Love or Stress?
Constructive or Destructive Relationships

Singapore, 13th of February 2016

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Agenda

• Why are relationships important for us?
• Relationships and Bonding relations
• Relationships and Trauma
• What means „healthy“ love?
• What are Illusions of love?
• Examples of healthy and sickening relationships
• What can we do to gain healthy relationships?
The importance of Relationships

• Our relationships are the main source for our well-being as well as for our suffering
• Our relationships are the most important challenge for personal development and growth
• There are healthy = constructive relationships and sickening = destructive relationships
• Behind most of the symptoms of emotional suffering and behind many symptoms of physical illnesses there are destructive relationships
Qualities of relationships

**constructive**
- We = I + You
- equivalence
- win-win-situation
- genuine interest for the other person
- Mainly warmth, empathy and support = love!
- it is possible to be authentic
- it is possible to dissolve the relationship

**destructive**
- We = I = You
- dominance and submission
- win-lose-situation
- relation in order not to be alone
- Mainly anxieties, rage and aggressions = stress!
- one only plays roles
- it is forbidden to dissolve the relationship
Relationships are an addition to and cannot be a substitut for our true self.
Especially important relationships

• Family relations (parents-relation, mother-child, father-child, sibling, grandparents-child, other relatives in relation)
• Couple relations
• Friendships
• Working relations (supervisor-employee, relations between colleagues, teacher-pupil, doctor-patient, therapist-client)
Relations and Bonding

• Only a few of our relations are bonding relationships
• Bonding relations touch on our deepest emotions and needs and are exclusive
• They come into existence unconsciously
• They are long lasting
• They can be dissolved only if we go into contact with our deepest emotions
• We transfer our early experiences with bonding relations unconsciously to our later relationships
• What we experience as children with our parents we repeat as youngsters and adults with others
Basic Emotions in Bonding relations

- fear
- rage
- love
- happiness
- mourning/sadness
- guilt
- shame
- pride
- pain
- disgust
Every type of relationship

• Offers a chance for love
• Includes the risk to end up in a stressful and even traumatising victim-perpetrator-dynamic
What makes relationships really destructive is trauma.
Traumatisation by Violence

Traumatisation of Sexuality

Trauma of Identity

Traumatisation of Love
Splits in the structure of a human psyche after traumatizing experiences

- Traumatised parts
- Surviving parts
- Healthy parts
Trauma and Relationships

- Traumas split the psyche of a human being and establish permanent conflicts between the different structures of his psyche.
- Trauma-Surviving-Structures are blocking deep emotions and keeping a permanent state of toxic stress in the brain.
- Relationships then are abused as distractions and trauma surviving strategies.
- It is difficult to have access to the healthy parts of the psyche and to love and empathy.
Healthy or entangled relations?

Person A

Person B

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Relationships with others can not heal my traumatized psyche.
What „Love“ Means

• Having desires to be loved
• Developing the capacities to love
„Love is an art to transfer emotions of love into a loving behavior without the need to give up oneself.“
(Jesper Juul 2013, S. 76)

Love means to combine your own benefit with the benefits for others in a meaningfull and satisfying way.
Desires to be loved consists from

• Symbiotic desires and
• Desires for autonomy
Symbiotic needs

- Being nurtured
- Getting warmth
- Getting body contact
- Being hold
- Being seen
- Being understood
- Getting support
- Belonging to somebody
- Being welcomed
Desires for Autonomy

- Having my own perceptions
- Own feelings and thoughts
- Having hold in myself
- Doing things myself
- Making own decisions
- Taking responsibility for myself
- Being and acting independently
- Feeling and being free
- ...

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The capacity to love means

• To fulfill the symbiotic needs of another person depending on his age
• Supporting her autonomy with respect to her age
Falling in Love

- Intense feelings of affection, intense longing for this feelings to be answered
- Butterflies in the belly, heartbeating, soft knees
- Obsessive thinking about the beloved person, permanent fear of being rejected, depressivness, horrible dreams, low self-esteem, bad mood
- Narrowed consciousness, perceiving the loved person much more positive than she really is
- Still no trust in the other person, no openness and sincerity, no readiness to take over responsibility for the other person
- Increased willingness to have sexual intercourse
- Increased willingness for monogamy
- Falling in love lasts between seven month and some years

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Characteristics of the survival strategies in the „trauma of Love“

- Struggling with the parents to get their love
- Idealising mother and father
- Identifying with the survival strategies of the parents
- Wanting to rescue the parents
- Merging with the traumatised parts of parents or grandparents, mixing up with the trauma of the former generations
- Denying one’s own trauma
Illusions of Love

- I can love whom- and whatever I want!
- If my love is strong enough, the beloved person will also love me
- All parents love their children
- Being loved can be achieved by pressure or money
- I can save another person by loving him/her
- Love heals all wounds
- Love is forever
- Love can be forced by violence
- ...
Immediately stop to follow me!

But .. I love you.
Healthy Couple relations

• Being different but equivalent
• Having common interests and goals
• Equal contributions for living together
• Openess for the constant development of the partner
• Partners are able to understand and change their own dysfunctional patterns from childhood
• If necessary separation with mutual agreement
Sickening Couple Relations

- Trying to possess the partner
- Idealisation of the partner
- Dominance and submission
- Lack of common interests, goals and values
- Financial dependency, emotional exploitation
- Insisting on the status quo
- Repeating continuously dysfunctional patterns from childhood
- Separation ends up as a tragedy
Healthy parents relations

• Both partners want (all) their children
• They can enjoy the development of their children
• Fairplay in dealing with the household, the education of the children and the income
• Children do not have to pay the cost of parship conflicts
• Mutual sexual attraction remains between the man and the woman
Sickening parents relations

- Mother and/or father do not fulfill their duties as parents
- Children are neglected or given very early away to of-home care
- Children are objects of dispute between their parents
- Relation with a child ranks higher than the relation to the partner
- Being sexual dishonest
- Permanent conflicts in behalf of household, education of children and income
Healthy Father-Child relations

- Fathers start to make contact with the child already during pregnancy
- Fathers are engaged in caring for the baby
- Fathers love their children
- They play with them
- They offer them safety, hold and orientation
- The child can see his father with his own eyes not through the eyes of his mother
Sickening Father-Child-relations

- Father ignores and rejects the child
- Father competes with the child
- Father exploits the child emotionally and sexually
- Child takes side with the mother against the father
- Child tries to rescue a weak father
What can we do to gain healthy love relations?

• Taking our own traumas serious
• Integrating the splits in our psyche
• Becoming fully oneself
• Investing no longer life energy in destructive relations
• Moving forward with the help of „Constellations of the Sentence of Intention“ step by step
• Enjoying healthy love relations
Invitation

• 3rd International Congress „Love, Trauma and I“
• 21.-23. October 2016 in Munich
• Basics of an Identity oriented Psychotraumtheory and –therapy
• [link](http://www.healthy-autonomy.de)
Literature