

**It has been a long way from
Mysticism to Dialogue – are we
going back again?
- a critical comment on Esotericism
and Spirituality in Psychotherapy**

Robert Waldl, Vienna
PCE 2010

- Is there a spiritual dimension to the personcentered approach?
- Can spirituality be used for personal growth in the personcentered therapeutic process?
- Can a human desire for spirituality be fulfilled by a personcentered therapeutic process?

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- questions like these have an old tradition in Europe
- personcentered approach stands in a long tradition of humanism
- two spiritual-psychotherapeutic statements

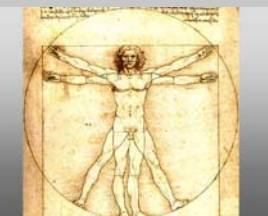
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- Enlightenment
- Counter-Enlightenment
- Humanism

- Aufklärung, Gegenaufklärung, Humanismus

4/50

Humanistic Renaissance, 1400-1600



- process of secularization and individualization

- Säkularisierung und Individualisierung

5/50

Humanistic Renaissance, 1400-1600



- Focus of Science: from the hereafter towards the here and now.

- vom Jenseits zum Hier und Jetzt!

6/50

Humanistic Renaissance



- Religion changed ...
- Religion moved ...

7/50

Period of Enlightenment, 18th cent.

- Freedom
- Dignity
- Autonomy (self-determination)

- Freiheit, Würde und Autonomie (Selbstbestimmung)

8/50

Period of Enlightenment, 18th cent.

Humanistic Thinking:

- Emancipation
- Free Will
- Liberty

- Emanzipation, Freier Wille, Unabhängigkeit

9/50

Period of Enlightenment, 18th cent.

Immanuel Kant:

- "Enlightenment is man's emergence from his self-incurred immaturity".

- „Aufklärung ist der Ausgang des Menschen aus seiner selbst verschuldeten Unmündigkeit“

10/50

Characteristics of Enlightenment

- Criticism – Authority
- Tolerance – Religion
- Here and Now

- Kritik, Toleranz, positive Diesseitgestaltung

11/50

Immanuel Kant and Carl Rogers

- Kant encouraged us to trust our own power of judgment.
- Rogers encouraged us to trust our own experience.

- Ermutigung der eigenen Urteilskraft zu trauen.
- Ermutigung der eigenen Erfahrungen zu trauen.

12/50

Immanuel Kant and Carl Rogers

- inside our own organism

13/50

Legend:

- The Temptation of Saint Anthony

- Die Versuchung des Heiligen Antonius

14/50



- “Communications is only about externals.”
- “Feelings and personal meanings are neither recognized nor owned.”
- “The individual increasingly comes to feel that this locus of evaluation lies within himself.”
Rogers, 1961

James Bugental, 1964:

1. Human beings cannot be reduced to components.
2. Human existence expresses itself in human relationships.

3. Human consciousness includes an awareness of oneself in the context of other people.
4. Human beings have choices and responsibilities.
5. Human beings are intentional, they seek meaning, value and goals.

- Sigmund Freud, 1927
Die Zukunft einer Illusion
- Viktor Frankl, 1948
Der unbewusste Gott
- Carl Gustav Jung, 1963
Psychologie und Religion



“It began to occur to me that unless I had a need to demonstrate my own cleverness and learning, I would do better to rely upon the client for direction of movement in the process.”
Rogers 1932

- The 1950s and 60s ... tendencies of enlightenment.
- Since the 80s ... typical tendencies of counter-enlightenment

- die 1950er und 60er ... Aufklärung
- Seit den 80er ... Tendenzen der Gegenaufklärung

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E. Hinterkopf, 1998

Integrating Spirituality in Counseling:

- “to present a definition of spirituality that is not restricted by the nature of spiritual content but instead includes the spirituality of all clients by concentrating on spiritual process”

E. Hinterkopf, 1998

Integrating Spirituality in Counseling:

- “definition of spirituality or the spiritual process: a subtle, bodily feeling with vague meanings that brings new, clearer meanings involving a transcendent growth process”

E. Hinterkopf, 1998

Integrating Spirituality in Counseling:

- “However, if a client asks a counselor whether an experience is spiritual, I believe it is important that a counselor gives at least a brief definition of spirituality to explain his or her response”

E. Hinterkopf, 1998

Integrating Spirituality in Counseling:

- No Definition
- Relapse into pre-Rogerian methods

• Aufklärung, Lebensaufklärung, Humanismus

Brian Thorne, June 2009, Vienna

- Lecture

- “Personenzentrierte Psychotherapie – eine spirituelle Disziplin”

28/50

Brian Thorne, June 2009, Vienna

“To refuse God’s love or a benevolent energy from the cosmos, means living in the worst hell. This means a self-hate, which is so deep, nothing reaches it”

„Die Liebe Gottes ... abzulehnen, bedeutet die letzte Hölle zu bewohnen. Das deutet auf einen Selbsthass, der so tief sitzt, dass nichts zu ihm durchdringt“

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Brian Thorne, June 2009, Vienna

“The ability to love one’s self must often be forged on the anvil of suffering and guilt.”

“Die Fähigkeit, sich selbst zu lieben, muss oft am Amboss des Leidens und der Schuld geschmiedet werden.“

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Rogers, 1961

- “in successful psychotherapy, negative attitudes toward the self decrease and positive attitudes increase”
- “the correlated increase in acceptance of others.”

Brian Thorne, June 2009, Vienna

- not be unwashed, uncombed in dirty and rumpled clothes

“Ungekämmt und ungewaschen in schmutzigen und zerrissenen Klamotten zu stecken ...

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Rogers, 1961

“quiet pleasure in being one’s self”

Brian Thorne, June 2009, Vienna

lecture:

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“It seems that my inner spirit has reached out and touched the inner spirit of the other. ...I am compelled to believe that I, like many others, have underestimated the importance of this mystical, spiritual dimension”.

Rogers, 1980

Brian Thorne, June 2009, Vienna

„would wish Rogers had died in 1973.”

„... lieber gewesen, wenn Rogers schon im Jahre 1973 gestorben wäre.“

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