



Person  
Paideia  
Politeia

DEVELOPING THE PERSON OF THE PCE THERAPIST

P C E // A T H E N S 2 0 2 4

# The 16<sup>th</sup> **PCE WORLD CONFERENCE**

for Person Centered & Experiential  
Psychotherapy & Counseling

September 9-13, 2024, Athens – Greece

## Book of Abstracts

ORGANIZERS



PANHELLENIC ASSOCIATION  
OF PROFESSIONALS  
IN THE PERSON-CENTRED &  
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Athens, 2024



# Person Paideia Politeia: Developing the Person of the PCE therapist

The 16th World Conference for Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy and Counseling (PCE2024) is taking place in person & online, on September 9th-13th, 2024, at Technopolis, Athens. The Pre-Conference is taking place in person & online on September 7th-8th, 2024, at the College for Humanistic Sciences - ICPS. The PCE Conference is the biennial event of the World Association for Person-Centered & Experiential Psychotherapy & Counseling (WAPCEPC).

## Questions Related to the Conference Theme

- How are we maintaining the person-centered values in a changing world as members of communities?
- Are our values still important?
- How are we evolving in an adverse reality?
- Pandemic Crisis, Economic Crisis, Environmental Crisis, Political Crisis?
- Are we ready for new types of dialogue?
- How can we facilitate and bring that change to a relational level in therapy?
- Are training, personal therapy and supervision enough?

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# Invitation to Athens

A short welcome...

«Ἄρξομαι δὲ ἀπὸ τῶν προγόνων· δίκαιον γὰρ αὐτοῖς καὶ πρέπον δὲ ἅμα ἐν τῷ τοιῷδε τὴν τιμὴν ταύτην τῆς μνήμης δίδοσθαι. τὴν γὰρ χώραν οἱ αὐτοὶ αἰεὶ οἰκοῦντες διαδοχῇ τῶν ἐπιγιγνομένων μέχρι τοῦδε ἐλευθέραν δι' ἀρετὴν παρέδοσαν»

Θουκιδίδης, Επιτάφιος Περικλέους, 36

"I will start with the ancestors first. It is our duty and at the same time it is necessary on this occasion to give this honor to their memory. Because, living continuously in this country, they handed it over to us, successively one generation after another thanks to their virtue, free now "

Thucydides, Pericles's Funeral Oration, 36 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C

Αγαπητοί πολίτες του κόσμου/Dear citizens of the world,  
Καλώς ορίσατε στην πόλη μας, την Αθήνα! /Welcome to our city, Athens!

We feel extremely honored to offer you our *filoxenia* /hospitality and to share with you the unique experience of a PCE Conference, where *polis/city*, *pedeia* /education and *prosopo* /person as concepts but also as reality have a timeless value.

In this country where democracy was born, let's make modern Athens the perfect context for a special experiential and dialogical journey of a continuum from the classical past to the humanistic today on the solid foundation of our person-centred and experiential values.

In ancient Greece, the democratic state and its values were passed on by our ancestors. Given the current opportunity, we wish to express our gratitude to our ancestors, the founders of the person-centred and experiential approach in Greece, Polly and Ioulios Iossifides, who during the anti-dictatorship struggle in Greece were among the first active members of the "Democratic Defence".

In 1989, they initiated the Institute of Person-Centred Approach, the first institution offering professional education in Person-Centred Counselling and Therapy in Greece. College for Humanistic Sciences – ICPS and The Panhellenic Association of Professionals in the Person-Centred & Experiential Approach (PEEPVIP) continue their legacy in our days.

In June 2009, ICPS organized the International Conference "Person-Centred Counselling & Psychotherapy Today: Journey and Challenges" in Athens with 350 participants from 25 countries and 10 leading academics, chaired by Polly Iossifides.

We thank Polly and Ioulios warmly for introducing PCE in Greece. They still remind us what it means to be a democratic and fully-functioning person.

We are also deeply thankful to WAPCEPC, to all of you as members of the person-centred and experiential community and more particularly to Professor David Murphy for accepting to be Head of the Scientific Committee in our Conference.

Ultimately, we are truly indebted to our colleagues from Ukraine, who had initially undertaken to hold the Conference in their beautiful country and due to the war conflict were unable to do!

We hope you will enjoy our Conference under the roof of Xenios Zeus/Welcoming Zeus... in the shadow of the Acropolis.

Maria Kefalopoulou  
Head of the Organizing Committee

# This is Athens

According to the ancient Athenian myth, Athena, the goddess of wisdom and war, competed against Poseidon, the God of the Seas, for patronage of the yet-unnamed city; they agreed that whoever gave the Athenians the better gift would become their patron and appointed Cecrops, the king of Athens, as the judge. According to the account given by Pseudo-Apolodorus, Poseidon struck the ground with his trident and a salt water spring welled up. In an alternative version of the myth from Vergil's poem *Georgics*, Poseidon instead gave the Athenians the first horse. In both versions, Athena offered the Athenians the first domesticated olive tree.

Cecrops accepted this gift and declared Athena the patron goddess of Athens.

Athens is one of the biggest economic centers in Southeastern Europe. It also has a large financial sector, and its port Piraeus is both the largest passenger port in Europe, and the third largest in the world.

The Municipality of Athens (also City of Athens), which actually constitutes a small administrative unit of the entire city, had a population of 664,046 (in 2011) within its official limits, and a land area of 38.96 km<sup>2</sup>. The Athens Urban Area or Greater Athens extends beyond its administrative municipal city limits, with a population of 3,090,508 (in 2011) over an area of 412 km<sup>2</sup>. Athens is also the southernmost capital on the European mainland and the warmest major city in Europe.

# The concept of community

## Athenian Agora

You can join us in the open space of Technopolis, a meeting point that can represent the Agora, the open heart of Ancient Greece and connect yourselves with the Greek spirit of community that involves.

Agora is the open space in the ancient Greek cities named as the place of location and as the assembly of citizens. The citizens of Athens employed there their various activities including the discussion of civic, legal and religious affairs, of the events of everyday life of Athenians and the realization of philosophical dialogues. Agora also functioned as a public place for social life and an open market in an open area. It is an historical term, which we meet for the first time at the times of Homer.

The agora of Athens was located below the Acropolis near the building of the Theseion (the Temple of Hephaestus), and continues to remind us the ancient city since open-air markets are still held in that same location today. Agora of Athens is identified as the birthplace of democracy since it was here that political discussions and arguments of the citizens, who came into the assembly, contributed to the emergence of politics and public discourse giving power to the people.

Later, the Greek agora influenced the development of the Roman forum in a more rigid and regular manner and a location with planned architecture. Until our days, the Agora and the Forum remain the center of the lives of citizens in the world.

Join us in the space that democracy was created and that makes us think how important it is to keep this regime alive today.

