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POSTER SESSION

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TRAUMATIC EVENTS AND DISSOCIATIVE EXPERIENCES IN FIBROMYALGIA SYNDROME

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The main objective of this study was to investigate the frequency of traumatic and dissociative experiences, and parental style in women with fibromyalgia syndrome (FMS) compared to healthy controls. The participants are 57 women with a diagnosis of FMS, mean (sd) age 50.2 (10.5), and 55 healthy women, mean (sd) age 43.6 (12.3). The participants were administered the Dissociative Experiences Scale (DES-II), the Traumatic Experience Checklist (TEC) and the Parental Bonding Instrument (PBI). Patients with FMS reported significantly higher level of traumatic events than healthy women in particular in the area of emotive neglect and abuse ($p < .001$). The prevalence of dissociative experiences was significantly higher in FMS patients compared to controls ($p < .001$) and a possible dissociative disorder seemed to be present in 19.3% of the patients with FMS and 1.8% of healthy women. In patients with FMS, but not in healthy women, there was a significant correlation between the amount of traumatic events and dissociative symptoms ($r = .351$; $p = .008$). As well as parental style is concerned, FMS patients showed the following parental pattern: both mother and father showed lower care and higher protection scores than healthy women. These data highlight the presence of an “affectionless control” style in FMS patients’ parents compared to healthy control (55.3% vs. 18.5% father; 66.7% vs. 27.8% mother, respectively). On the contrary, results showed the limited presence of “optimal parenting” style, characterized by high care and low protection, in FMS patients’ parents compared to healthy controls (16% vs. 39% father; 14% vs. 41% mother, respectively). The results suggest that women with FMS tend to present more traumatic events and more dissociative experiences than healthy women. Moreover, FMS patients seem to have mostly experienced a parental style defined as “affectionless control”.