


**Working with Families
in Family Businesses**
The Crossover between Person-Centered
Counselling and Consulting

Robert Waldl
PCE Symposium Prague 2014

Charles University Prague
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**Working with Families
in Family Businesses**

Robert Waldl, Vienna
find handouts at: www.waldl.com

The Residential & Office Building of the Buddenbrooks in Lübeck

Fritz B. Simon's hypothesis :

„Growing up in a business family is a risk factor which means the probability of developing psychological problems is greater in such families than on the average.“
(Simon, 2005, p. 56) transl. by R.W.

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1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

„In many of these families there is one child, who has become a 'professional' patient, while the other children are running the company“
(Simon, 2005, S. 64) transl. by R.W.

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My Personal Point of View:

Over the years, from time to time, every psychotherapist is confronted with the themes of business families but they are not always identified as such.

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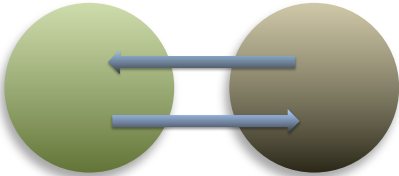
Structure of my Presentation

1. Introduction
2. Relationship dynamics in business families
3. My work with business families
4. Status of research and literature
5. Conclusion and Discussion

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Social Norm in the 21st Century

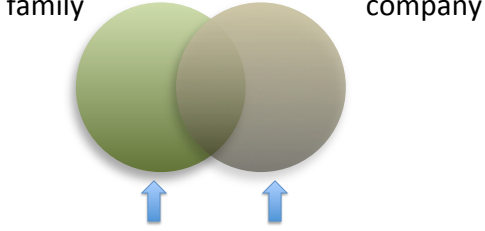
1. Separation of private and professional life, family and company



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Characteristics of Families who run Businesses:

1. Connections between private and professional life



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Social Relevance of Family Businesses in the Western World:

1.
 - 75- 80 % of all businesses are majority-owned by families
 - ≈ 70 % of all employees work for these
 - the size: from small businesses to huge international corporations (like *Ford, Merck, Porsche*)

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Different Rules ...

1. Private life: Rules in the family system
 - orientation towards the person
 - relationship: love
 - member by birth /marriage
 - members are not (easily) replaceable
 - decisions: emotional
 - profits are idealistic in nature

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Different Rules ...

1. Professional life: Rules in the company system
 - orientation towards the function
 - working relationship: money
 - you become a member by decision
 - you can be dismissed
 - decision: rational
 - material benefits

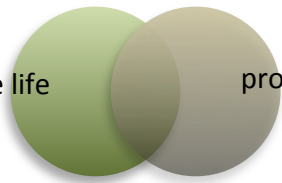
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... und deren Überlagerung:

1. Privatleben: Regeln des Familiensystems
 - Orientierung an der Person
 - Paarbeziehung: Liebe
 - Zugang durch Geburt
 - nicht austauschbar
 - unkündbar
 - Emotional
 - Ideeller Gewinn
2. Berufssystem/Regeln im Unternehmen
 - Orientierung an der Funktion
 - Arbeitsbeziehung: Geld
 - Zugang durch Entscheidung
 - kündbar
 - rational
 - Materieller Gewinn

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Difficulties in Relationships because of this Overlap:



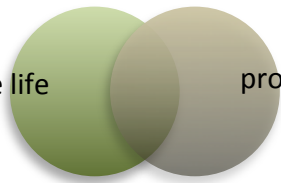
private life professional life

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

- rules contradict each other
- rules can apply at the same time
- the boundaries are unclear
- things get mixed up and confusing

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Risks of Overlaps:



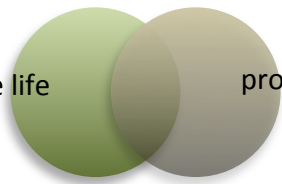
private life professional life

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

- in communication it might not be clear which rules the person opposite is applying at a particular moment

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Consequences of Overlaps:



private life professional life

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

- Specific relationship dynamics:
- Specific social, mental and psychic demands on the people involved

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'Normal' Situation:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

- We all have learned different rules for our different roles in life. Example:
 - + Private person
 - + Public person
- Either in the family or in the organization
- We can handle the bilingualism, the multilingualism in different subsystems
- We try to avoid overlaps