## Keynote speakers

**Keith Tudor**

**Gillian-Proctor**

**Jeff Cornelius White**

**Rhonda Goldman**

## Online Keynote speakers

**Arthur Bohart**

**David E. Orlinsky**

**John C. Norcross**

## Pre Conference - Workshop Facilitators

**João Hipólito**

**Jean-Marc-Randin**

## Semi Plenary

**Maria Kefalopoulou**

**Jana Gololob**

## Organisers – Supporters





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MA in Psychology, Authorized Psychologist, Specialist and Supervisor in Psychotherapy, Chair of DSPOP, Chair of PCE2022 Organizing Committee

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Head of the Scientific Committee

### **Keith Tudor**

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### **Jeff Cornelius White**

### **Bagge Niels**

### **Susan Stephen**

### **Maria Kefalopoulou**

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Client-Centred Therapist, supervisor, trainer and consultant. Management Coach. Training Consultant – Training Factory.Praha, Czechia; MSc Contemporary Client-Centred Psychotherapy (Primary Tutor), Metanoia Institute, London UK.

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Psychotherapist, M.Sc. In Person Centred Counselling & Psychotherapy, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow UK. European Certificate of Psychotherapy (E.C.P.) – Member of European Association for Psychotherapy (E.A.P).

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## **Martin Lange**

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### **Katerina Triikka**

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# 3

## Third Culture Kids (TCK's): When many cultures meet in one person

Mr. **Patrick Akrivos** Mag.

*Praxis Akrivos, Athens, Greece. FORUM Personzentrierte Psychotherapie, Ausbildung und Praxis, Vienna, Austria*

### Mr. Patrick Akrivos Author Bio

Mag. Patrick Akrivos Mag. Patrick Akrivos is an Austrian-Greek licensed psychotherapist. He works in Athens, Greece and Vienna Austria (praxis-akrivos.at). He holds a postgraduate degree from Middlesex University, a postgraduate diploma in the Person-Centered Approach from the University of Strathclyde and has completed his training in Person Centered Psychotherapy at the FORUM in Vienna, Austria. He is also a certified Gordon Trainer (Parent, Teacher, Youth and Leader Training), he is a certified S.A.F.E. trainer (Secure Attachment Training) as well as a Positive Discipline Instructor. He has completed trainings in Emotional Focused Couples Therapy, Addictions, Trauma therapy and others. Patrick Akrivos has many years of experience in the education of parents and teachers as well as consulting and educating staff and employees in Greek and International companies as well as educational institutions. Patrick Akrivos has a significant number of publications and conference presentations and is continuing to deepen his understanding of psychotherapy with additional training.



## Abstract

This Lecture explores the intersection of psychotherapy and the experiences of Third Culture Kids (TCKs), individuals who have spent a significant part of their formative years in cultures different from their parents', or have parents from different cultural backgrounds. Therapists working with Third Culture Kids (TCKs) need consider cultural sensitivity, acknowledging the complexities of identity formation, the impact of frequent relocations, and the potential feelings of rootlessness. Third Culture Kids (TCKs) often possess heightened social sensitivity due to exposure to diverse cultures. Therapists are called to recognize and validate this sensitivity, addressing challenges like cultural identity conflicts. Understanding the interplay between cultural influences is crucial for effective therapy, fostering a safe space for TCKs to explore and integrate their unique experiences. Further, some TCK's may experience reverse culture shock when returning to their passport country. This can manifest as a sense of disorientation, questioning identity and cultural loyalty, and emotional struggles associated with readjustment. In a world that is increasingly mobile and the number of individuals growing up among cultures begin to become the norm, this lecture aims at raising awareness of the unique challenges TCKs face in identity development, relationships, and mental health, thus contributing to a broader dialogue on the cultural dimensions of psychotherapy, emphasizing the significance of considering diverse cultural backgrounds in therapeutic practices.

# Submission type

Structured Discussion (60 min) **Moderator/Discussant** Patrick Akrivos

# Keywords

TCK, Cross-Cultural , Psychotherapy, Cultural-awareness, Global-Nomads



# 6

## Can Tabletop Role-Playing Game (TTRPG) function as a personal development group in adjunct to Person-Centered Play Therapy (PCPT)?

Mr. **Leonidas Perellis** Mag.<sup>1</sup>, Mr. **Patrick Akrivos** Mag.<sup>2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Deutsche Schule Athen, Athens, Greece. <sup>2</sup>Praxis Akrivos, Athens, Greece. <sup>3</sup>FORUM Personzentrierte Psychotherapie, Ausbildung und Praxis, Vienna, Austria

### Mr. Leonidas Perellis Author Bio

Leonidas Perellis is a computer science teacher and lifelong educator currently serving at the German School of Athens (DSA) the Trianemi Primary School. Holding bachelor and master's degrees from the Universities of Athens and Vienna, he has supplemented his academic background with numerous seminars focusing on teaching philosophies and techniques. With long years of experience working with children of all ages, Leonidas focuses in teaching not only computer science, but also mathematics, logic, and social skills. Notably, he has pioneered a unique curriculum for teaching Computer Science Unplugged, emphasizing learning without the use of electronics and screens. A lifelong enthusiast of TableTop Role Playing Games (TTRPGs), Leonidas has developed a tool precisely tailored to address the social needs of children aged 5-15, fostering soft skills within the safe and collaborative environment of a group. Over the past 8 years, he has conducted weekly workshops with children, accumulating valuable results and case studies that showcase the effectiveness of this innovative approach.



### Mr. Patrick Akrivos Author Bio

Mag. Patrick Akrivos Mag. Patrick Akrivos is an Austrian-Greek licensed psychotherapist. He works in Athens, Greece and Vienna Austria (praxis-akrivos.at). He holds a postgraduate degree from Middlesex University, a postgraduate diploma in the Person-Centered Approach from the University of Strathclyde and has completed his training in Person Centered Psychotherapy at the FORUM in Vienna, Austria. He is also a certified Gordon Trainer (Parent, Teacher, Youth and Leader Training), he is a certified S.A.F.E. trainer (Secure Attachment Training) as well as a Positive Discipline Instructor. He has completed trainings in Emotional Focused Couples Therapy, Addictions, Trauma therapy and others. Patrick Akrivos has many years of experience in the education of parents and teachers as well as consulting and educating staff and employees in Greek and International companies as well as educational institutions. Patrick Akrivos has a significant number of publications and conference presentations and is continuing to deepen his understanding of psychotherapy with additional training.



## Abstract

Person-Centered Play Therapy (PCPT) is exclusively conducted one-on-one to prioritize individualized therapeutic experiences. The private setting promotes a sense of safety and security, encouraging children to freely express themselves without the potential judgment of peers. Play serves as a natural medium for children to communicate and express emotions, overcoming verbal limitations, while exploring and working through issues at their own pace. However, this being the only option for children, they cannot benefit from what a group can offer such as a sense of belonging and reduced feelings of isolation, learning and practicing social skills, empathy, and cooperation.

Tabletop Role-Playing Game (TTRPG) could fill this gap. Role-playing, as a general concept, is very often used as a powerful tool in all kinds of therapy. However, its spectrum is exceptionally wide and its goals and results cannot be easily set or measured. Moreover, one often finds most examples of role-playing games in mainly team building setups or one-off workshops, usually tailored to specific circumstances and groups and almost always aimed at adults.

We argue that, utilizing a specially designed Tabletop Role-Playing Game for children, within the scope of Play Therapy, can draw on the principles of experiential learning and narrative engagement and serve as a dynamic medium to enhance communication and foster the development of various soft skills within small groups of 3-5 children.

