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"Wander away and come back different from what I was":

A Proposal to Combine Travel Stories

in Working with Adolescents

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Adolescence is characterized by feelings and conflicts that arise during the transition from childhood to adulthood. The adolescent is required to deal with developmental tasks, in which the main conflict constitutes a normative and visible crisis of exploration, development and consolidation of a sense of identity.

Parents, society, and educating figures play a role in development, in the transition from childhood to adulthood, and in the adolescent's identity-formation process. Daughters and mothers become closer and further apart in the cycle of life (Lamdan 2004), and the identifications that pass from mother to daughter are very prominent in the daughter's identity (Cohler, Grunebaum and Robbins, 1981). In the absence of a maternal presence, the daughter must mobilize alternative resources, both external and internal, for her maturation process and personal growth.

This article presents a reflection on the maturation process of a girl who lost her mother at birth and the stages of her development into an adolescent and a woman by mediation between an African tale and the heroine's emotional journey, which is also experienced by the tale's reader. From this perspective, the article suggests combining the travel stories of tale heroes in educational and therapeutic processes, with the purpose of helping girls and women in the process of identity formation. This article refers to girls, but the observations presented here can be extended to adolescents of both genders, as well as to certain groups characterized by deprivation of parental care.

Keywords: Bibliotherapy, Adolescence, Motherless Daughters, Development & Individuation, Parenting adolescents.

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