The Challenge of the Other
Towards Dialogic
Psychotherapy and Counselling

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What we have in common is that we are all different from each other.  

Proverb
The coconut trap
The second grip

- pre-hensile hand
- ap-prehend
- com-prehend
The Challenge of the Other
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I. “Videor ergo sum”: The epistemology of transcendence

II. Dialogue: The occurrence of the original We

III. Co-presence: The essential dialogical nature of therapy
I. “Videor ergo sum”: The epistemology of transcendence

“I am certainly excited with the efforts to develop a new epistemology.

I put a lot of work into pushing the theory in a more dialogical direction …”

Dave Mearns
Cogito ...

- ap-prehend: * ad
- com-prehend: * con
Cogito ...

- ap-prehend: * ad
- com-prehend: * con
- con-cept: * con+capere ("to take")
- term: * terminus ("boundary stone, finishing post")

... the trap of the same
Epistemology of transcendence

- Ulysses
- homecoming
- TOTALITY
- sameness
- I - THOU
- egology
- Abraham
- mouvement sans retour
- INFINITY
- otherness
- THOU - I
- alterity
Epistemology of transcendence

As consequence of the paradigm change from egology to alterity, as opposed to the epistemology of the cogito, of “grabbing”, of understanding oneself by oneself,

we need an epistemology of dialogue.
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The occurrence of the original We

“dialogue”
mutual conversation, interchange in talking, discourse

* Greek “δια-λέγειν”
to put something apart by thinking over it
(λέγειν = pick up, gather, collect; talk, speak)
Dialogue

conventional meaning

“dialogue”

= human conversation face to face, mutual exchange, message and contradiction

→ symmetry and equality

a meeting of the one with the other
Interpersonality ➔ Dialogue

“The sphere of the interpersonal is the opposite-to-each-other; its unfolding is what we call dialogue.”

Buber, 1948
Dialogue
Emmanuel Levinas

- where transcendence happens
  - the cogito is not prior to dialogue
  - not a consequence of experience
- primary occurrence
- original sociality occurs in dialogue
- dissymetric:
  The other comes first
Dialogue
Emmanuel Levinas

Dialogue $\rightarrow$ Interpersonality

“It is precisely because the Thou is absolutely different from the I that there is - from the one to the other - dialogue.”

Levinas, 1981
Dialogue
Emmanuel Levinas

Subject:

“I am sub-jected to the Other.”

Levinas, 1986

- Subjectivity itself is relational.
- Subjectivity is I-for-Thou.
- Substantiality and relationality coincide.
- Subjectivity is Being-for-the-Other.
Dialogue
Emmanuel Levinas

- Solidarity is a basic human condition.
- It means to say: “Here I am.”
- The dissymmetry is the origin of ethics.
- The I is constituted by his/her responsibility to the call of the Other.
Dialogue

Self-consciousness → dialogue

Dialogue → self-consciousness
The human person *is* dialogue.
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What does dialogue in therapy actually mean?
Therapy as dialogue

- Therapeutic dialogue is not about making community, it is about realizing the preceding We.
- To encounter a person is to realize to be in dialogue.
- Psychotherapy substantially is dialogue.
Therapy as dialogue

- The therapeutic is the transcendence of the same.
- “Here I am.” (Presence)
- Psychotherapy is dialogue or it is not psychotherapy.
- Relational depth is the fundament.
Therapy as dialogue

- In the beginning there is dialogue.
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The Person-Centered Website
by Peter F. Schmid

Die personzentrierte Site
Le site centré sur la personne
De Persoonsgerichte Site
Site da Abordagem Centrada na Pessoa
Página Web Centrada en la Persona