Our experience has provided us with insights, as well as empirical evidence, into the unique therapeutic benefits that the game has to offer, shedding light on their potential to create a supportive and interactive environment that facilitates emotional expression, social interaction, and the cultivation of essential life skills in all participating children.

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

Tabletop Role-Playing Game, Person Centered Playtherapy, Workshop, Demonstration, -

# 9

## “Harmonizing Person, Paideia and Politeia: A Guided Exploration of Building and Developing Your Private Practice”

### **Maria Manganari**

*MSc in Person - Centred Counseling and Psychotherapy, Master in Business Administration  
Private practice, Chios, Greece*

#### **Maria Manganari Author Bio**

I was born in Athens. My first degree is in French Language and Literature (E.K.P.A.). I also hold a Master's degree in International Business (A.U.E. B.). I have worked extensively in the fashion business industry. I hold a M.Sc. in Person-Centred Counseling and Psychotherapy (University of Strathclyde) and started my private practice in 2018. I have been trained in Gordon Hellas (Parents Effectiveness Training, Teachers Effectiveness Training, Be your Best, Terrific Toddlers) and in Focusing Centre (Person - Centred Family and Couples Therapy). I live in Chios island, Greece, working online and on site with individuals, couples, parents and as a counseling supervisor.



## Abstract

This presentation is aimed at novice professionals. It invites them to a profound exploration of these interconnected themes in the context of establishing and developing a flourishing Person – Centred & Experiential Psychotherapy & Counseling private practice.

The presentation discusses the concept of 'Person', encouraging therapists to:

- Clarify their personal motivations and goals so as to develop the appropriate business plan.
- Identify their target group.
- Establish a professional website and social media network with clear information services, credentials and contact details.
- Determine their pricing policy based on their experience, expertise and local market.
- Establish effective work- life balance so as to prevent burn - out.

The word "paideia" is a derivative of the ancient verb "paideuo" which means to teach - to educate. In addition to providing knowledge, paideia aims to shape our personality and develop our moral identity:

- Pursuing ongoing training, supervision and personal therapy.

- Attending conferences and workshops to network with other colleagues and considering forming collaborations.
- Implementing feedback procedures.

We will then navigate the concept of "Politeia". Rooted in the term and meaning of the ancient greek city – state "politeia" refers to the organization of social coexistence: the rules-laws, the obligations and rights of individuals and finally, the penalties in cases of violation of the rules. This journey will invite participants to:

- Implement the code of ethics of counselors.
- Familiarize with local laws and fiscal context governing private practice.

As we delve into the symphony of "Person", "Paideia" and "Politeia", this workshop will equip the participants with both confidence and a practical toolkit, empowering them to establish and expand their PCE private practice.

## Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

## Keywords

private practice , professional identity, career path, business plan, branding

# 11

## Learn about and Get Involved with the WAPCEPC Journal, Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapies

Prof Jeffrey **H. D. Cornelius-White** PsyD [ORCID iD<sup>1</sup>](#), Prof **Rhonda Goldman** PhD [ORCID iD<sup>2</sup>](#), **Maria Kefalopolou** PhD<sup>3</sup>, **Jason Sharbanee** PhD [ORCID iD<sup>4</sup>](#), **Susan Stephen** PhD [ORCID iD<sup>5</sup>](#)

### Prof Jeffrey H. D. Cornelius-White

[0000-0003-1994-6827](#)

#### Author Bio

Jeffrey H. D. Cornelius-White is Distinguished Professor in the School of Mental Health and Behavioral Sciences at Missouri State University. He has published over 100 works on a variety of topics, including person-centered therapy, learner-centered instruction, interdisciplinary studies, and multicultural issues, most notably concerning attitudes towards trans persons.



### Prof Rhonda Goldman

[0000-0001-8594-0840](#)

#### Author Bio

Rhonda Goldman is a clinical psychologist and lecturer at the Chicago School in Chicago, IL, USA. She has been a key developer of Emotion-focused Therapy, having produced many books and articles on Emotion-focused Therapy for Individuals and Couples. She continues to conduct research relevant to Emotion-focused Therapy.



- <sup>1</sup> Missouri State University, Springfield, USA.
- <sup>2</sup> Chicago School of Professional Psychology, Chicago, USA.
- <sup>3</sup> ICPS-College for Humanistic Sciences, Athens, Greece.
- <sup>4</sup> Curtin University, Bentley, Australia.
- <sup>5</sup> University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, United Kingdom

### **Maria Kefalopolou Author Bio**

Maria is a social psychologist and person-centered counselor/psychotherapist and supervisor in Athens. She is Academic Lead in Psychotherapy and PCE trainer at the ICPS- College for Humanistic Sciences, Greece.



### **Jason Sharbanee**

[0000-0003-1822-9092](tel:0000-0003-1822-9092)

#### **Author Bio**

Jason Sharbanee is a clinical psychologist and senior lecturer at Curtin University, Perth, Australia, where he teaches psychotherapy to postgraduate students, and conducts psychotherapy research. He is certified as an Emotion-focused Therapy trainer for individuals and couples by the International Society of Emotion Focused Therapy.



### **Susan Stephen**

[0000-0003-3567-2045](tel:0000-0003-3567-2045)

#### **Author Bio**

Susan Stephen is a person-centred counsellor and supervisor based in Glasgow. She is a lecturer in counselling at the University of Strathclyde and Director of the Strathclyde Counselling and Psychotherapy Research Clinic.



## Abstract

The journal, *Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapies*, satisfies one of the primary goals of the World Association for Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy and Counseling through the production of a high quality journal to foster the exchange of research, theory, and practice.

During this structured discussion, the co-editors of PCEP will update participants on the current status of the journal and invite feedback and questions. Among other topics, the co-editors will encourage discussion of the range of ways to be involved in the journal, such as volunteering to co-edit special issues, serving as reviewers, and authoring papers.

All conference attendees are invited to participate in the discussion and promote the journal in social media, their own research, teaching and practice, and directly with their colleagues and students. Any presenters at PCE 2024 who are interested in developing their presentation into a published paper are especially invited to participate and ask any questions that might foster a

successful submission.

Here is a link to the journal: <https://www.tandfonline.com/journals/rpcp20>

## Submission type

Structured Discussion (60 min) **Moderator/Discussant** Jeffrey Cornelius-White

## Keywords

Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapies, journal, emotion-focused therapy, focusing, World Association for Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy and Counseling

# 12

## The distinction between 'Focusing-Alpha' and 'Focusing-Beta', the practice of 'Crossing with Animals' and theoretical considerations on some aspects of Experiencing

Prof **Akira Ikemi** Ph.D.  
Kansai University, Suita, Japan

### Prof Akira Ikemi Author Bio

Akira Ikemi is a professor at the Faculty of Health and Well-Being and the Graduate School of Psychology at Kansai University, Japan. He has been practicing, researching, and teaching Focusing since his tutelage under Professor Eugene Gendlin at the University of Chicago. In addition to faculty positions at Japanese universities, he has worked as a clinical psychologist in hospital settings and corporate mental health. A prolific author, Dr. Ikemi has penned over 180 articles, translations and book chapters in both Japanese and English. His contributions have been recognized through prestigious accolades, including being named a Living Luminary by the Journal of Humanistic Counseling (American Counseling Association) and receiving the esteemed Japanese Association of Humanistic Psychology Award.



