

Constellation of the Intention

A method to diagnose and offer therapy for transgenerational traumatizations

Development and State of the Art

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Agenda

- General development of COI
- What means „Intention“?
- Basic principles of COI
- Conducting COI in groups
- Conducting COI in individual sessions
- Reliability and validity of COI

General development of the Constellation of the Intention (COI)

- ▶ Since 1995: starting with Family Constellations (Bert Hellinger)
- ▶ Since 1999: still following Hellingers approach „Movements of the Soul“
- ▶ Since 2001: developing „traumaconstellations“ based on my own theorie called „Multigenerational Psychotraumatology“
- ▶ Since 2009: starting with COI

What does „Intention“ mean?

- „aim“, „purpose“, „wanted result“ out of a constellation
- „Intention“ is intentionally open and vague
- Trying to find a perfect intention activates surviving strategies
- The Intention is a mixture of conscious and unconscious processes
- It is a methodological category

Aims of COI

- Making the split of trauma conscious
- Showing symbiotic entanglements
- Helping to bring the psyche of a client into a more healthy state
- Promoting Self-responsability
- Supporting Autonomy needs
- Helping to gain healthy relationships

Constellation of the Intention

- Gives space for the client to use it in his own manner
- The clients gets what he wants
- It is of no use to start a constellation without the client having an intention
- If a client doesn't formulate an intention, it means his surviving strategies are still too worried to risk a constellation

Integration of Split of parts during Traumatherapy



Basic Structure of the Method

- Client finds another person to represent his intention
- He gives the representative a position
- He tells his intention explicitly to the representative
- He takes his own position in relation to his intention
- The process of interaction between the client and the representative of his intention starts and goes on between 15 and 60 minutes

How does COI work?

- ▶ The client sends out consciously and unconsciously information towards his representative that causes in return resonance in him
- ▶ Reactions of the representatives activate conscious and unconscious psychic processes within the client („implicit memories“, „body memories“)
- ▶ By the ongoing process of mirroring and resonating between client and representatives even split off parts of the client's psyche can show up

Conducting COI

- Let the client develop his intention
- Give the starting signal for COI
- Let the process happen
- Observe precisely, develop hypotheses, prove them and maybe forget them

Conducting COI

- Go on to understand the whole process
- Propose to bring in further representatives
- Support the client to understand, what is going on in his constellation
- Formulate with words what is still unconscious and beyond words for the client
- Offer a summary

Conducting COI

- Focus on the essentials
- Keep the client in the process
- Work in small steps
- Promote clarity and transparency
- Don't overburden and confuse the client
- Don't bring in unclear and vague concepts
- Don't support surviving strategies and don't fight against them
- Don't offer the client less or more than his intention

Possible errors of the therapist

- Offering an intention for the client
- Evaluating the intention of the client as „right“ or „wrong“
- Too early and too late interventions
- Bringing in representatives that are superfluous
- Forcing the constellation into the wrong direction
- Losing contact with the intention of the client
- Confronting the client with issues that he is not prepared for and cannot deal with

COI in individual work

- Therapist offers himself as a representative of the intention
- Therapist stays in the representation as long as possible
- Therapist makes a change in his role transparent
- Other persons or inner states can be represented by objects and markers on the floor
- Therapist can represent further persons or inner states
- The client can represent further persons or inner states
- Important: Do not make the emotional work instead of the client

Reliability of COI

- Reliability grows, if all other factors (therapist, client, representatives, group) are as autonomous as possible
- Although one could suspect, that the subjective factor of the representatives has a great influence and makes the results of the method arbitrarily, practise shows the opposite
- COI is highly precise to bring the inner structure of a client to the point, because the representatives follow their subjective impulses

Validity of COI

- Client can find confirmations of his findings in a constellation by looking at the family biography, asking family members etc.
- Memories based on feelings are more convincing than memorized pictures

COI means to make contact with oneself and to feel empathy and love for oneself



Literature

- ▶ Franz Ruppert (2014). Frühes Trauma. Schwangerschaft, Geburt und erste Lebensjahre. Stuttgart: Klett-Cotta Verlag.
- ▶ Translations in Dutch and English in preparation