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Rogers and Heidegger: Is a gathering for a new view of the self possible?

Rogers e Heidegger: um encontro possível?

Elza Maria do Socorro **DUTRA**¹

Abstract

The aim of the article is to propose a connection between the construct of self as thought by the psychologist Carl Rogers in his personality theory and the notion of being-here, developed by Martin Heidegger's Existential Analytic. With reference to these authors, we discuss the possibility of a new vision of self from the contributions of the client-centered approach of Eugene Gendlin. Despite the recognition of differences in epistemological and ontological fields in which the authors are located, a rapprochement between self and being-here is considered possible. We expected that the debate on this issue will contribute to the enrichment of Phenomenological Psychology.

Keywords: Carl Rogers; Humanistic psychology; Martin Heidegger; Phenomenological psychology; Self.

Resumo

Este artigo tem como objetivo propor uma aproximação entre o constructo self, como pensado pelo psicólogo Carl Rogers em sua Teoria de Personalidade, e a noção de ser-aí, ideia presente na Analítica da Existência desenvolvida pelo filósofo alemão Martin Heidegger. Tendo como referência os autores mencionados, discute-se a possibilidade de uma nova visão do self a partir das contribuições de Eugene Gendlin à Terapia Centrada no Cliente. A despeito do reconhecimento das diferenças dos campos epistemológico e ontológico em que os autores se situam, considera-se possível uma aproximação entre self e ser-aí. Espera-se que o debate sobre essa questão possa contribuir para o enriquecimento da Psicologia Fenomenológica.

Palavras-chave: Carl Rogers; Psicologia humanista; Martin Heidegger; Psicologia fenomenológica; Self.

This paper is based on the doctorate thesis (Dutra, 2000) conducted with adolescents who had attempted suicide. In order to understand the attempted suicide of these teenagers, we focused on the construct of self, according to the person-

centered therapy, and we proposed, from the contributions of Eugene Gendlin to the theory developed by Carl Rogers, the comprehension of the self as an expression of the being-in-the-world in view of Martin Heidegger's thought.

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However, the theme related to suicide attempt will not be considered in this paper, whose purpose will be limited to the discussion about the construct of self to broaden the theoretical scope by using some ideas of Martin Heidegger's ontology as reference. Accordingly, theoretical considerations are made, based on Carl Rogers and Martin Heidegger's ideas, with the aim of reaching the intended interlocution between both authors, particularly about the self, the main concern of this work. To achieve this objective, we will focus on the construct of self, which represents the central nucleus of the theory developed by Carl Rogers, as it is the concept that plays an important role in behavior.

At the same time, the main ideas that are central to Heidegger's thought will be presented to create a theoretical support that allows an interlocution between the philosopher and the psychologist, Carl Rogers. From the reformulations of this construct, mainly when Gendlin's ideas are absorbed by the person-centered therapy, we intend to reach a new view of the construct of self from the Heideggerian phenomenological perspective.

A little about Carl Rogers' Theory of Personality

The self is the central nucleus of the theory of personality developed by Carl Rogers. The self was developed in clinical practice and considered by Rogers as having an eminently phenomenological nature, supported by the organismic theories of personality, which is best represented by Kurt Goldstein, supported by the ideas of Snygg and Combs (1949), by phenomenology and by current authors of humanistic and Phenomenological Psychology (Feijoo, 2011; McDonald & Wearing, 2013).

Some influences can be observed in this theory, such as the Gestalt psychology, through the theoretical formulation of the Phenomenological or perceptual field, according to Snygg and Combs (1949). These authors introduced the phenomenological perspective in the United States,

while the Organismic theory was introduced by Kurt Goldstein.

These influences favored the development of a theory that assumes as a priority what has been lived, the subjective experience of the individual, which means, the internal world of experience. For Carl Rogers, the objective reality does not exist because each person perceives the world or reality according to his internal world, his feelings, emotions and experiences; in other words, according to the perception that he has of his being-with-others. In this process, the perception that each one has of his characteristics, affections, moods, relationships and values, this is, his self-concept or self, has a crucial importance, because it is the image through which each one perceives oneself in the world that will influence, not to say guide or determine, the existence of the individual. Rogers (Rogers and Kinget, 1975) is quite explicit about it when he insists on the importance of the self and the development of the actualizing tendency, conferring to it a determining role, when he proposes that what determines behavior is the conjunction of these two factors, the actualizing tendency and self-conception.