## Abstract

The term "Focusing" encompasses two distinct meanings: the "crucial inner act" which I refer to as "Focusing-Alpha," observed in successful clients in psychotherapy, and methods developed to teach this process which I refer to as "Focusing-Beta." While Focusing-Beta is more readily recognizable as a structured method, Focusing-Alpha is an internal act that is not easily observed. Eugene Gendlin, the originator of Focusing, has presented much on Focusing-Beta, whereas the origins of Focusing-Alpha, which he terms "Experiencing," is only hinted to have come from the philosophy of Wilhelm Dilthey. In this workshop, I will first show the connection between Experiencing and Dilthey's hermeneutic circle, detailing how Gendlin has advanced this concept into a psychological framework. Moreover, I will introduce a pair practice entitled "Crossing with Animals" to illustrate how Focusing-Alpha is experienced.

Participants will engage in this exercise to gain hands-on experience with theoretical concepts such as Experiencing, Crossing, Embodied Experiencing, Metaphors, Re-experiencing (Nacherleben), Carrying Forward, and the 'Carried Forward Was'.

The workshop will commence with a brief overview of these theoretical underpinnings, followed by a 30-minute pair-session of the Crossings with Animals exercise, with subsequent opportunities for



mutual sharing and discussion. An experiential understanding of one's existence through Crossing with Animals as well as knowledge of how human experiencing functions will initiate a process of long-term education of Person-Centered therapists.

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

Focusing-alpha, Focusing-beta, Experiencing, Crossing with Animals

# 13

## Therapeutic Use of Dungeons & Dragons and Stranger Things: A Person- Centered Analysis

**Mrs. Erin S. Lowder** Psychology, **Mr. Chad Bryson** Psychology, **Mr. Tyler Priest** Experimental Psychology, **Mr. Vance Vela** Psychology  
Missouri State University, Springfield, USA

### **Mrs. Erin S. Lowder Author Bio**

Erin Lowder is a master's level counseling student with a passion for people and a strong advocate for mental health. She has a bachelor's degree in psychology and a professional background in an inpatient psychiatric setting. In her free time, she enjoys a good book or playing D&D with her close friends.



### **Mr. Chad Bryson Author Bio**

Chad Bryson is a master's student in clinical mental health counseling at Missouri State University. He enjoys being involved in pop culture and learning how it can be examined and used in therapeutic ways.



### **Mr. Tyler Priest Author Bio**

Tyler Priest is in the Masters Program for Experiment Psychology at Missouri State University. His future plans are to pursue a PhD in Clinical Psychology and open a private practice.



### **Mr. Vance Vela Author Bio**

Vance Vela, a dedicated master's student from Springfield, Missouri, is passionately pursuing his studies in School Counseling. He is driven by a deep commitment to supporting the well-being and academic success of students.



# Abstract

Dungeons & Dragons (D&D) is a collaborative storytelling game in which players engage in a typical fantasy setting through the embodiment of an avatar they create. The popularity of D&D has exploded in recent years, in part due to the popularity of the Netflix original series, Stranger Things. Within the context of the show, there are clear examples of how D&D provides opportunities for the main characters to make decisions and gain confidence against the monsters they were fighting in real life.

Considering in a therapeutic context, D&D can provide opportunities for clients to explore complicated decisions and aspects of identity in a safe environment. Due to the group element, such role-playing games can help build communication skills through positive regard and empathetic understanding. Counseling focused D&D groups work well to engage individuals in considering themselves from multiple perspectives and regulate emotions enough to talk about mental health topics in some depth. People who play D&D often say that their characters reflect some part of themselves. Sometimes their characters represent parts of themselves they do not like while other times they represent parts they wish they could express more.

Playing this character may allow a client to experience decisions and emotions in a safe, whimsical world separate from real life consequences and thereby integrate incongruences in the self and increase tolerance for frustration. Much like the characters in the show Stranger Things, clients can gain confidence to take skills learned in the game and apply them to real life scenarios. D&D sessions with a person-centered therapist in a group or individual modality may allow for exploration of the self in a safe environment and provide an opportunity for clients to learn about themselves and their environments.

## Submission type

Online Brief Individual Paper (15 min)

## Keywords

Pop culture, roleplay, person centered therapy, Dungeons & Dragons, "-"

# 14

## Horse-Centered Therapy? Equine-assisted psychotherapy and the person-centered approach

**Mrs. Chandra L Arbogast** BS, **Mrs. Tyrah K Brackenbusch** BS, Prof **Jeffrey H D Cornelius-White** PsyD [ORCID iD](#), Prof **Yasuko Kanamori** PhD [ORCID iD](#)  
*Missouri State University, Springfield MO, USA*

### **Mrs. Chandra L Arbogast Author Bio**

Chandra L. Arbogast is a graduate student in the mental health counseling program at Missouri State University. She is interested in practicing equine-assisted therapy, having lived life a lot with horses. She is also excited to be traveling to Greece!



### **Mrs. Tyrah K Brackenbusch Author Bio**

Tyrah K. Brackebusch is a dual master's student, working toward a Master's of Social Work as well as a Master's of Therapeutic Recreation. She plans to continue my efforts in education by pursuing a Doctorate in Psychology upon completion of her master's degrees. Her passion lies in helping people become more comfortable within their own minds through the use and exploration of nature-based interventions. She has two dogs, loves building Harry Potter Lego sets, drinks a lot of coffee, and enjoys reading, exercising, and being outside.



### **Prof Jeffrey H D Cornelius-White**

[0000-0003-1994-6827](https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1994-6827)

### **Author Bio**

Jeffrey H. D. Cornelius-White is a Distinguished Professor at Missouri State University, a co-editor of *Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapies*, and author of more than 100 published works. His primary research interests are the person-centered approach to counseling and education, interdisciplinary studies, and multicultural issues, particularly attitudes towards trans persons.



**Prof Yasuko Kanamori**

[0000-0003-3597-2224](tel:0000-0003-3597-2224)

### Author Bio

Yasuko Kanamori is a per course faculty member at Missouri State University and the University of Memphis. She has a PhD in educational psychology and research, a master's in counseling and a master's in theological studies. Her primary research interest concerns attitudes towards trans people, but enjoys serving as a methodologist in many areas of social, educational, and clinical psychology.



## Abstract

Equine-assisted psychotherapy and other equine-assisted services are increasingly validated approach to psycho-social learning and development. This presentation will include an overview of equine-assisted psychotherapy, potentially with video clips demonstrating horse-human bonding from the first two presenters as well as results of a large quasi-experimental study and two meta-analyses on the effectiveness of equine-assisted services for military veterans with PTSD and at-risk youth by the last two presenters. Finally, the presenters will build conceptual bridges between equine-assisted services and person-centered therapy. The relationships between the horse, client, and psychotherapist offer multiple venues for empathy, incongruence and congruence, as well as unconditional positive regard, especially when explained through the concept of interactive resonance.

## Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

## Keywords

equine-assisted services, person-centered therapy, meta-analysis, practice, research

# 16

## “You are like bowling bumpers for me” -A case study of person-centered therapy from existential perspective-

Mr. **Takahiro Namiki** Ph.D [ORCID iD](#)  
*Aichi Shukutoku University, Aichi, Japan*

### Mr. Takahiro Namiki

[0000-0002-7584-6161](#)

### Author Bio

Takahiro Namiki is an assistant professor working as a college counsellor at Aichi Shukutoku University in Japan. His current research interests are in the person-centered therapy, person-centered integration, training and encounter philosophy.



## Abstract

This presentation aims to show the case of person-centered therapy in a student counselling center and to examine it from an existential perspective. The case study focused on a female college student who was troubled with her thesis and job-hunting. She accomplished both challenges through therapy with the therapist (the author) for one year. A theory-building case study was adapted to develop and expand the significance of person-centered therapy from an existential perspective. The analysis helped us understand the therapy process that led to them from inter- and intra-personal dimensions. In the early phase of the therapy, she was trying to meet the expectations of others. She also fell into a cycle of regretting the past and at the same time she was overwhelmed by the future. Within the relationship with the therapist, she came in touch with her here-and-now experience and accepted it. Then, she proactively tried to engage with the world, rather than adapting herself to it. I will examine this process from the concept of “existential living” (Rogers, 1961) and “project” (Sartre, 1943). With these concepts, I will also discuss how the therapeutic relationship relates to being existential, which means being and becoming oneself. Existentialism has been one of the main themes since Rogers’ era. I would like to demonstrate that we can and do adequately deal with how to live existentially without talking about existential themes itself in therapy.

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

Person-centered therapy, Existentialism, Existential living, Project

# 17

## Cross Language and Cross-Cultural Sand Tray Therapy

Mrs. **Callie Cochran** B.S., Mrs. Avery Orscheln B.S., Mrs. Hollie Bickel B.S.  
Missouri State University Counseling Graduate Program, Springfield, USA

### Mrs. Callie Cochran Author Bio

Callie Cochran is a master's student at Missouri State University in the Mental Health Counseling Master's program. She is currently working as a graduate research assistant studying bullying in schools, and her professional interests include child and adolescent counseling.



### Mrs. Avery Orscheln Author Bio

Hi! My name is Avery Orscheln and I am a student in the Clinical Mental Health Counseling Program at Missouri State University. I am interested in cognitive-behavioral therapy and person-centered therapy, specifically in the end stages of life. My goal is to emphasize in pre and post death counseling and family counseling through grief and bereavement.



### Mrs. Hollie Bickel Author Bio

Hollie Bickel is a Clinical Mental Health Counseling graduate student at Missouri State University interested in internal family systems and person-centered approaches. Hollie aims to work with adolescents and young adults experiencing struggles and hardships in the inpatient setting.



## Abstract

While Kaiff and Lowenfield developed sand tray therapy from Jungian concepts, sand tray therapy provides a venue for central person-centered experiential experiences and is sometimes described as a combination of child-centered play therapy and expressive arts therapy. Counselor and client language differences may prevent the development of the therapeutic relationship, which is integral to experiential therapy. Based on its largely nonverbal nature, sand tray therapy offers a unique opportunity for connection and expression beyond words and/or with limited language similarity between counselor and client with culturally responsive methods. This mini-workshop

will highlight how the underlying therapeutic relationship and set up of sand tray can allow for metaphorical, indirect modes of communication and emotional processing in addition to direct expressions with words. It offers a climate and setting for participants to play, learn, and engage with others in a cross cultural exchange.

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

Sand Tray, Therapy , Counseling , Cross-cultural, Cross-language



# 18

## Further Evolving the Person-Centred Approach to Form a Paradigm for the Field of Psychotherapy: Carrying Forward Carl Rogers' Final Theorising

Dr **Ivan Ellingham** PhD  
*Kelling Institute, Holt, United Kingdom*

### Dr Ivan Ellingham Author Bio

Ivan is English but gained his doctorate at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign under the supervision of C. H. 'Pat' Patterson, who was trained by Carl Rogers. In England Ivan has taught on university counsellor education courses and been a counselling psychologist in the NHS. He presently lives in North Norfolk with his wife Derryn, a former art psychotherapist and their four cats and three dogs.



### Abstract

The final theorising of Carl Rogers, founder of the person-centred approach, contains significant intellectual insights crucial to the further evolving of the approach and the forming of a scientific paradigm for the field of psychotherapy as a whole, one that thereby transcends the compass of not only the 'Tribes' of the person-centred approach, but that of other psychotherapy theories. The immediate motivation is thus the improvement of the different 'Tribes' as vehicles of scientific understanding, the overcoming of the problem of their conceptual weaknesses.

Rogers terms the last of his intellectual insights 'infant ideas' and suggests that they 'might be fleshed out more fully' by either him or 'someone else' (1980, pp. 340, 339). He further suggests that such fleshing out involves a paradigm shift from a Newtonian paradigm to a paradigm which is associated with modern physics, one holistic and organismic. The methodology, therefore, involves further interweaving holistic and organismic ideas into the basic fabric of Rogers' infant ideas,

Involving experiential exercises my workshop will discuss not only my attempt to flesh out Rogers' final ideas more fully, but also the comparable attempts of others to do the same—both successful (Eugene Gendlin and Leslie Greenberg), and unsuccessful (Mick Cooper and John McLeod).

On this basis, I look to highlight features of a future holistic/organismic paradigm: a paradigm with the potential to not only unify the person-centred approach and field of psychotherapy, but shed light on the nature of science, spirituality and psychosis. Thereby implied will be the greater authority of the person-centred experiential approach within the field of psychotherapy, in light of improved understanding of the nature of science, spirituality and 'madness'.

Discussion will likely focus on what the different 'Tribes' have to offer in terms of such a paradigmatic

integration and what represent the greatest challenges to future development of the underlying theory of the person-centred experiential approach.

Rogers, C. R. (1995). *A way of being*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt.

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

Evolving, Psychotherapy, Science, Spirituality, Psychosis

# 19

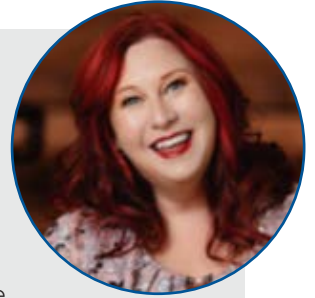
## Being in the Slow

Prof **Holly C Thompson** Ph.D.<sup>1</sup>, Prof **Wendy J. Hoskins** Ph.D.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Illinois Springfield, Springfield, USA. <sup>2</sup>University of Nevada Las Vegas, Las Vegas, USA

### Prof Holly C Thompson Author Bio

Dr. Holly Thompson is an Associate Professor of Counseling at the University of Illinois Springfield, where she trains and supervises Master's level counseling students. Holly coordinates the clinical mental health concentration and specializes in group work, multicultural counseling, and has a deep passion for social justice and advocacy work. In addition to teaching at university, Holly works part-time for a tech- counseling start-up company out of California, where she weekly assists clients to navigate the deeply personal existential challenges that are inherent to life in modern society. She especially enjoys working with psychotherapists and other helping professionals who are disenfranchised with the current emphasis on conceptualizing and working from a positivistic, medical model. Holly loves to travel and experience all things cultural.



