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The British Association
for the
Person-Centred Approach

PERSONAL GROWTH AND SOCIETAL IMPACT

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6th BAPCA Conference

Growth and the Person-Centred Approach: A system for individual and social change
Royal Agricultural College, Cirencester, UK



- 1 SOCIO THERAPY ?**
- 2 PC ESSENTIALS**
- 3 BEYOND THE INDIVIDUAL**
- 4 PROPOSITONS**

- The PCA is a social psychological approach.
- The PCA is a political endeavour.
- The PCA is a practice of social ethics.

What can it contribute to society ?



1

SOCIOTHERAPY

?

- We experience limits to the impact of individual therapy.
- Doesn't society need therapy?
- We face substantial global challenges.
- What can the PCA contribute to a change?
 - Change self-understanding.
 - Change the epistemology.
- We need another 'approach' to society.

The PCA is an approach developed from experience with people in need that much too often has been limited to different applications and thus failed to understand *its inherent power to facilitate change in society.*

2

PC ESSENTIALS

Essential foundations of PCT

- **Person**
- **Encounter**
- **Presence**
- **Dialogue**
- **Responsive structure**
- **The fundamental We**

The person-centered *essentials* are highly relevant social terms.

They are *social ethical terms*.

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Arthur Bohart

The Handbook of Person-Centred Psychotherapy & Counselling

Second Edition



Palgrave,
2013

Person

- relational-substantial nature
 - independence & interdependence
 - self-responsibility & solidarity
- *Individual therapy always has an impact on society.*



The Etruscan god Phersu, whence the term „person“

Encounter

- the relationship person to person
 - ‘en-counter’: openness to be surprised by the Other
 - **Thou-I-relationship**
- *The basic epistemological stance of the PCA rests on a social relationship.*



Le visage de l'autre
(The face of the Other)

Presence

- to be fully there
- authenticity (congruence), acknowledgment (upr), comprehension (empathy)
- *the core condition of being-with*

→ *A fundamental openness for the social reality*



Kairos, Greek god
of the fertile moment

Dialogue

- of original im-media-cy
- a primary occurrence
- The call of the Other demands a response.

→ *Dialogue reveals the original sociality.*

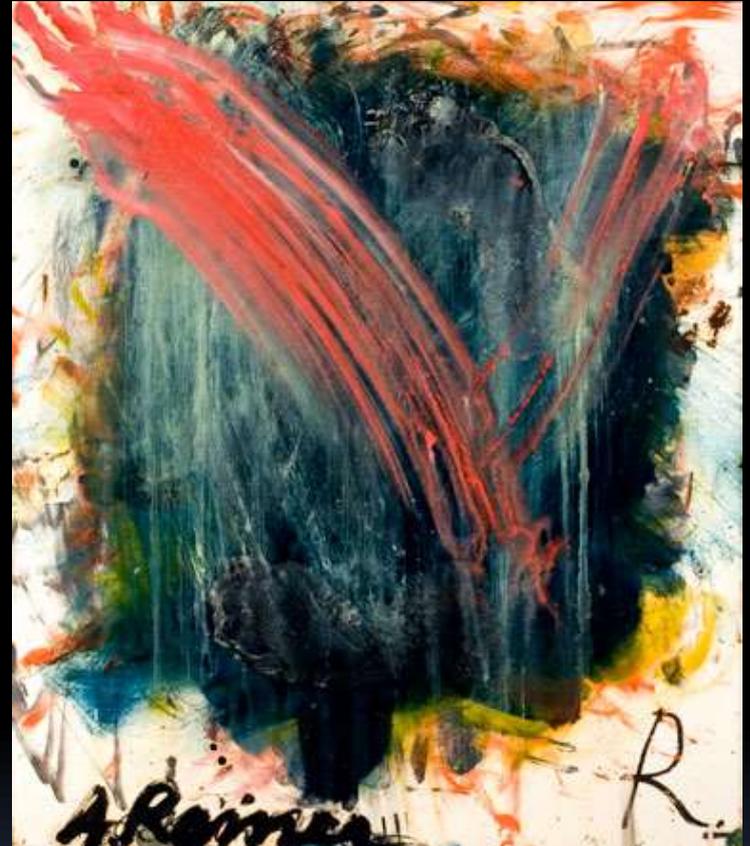


F. Ringel, Gespräch
(Conversation)

Responsive structure

- To respond = 'to give a counter-promise'
- Encounter the strange that disturbs our orders
- The task is to respond existentially and to look at the extra-ordinary

→ *The primary social condition of the human being marks a social ethical stance.*



Arnulf Rainer,
Fingerschmiere

„Response“

- „to answer an engagement, a promise;
to give a solemn counter-promise, **take up a challenge**“
- * Lat. *respondere* = orig. „correspond, being reliable“
- * *spondēre* = „to solemnly promise, commit oneself,
bind oneself by contract“
- v. *sponsus / sponsa* = „spouse“
- → *responsible* (for a promise)

→ *respond* = make a solemn engagement, promise

The responsive structure of the person

Bernhard Waldenfels

- Human beings encounter each other by responding to each other and a common world.
- Responsive phenomenology and ethics



born 1934

The systems of order and the strange (xenology)

- *strange* * Latin *extra ordinem*
- The strange is the extra-ordinary.
- We are strangers to ourselves.
- Horror alieni: The strange frightens us!
- The stranger disturbs us, because they question our order.

