dos Santos & Mitjans Martínez, 2020). However, due to this simultaneity, these levels must always be referenced and situated in relation to each other. Individual subjectivity refers to each person in their concrete trajectory, and in the particularities of their lived experiences. In turn, social subjectivity involves the integral system of subjective conformations (group and individual) articulated in social life in its various spheres, intertwined in specific ways in institutions, groups and various formations of a concrete society. Thus, social subjectivity involves the ways in which social representations, beliefs, morals, myths, ideologies, languages, discourses, and symbolic and cultural productions such as perspectives on health, illness, death, old age, childhood, love, gender, race, etc. are subjectivized (González Rey & Mitjans Martínez, 2017).

Another singularity of subjectivity in relation to other systems is its constitution: a way that is continuously committed to both lived experiences of people, groups and institutions histories and the current moment of their subjective conformation and their ongoing experience (González Rey & Mitjans Martínez, 2017). Thus, subjectivity, as well as being simultaneously individual and social, is also both historical and current — a simultaneity evinced by two of the other main theoretical categories of Theory of subjectivity, “subjective sense” and “subjective configuration.”

Subjective sense is the most basic, elementary and dynamic unit of subjectivity, represented by the emotional-symbolic integration whose emergence configures the very process that ontologically defines subjectivity (González Rey, 2019c). Its production takes place in every human experience. When, in the course of a concrete trajectory, subjective senses interact with each other in such a way as to converge in relatively stable formations that produce/perpetuate specific subjective states — of shapes and colors that make up the experience lived by people, i.e., shapes and colors that constitute the subjective nature of lived experiences — this organization of subjective senses is called a subjective configuration (González Rey, 2007). Mori (2020) argues that one of the great theoretical advances made possible by Theory of Subjectivity in understanding human processes is comprehending that subjective senses produced

at different moments, relationships and actions in people's lives can be integrated into subjective configurations and organized from the multiplicity and contradictions of lived experiences. However, their stability is relative because, in every emergence of subjective senses, i.e., in every human experience, subjective configurations are mobilized in their current conformation as these new subjective senses are organized. As a result, subjective configurations can become procedurally reconfigured due to this sensitization (Rossato & Ramos, 2020), making it possible for new specific subjective states, new colored forms to become a privileged part of the subjective nature of lived experiences — and precisely because in this case, subjective configurations have differed from what they were previously. Thus, the current subjective conformation, although necessarily involved in the production of new subjective senses, does not determine them, or prevent something qualitatively different from them from emerging; it only limits this production, but not as insurmountable barriers, only as particularities of its formation and process (González Rey, 2007).

This movement leads to a view of subjective development as singularly produced, without events and/or periods of human life being universally and a priori fixed, nor regular and progressive stages of any human processes (cognition, intellect, affect, biology, language, or learning), for it to happen (Montú et al., 2021). Thus, subjective development, in Theory of Subjectivity, is precisely understood as the configuration of subjectivity in qualitatively different ways in relation to its previous moment. This reconfiguration also produces new ways of acting and interacting with others (Rossato & Mitjáns Martínez, 2018).

In the Theory of Subjectivity, “emergence of the subject” is the opening — by people, groups and/or institutions — of new ways of subjectivation and new life alternatives that transcend and transgress the normativity of their contexts. This openness is linked to subjective development. Thus, the subject (another of the main theoretical categories of Theory of Subjectivity) refers to the person, group or institution who, within the contours and limits of their subjectivity and the social subjectivities of the spaces they live and take part in, produces, in their lived experiences, both the reconfiguration of these contours and limits, generating others, and new options for their trajectory. In turn, Theory of Subjectivity addresses in the theoretical category “agent” the person, group, or institution that, in its subjective production, thinks, positions itself, acts, transits, decides, but remains aligned with the molds imposed by its contexts. The agent refers to the person, group or institution that is not completely dissolved in the subjective systems of which it is a part — it reflects, chooses and acts — but neither is it subjectively provoked in such a way as to generate something new.