### Prof Wendy J. Hoskins Author Bio

Dr. Wendy Hoskins is an Associate Professor and the Associate Chair of the Department of Counselor Education, School Psychology and Human Services at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas. She received her Ph.D. in Counselor Education and Supervision at Idaho State University. Over the past 20 years, Dr. Hoskin's practice and scholarly interests include slow counseling, group counseling practices, and the global movement of the counseling profession. In her array of travels and meeting with other helping professionals, she has discovered the following emerging trends: advocacy for wellness based treatment of mental health issues, professional identity, quality counselor education, and program evaluation.



## Abstract

"Slow Counseling" is a Person Centered way of being and working that allows for the alignment of needs, affect, and intention. Living in a fast paced, transactionally oriented society comes at a great cost. "Slow counseling" offers a way to embody Person Centeredness, build relationship, and foster deep connections through which healing and change can occur. PCE counselors are charged with the essential and delicate task of assisting the most vulnerable in society as they navigate the continuum of normal life struggles and developmental challenges to sensitive and painful, traumatic experiences. Both PCE counselors and counselor educators, in parallel process, end up becoming receptacles for all the psychological and emotional pain elicited during the work.

Creating an interpersonal group space, where therapists can process through the secondary and/or vicarious trauma is imperative. Under "normal" times, this space is necessary. Given the current social/political context, continued psychological sequelae resulting from the pandemic (e.g. forced shutdown or "slow down"), and intensified awareness of the economic and racial inequality that is pervasive in society, intentionally creating a group structure that supports a slow, here-and-now focused, relationally oriented space is required to foster necessary support and connection.

Facilitators will create a group experience where participants can explore questions related to how PC values are lived and expressed, impediments that hinder PC ways of Being, and generate ideas for holding salient PC values through difficulty. Participants will be invited to share their journey during these unprecedented times, and engage in a meaningful slow group process designed to embrace core PC, interpersonal group process values. Additionally, specific "slow counseling" techniques will be discussed and demonstrated. Facilitators believe that intentionally slowing down can help create space to explore, experience, process, and heal. Goals for the group include: (1) intentionally slowing down to foster relationship while activating the here-and-now and attend to therapeutic factors, (2) processing struggles with living/working life during and since the pandemic, and (3) learning and experiencing "Slow Counseling" strategies for adapting to higher productivity expectations in the workplace (e.g., higher education and corporations). Facilitators hope through this group experience, participants may begin to experience core conditions of empathy, congruence, and unconditional positive regard, decreased isolation, increased connection, an ability to explore painful existential factors, and a deep knowing of how being "slow" enables our ability to link our needs, affect, and intentions, for our optimal wellness.

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

slow, intentional, group, experiential , relational

# 20

## “I am amazed by how therapeutic this group can be”-- exploration of therapeutic effects on a EFT skill practice group

Dr **Junmei Wan** Doctor of Psychotherapy  
Singapore Counselling Centre, Singapore, Singapore

### Dr Junmei Wan Author Bio

Junmei Wan Doctor of Psychotherapy and Counselling (University of Edinburgh) Private practice Before I practice as a psychotherapist and counsellor in Singapore, I studied in Edinburgh, worked as a school counsellor, social worker, a training company director and a research scientist, while my interest shifted from the fascinating physical world to the mysterious beautiful human psych.



## Abstract

This research examines the therapeutic effects of an emotion-focused therapy (EFT) peer skill practice group consisting of 10 Chinese-speaking counsellors, with a focus on identifying the contributing factors. The group has been active for 15 months and is still active. It proves a practice venue for counsellors who completed EFT level 3 training in Shanghai in 2021. The researcher, as a participant of the group, used heuristic inquiry as the methodology, and the data included transcripts of group discussions, verbal and written input from individual members, and excerpts of helpful session transcripts. The study found that the following factors contributed to the group's therapeutic effects. The group as a whole is bigger than individuals. The group has more holding capacity and perspectives to help both the client and the counsellor. The openness of other peers helped one with their own issues, and also helped one overcome one's sense of shame to open up.

The study suggests that further research should be done to develop similar peer training or education groups for therapeutic purposes in communities where there is stigma around counselling and limited access to counselling resources.

## Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

## Keywords

person-centred experiential group, peer-learning, peer-support, Chinese counsellors, therapy

# 21

## The Strathclyde Inventory intercultural Project. Investigating intercultural differences in congruent functioning using three different language versions of the Strathclyde Inventory.

**Susan C Stephen** PhD [ORCID iD](#)<sup>1</sup>, **Shun Chen** PhD [ORCID iD](#)<sup>2</sup>, **Afnan A Alhimaidi** PhD [ORCID iD](#)<sup>3</sup>, Mr. **Martin A Lange** Counsellor<sup>4</sup>, Mrs. **Claudia N Aguado** Bachelor Degree in Social Sciences<sup>4</sup>, Prof **Stephen Joseph** PhD [ORCID iD](#)<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, United Kingdom. <sup>2</sup>University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, United Kingdom.

<sup>3</sup>Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. <sup>4</sup>PCE7, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

<sup>5</sup>University of Nottingham, Nottingham, United Kingdom

### Susan C Stephen

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#### Author Bio

Dr Susan Stephen is a person-centred counsellor and supervisor based in Glasgow. She is a lecturer in counselling at the University of Strathclyde, Director of the Strathclyde Counselling and Psychotherapy Research Clinic, and a co-editor of the international journal, Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapies.



### Shun Chen

[0000-0003-0097-2654](#)

#### Author Bio

Dr Shun Chen, a Chartered Psychologist with the British Psychological Society and a Lecturer in Counselling Psychology at the University of Aberdeen, specialises in counselling, LGBTQ+ wellbeing, and psychological assessment. An accredited Gender, Sex, and Relationship Diversities (GSRD) trainer, his work promotes inclusivity and support for diverse communities.



**Afnan A Alhimaiddi**

[0000-0002-1129-402X](tel:0000-0002-1129-402X)

**Author Bio**

Dr. Afnan Alhimaiddi is a Lecturer in Psychology at Princess Nourah Bint Abdulrahman University. She is focusing on the counseling and psychotherapy field, psychological assessments, and counseling therapy center outcomes in Saudi Arabia. An accredited trainer.



**Mr. Martin A Lange**

**Author Bio**

Martín Lange is a counselor and FOT who works in private practice with persons and groups based on the Person-Centered Approach. He is part of PCE7, a group of Person-Centered professionals dedicated to organizing Encounters and forums, training professionals, and workshops for the community in general.



**Mrs. Claudia N Aguado Author Bio**

Claudia Aguado is a counselor who works on individual and group processes from the Person-Centered Approach. She is part of PCE-7, a group of Person Centered professionals dedicated to the organization of Encounters and forums as well as the training of professionals and training of the community in general.



**Prof Stephen Joseph**

[0000-0001-7171-3356](tel:0000-0001-7171-3356)

**Author Bio**

Stephen Joseph is a chartered psychologist and Fellow of the British Psychological Society, and an HCPC registered counselling psychologist. His research focuses on positive psychology applications of the person-centred approach. He is editor of the Handbook of Person-Centred Therapy and Mental Health (PCCS books).



## Abstract

The Strathclyde Inventory (SI) is a brief self-report instrument designed to measure 'congruent functioning', a contemporary re-framing of Rogers' concept of the fully functioning person. This concept is relevant not only for clients of PCE but also for our ongoing development as therapists and as persons- in-the-world.

