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BOOK REVIEW OF THE VOLUME *MEDIEREA CONFLICTELOR FAMILIALE*, AUTHORED BY IULIAN APOSTU, 2020

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Book: *Medierea conflictelor familiale*, [Mediation of family conflicts]
Author : Apostu Iulian, Voinea Maria.
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Abstract

The book Mediation of family conflicts published by Pro Universitaria Publishing House in December 2020 is the latest publication by the authors Apostu Iulian and Voinea Maria.

The paper develops a theoretical approach on the evolution of conjugal structures in the Romanian space, highlighting the resources that define these changes and their effects in terms of functional changes in the family. The originality of the work derives from the new vision that the book brings in this dilemma - mediation or separation – thus synthesizing the sociological and psychological elements about mediation, counseling and therapy.

The book is an excellent landmark for those who want to understand the idea of mediation, an action viewed from a threefold perspective: sociological, psychological and of intervention in social work.

Keywords:
Mediation of family conflicts, Romania, sociological and psychological elements about mediation.

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Also, for Romania, the process of mediation and therapy is not so well known. As the paper demonstrates, less than 3% of partners have experience in therapeutic or marital mediation services. The book aims to highlight these types of specific services, both for psychologists, mediators or counselors.

Structured on 4 chapters, the book tries to explain the evolution of the couple's life in a functionalist approach, analyzing in a contemporary context new trends of socialization, solidarity, biological manifestation and economic functionality.

The contemporary space faces multiple phenomena and manifestation issues in the couple's life, on the solution of which depends the whole balance of the conjugal system.

The amplification of this phenomenon is also due to the new contemporary challenges that tend to structurally reform the whole society, by rethinking the roles, functions and social imperatives that were the basis of the functioning of society until now. Moreover, the pandemic context also comes with a series of challenges that further highlight the problems of the contemporary couple. In many couples, mimicking happiness becomes a general state of the couple: each partner tries to protect himself from the other by limiting actions to the strictly functional level (formal fulfillment of functions and related roles), by reduced emotional involvement and by avoiding controversy. For this reason, many therapists believe that some couples have not grown much in intimacy and that those who have been married for 15 to 20 years have only 1-2 years of conjugal relationship, repeated for 8 to 10 times.

At the same time, the book dismantles a series of social stereotypes regarding marital life, such as communication problems, conflict, therefore highlighting the main resources for marital intervention and mediation. Thus, the conflict must be seen not only as a consequence of dysfunctions, but also as a way to highlight differences of opinion and attitudes that, thus, can be exposed to mediation. In the same sense, communication problems,

categorized as primary problems of marital conflict can be effects of real problems rather than problems themselves and one of the general problems in marital mediation strategies can derive from mediating the effects and not the causes that generated it.

Conflicting resources in the contemporary couple, the psycho-social consequences are also exposed and explain the main forms of intervention in mediation.

Particular attention is paid to the idea of internal fusion, of building solidarity. As a function of the family, solidarity is the sum of internal resources that ensure the couple's vitality, emotional consistency, security and trust.

In this context, the logic of building marital solidarity becomes the key to deciphering the type of marital relationship - solidarity, as a cultural predefining of a system that sees the cohesive couple through the very decision of choosing a partner, or solidarity as an effect of two individual accomplishments.

Either of the two guidelines would be considered valid, the conflict can be seen either as evidence that predicts separation, or as a way to reveal certain differences in marital manifestation to be exposed to mediation. And because the line between mediation and separation is sometimes blurred, many couples with a chance of mediation become victims of a momentary decision that dictates separation imperatively.

The book is an excellent landmark for those who want to understand the idea of mediation, an action viewed from a threefold perspective: sociological, psychological and of intervention in social work.

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