Due to the interdependence and inseparability among Theory of Subjectivity, Qualitative Epistemology and constructive-interpretive method, professional practices that represent human processes based on Theory of Subjectivity will necessarily have Qualitative Epistemology as their epistemological foundation and constructive-interpretive

method as a way of generating intelligibility and action. Thus, psychotherapy based on Theory of Subjectivity is guided by Qualitative Epistemology, which consists of three pillars:

- The constructive-interpretive nature of knowledge: generating knowledge means operating with the theoretical categories of Theory of Subjectivity (all open and devoid of prior established content) to organize hypothetical-theoretical weaves on the addressed field. This movement, which is the constructive-interpretive method itself, is undertaken in the recursion between what is experienced in the field and the speculative and reflective capacity of those who dedicate themselves to it (Patiño Torres & Goulart, 2020). In psychotherapy, this implies that the psychotherapist is continually called upon to produce, in an authorial way, on the subjective processes of the other person and the relationship that surrounds them — this second point being a theoretical innovation in Theory of Subjectivity proposed by this work, as this framework does not yet address the need to specifically qualify this relationship. It is understood that such qualification is fundamental because it makes it possible to visualize and represent subjective senses emerging and interacting in such a way as to produce subjective configurations, as well as to think about the ways in which certain subjective senses participate in the reorganization of these configurations; and how other ways relate only to specific emergences (which are not integrated in a stable way into any subjective configuration). In this sense, the articulation of the psychotherapist's constructions (ideas, suspicions, clues, called indicators in Qualitative Epistemology) in specific hypotheses and theoretical models is one of their main working tools and one of their main care tools. This dynamic take shape from this professional's sensitivity to the other, and thus from their own subjective processes.

- The legitimization of the singular as a source of knowledge production: in Qualitative Epistemology, due to the value that theoretical production holds, the singular is recognized for what it contributes to the advancement of reflection and action (González Rey, 2005). In this theoretical study, it is understood that in psychotherapy this pillar incurs in the need to recognize the other in their particularities and this other truly as another person, someone different and free, so that the care offered by the psychotherapist also needs to be singularly constituted. This means that this pillar is also deeply supported by the quality of sensitivity that the psychotherapist gives to the people they care for, especially with regard to how such recognition is fundamental for a relationship and a process to be constituted as effectively dedicated, par excellence, to the organization of existential fabrics and, therefore, to the organization of places and ways of/to exist and live. This position also represents, in its link to the discussion undertaken here on psychotherapy as care, a theoretical innovation of this work in relation to the current moment of Theory of Subjectivity.

- The importance of dialog in knowledge production: in Qualitative Epistemology, dialog is understood as a relational space marked by the subjective engagement

of the people involved in it, and thus as a relational space marked by mutual interest and commitment, emotional involvement, and open and authentic expression (Madeiro Coelho & Patiño Torres, 2022). This expression admits and demands convergence and continuity – which sustain the relational space – but also admits and demands divergence and conflict. Both maintain and promote the difference between singularities, and it is precisely this difference that is the constituent and constitutive basis of dialog. As a result of the subjective engagement that characterizes it, dialog is therefore a relational space that favors the emergence of subjective senses. In research and knowledge production, this emergence is necessary because what moves in it are precisely the aspects that can be represented and signified in the constructive-interpretive method. In psychotherapy supported by Theory of Subjectivity, it is taken as a foundation because it contributes to the generation and organization of new subjective resources and subjective conformations and thus contributes to subjective development and the emergence of the subject. Encouraging subjective development and the emergence of the people being assisted as subjects of their trajectories are understood here as the horizons of psychotherapy based on Theory of Subjectivity – and not as its objectives, as is currently understood in this framework (González Rey, 2007). This work makes a theoretical innovation by arguing that, in psychotherapy based on Theory of Subjectivity, care is not configured in goals, but is guided by principles that allow the psychotherapist to produce their actions in an authorial way in relation to the other, and precisely from the relationship with that other. This consideration is important within Theory of Subjectivity, in which, unfortunately, the emergence of the subject has become a fetish (Rossato & Almeida, 2022), an outline that often tramples on the configuration of psychotherapy as a space for care.

