

The Trauma of Love

How trauma gets
Transferred from one
Generation to the other

London, 18th of November 2013



www.franz-ruppert.de

Agenda

- ❖ Steps toward the multigenerational psychotraumatology
- ❖ Constellation method
- ❖ Traumatheory
- ❖ The Trauma of Love - the process to transfere trauma
- ❖ Symbiotic Entanglements and their transgenerational effects
- ❖ Ways out of Symbiotic Trauma and symbiotic entanglements

My development with the constellation method

1994 - 1998: Family constellations

1999 - 2002: Movements of the Soul

2003 - 2009: Trauma Constellations

2010 - : Constellation of the Intention

Methodological Structure of the „Constellations of the Intention“

- ❖ Client finds and formulates his intention
- ❖ Client chooses a representative for his intention
- ❖ Therapist observes and interprets the interaction between client and intention
- ❖ Therapist supplements the context of the problem by proposing to add further representatives
- ❖ Therapist intervenes in order that the client is able to gain more healthy structures in his psyche

An iceberg floating in the ocean. The tip of the iceberg is visible above the water surface, while the much larger, submerged part is hidden below. The sky is blue with light clouds, and the water is a deep blue. The text is overlaid on the image.

**Symptoms of mental and
physical health problems**

Trauma

General symptoms of a trauma



- ❖ hyperarousal and hypervigilance
- ❖ extreme anxiety and panic
- ❖ permanent feelings of helplessness, hopelessness, sadness
- ❖ numbing of all feelings
- ❖ intrusions of the traumatic situation in the mind

General symptoms of a trauma



- ❖ Avoidance behavior
- ❖ Feelings of unreality
- ❖ Depersonalisation
- ❖ Dissociation
- ❖ Somatization
- ❖ Hallucinations
- ❖ Losing bonding capacities

A life experience becomes not only stressful but traumatic

if we face a mortal risk, and are incapable of dealing with it with the help of our stress programs.

Our stress programs make the situation even worse.

Therefore we end up in a state of helplessness and agony and the stress programs have to be stopped.



The Trauma-emergency-mechanism consists of:

Immobilization

Freezing

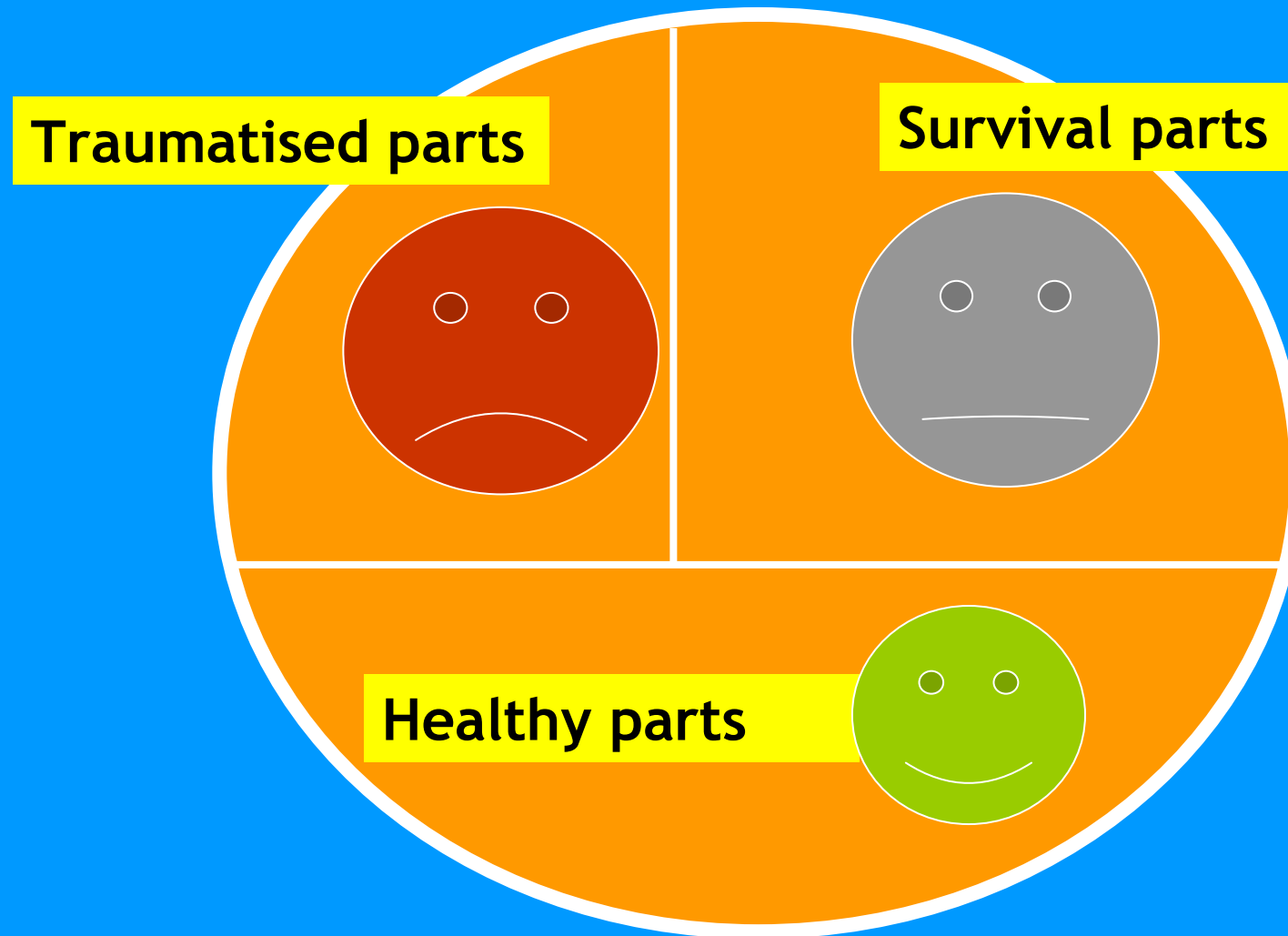
Dissociating

Splitting in the psychic structure

It helps us to survive.



Splits in the personality and identity structure after a traumatic experience



Four types of psychic trauma



- ❖ Trauma of existential Threat (being involved in a life threatening event)
- ❖ Trauma of existential Loss (losing a person to whom one is bonded)
- ❖ Trauma of Bonding (being rejected by the person one needs to bond to)
- ❖ Traumatization of a bonding system (perpetrator-victim-dynamics in a bonding system caused by violence, incest or murder)

**Traumatization by
Natural Forces**

**Traumatization by
Human Violence**

**Traumatization
of Sexuality**

**Traumatization
of Love**

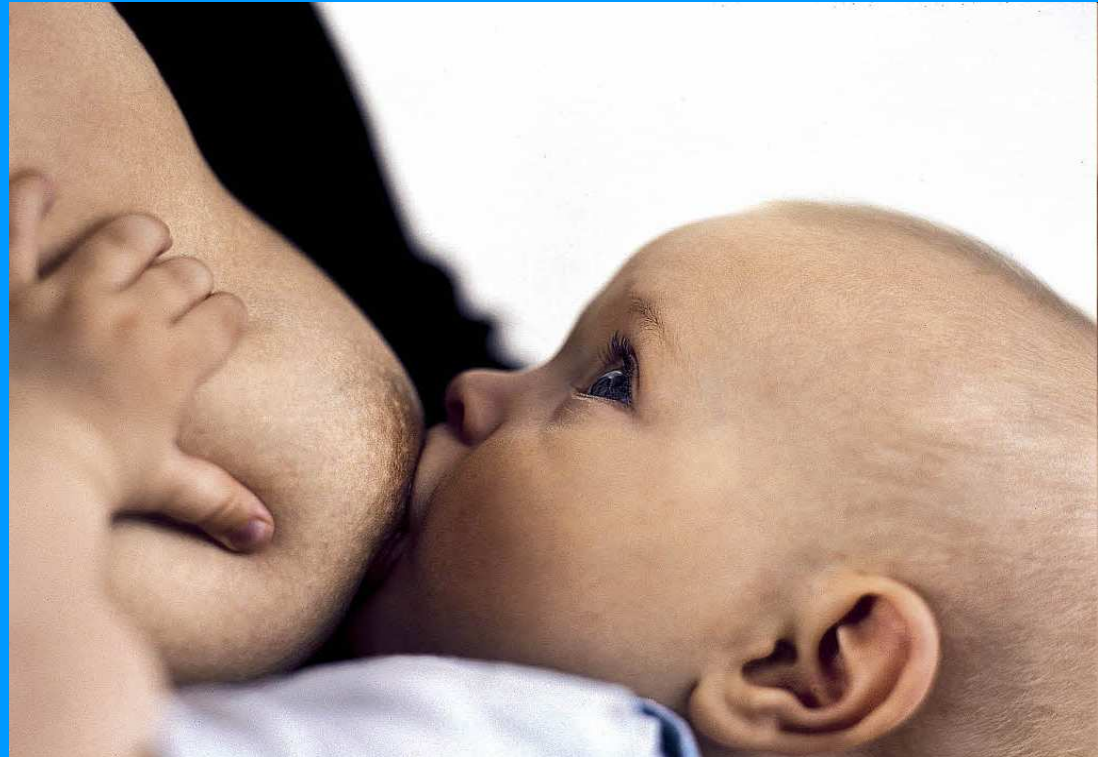
**The Trauma of Love / Symbiotic
Trauma - the process to transfer
trauma from one generation to
the other**

