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“The experience of miscarriage among women with and without disabilities as a traumatic situation”

### **Abstract**

Miscarriages are incredibly common. Considering Polish statistics, every year in our country this issue affects approximately 40,000 women (Chazan, 2006). It also involves women with disabilities. Nonetheless, the situation of women with disabilities after miscarriage is still not reflected in empirical analyses.

A miscarriage occurs suddenly, surprisingly, causing loss of control, helplessness, horror; it is also associated with fear for life and means the death of the child. Therefore, it can be perceived as a traumatic event. In the present thesis I particularly focused on this aspect of miscarriage. Chronically ill women were the core group included in the study.

The objectives of this thesis are:

1. determine whether miscarriage is a traumatic experience for women with and without disabilities (level of symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder, level of post-traumatic growth, level of basic hope, methods of coping with stress);
2. determine what influences the level of symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder and the level of post-traumatic growth among women after experiencing miscarriage both with and without disabilities;
3. create a model of psychological support for both disabled and non-disabled women, after experiencing a miscarriage.

The findings revealed that many women experience symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder on a long-term basis. These women are entitled to help, and support tailored to their needs and disabilities.

The thesis presented here consists of three parts. The theoretical part includes 7 chapters. It discusses issues related to miscarriage: its medical, psychological, and sociological aspects. The issue of stress and coping with miscarriage was raised as well as the challenge of traumatic stress. The last chapter of the theoretical section deals with motherhood in the context of

disability. The methodological part consists of one chapter, in which the methodological assumptions of the own research are presented. The empirical part is divided into 2 chapters. Here the results of statistical analyses and conclusions of the research are discussed, including a model of psychological support for women who have experienced miscarriage.

Keywords: miscarriage, trauma, disability, coping, post-traumatic growth

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