CHAOS ALARM !

Dealing with the strange

Either:

mobilise defense

monopolise

reject

distort

deny

Or:

respond existentially

- ‘With every responding that really deserves this name we break an order.’
- The only appropriate way to deal with the strange is to encounter it.
- The task is to respond not in order to give an answer to a question, but to the challenge of being questioned.

,Each experience
that really deserves this name,
thwarts an expectation.'

H.-G. Gadamer

The fundamental We

- co-responding to the existential situation
 - intersubjective, co-creative process
 - bi-polar model: agency of the client & presence of the therapist
- *understanding persons from society*



Franz Ringel, Wir (We)

Essential foundations of PCT

- **Person**
- **Encounter**
- **Presence**
- **Dialogue**
- **Responsive structure**
- **The fundamental We**

3

BEYOND THE INDIVIDUAL

Beyond the individual

- Can the PCA ‘directly’ contribute to society?
- Do pc principles work with social entities?

Groups

- Rogers believed in the ‘wisdom of the group’.
- ‘The individual creates the group that creates the individual.’ (John Wood)
- Groups are primary facts.
- *Groups are the interface between person and society. They have an impact on both.*
- *Groups are the personal element in society.*

Beyond the individual

Communities, organizations, institutions, society ...

- Larger entities tend to preserve themselves...
- ... if they don't value their inner opposition.
- Any attempt to relate 'in order to' disturbs the emancipatory forces.
- The pc way is to *encounter* these societal entities.
- '*Facilitators*' (*persons or groups*) need to be interested in being surprised.

4

SOME PROPOSITIONS

- Save the world ?
- How to approach situations ?
- What is your image of the human being and of society ?
- Crises as opportunities ?



危机

We need to

- change the human self-understanding to value the fundamental We
- *encounter* societal issues instead of trying to approach them purposefully, in 'order to'
- think in terms of being challenged to existentially respond, not in terms of solutions
- actively be open to the strange
- question orders and appreciate the extraordinary
- value the critics and heretics

Some propositions / 2

- pay attention to power issues
- think in terms of resources and opportunities instead of problems
- learn that the answers are already there albeit not yet realized
- further face-to-face groups as ‘encounter groups’
- co-operate with others who share the same values.
- regard pc work also always as political work
- still value the person above all

Thank you for listening.



pca-online.net

The Person-Centered Website

by Peter F. Schmid



welcome to | willkommen auf
bienvenue à | bienvenido a

pca-online.net

The Person-Centered Website

by Peter F. Schmid



THE PERSON-CENTERED APPROACH

THE PCA

What is the PCA?
Carl Rogers
Resources
Links

EVENTS

- BAPCA Conference 2013
 - 'PCA in Europe' Prague 2014
 - C.Rogers Birthday Conf. 2014
 - PCE World Congress 2014
- All Conferences

INSTITUTIONS

WAPCEPC
PCE World Association
PCE Europe
PCE Institutions &
Associations
Person-Centered Association
in Austria (PCA)
www.personzentriert.at



IPS/APG

Institute for
Person-Centered Studies Austria



BIBLIOGRAPHIES

Carl Rogers Bibliography Online
(English & German)
Rogers: Bibliographie
francophone
The PCE Online Bibliography
Bibliography Gendlin
Bibliography Peter F. Schmid

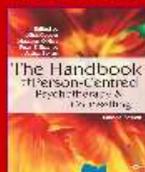
JOURNALS

Journal PCEP
Journal PERSON

PAPERS

Papers P.F.Schmid download
Links to other papers online

TOPICAL PUBLICATION



Cooper, O'Hara, Schmid, Bohart
Handbook of PCT
Second edition 2013
completely revised & enlarged



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PERSON-CENTERED WORKSHOPS

Living and living together	28-29.9
What is a psychological disease?	19.-20.10
Competition	8.-9.11
Mindfulness	14.12.
The spiritual dimension ...	17.-18.1.
My hopes – my fears	7.-8.3.

[Register online](#)



Person-Centered Psychotherapy Science
Sigmund Freud University, Vienna
Carl Rogers Institute

PFS: TOPICAL PUBLICATIONS

The person and evil
Psychotherapy is political
The Handbook of PCT
(2nd edition 2012)

FAUST III, Vol. 1
FAUST III, Vol. 2
Life Management
Missa Jahwe



Περα απο ερωτησεις και
απαντησεις.

RECENT DOWNLOAD MATERIAL

Peter F. Schmid
**on anxiety
on death**

PowerPoint slides from
presentations at the
10th PCE World Conference
in Antwerp, July 8-12, 2012

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