

The objective of the work is to understand the experience of the parents of physically disabled children using the hermeneutic-narrative approach. The theoretical foundation for the research is McAdams's concept of "narrative identity", which is understood as the internalized integration of the past, present time and anticipated future, and provides the feelings of unity and purposefulness. The work partially uses McAdams's model of "identity as a life-story", which consists of following categories: 1) key event, 2) perspective and goal, 3) self-image and image of the others, 4) values and beliefs. The theoretical part further elaborates the psychological problems of the families with physically disabled children with a special interest in their coping strategies.

The methodological foundation of the work is the hermeneutic-narrative approach and its assumption that the human experience is narratively structured. Thus, if we want to study, what it is like to be a parent of a physically disabled child, it is possible to explore the way, how this experience and the relevant understanding are structured in a narration. Using the life-story analysis we can explore, how the parents of disabled children experience their fate, how they cope with it and what meaning they attribute to it. The research sample consists of 10 parents of physically disabled children from the SPC practice at the Jedlička Institute. The data collection methods were the narrative interviews facilitated with the "life-line" technique. The data processing phase consisted of three major stages. At the first stage we proceed from the data to the topics and categories of narrative analysis enhanced with higher level terms of agency and positioning. These higher level terms lead to a number of specific categories, which constitute a framework of the research. At the second stage the interviews are analyzed and interpreted using the terms of the selected categories.