Regarding the phenomenological or conceptual field, important for the development of self, it is defined by Rogers (1975, p.467) as "the one that includes everything that is experienced by the body, whether these experiences are held by awareness or not". The phenomenological or perceptual field was borrowed from Snygg and Combs (1949) and aims to reflect and contemplate the relationship between the internal world of experience and all the influence that this relationship represents in the experiential process.

The phenomenology that inspires Rogers is based on the ideas of the authors Snygg and Combs that seems to reflect the phenomenology of Edmund Husserl because the valorization of the internal world of the individual is observed, a principle that is in the concept of intentionality of consciousness proposed by the philosopher. The American authors proposed that behavior was mainly determined by the phenomenological field of the individual and suggested, as a task for

Phenomenological Psychology, the exploration of this phenomenological field (Snygg & Combs, 1949). According to them, behavior is considered, above all, as a problem of the human perception.

We can say that, for Rogers, the fact of having adopted a phenomenological perspective in the way he did means he prioritizes the internal reference frame of the other, in order to penetrate into his personal meanings, because he considers that each person's truth is the perception of reality, as he experiences it in his life. This approach is much closer and related to Husserl's phenomenology, to his most basic assumptions, such as the principle of intentionality of consciousness.

Rogers introduces us to two important definitions of the self. The last one is introduced in the second version of his personality theory. Rogers (1959) presents it in a more summarized manner, with more elaborated definitions and, at the same time, a strong influence from the existentialist perspective is observed. These definitions of the construct of self, especially the first version, we clearly identified a characteristic of the self with a relational nature, which is built up not only from the perception that the individual has of his personal attributes, but also from those related to the world. The self presents some characteristics: it is conscious, it is a gestalt or an organized configuration and it contains, mainly, perceptions of the own individual related to the world. The character of awareness of the self responds to Rogers' need to scientifically prove his theory, within positivist parameters. Assuming that the self is sheltered only by the perceptions of awareness, it could be objectively verified and be given an operative definition; this approach mainly corroborates the last definition:

Self, Self concept, Self-structure. These terms refer to the organized, consistent conceptual gestalt composed of perceptions of the characteristics of the 'I' or 'me' and the perceptions of the relationships of the 'I' or 'me' to others and to various aspects of life, together with the values attached to these perceptions. It is a gestalt, which is available to awareness, though not necessarily in awareness. It is a fluid and changing gestalt,

a process, but at any given moment it is a specific entity, which is at least partially definable in operational terms by means of a Q sort or any other instrument or measure. Rogers (1959, p.200).

As an organized configuration or gestalt, the self becomes ruled by the laws of the perceptual field. This means that it is not a rigid structure of itself; on the contrary, it involves changes and sudden fluctuations that take over new organizations according to the involved aspects in the manner of being-in-the-world. It is a perception that flows and moves according to the being-in-the-world of the person and reflects his affections, ideas and moods, favored by existence.

The self, although constituted as a perceptual and changeable configuration, accepts the most specific characteristics of the individual or those that are perceived in this way and tend to be preserved according to the actualizing tendency of self. This dimension of awareness of the self, this is, the attributes that the individual considers as being part of himself, is responsible for the healthy development of the individual, as well as for the pathologies of his behaviors, which will depend on the way those experiences will be symbolized, whether correctly or not, and still, if they will be distorted or denied. Such a process would correspond to an agreement, which Rogers calls congruence, between the experience that has been felt and its symbolization; in other words, between the experience of the body and the self of the individual.

Thus, congruence is considered by Rogers as a process of internal communication, when experience that has been felt is correctly symbolized in the awareness. Functioning in a congruent way means to make contact with the experience that has been felt and to be able to represent it in the awareness, without any need to distort or deny it, according to a self-concept that has already been organized, and with which some specific experiences can be presented as incompatible ones. This way of functioning, then, would consist in an incongruent way of being; actually, it means acting in an inauthentic way, based on a false conception

of himself; it would be assuming other people's values, it would be alienating one from his himself.

Rogers' personality theory received great contributions from the researchers of the person-centered approach. One of its main contributors was Eugene Gendlin who, by developing the Theory of Experiencing in 1973 and Theory of Personality Change in 1964, consolidated some of the principles that were introduced by Rogers and modified others. Some authors (Rezola, 1975; Spiegelberg, 1972) affirm that Gendlin was able to solve a conflict that tormented Rogers during his whole life: to develop a subjective science without neglecting the methodological claims of positivism, and establish the theory in a truly and concretely existential dimension, through the 'experiencing' concept.

