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# Conference PCE 2024 Person, Paideia, Politeia. Athens

The 16th World Conference  
for Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy and Counseling.

Technopolis City of Athens, 100 Pireos str., 11854 Gazi, Athens, Athens, Greece  
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Invitation to the Presentation:

## How Conflicts between Adult Siblings can be Avoided and Resolved (if they want to)

The development of a person is closely related to the sibling constellation in the family of origin. Carl Rogers experienced this intensely and painfully in his personal history, but reflected it little in his theory of personality development. After Rogers, it was left to his colleagues to formulate a person-centered developmental psychology. However, the importance of the relationship between siblings for self-development has, to date, been little addressed in the person-centered approach.

Sibling relationships are often highly ambivalent, diverse and rarely free of conflict. They are characterized by the sibling order, the respective personalities of the children and the relationship between the parents. Sibling relationships are constantly changing. In the course of their lives, siblings take on different, often very significant roles for each other: they can be protectors or victims, allies or rivals. Many siblings break off contact with each other after conflicts. Others are important resources for each other in different phases of life.

Rivalry between siblings is an issue in many families. For those affected, sibling conflicts are often associated with shame. Most families try to hide the existence of such disputes from the outside world, even if they have escalated and have been going on for a long time.

The issue of justice between siblings often becomes more complex when it comes to property and inheritance within the family. Especially in business families, sibling rivalry can become an existential threat. As more than 90% of companies in Europe are family businesses, the issue of siblings is generally highly relevant. Every business family is confronted with the issue of conflict between siblings in the course of its development. Siblings working together can mean the most successful development, but also the greatest challenge for a family business.

As a management consultant and person-centered psychotherapist, I have been working with business families for many years. However, I am not only consulted when conflicts arise. People of adult age regularly come to my practice with the initiative to work with siblings. They want to clear up old projections and role attributions and reorganize their sibling relationship.

In the lecture I will present cases from my work with siblings and families using genograms. I will present my development-oriented approach to working with siblings based on person-centered systems theory. The aim of my presentation is to promote a greater awareness of sibling work in the various settings of person-centered psychotherapy and counseling.

Robert Waldl