Illusions and Delusions of Love

Moving beyond the destructive effects of trauma

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Humans love because they are

- social
- sexual
Different types of Love

- mother-child
- father-child
- child-mother
- child-father
- between siblings
- to one’s own family
- of a man
- of a woman
- of one’s own tribe
- of one’s own country
- of oneself

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Love can go beyond borders and limits.

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The first love experience of human beings is symbiotic.
Symbiotically every child is doubly bonded to her mother:

passively: the emotional qualities of the mother are an imprint in the child’s soul

actively: the child tries to support the mother

The symbiotic love of a child towards her mother is one of the most powerful emotional forces.

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Love

- between child and mother always exists.
- between mother and child only happens, if the mother is not traumatized.
A trauma is

“... a vital experience of discrepancy between threatening situational factors and the individual’s coping capacities, that is associated with feelings of helplessness and lack of any protection, thus creating a permanent instability of the self-concept and perception of the world.”

(Fischer und Riedesser, 1999, p. 79)
When traumatised we freeze, dissociate and split the personality in order to survive.
Split in the personality structure after a traumatic experience.

- Traumatized parts
- Healthy parts
- Surviving parts

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Trauma and parental love

- Traumatic experiences destroy the capability of parents to love,
- because of their surviving mechanism, they avoid deeper emotional contact with the child.
„Symbiotic trauma“

A child is helpless and incapable of getting a stable and safe emotional contact with his mother.

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Characteristics of the traumatized part in a symbiotic trauma

- despair that there is no love from mother
- deep loneliness
- fear of dying
- suppressed anger
- suppressed sadness
Characteristics of the surviving parts in symbiotic trauma

• idealising the mother
• repressing and denying one’s own trauma
• identification with the surviving mechanisms of the mother
• identification with the traumatized parts within the mother

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Consequences of a symbiotic trauma for a child

- no capacity to distinct between own feelings and those of the mother
- not living one’s own identity
- mental illnesses like hyperactivity, depressions, psychotic states
- repeating symbiotic entanglement in other relationships
Characteristics of a symbiotic entanglement

- clinging and adhering
- hiding one’s own vulnerability
- anger, hate and violence in a relationship
- no real self esteem, feeling of worthlessness
- always looking to others
- love illusions and love delusions

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Characteristics of love in healthy parts of the personality

- knowing that love can be developed by oneself
- clearly saying „Yes“ or „No“
- supporting the autonomy of the other
- respecting borders and limits
- taking responsibility

- no sex without love
- no sex with children
- no lying
- ability to distinguish between reality and illusions
- willingness to free oneself from symbiotic entanglements
- loving oneself

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Important distinction in psychotherapy

- Disintegrate traumatic structures that are incorporated by symbiotic entanglement with the parents
- Integrate one‘s own splits in the personality structure
The 5 most important steps in psychotherapy

- giving up of illusions
- withdrawing from symbiotic entanglements
- understanding the split in one’s personality
- acknowledging the traumata that happened
- integrating traumatised parts

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Literature


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