In fact, the three pillars presented above have as a common axis the importance of the psychotherapist's sensitivity to each person assisted in the constitution of the psychotherapy space, with emphasis also on how this sensitivity is fundamental to the psychotherapist's theoretical production to take shape and help him, as a care tool, in each therapeutic process. In terms of this work, these three pillars have as their common axis the importance of the psychotherapist's sensitivity to each person served in the constitution of different and unique forms and ways of care, which this professional offer to the other – and particularly with regard to the ways in which the refinement of their theoretical production participates in it. In concrete terms, this understanding has some implications:

- It demands that the psychotherapist, in their sensitivity to the people they care for, investigate and understand the ways in which the subjective configurations of the other give shape and color to their lived experiences and, from this, particularly the ways in which this other weaves their existence and organizes their places and ways of/to exist and live – in other words, the ways in which each person they care for produces their own care. The relevance of this investigation

and understanding lies precisely in how much they serve the psychotherapist in his craft of caring for the other;

- Caring for the other involves the psychotherapist's sensitivity in acting as a facilitator in shaping the psychotherapy space both as a human dwelling place (which embraces what the other experiences and is their existential refuge) and as a generator of new human paths (which invites the other to reflect and experiment in order to produce their own care in new ways). Thus, care involves the psychotherapist's dedication to facilitating the conformation of psychotherapy as a space that, in each person's experience and production of themselves, is configured simultaneously as home and work (Figueiredo, 2015), as freedom and responsibility (Holanda, 2009);

- Care, based on the definition of subjectivity that comes from Theory of Subjectivity, makes sensitivity to the other and caring for that other a matter of allowing oneself to be affected and reflecting on the subjective production of each person being cared for in the character of this production of being, at the same time, a formation, and a process. This means that, in facilitating the production of new subjective senses, it is essential to respect both the formation that is subjectivity and the process that it also is. With regard to respect for formation, sensitivity to the other and caring for this other require the psychotherapist to be able to qualitatively measure how much and how it is possible to subjectively mobilize the person being assisted without running unnecessary risks of leading them to excessive and sudden ruptures which, instead of promoting new emotional-symbolic integrations, dismantle, disorganize and end up being able to take away from the other what sustains them. In relation to respect for the process, sensitivity to the people being cared for require the psychotherapist to take into account what is already subjectively configured and thus seek to facilitate the production of new subjective senses based on reflections and experimentation that dialog with the other person's current modes of subjective production; however, with the dedication that these invitations differ to some degree from what is already configured, but to a degree that respects subjectivity as a formation. This means understanding the favoring of the production of new subjective senses as a movement that necessarily needs to start from what and how the person being assisted lives, enhancing the chances of new emotional-symbolic integrations taking place, as well as new qualities of integration. This discussion is also a theoretical innovation in Theory of Subjectivity, which has not yet focused particularly on how to facilitate the production of new subjective senses in practice.

### **Care and Specificities of Research and Knowledge Production in Psychotherapy Based on Theory of Subjectivity**

When taking psychotherapy based on Theory of Subjectivity as a professional practice of care, due to the importance of the psychotherapist's sensitivity to the other and their authorial theoretical production about each therapeutic process, it is fundamental that the psychotherapist

be a subject and, in this sense, the protagonist and author of their own concrete trajectory; and particularly with regard to their dedication to their own subjective processes of being a psychotherapist. However, the distinctive quality of the psychotherapy space, as discussed in the previous section – care – demands of the psychotherapist that their ways of being a subject necessarily involve putting themselves at the service of others as one of their capacities and movements *par excellence*.

For this reason, the psychotherapist as a subject is faced with a contradiction in which he is constantly called upon to navigate. It is essential for them to be the protagonist and author of their concrete journey, and especially of their being a psychotherapist. However, this protagonism and authorship have contours and boundaries shaped in the moment and in the process of encountering the other, depending on how and to what extent they can contribute to favor the other's own protagonism and authorship. In this way, paradoxically, the psychotherapist as a subject demand that the professional, within the space of psychotherapy, be guided by the forms, colors, and the lived experiences of the other, while simultaneously providing critical and continuous support to themselves. Through this mechanism, this self-support is what allows them not only to support the other in their mobilizations and movements but also to secure the space of psychotherapy itself as a space of care. This discussion about how the psychotherapist's subjectivity needs to take shape from a perspective of care is not currently a focus in psychotherapy grounded in Theory of Subjectivity, which represents a theoretical innovation in this work.

