

Abstract for the European Symposium "The place of the Person-Centred Approach in Europe: Contributions, Activities and Impact in a Troubled World"
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PCE Europe and the Department of Psychology,
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Working with Families in Family Businesses

The Crossover between Personcentered Counseling and Consulting

Couples and families running family businesses live and work under special circumstances. They face complex interference between two social systems: the business, and the private world. They must cope with contradictory value systems in communication, decision-making and belonging.

Many occasions bring business families to a counselor / consultant. Mostly they are overloaded and unsure whether problems stem from their partnership or the company. There is incongruence, vulnerability and uncertainty about double roles; communication is ambiguous and they experience each other as threatening. When the next generation takes over, plans often endanger relationships and the existence of the business.

Personcentered counseling and consulting can be done at different levels: at the individual-, the interaction- or the organization level. Working on awareness of self and others, cultivating communication in double roles enables persons to become congruent. They can switch freely between their roles as family members and company functionaries, allowing new perspectives in the family and in the organization.

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