**Human development
takes place between
the polarities of
symbiotic needs and
the desire for
autonomy.**



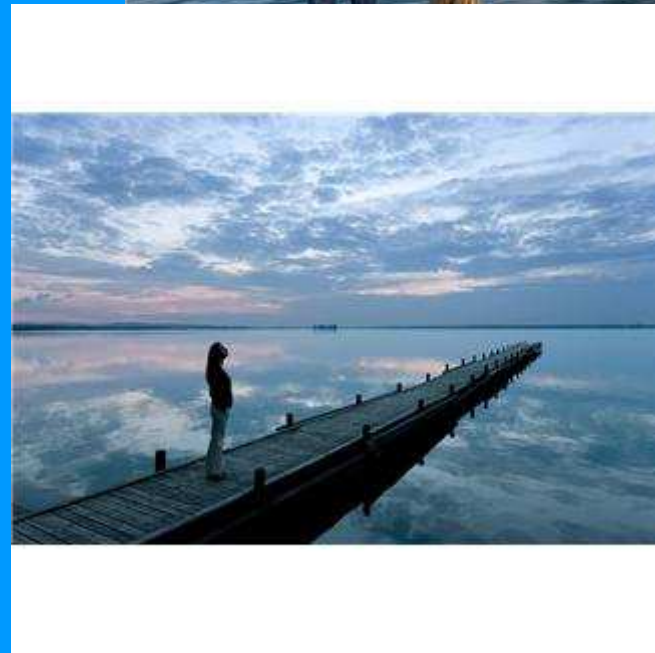
Symbiotic Neccesities

- ❖ Being really welcomed
- ❖ Being nurtured
- ❖ Being kept warm
- ❖ Getting body contact
- ❖ Being held
- ❖ Being seen
- ❖ Being understood
- ❖ Getting support
- ❖ Belonging together



Desires for Autonomy

- ❖ to gain confidence in one's own perceptions, feelings and thoughts
- ❖ to rely on one's own ability to act
- ❖ to find inner support in oneself
- ❖ to do things oneself
- ❖ to act independently
- ❖ to make one's own decisions
- ❖ to be free
- ❖ ...



What makes a healthy development of the human psyche possible?

Symbiotic needs for warmth, protection, holding, love and belonging are fulfilled by a child's mother and father.

Desires for autonomy are supported by both parents.



The most powerful psychological experience of every human being is

the symbiotic relationship with their mother.



Symbiotically every child is bonded to their mother in two ways:

passively: the psychological qualities of the mother are an unconscious imprint on the child's psyche

actively: the child adapts to their mother and tries to support her needs



Children love their mothers however they are and what they do to them

For a child, his relationship to his mother can become a traumatic experience - a symbiotic trauma

The child is helpless and incapable of establishing a safe, holding relationship with his mother who is traumatised (eg by loss of a baby, violence, wars, sexual abuse, not being loved by her parents, suffering from a symbiotic trauma herself).