The term experiencing was introduced by Gendlin (1970a, p.138) and he defined it as "the process of concrete, bodily feeling, which constitutes the basic matter of psychological and personality phenomena". Some of the changes that took place in Rogers' theory were possible through this new concept and through the new conception of authenticity, which came from Gendlin's ideas. The importance of experiencing and self has been recognized by many authors in Phenomenological Psychology (Brisola & Cury, 2016; Messias & Cury, 2006), among others.

Gendlin's theory was formulated for the first time in 1955 and intended, above all, to articulate philosophy and Carl Rogers' theory, establishing then a new foundation for his personality theory, as Spiegelberg (1972) thinks. Gendlin's effort to close up existentialist philosophy and psychotherapy can be observed in a text about this topic (Gendlin, 1970b), where he proposes an existential relationship that is founded in the patient and therapist experiencing processes. According to him, existentialism is frequently seen in the wrong way: it would have vague, abstract objectives, constituting an invitation to glorify the ephemeral. In his opinion, this is a mistake; in fact, "the directly felt experience and being-here in its pre-ontological and pre-defined concreteness" (Gendlin, 1970b, p.86). For him, then, existentialism is successful if we equate 'existence' and 'experiencing'. The ideas here

presented confirm his personal endeavor to relate philosophy and psychotherapy by having the process of experiencing as the support and foundation of his thought.

Experiencing became the main construct of Gendlin's theory and consists of a flow of experience that is prior to logic, but not opposite to it. It constitutes a source of meanings that come from an interaction between experience and logical processes. Because experiencing is prior to logic, it has an existential nature, but it does not oppose to it. Experiencing is a fluid process, in constant motion, coming from concrete experience and having a processual nature. From now on, Rogers incorporates this new perspective of experiencing and starts to define it as "the fluid feeling of having experiences, which partially unshaped flow of feelings that we have all the time. It is pre-conceptual, it contains implicit meanings, it is something basically prior to symbolization or conceptualization" (Rogers, 1963, p.126).

In addition to all these changes, Gendlin (1970a) proposes a new conception of congruence; he names it authenticity. For him, differently than for Rogers whose congruence would be the correct symbolization of the experience, authenticity, now based on experiencing, does not constitute itself anymore of the symbolization of experience, but in the openness from the being to the lived. Authenticity, as he proposed, differently from the Rogerian notion, started to represent not the symbolization of the experience, but the possibility of openness to the world, the possibility of living experiences.

Pagès (1976) considers Rogers as a phenomenologist, although he was not concerned about it in his work nor is this term found in his writing. With regard to this, we have stated our opinion, in agreement with Pagès, that Rogers is a phenomenologist. Unfortunately, this question cannot be addressed in depth in this paper, but it has been addressed by other scholars in the field (Klein & Westcott, 1994; McDonald & Wearing, 2013).

One of the criticisms to Rogers is that he proposes a phenomenological attitude as a

psychotherapist and performs a scientific practice, which is sheltered by positivistic principles. However, concerning the self, a conception of a phenomenological nature is revealed between the lines of this theoretical construction that, by the way, seems to be closely related to Husserlian ideas because it focuses on the transcendental I and, by doing so, focuses on subjectivity. It is also existential as it presents human existence as a process that is led by the possibilities of the can-be that is built at each moment of experience. From this perspective, Rogers' understanding about the constitution of the self could rest on a philosophical comprehension that prioritizes subjective experience. At the same time, it could also contemplate the individual's being-in-the-world, while it sets the phenomenological field as a part of this experience. Would it be a highly phenomenological and existentialist outlook? How could the self be understood if we follow the Heideggerian philosophy? Would Gendlin's contributions be a possible way for this approach?

On Gendlin, *Befindlichkeit* and experiencing

Gendlin seems to have enriched the person-centered therapy perspective when he intends to bring it closer to Heidegger's view. In order to do it, he searched for the link for the philosophical reference to this approach mainly in the *Befindlichkeit* concept. *Befindlichkeit* represents one of the most important concepts of the ontology created by Heidegger and, at the same time, it is the most incomprehensible one.