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Specific Situation in Business Families:

- 1.
2.
 - There it is not (always) an “either / or”
 - There is a need to communicate and act synchronal
 - For the people involved there is a need to develop special social, mental and psychic skills
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

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Intrapersonal and Interpersonal Role-Conflicts:

- 1.
2.
 - In founding families:
 - Role as parents vs. role as founders
 - “the company sits always at the table too”
 - Role as child vs. role as competitor (with siblings, with company) vs. role as successor
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

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Autonomy:

- 1.
2.
 - For founders and raisers of a company: autonomy is a high value
 - How can Children of founders stay autonomic?
often in unsolvable conflicts
 - Ambivalence, double bind
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

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Status and Relationship Dynamics

The diagram consists of two overlapping circles. The left circle is green and labeled 'family', containing several black human icons. The right circle is grey and labeled 'company', containing a larger number of black human icons. The overlapping area in the center contains a few black human icons, representing the intersection of family and company roles.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

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Status and Relationship Dynamics

1.

2. family company

3.

4.

5.

Tagiuri und Davis' classic three-circle model, 1996

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ownership

Detailed description: A Venn diagram with three overlapping circles. The top-left circle is green and labeled 'family'. The top-right circle is brown and labeled 'company'. The bottom circle is grey and labeled 'ownership'. The circles overlap in the center, and each contains several black human icons representing individuals within that domain.

The Concept of 'Person' in PCA:

1.

2. ... the individual and his / her social context, relationships ...

3.

4.

5.

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Detailed description: Similar to the first slide, but the central figure in the 'company' circle is highlighted with a blue glow, representing the individual's focus within that context.

The Concept of 'Person' in PCA:

1.

2. ... the individual and his / her social context, relationships ...

3.

4.

5.

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Detailed description: Similar to the second slide, but blue arrows radiate from the highlighted individual to other human icons within the 'company' circle, illustrating relationships.

'...social implications...'

1.

2. "... organisations might discover, as have individuals, that it is a richly rewarding experience to be what one deeply is." (Carl Rogers, 1961, p.180)

- Positive
- Constructive
- Realistic
- Trustworthy

3.

4.

5.

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‘...old, old questions ...’

- 1.
2. “What is my goal in life?”
3. “What am I striving for?”
4. “What is my purpose?”
- 5.

(Carl Rogers, 1961, p.164)

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The Idea of a Private Life - Separate from Public Life and Work



... is a modern concept

Family,
Company,
Ownership

Pieter de Hooch, 1662,
Dutch Family in the Courtyard of its House
Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

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My Work with Business Families: Methodological

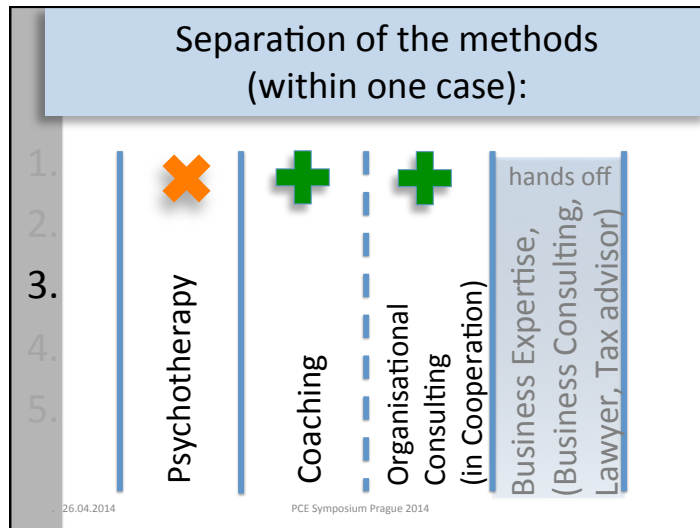
- 1.
2. • Psychotherapy, Couple Therapy
3. • Coaching
4. • Organisational Consulting
- 5.