Traumatised mothers can

Be emotionally unavailable

Disrespect boundaries

Carry heavy emotional burdens
(anxieties, rage, pain)

Act unpredictably

Be extremely emotionally needy

Be violent

Their psychic structure is split.



Transgenerational Trauma

The trauma experiences of parents (trauma of existential threat, trauma of loss, symbiotic trauma) are transferred to their children via the bonding processes and thus causing a trauma of love and often also traumatization of sexuality.

Healthy psychic structures of a child

- ❖ Own life force
- ❖ Own will to live
- ❖ Healthy basic needs
- ❖ Joy to move
- ❖ Joy to play
- ❖ Joy to learn
- ❖ Openness, creativity
- ❖ ...



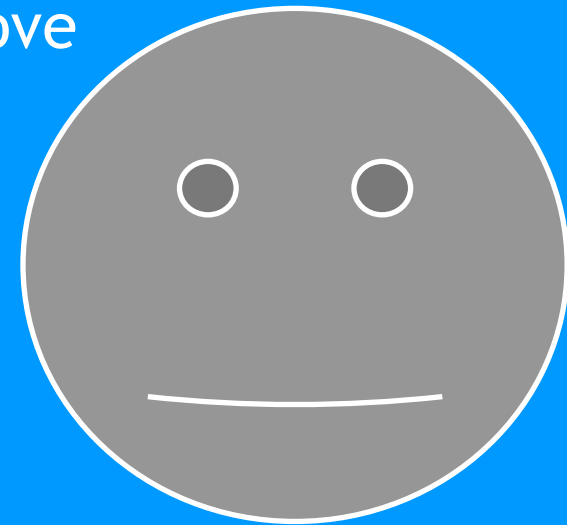
Characteristics of the traumatised part in a symbiotic trauma

- ❖ Desperation that there is no love from the parents
- ❖ Feeling abandoned and extremely lonely
- ❖ Terrified it has to die
- ❖ Suppressed rage
- ❖ Suppressed mourning
- ❖ Extreme withdrawal
- ❖ Tendency to give up



