

ABSTRACT

The central question of my research was: What is the experience of mothering an immobile-dependent child? This research shows that the experience of caring for an immobile-dependent child has profound effects on the mother on all levels i.e. physiological, psychological, emotional, spiritual, financial etc. In proportion to the number of mothers affected, research has been limited. I was unable to locate any research from a Gestalt perspective about the experience of mothering immobile-dependent children.

I used a Heuristic method in order to discuss the essence of this experience. I used interviews to collect data from seven co-researchers. These interviews were recorded transcribed and later analysed. From the data I produced individual depictions, exemplary portraits, a composite depiction and a creative synthesis.

My findings suggest that caring for an immobile dependent child is emotionally painful, time-consuming, expensive and physically exhausting. They also confirm that although it is not different in many ways from ordinary mothering, mothers of immobile-dependent children have to spend extra time, extra energy and extra financial resources on advocacy and other activities due to poorly co-ordinated and often non-responsive services.

I believe that these mothers have an important contribution to make to the knowledge in psychotherapy. I wanted to inform the Gestalt community about the experiences of these women and its implications on the mother's psychological well being and from that my hope is that individuals will start to explore this and work in relationship to these women.