This dynamic is the first of the specificities that research in psychotherapy based on Theory of Subjectivity imposes on the psychotherapist: the level, extent, and ways in which their protagonism and authorship are expressed in this space have as their main thermometer precisely how much and how they care for the other. Although psychotherapy based on Theory of Subjectivity requires the psychotherapist to be a researcher and thus create knowledge on each therapeutic process, the ways in which they understand the other, although feeding theoretical production, are not subordinated to it as a primary purpose, but rather to care. This gives theoretical production the status of a tool for care, removing it from the central status it usually holds in research supported by Theory of Subjectivity, making psychotherapy, *par excellence*, a space that is different from other spaces of research and knowledge production.

This displacement to which theoretical production is subjected in psychotherapy research based on Theory of Subjectivity is linked to the difference between the roles and intentions that mark this research space in comparison to other spaces of this type. From a care perspective, in addition to what was discussed in the previous paragraph, it should be borne in mind that people who generally seek psychotherapeutic care, except in specific situations (such as cases referred by guardians and/or tutors, or by law), mostly seek to be cared for and/or to care for themselves – whereas research participants propose (at least according to what

they say) to contribute to knowledge production, through an active search and/or invitation on the part of the researcher.

Such difference means that the type of commitment signed between the researcher and the participants in a research project is different to that established between the psychotherapist and the people being cared for. Although it is not only interesting but also desirable for every researcher to have as one of their research guidelines to take care of their participants during the process, the ways and means by which this care can take place are different from the ways and means of psychotherapy, due to factors mentioned earlier in this work: (1) the different quality of the relationship between the psychotherapist and the people they care for, due to the deepening of trust and dialogue; (2) the length of time this relationship lasts, and (3) what this time allows the psychotherapist to accompany, cultivate and favor. Thus, research and knowledge production in the field of psychotherapy based on Theory of Subjectivity benefit from care in what involves the possibility of generating broader and deeper reflections and understandings on human processes, but they cannot eclipse it, quite the opposite: they need to be undertaken for its sake.

Finally, the theoretical contributions of this work are summarized, as well as some ethical implications arising from the perspective adopted. The first theoretical contribution concerns the very movement in Theory of Subjectivity to take the foundation of psychotherapy to be care, since this theoretical-epistemological-methodological body has been thinking about this professional space and practice without differentiating psychotherapy from other spaces in which research and knowledge production also take place. Connected to this contribution are the theoretical innovations presented here on the impositions of care on research and knowledge production in psychotherapy based on Theory of Subjectivity, as well as the theoretical innovations concerning the rethinking of the three pillars of Qualitative Epistemology from the perspective of care. The second theoretical contribution, in turn, involves the relationship established here between the conformation of psychotherapy as care, the psychotherapist's sensitivity to the other and their authorial theoretical production. This link highlights the importance of studying and understanding the subjective configurations of being a psychotherapist to advance care in this field. Hence, it especially highlights the importance of studying and understanding ways of living such experiences that subsidize and encourage the psychotherapist to place them at the service of others.

As ethical implications of research and knowledge production in psychotherapy based on Theory of Subjectivity with care as a guideline, there are points that need to be taken into consideration by psychotherapists when thinking about publicizing what they have generated during therapeutic processes of the people they care for. In this theoretical study, it is understood that such publicization is very important, making it essential for psychotherapists to deal with issues related to it. The first point has to do with this interest in publicizing being taken into the very relationship with the

people being assisted, thus becoming a process that is also theirs and, therefore, a process that is necessarily part of the care that the psychotherapist provides.

This consideration leads to the second point, in which this theoretical production, when presented to the other, can become a moment of evaluation of the psychotherapist and the therapeutic process by each person assisted. This moment can also be extremely fruitful for facilitating the emergence of new subjective senses, as well as for the people being cared for to be able to look at their journey from other angles based on how the psychotherapist sees their journeys in psychotherapy.

In turn, the third point involves precisely guaranteeing the right to confidentiality by publicizing the knowledge produced in such space, so that no information is presented that could compromise it, and/or whose disclosure is not authorized by the people served.

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