Characteristics of the survival strategies in symbiotic trauma

- ❖ 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



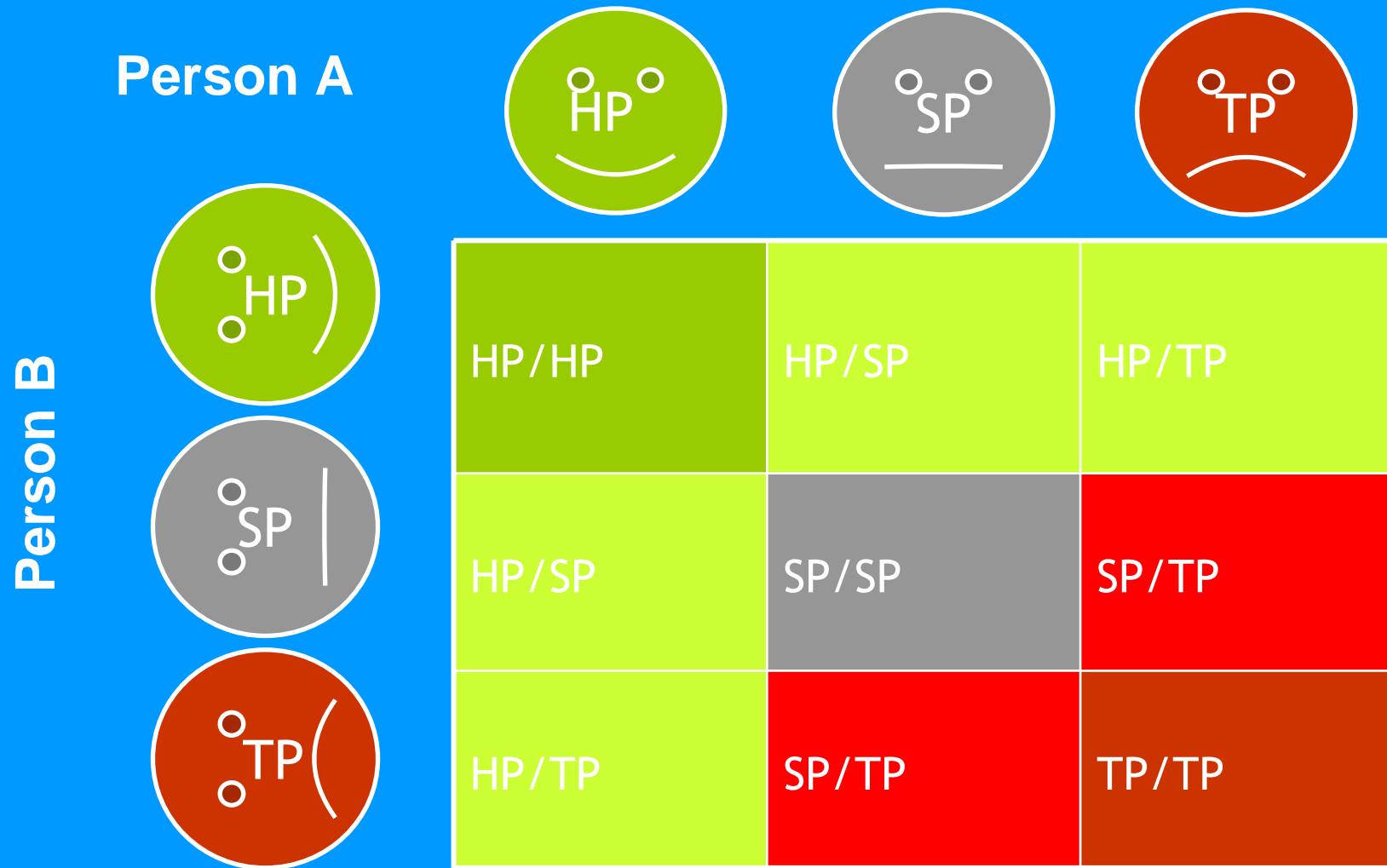
Consequences of a Trauma of Love

- ❖ Inability to distinguish between ones own feelings and those taken over from others
- ❖ Living another person's identity
- ❖ Lifelong symbiotic entanglement with the parents
- ❖ Symbiotic entanglement in all other close relationships
- ❖ Psychic problems of all sorts (anxiety, hyperactivity, depression, addictions, psychosis ...)



- ❖ If the first loving relationships of a child with his parents are traumatizing relationships this can influence all other relationships later in life.
- ❖ Symbiotically entangled relationships become normal.


Healthy and symbiotically entangled relationships



Steps towards resolving a Trauma of Love

- ❖ Acknowledging one own's trauma
- ❖ Learning to distinguish between realities and illusions
- ❖ Learning to distinguish between own feelings and those of others
- ❖ Finding back to one's own healthy needs
- ❖ Learning to keep borders
- ❖ Separating from symbiotic entangled relationships
- ❖ No longer trying to save others
- ❖ Living healthy and constructive relationships

Trauma Therapy



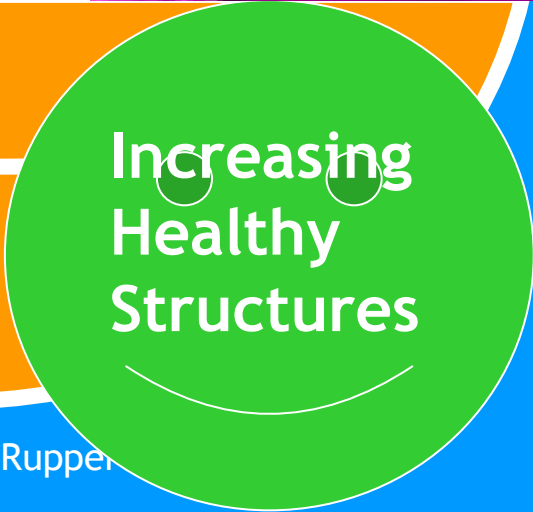
Opening the
Gates towards
trauma



Passing the
Gates of Illusions



Stabilisation -
Taking steps through
the Gates of Freedom



Increasing
Healthy
Structures



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Announcement

10.-12. October 2014 in Munich

- 2nd International Conference
- Healthy Relationships and the Constellation of the Intention
- www.healthy-autonomy.de

Literature

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