The SI was originally developed in English and has been translated into several languages including French, German, Korean and Russian. Person-centred theory is often criticised as representing Western concepts that may not 'translate' in other cultures. The SI offers an opportunity to investigate this claim, albeit within the limitations of a positivist research paradigm.

The Strathclyde Inventory Intercultural Project (SIIP) is an international collaboration that aims to:

- support the development of different language versions of the SI,
- support investigations of their psychometric properties using data collected from clinical and non-clinical populations in a range of cultural contexts, and
- use this data in comparative studies to investigate intercultural differences in congruent functioning. We launched SIIP with ethical approval granted by the University of Strathclyde for a series of different language studies that collected data from non-clinical populations using the SI (20-item version),

Authenticity Scale, the Mini-IPIP (a 20-item version of the International Personality Item Pool, a measure of the 'big five personality factors') and the Social Desirability Response Scale. In this presentation, we will report the results of our first three studies, conducted in Arabic, Chinese and Spanish: what the data tell us about each version of the SI and what we have learned from our comparative analyses.

Our preliminary results indicate that all three language versions of the SI have good internal consistency and good/acceptable test-retest reliability. We found that relationships between congruent functioning (as measured by the SI) and other constructs were generally as predicted. In summary, we found that all three versions have demonstrated good validity and appear fit for purpose.

Confirmatory factor analyses revealed that different models best fit the three language-speaking groups. This suggests that language and cultural contexts may significantly influence how respondents interpret and relate to SI items. We are investigating this finding further using Rasch modelling.

This presentation is relevant for all PCE therapists interested in understanding how a key theoretical concept 'translates' across cultures.

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

Strathclyde Inventory, congruent functioning, intercultural, psychometric, -



# 22

## Trusting comes first, Felt Sensing second – Felt Sense Literacy can be measured using the new Focusing Skills Inventory

Mr. **Danny Gehlen** MSc [ORCID iD](#)  
*University of Cologne, Cologne, Germany*

### Mr. Danny Gehlen

[0000-0001-7316-6157](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7316-6157)

### Author Bio

Danny Gehlen MSc is a psychologist, psychometrician and Focusing trainer based in Cologne, Germany. He investigates how Focusing attitudes and mindfulness should be measured and effectively applied to facilitate health.



## Abstract

Person-centered practitioners assist clients building Focusing attitudes toward their complex feelings. Such intra-personal Focusing attitudes like Trusting, Felt Sensing and Distancing express important values of the person-centered nation. Focusing attitudes are thus considered as psychotherapy outcomes.

They have also been associated with a sense of meaning in life and may empower clients to find their own answers to personal, societal, and global crises. However, the commonly used self-report questionnaire "Focusing Manner Scale" may not validly assess Trusting, Felt Sensing and Distancing because factor and item discrimination problems were found internationally. We therefore (1) revised the construct theories of the Trusting, Felt Sensing and Distancing attitudes and (2) developed a new 30-item questionnaire called "Focusing Skills Inventory" (FSI). To evaluate it, we used Rasch analysis in a German student sample (N = 747; N3-month retest = 117). Overall, reliability indices showed that the FSI is ready-to-use for group-level studies. Indeed, Trusting and Felt Sensing were successfully contrasted from Distancing. Rasch analysis further indicated that Trusting precedes Felt Sensing when combined into an overarching Body Listening scale. Given the conceptual overlap, this Body Listening scale may even act as a measure for Felt Sense Literacy. Concurrent and convergent validity evidence was found. Overall, Rasch analysis advances Focusing attitude theory and measurement. It implies that there is not one but multiple Focusing attitudes clients can practice in their everyday life. It further implies, when building Felt Sense Literacy, Trusting should be established before Felt Sensing.

# Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

# Keywords

Focusing attitude, Felt Sense Literacy, Trusting, Felt Sensing, Distancing

# 23

## Our own understanding of spirituality as person-centered psychotherapists: Is a congruent dialogue possible?

Prof **Harald E. Tichy** Dr.scient.pth.<sup>1,2</sup>, Prof **Christian Metz** Dr.<sup>3</sup>, Mr. **Patrick Akrivos** Mag.<sup>3</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Sigmund Freud Private University (SFU), Vienna, Austria. <sup>2</sup>Institute for Person-centered Studies (IPS), Vienna, Austria. <sup>3</sup>FORUM Personzentrierte Psychotherapie, Ausbildung und Praxis, Vienna, Austria

### Prof Harald E. Tichy Author Bio

Person-centered psychotherapist and supervisor, Buddhist meditation teacher, Yoga teacher, psychotherapy scientist (area of expertise: dialogue between psychotherapy and early Buddhism), lecturer for person-centered psychotherapy and mindfulness meditation, and head of the two-year course "Mindfulness in Medical, Psychosocial, and Pedagogic professions" at the Sigmund Freud Private University (SFU), Vienna.



### Prof Christian Metz Author Bio

Person-centered psychotherapist and supervisor; training therapist of FORUM; member of the scientific advisory council of the journal *Spiritual Care* (de Gruyter Verlag); for many years facilitator of interprofessional trainings in *Spiritual Care*.



### Mr. Patrick Akrivos Author Bio

Mag. Patrick Akrivos is an Austrian-Greek licensed psychotherapist. He works in Athens, Greece and Vienna Austria (praxis-akrivos.at). He holds a postgraduate degree from Middlesex University, a postgraduate diploma in the Person-Centered Approach from the University of Strathclyde and has completed his training in Person Centered Psychotherapy at the FORUM in Vienna, Austria. He is also a certified Gordon Trainer (Parent, Teacher, Youth and Leader Training), he is a certified S.A.F.E. trainer (Secure Attachment Training) as well as a Positive Discipline Instructor. He has completed trainings in Emotional Focused Couples Therapy, Addictions, Trauma therapy and others. Patrick Akrivos has many years of experience in the education of parents and teachers as well as consulting and educating staff and employees in Greek and International companies as well as educational institutions. Patrick Akrivos has a significant number of publications and conference presentations and is continuing to deepen his understanding of psychotherapy with additional training.



# Abstract

Originating in a clearly defined Christian sense, where 'spirituality' basically meant the lived, experiential dimension of living in the spirit of God, 'spirituality' became a general term for addressing this experiential dimension in a trans or post confessional sense in the second half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. From a sociological perspective it seems that for a significant number of people there was a necessity to find such an all-inclusive term to find new ways to speak about their personal experiences. Yet, the disadvantage of the term is its fuzziness. Since Carl Rogers repeatedly distanced himself from each kind of formal 'religion', he clearly used this term in the second open, yet fuzzy way.

Between 1979 and 1986 Carl Rogers wrote altogether five times about a certain kind of 'presence' when he was at his best, which he understood as a spiritual experience. By this he meant a heightened access to his intuition and a mutually shared direct I-Thou-relationship in the sense of Martin Buber.

Within the diversity of our person-centered community some appreciate that. Fewer give it a clearly defined meaning. Maybe the majority distances from it completely. However, in our therapeutic work our clients invent this narrative. Thus, it seems that it would be highly helpful if we know our own reflected positions to this complex topic.