Befindlichkeit, according to Heidegger (1927/1999), is one of the three basic parameters of human existence, in addition to comprehension and language. For Gendlin (1978/1979, p.43), it refers to "what is usually called being in a state of spirit, being in a mood and also to what is called feeling". Heidegger offers us a different way of thinking about that ordinary experience. The concept designates the way we feel in situations (Gendlin, 1978/1979, p.45). Feeling is usually considered something internal, opposite to the

meaning proposed by Heidegger, which refers to something internal as well as external, before the division between in-out is made. As Gendlin points out, we always live in situations, in the world, in a context, living with others, trying to obtain some things and avoiding others. The mood or state of spirit is not just internal; on the contrary, it represents a way of being in the world. In his words:

The situations do not exist apart from me. The situations are not purely physical attributes, but human relational factors, what I can and cannot do, need, hope, acquire, use, avoid and so on... When I say how I feel, this is a process of living that goes beyond what was given when I started to talk. And telling you how I feel, naturally, is a different being-in-the-world than telling it to myself or to another person. Gendlin (1970b, p.85).

We can consider *Befindlichkeit* as an interactional concept, more than a psychical one. Meanwhile, it consists of both of them because it exists before this distinction is made. Interaction does not apply to this term either because it presupposes the existence of two parts to be integrated, not corresponding to its sense. According to Heidegger (1927/1999), human beings are their being-in-the-world-with-others; humans are being-here and being-with. According to Roehle and Dutra (2014, p.105), "The German philosopher called Dasein the particular human mode of being in order to rethink the western metaphysical (ontological) tradition. (...) Dasein is always a relationship to one's own being, the characteristics of which are called existential".

Another essential existential parameter is comprehension. It means that we do not always know our state of spirit, although we have a certain comprehension of it, of our living in the world. It does not mean a cognitive comprehension, but an implicit one about our existence. On language, Heidegger (1927/1999) says that it is always related to any feeling or mood, actually, any human experience. It is the articulation of comprehension, which does not mean to say that there will always be a speech that expresses into words what

someone experiences. But it means that there is always speech and listening for each one and openness to the speech of the other because it is a part of what we are and what we live, whatever we can really say or not. In sum, we feel we are living situations with others, with an implicit comprehension of what we are doing and with an already involved communication among us. A feeling is always all of this. Speaking is the articulation of comprehensibility.

From this *Befindlichkeit* perspective, Gendlin (1973) reflects about a new relationship between Philosophy and Psychology, which involves the elimination of concepts such as in-out, self, affective and cognitive, among others. The importance resides in the 'ways of being' and not in concepts, and proposes a restructuring of the concept 'feeling', which must be understood as an implicit and changeable sense that occurs through stages of explanation or articulation. The importance of experiencing is confirmed here once again because it means nothing more than a solidly felt feeling that can be taken forward when direct reference is made to it, as Gendlin (1970a) shows us in his theory.

Gendlin suggests we understand Heidegger in an experiential way, without, though, reducing ontology to Psychology because the implications of doing so are greater than imagined, involving not just this one, but other sciences. He understands that when Heidegger refers to *Befindlichkeit* he means "the basic structure of being-in-the-world and also about the world and any topic, question or problem from any science accessible to men. However, this *Befindlichkeit* is the same feeling or sensation that is studied in Psychology", (1978/1979, p.54). To understand Heidegger in an experiential way is to understand the inherent relationship among living, feeling, understanding and any kind of cognition.

For Heidegger (1927/1999, p.139), *Befindlichkeit* is also related to the method because "the phenomenological method depends on revelation". For Gendlin (1978/1979), Heidegger means that if the discovery of the *Befindlichkeit* is not there as a part of the method, then there will not be phenomenology, but a free fluctuation.

Therefore, we can understand *Befindlichkeit* from Gendlin's comprehension (1978/1979) of the process of feeling that is lived all the time and to which one can refer to at each moment. Therefore, *Befindlichkeit* is a constitutive part of experiencing, thus it reveals the feeling that one lives at each moment of concrete existence. Next, on Heidegger's thought in general, we intend to present a view of his philosophy to foster a discussion of some of his ideas and those that have been discussed until now.

Heidegger: Some ideas

Heidegger was Husserl's student in Freiburg, but while he studied with the master, he developed seminars with more advanced students, intending to discuss the philosophical issues that were disturbing him. Although he started his studies with Husserl, as many others, he eventually rejected phenomenology.