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Separation of the methods (within one case):

+	×	-	hands off
Psychotherapy	Coaching	Organisational Consulting (in Cooperation)	Business Expertise, (Business Consulting, Lawyer, Tax advisor)

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Themes I: Person-Centered Coaching

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

- Confidence, clarity und flexibility regarding one's role in the family, partnership and company
- Clarity between the person and the functions he/ she has in the company

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Themes II: Organisational Consulting

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

- Tasks are tailored too much to a specific person and not to a function
- To create (more) clear job profiles and task profiles

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Themes III: Separating Family from Family Business

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

- Separation of working space and private space
- Separation of working and non-working times
- More clarification of family vs. business roles

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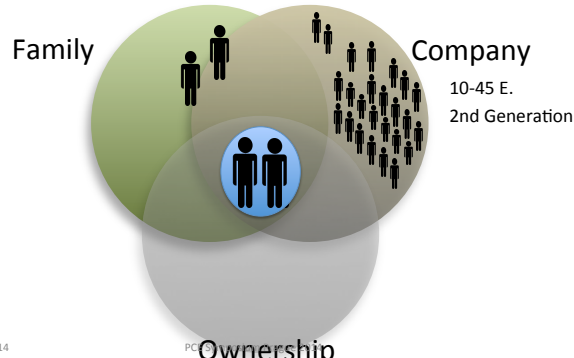
Themes IV: Succession Plan



1. Analysis of interests
2. Succession plan, balance of interests
3. Legal services
4. Handing over – taking over

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Case Example 1:

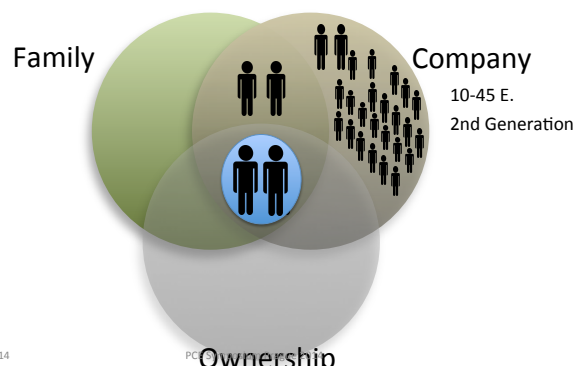


Family Company
10-45 E.
2nd Generation

Ownership

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Case Example 1:

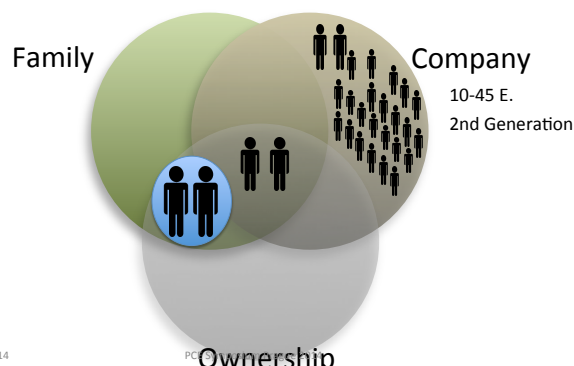


Family Company
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Ownership

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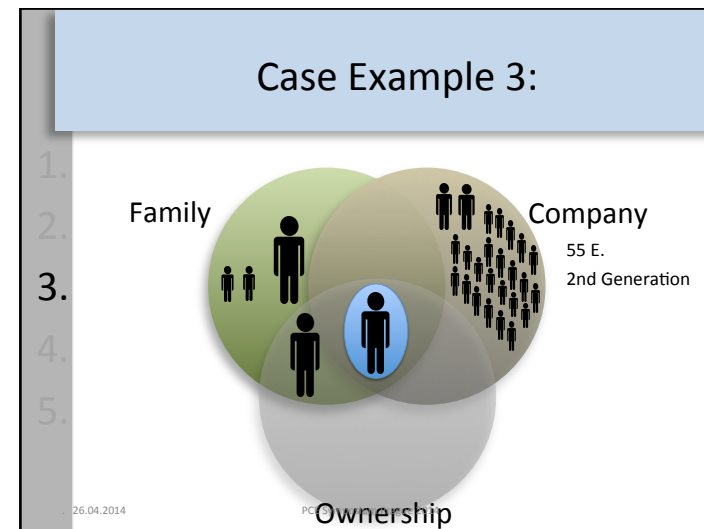
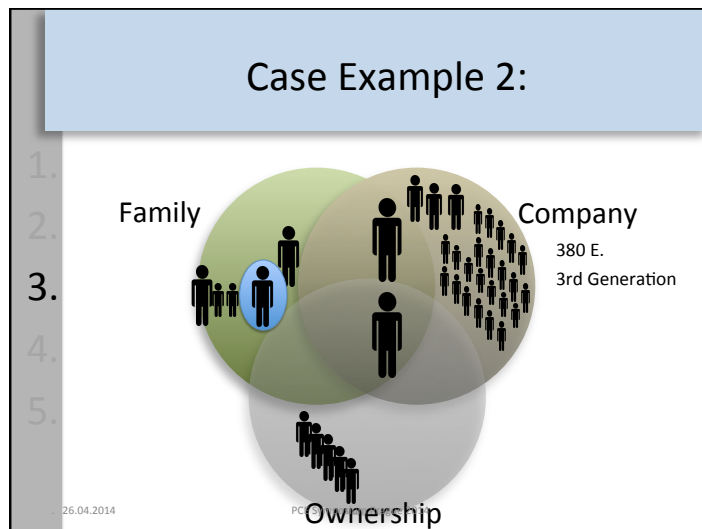
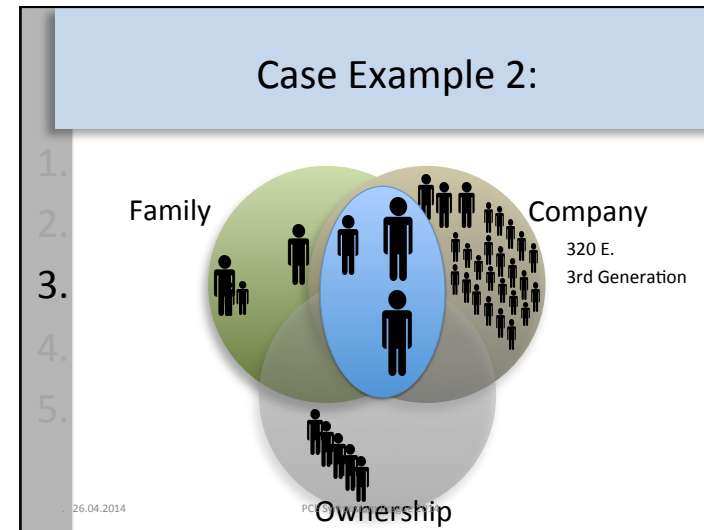
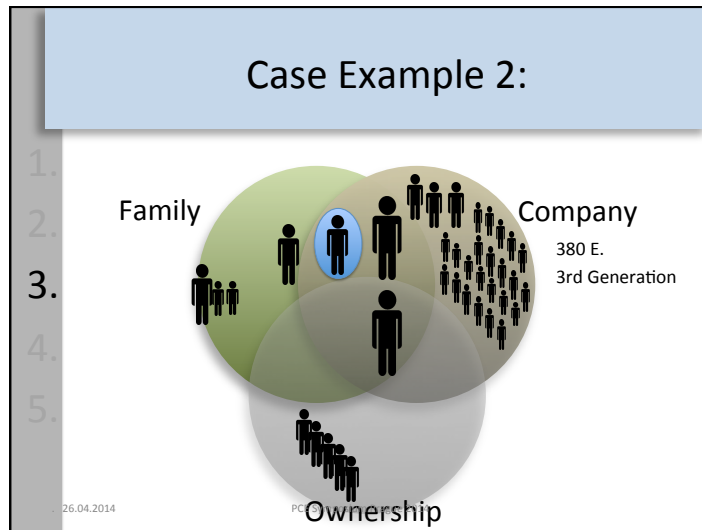
Case Example 1:



Family Company
10-45 E.
2nd Generation

Ownership

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Status of Research and Literature

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
4.
 - Existing Institutes research family businesses in regarding economic success
5.
 - Literature exists but based only on systemic theory
 - No Person-Centered literature yet

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Summary of relevant themes

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
5.
 - Illuminate the special business vs. private life context
 - Enable people involved to reflect on themselves / their lives
 - Clarify person and function

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Conclusion:

- 1.
2. To create awareness of the theme "Working with Business Families"
- 3.
4. To encourage others to work in this field with our Person-Centered Approach
- 5.

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Discussion

Thank you

Feedback & questions

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- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
5.
 - www.waldl.com
 - www.coaching-psychotherapie.com

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1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

About me:

- Person-Centered Psychotherapist
- Systemic Coaching in Organizations
- Consulting-License Chamber of Commerce

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