

## BABY: FROM OBJECT TO SUBJECT \* (1)

by Karina Tenenbaum

An analyst has to intervene when the full attention of a mother might be harmful to her son.

**Sometimes too much love is not healthy.** It would be necessary to intervene when a woman's place is entirely occupied by her role as mother. **It is very important to help the parents in this process because they also suffer and they don't know how to help themselves and their child.**

A child can take the position of an object depending on his mother, and must perform certain maneuvers to move towards becoming an independent subject. What will enable this shift will be the reconstruction of a version of a father, which will result in barring the desire of the mother, stopping it. In the pursuit of the cure we'll bet on this feature of separating mother and child, or cutting, which may have been dormant and veiled in the structure of the neurosis, but not necessarily erased.

When a mother wants something else other than her own son, the child asks himself, what does she want besides me?

It is necessary that the object-child is not everything to the subject-mother. Rather, it is necessary that the mother be divided between her love and desire for a man, and her desire for her son.

I will give an example on how in a therapeutic environment an analytical process can work with a child doing play therapy. The patient who I will call A is five years old. He begins to draw, wanting to draw a number 5 and getting a number 2. He repeats this several times, but cannot achieve his 5. He tries to use scissors, but he can't, because he says that the scissors are not working well. He asks me to help him out, making his first demand. As I help him to make the cut, I ask him how old he is. He is surprised by the intervention and says 5, and laughs. The number 2 that he comes out with is where The Other places him, but he turns to the analyst to help him make a cut, where to cut something does not work.

In the next session he takes three papers and draws a head, a body and legs. Each body part is on a different piece of paper. He sticks them together and says that it is he. He repeats the same process, but this time draws his mom and asks the analyst to make her a dress to mark the distinction. There are only three papers left and he doubts between making either his sister or his father. After thinking about it for a while, he decides to draw his father, but he makes a mess and throws the drawings in the garbage. He knows that there are no more papers, but asks for more regardless. The intervention here was: **"we have to make a father with what we have,"** while I take his drawing out from the garbage can, and put him back on the table.

This intervention is an adjustment that calls into question a meaning given and established by him. A means that this father doesn't work out for him, and what he gets is "this father does work

out, and it's the one that is available." This intervention acts as a cut, going against the sense given. He fell for an established meaning, and this produced emptiness.

**“ THE IDEA IS TO MAKE “A” FATHER OPERATIONAL WHERE HE HAD ALREADY FUNCTIONED, ALBEIT IN A WEAK WAY. PROFOUND DETERIORATION OF THE FATHER FIGURE COMBINED WITH THE MOTHER’S INNER HAVOC. ”**

In the presence of his mother he says he does not want to live anymore, and his mother becomes anxious, crying desperately. When the mother left the room, suddenly, in the absence of his mother, he speaks of the dialectic between being big or small.

His mother says that A drinks from the bottle in the morning, and then he washes a cup. His father insists he uses the cup, so when his father arrives, he believes that A has drunk from that cup.

A pleases the two, first taking the bottle as his mother wishes and showing the cup as his father wishes. We see a shift from the S1 bottle to the S2 cup, and how this marks his subjective division as this appears to be a hoax to his father. The S2 is also a way to set out the paternal function. This is where we can place the child's symptom: a symptom in two tempos. He wants to please his mother and his father. He wants to be a baby but also a grown up, this is his doubt between being small or big.

He continues playing some family games where he has to destroy the bad family, until one day he says: “I killed the baby.” This statement coincides with the time he eventually stops the bottle feeding, as well as he starts going to the toilet by himself, stopping his “accidents” such as having problems to control his pee. When A comes to the next session, he says he likes to play baby. Sometimes he pretends he is a little boy and he is sleepy so his mother can hold A in his arms. The analyst highlights: “this is a game.”

If he can already play, or metaphorize, it is because he is represented by that, and if he needs signifiers to represent him he is no longer in the place of an object-baby to advent as a subject.

By the time A was able to separate from his mother, and his mother from him, she was able to find activities for herself that she wished to partake in for years, but had been unable to because of her duties as a mother.

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