Heidegger had to refer to Aristotle and metaphysics to find the being. He questioned reduction, which was responsible for the main divergence between him and Husserl. Heidegger did not accept the radicalism of reduction because the principal aspect of his philosophy consisted of the world of life, the factitiousness of the being-here, and Husserl's transcendental phenomenology intended to eliminate factitiousness by assuming all the world of the life in the transcendental I. Therefore, transcendentalism would reduce the understanding of the being to the subjectivity dimension which, for him, would mean to limit the being-here. These issues have been studied by several authors in recent years (Bloc, Souza, & Moreira, 2016; Crowell, 2013).

According to Stein (1983, p.21), Heidegger proposes his conception of method as an intent to go beyond the veiled issue of the being by thinking that "... Heidegger applies the phenomenological method, founded in a binary model: veiling-unveiling. The application of the phenomenological method to these two fronts aims to consider that the being, since it is veiled, must lead to the unveiling".

An innovator aspect found in Heidegger that increases the distance between him and other philosophers is related to the "primacy of the tendency to the covering" (Heidegger, 1927/1999). Instead of reasoning like those philosophers, for whom reality presents itself to our eyes, waiting for us to apprehend it, he believes that "man and the essential about things tend to disguise or are effectively veiled. Because of this, he turns to the how, looking for a path to consider the object of his research to revelation" Stein (1983, p.103). And this is the being that must reveal itself in the Dasein as the result of constant seeking for unveiling what is veiled, starting from itself. This process receives several denominations throughout the philosopher's thinking, going from 'being given', then 'meeting', 'discovery', 'revelation', and eventually as 'unveiling', being the most dominating one, which sometimes appears as 'clearing'.

Heidegger and Rogers: Is an encounter for a new view of the self possible?

In previous Gendlin's words, we are not trying to reduce Philosophy, in this case Heidegger's ontology, to a Psychological theory, on the contrary. Instead, this is about an attempt to propose a dialogue between Heidegger's thought and the notion of self in Rogers' theory possible by searching for the construction of a theoretical horizon that is able to see the self from a phenomenological and existential perspective. In other words, it means to conceive this notion from a new view that is able to contemplate the existence of the being-in-the-world.

We can say that many aspects that are involved in both theories by the psychologist and the philosopher force us to set them apart, thus making an approximation difficult. However, if we point out some aspects of the Rogerian thought, particularly those referring to the self and reformulated after Gendlin's contributions, the differences will not be eliminated, but will become close when they assume a new configuration. Some issues can be already pointed out. We will start by pointing out some aspects that, at first, seem to be

incompatible in the theoretical corpus of these two authors. Further we will discuss the possible Heideggerian's readings of some theoretical notions from the Rogerian thought.

If we take the self and the being-here, we can verify that, while the self is based on what is awareness, as Roger's first definitions of this construct shows, the being-here includes all the dimensions of existence, not limiting itself to what is conscious or unconscious. On the other side, the Rogerian thought, related to the self, prioritizes the internal world, the lived one; in other words, subjectivity. Meanwhile, for Heidegger, Husserl's transcendentalism, this is, the emphasis on subjectivity, would limit the being-here. Here we have a characteristic of Heidegger's ontology that shows a clear opposition to the subjectivism found in Husserl's transcendental I. This approach can be understood as equally contrary to Roger's one of his self-conception: the emphasis on subjectivity, as we have already pointed out.

The issue about the veiling and unveiling of the being, according to Heidegger's philosophical assumption, leads us to think that, because of this, it is not possible to think the human being, in this case, Dasein, as mainly subdued to the influences of the self, which does not say everything about it. Because of this, the Dasein is not regarded as a subjectivity that stands out in the world and in its existence from it. Instead, with Heidegger, it becomes possible to think about the being-here as a revelation of the being that, due to its existential constitution, is inserted in an already existent world, immersed in its factitiousness as a consequence of its ontological characteristic of being-here (Dasein), an openness being to all that already is and also a relational being, a being-with.

This thought proves that Heidegger's ontology, as well as the existential analysis, transcends any theoretical approach that tries to reduce, explain or understand the Dasein through the self, pulsation, or characteristics that, in some way, fragment it, eliminating, thus, its Dasein structure. This has already been acknowledged by several authors, including Binswanger (1947/1971),

Boss (1988) and by Heidegger himself (1927/1999) when dealing with Existential Analysis.

