

P-1161 - HEART FOCUSED ANXIETY FOLLOWING RETROSPECTIVES MEMORIES OF NEGATIVE LIFE EVENTS: THE ROLE OF HOSTILITY

N.Nikolakakis¹, M.Gouva², E.Dragioti³, D.Tsartsalis³

¹Department of Psychiatry, University of Crete, Heraklion, ²School of Health, Higher Technological Educational Institution of Epirus, T.E.I., Ioánnina, ³Department of Psychiatry, [Sotiria] Hospital, Athens, ⁴Cardiology Department, Hippokration Hospital, Athínai, Greece

Introduction: Retrospective memories of stressful events during childhood have been related empirically with a wide range of symptoms in adulthood.

Objective: To clarify the possible link between memories of childhood stressful events and adult heart focused anxiety.

Aim: To investigate whether retrospective stressful memories are associated with cardiac anxiety and if this association is mediated through hostility in adulthood.

Method: A community sample of 300 individuals (100 men - 200 women, mean age 33, SD = 12,5 ranged 18-75), completed the Cardiac Anxiety Questionnaire, the Hostility and Direction of Hostility Questionnaire and a questionnaire regarding retrospective memories of stressful experiences during childhood.

Results: Childhood stressful memories were associated with higher levels of both heart focused anxiety and hostility ($r=.005$). Elevated levels of cardiac anxiety were also correlated with a hostile attitude ($r\leq.001$). Regression models revealed that paranoid hostility fully mediated the link between stressful memories and heart focused anxiety for women ($\beta =2,918$, $p=.004$), after adjustments. No such mediation was proved in men, thus both retrospective stressful memories during childhood and hostile attitudes were independent contributors for anxiety of heart function. No significant differences were found among both sexes, as far as heart focused anxiety ($t=-.964$, $p=.336$) and total hostility ($t=.342$, $p=.733$) are concerned.

Conclusion: Findings are consistent with the hypothesis that, in women, childhood stressful memories influences adult levels of cardiac anxiety sensations by fostering paranoid hostility. In men, findings suggest that these memories and hostility are both important independent predictors of adult cardiac anxiety sensitivity.