Similarly, if we take the phenomenological field as a reference, as it was proposed by Rogers, from the beginning we can perceive it as the construct of self, a limitation related to the being-here, existential structure that is present in Heidegger's ontology. However, although this evidence is considered, it is necessary to recognize the importance of the phenomenological field as an idea that may bring the self and being-here together. Following this reasoning, we quote Rogers (1994, p.43) to illustrate the appropriateness of this point of view. He says that "while changes take place in the self perception and in reality perception, they also take place in behavior". This statement makes us think about a constant state of openness in which the phenomenological field constitutes and represents itself. Because it is a phenomenological field and because it is sheltered by the process of perception of the world, which arises at each moment of experience and because of this it is changeable, it is opportune to think that this idea is related to and supported by a way of thinking about the man that includes his openness to the world. This openness is precisely given when experience of living occurs and it happens all the time. Why can't we think then, that this condition of openness and the conditions for changes in possibilities represent the structure of the being-here and its possibilities of being?

The perceptual field is important for the experiencing process and includes the individual himself and everything around him, such as the lived situations, the physiological and also cultural forces that means being-in-the-world-with-others. These aspects influence the Dasein and its way of being and how Dasein will respond to the demands of the world. We can propose that this is a way to understand the factitiousness of the being; in other words, man living in the world situations, corresponding to the way of the being-with, the structure of the Heideggerian being-here.

The way-of-being, according to Heideggerian's thought, would be influenced by the perception one has of oneself, of a being-in-the-world at a given

time. Thus, the self would be placed in the openness for the world that constitutes the being-here. The self, as conceived by Rogers, constitutes itself as the can-be of man because it represents a perceptual configuration supported by the phenomenon of perception; and, because it is changeable, it cannot be shaped into static and rigid conceptions of characteristics of the being and it is potentially able to assume a different configuration at each lived situation, which means, from the immediate experience and then taking a certain way-of-being-in-the-world.

On authenticity, we consider that it, together with the perspective of the self, does not exclude the being-here proposed by Heidegger. Because the being-here, for the reason that it constitutes an openness to the world, reveals itself through a being-itself that, at some moment, during daily existence and as a Dasein, makes choices, an appropriation of its being-in-the-world. We can say that at this existential moment, the being-in-the-world reveals itself as it is founded on experience of the being-with of the Dasein. And it implies to perceive itself in a certain way about the world, in an openness state to what is presented in existence and whose process of living occurs when being in the experience at each moment. Rogers, starting from a place in Psychology, tells us how the being can, psychologically, reveal itself, in the concreteness of experience.

We quote Rogers (1974, p.129) to illustrate better what we have just stated. He refers to the self, here translated as I when he talks about the changing process that happens during therapy: "The I, at this moment *is* (author's italics) this feeling... . The I is, subjectively, in an existential moment. It is not anything able to be perceived". We can think about this feeling of being as an expression of *Befindlichkeit*, well translated by Gendlin as a feeling. The self, according to this, "is the experience of being, of existing". In Rogers' words (1959, p.223), the self is "the awareness of being, of functioning" and it is not a strictly conscious idea or notion, as its definitions leads us to understand. It is this existential character contained in the self that we try to make explicit.

According to the development of the self, its relationship with the other is an important aspect that requires our attention in this discussion. According to Rogers (1959, p.223), the self develops from the differentiation of experience: "This representation in awareness of being and functioning becomes elaborated through the interaction with the environment, particularly the environment composed of significant others, into a concept of self, a perceptual object in experiential field". We can apprehend the presence of the world in the experience of the being from this development of the self. The self does not represent an entity that is already a part of the biological and genetic background of man neither does it come from nothing. It will only be constituted from the relationship between an individual and the other when this man sees his original vocation has been accomplished, that is, the being-with, performing his openness to the world of experience, a characteristic of the being-here.

We can understand the self, according to Rogers' ideas, permeated by a phenomenological nature, as being close to Heideggerian's sense. Furthermore, it is important to point out that this notion includes a being able to-be character because it includes the perspective of past, present and future, in the actual living that opens itself to a project that is always situated in a possibility of being, and that does not end or close up there. As experiences comes up and I turn to them, I am able to follow this flow and situate myself in front of the world, assuming choices and projecting myself in the existence that this experience reveals and that involves me into it. This verification allows us to see, at that moment, the being-here, related to the being of possibilities; to the being-able-to-be that characterizes Heidegger's being and that can be identified, similarly, in the 'himself' that Rogers refers to.

We can say that what Rogers calls incongruence and that we denominated inauthenticity, in agreement with Gendlin, is close to what Heidegger calls improperness. When the being stops being himself because of the everydayness, in other words, when he answers to

his being-with in a distant path from himself, in an inauthentic path, he would be existing in improperness. Then, however, we should inquire about the being and his veiling-unveiling characteristic, about the fact that he never remains in one or other path but, on the contrary, remains in this being and not-being process. Would it be possible for the Dasein not to live in improperness? And what can be done to permit that such a path of existing does not keep him completely away from an existence that, without intending the completeness of the being, impedes him from living in total improperness, alienated from the sense of being? What would make the being appropriate to himself and leave improperness? Because the being is a being-here, which means that it is thrown into the world together with what is already there, when he is in this openness, how can the himself be preserve without losing the sense of being? How to exist in a relationship, in the being-with, without getting lost in improperness? The answer may be in care.

In Heidegger's words (1927/1999, p.265): "The existential condition of possibility of 'beware of life' and 'dedication' to be conceived as care in the original sense, that is, ontological". We can say that properness resides in liberty because the himself opens to experience and to its possibilities; to the existing process that happens at all times and points out what is singular and specific of the himself. This is a liberty notion that has as its foundation experiential liberty, in care, we may think. In other words, it is based on the openness capacity, singular to the being-here that allows listening to experience, being the own experience, as Rogers has stated (1975, p.46):

The liberty we are considering here belongs to another order. It is essentially related to experience... It consists of the fact that the individual feels free to recognize and elaborate his experiences and personal feelings according to the way he understands them.

On the notion of the self, as proposed by Rogers, it is only supported by what is conscious. Gendlin suggests that authenticity would be a

process that is beyond what comes to awareness. Then, the care we previously mentioned would consist, above all, of the openness to experience, which means neither limiting nor excluding the symbolization of experience avowed by Rogers, but broadening it. Being-in-the-world in properness means, at the same time, to exist in the openness state of the world, related to the being-with, which means being open to experiencing, which is existence itself, in a fluent and permanent process of living. It means risking choosing, at each moment, what one wants, what one can and cannot be. During this process, the capacity of being in contact with the felt experience in this world of relation, as well as its consciousness, is basic for the being to behave in a responsible and authentic path toward the achievement of ones projects, without losing himself or falling into impropriety.

It is important to point out that the most evident difference to be mentioned in Rogers and Heidegger's thought related to the issues we have been discussing until now refers to the places from where they speak. On the one hand, man is contemplated from an ontological, philosophical horizon; on the other, man is regarded as his individual and subjective experiences, into an experiential process and from the point of view of a psychological theory, from an ontic place.

Final Considerations

Although Rogers has been interpreted as a positivist because of his theoretical conception, it is possible to understand the self as a dimension through which the being reveals himself; in other words, it is possible to have a phenomenological and existential reading of the self, according to Heidegger's thought. However, it is necessary to accept, once again, that one of the aspects that keep these theories separated is related to the reach of Heidegger's philosophy that is evidenced in its ontology. One example of this statement is his conception of Dasein: being-here, submerged into a world and inseparable from it.

Meanwhile, although Rogers intends to give a total character to the concrete existence of man

through the self and the phenomenal field, his conception remains mainly restrained to the subjective, conscious experiences, which are related to an experiential and psychological world. If we think this aspect is related to the being-here, as an openness to the world, which refers him to a world that privileges the subjective and the experiential, there is no doubt that the notion of self is surpassed by this concept; moreover, because it is about a notion of ontology that intends to reach the sense of being and its truth, this conception is certainly much broader than the self, seated in Rogers' theory of the personality. In spite of these differences, we understand the self as being identified with what Heidegger calls himself, especially after the contributions of Gendlin. Thus, the self could be considered as a revelation of the being-here; it would be the concrete and living dimension of the unveiling of the being that shows itself to the concrete world, in a distinct moment of the existence, through a perception or path of being in the world.

As we have been arguing here, the differences between the thought of the philosopher Martin Heidegger and the psychologist Carl Rogers did not prevent us from continuing to reflect on the similarities between the being-here and the self. It is our wish that the reflections developed in this paper may contribute to the debate, which is so important to the field of Phenomenological Psychology.

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