Since one and a half years a dialogue about this is regularly held between Christian, a former, still meditating Jesuit, Harald, a post confessional Buddhist meditation teacher, and Patrick, an open-minded Tibetan Buddhist. They are deeply committed to the Person-centered Approach, while also dialogically exploring the tangents of their therapeutic approach with their spiritual paths. Now, they want to invite the participants of this workshop to a dialogue, open for questions such as: Do I consider myself as 'spiritual', as 'religious'? What is the meaning behind my answer? How is my personal understanding of 'spirituality' reflected in my value system as a person-centered practitioner? What is its relation to congruence?

There are no easy answers to those questions. This workshop gives room to participants to share and explore and ultimately offer the possibility for greater experienced congruence. For those, who regard questions like these as relevant for the person-centered work, a space is offered for an empathic, unconditional appreciative, and authentic dialogue.

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

Spirituality, PCA, Congruence, Dialogue

# 24

## Emotion-Focused Therapy for Youth and Caregivers: Nurturing Resilience in a Turbulent World

Mr. **Krzysztof D Błażejowski** M.A.  
*Privat Prattice, Warsaw, Poland*

### Mr. Krzysztof D Błażejowski Author Bio

Krzysztof Błażejowski, M.A. - Psychologist, certified EFT psychotherapist specializing in Individual psychotherapy for adults, couples psychotherapy, psychotherapy for youth, EFST for parents. He gained clinical experience working for several years in a psychiatric hospital, where he explored the use of humanistic-experiential principles with individuals facing various severe mental health conditions. He later established a team at a private psychotherapy clinic for children, adolescents, and families, grounding the center's approach in humanistic values. He learned EFT-Y from Dr. Mirisse Forough and supervises his work with her. He is part of an international team of EFT-Y trainers and supervisors, led by Dr. Forough. In the field of EFST-P, he was initially taught and supervised by the creator, Dr. Joanne Dolhanty, and subsequently by Dr. Cheryl Aubie. His primary interests in the field include the function and impact of relational presence, compassion, and deep empathic attunement in the psychotherapy process. Currently, he operates a private practice in Warsaw, supporting youth, parents, and adults, including couples. He is actively involved in popularizing EFT-Y and EFST-P in Poland by integrating these models into public mental health care.



### Abstract

In an era marked by pervasive crises—pandemic, economic, environmental, and political—youth mental health face significant challenges. The resulting stress across familial, social, academic, and professional spheres necessitates effective, innovative therapeutic strategies. Emotion-Focused Therapy for Youth (EFT-Y), developed by Dr. Mirisse Foroughe, is a humanistic-experiential method that deeply attunes to the emotional experiences of youth and their caregiver(s), offering a pathway to healing that adheres to humanistic-experiential values amidst global upheaval.

EFT-Y emphasizes moment-by-moment deep empathic attunement, processing emotional pain through experiential tasks that address symptoms, the underlying emotional dysregulation, and emotional avoidance. This approach aligns with the conference theme of maintaining core humanistic values in therapy during adverse times, demonstrating how therapeutic practices can evolve to meet the changing needs of communities while sustaining essential values.

This presentation will detail EFT-Y's application to youths aged 9 to 17, supported by findings from a randomized study that measured immediate therapeutic outcomes within sessions. The session will explore how EFT-Y fosters significant emotional and psychological transformation.

Attendees will gain insights into implementing EFT-Y to improve mental health and emotional well-being in youth and caregivers, illustrating a pivotal contribution to evolving psychotherapy practices that resonate with, and reinforce, humanistic-experiential values.

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

Youth, Emotion-Focused, Therapy, New Model, Experiential

# 25

## Enhancing Parental Efficacy with Emotion Focused Skills Training: Strategies for Family Harmony

Mr. **Krzysztof D Błażejowski** M.A.  
*Privat practice, Warsaw, Poland*

### Mr. Krzysztof D Błażejowski Author Bio

Krzysztof Błażejowski, M.A. - Psychologist, certified EFT psychotherapist specializing in Individual psychotherapy for adults, couples psychotherapy, psychotherapy for youth, EFST for parents. He gained clinical experience working for several years in a psychiatric hospital, where he explored the use of humanistic-experiential principles with individuals facing various severe mental health conditions. He later established a team at a private psychotherapy clinic for children, adolescents, and families, grounding the center's approach in humanistic values. He learned EFT-Y from Dr. Mirisse Forough and supervises his work with her. He is part of an international team of EFT-Y trainers and supervisors, led by Dr. Forough. In the field of EFST-P, he was initially taught and supervised by the creator, Dr. Joanne Dolhanty, and subsequently by Dr. Cheryl Aubie. His primary interests in the field include the function and impact of relational presence, compassion, and deep empathic attunement in the psychotherapy process. Currently, he operates a private practice in Warsaw, supporting youth, parents, and adults, including couples. He is actively involved in popularizing EFT-Y and EFST-P in Poland by integrating these models into public mental health care.



## Abstract

In today's world, rife with health crises, environmental disruptions, and social upheaval, it is critical to sustain humanistic-experiential therapeutic approaches. Developed by Dr. Joanne Dolhanty and backed by research, Emotion Focused Skills Training for Parents (EFST-P) employs a deeply attuned, humanistic-experiential method to enhance parent-child interactions. This program focuses on emotional processing as essential for restoring familial harmony and empowering parents.

Led by Krzysztof Błażejowski, this workshop will introduce EFST-P's core principles, guiding parents through their emotional landscapes to better support their children. While EFST-P is not primarily designed for deep emotional processing, engaging with previously avoided emotions is a critical aspect of the training. Parents often encounter painful secondary emotions such as hopelessness, blame, or fear, which can disrupt their ability to address their children's needs effectively.

Furthermore, the workshop will illustrate how, although the sequential 3-step model of traditional Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT) does not directly apply to EFST, focusing on past emotional injuries within the EFST framework can help reverse patterns of emotional avoidance and enhance

familial resilience in managing emotional distress.

Participants will gain practical insights into how EFST-P facilitates emotional attunement and validation, and enhances parents' motivation to support their children through emotional challenges. This experiential session will contribute to the conference dialogue about how therapeutic practices are evolving in response to global crises and whether existing training approaches are sufficient to foster effective relational change.

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

Parenting, Validation, Family, Training, Emotion



# 26

## Open Case at the Age of 10 – A Structured Intervention Aimed at Person-Centered Empowerment

Prof **Renate Motschnig** Dr. [ORCID iD](#)<sup>1</sup>, Prof **David Murphy** Dr.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria. <sup>2</sup>University of Nottingham, Nottingham, United Kingdom

### Prof Renate Motschnig

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#### Author Bio

Renate Motschnig holds a double assignment as a professor at the Faculty of Computer Science and the Centre for Teacher Education at the University of Vienna, Austria. Renate is author/co-author of more than 180 articles and three books on the Person-Centered Approach, the most recent being "Transforming Communication in Leadership and Teamwork" co-authored by David Ryback. Renate has a deep interest in the multiple ways in which thorough understanding and whole-person learning happen. She is determined to foster a style in higher education and management that is grounded in person-centered attitudes, our co-actualizing potential, and thoughtful support by technological innovations.



### Prof David Murphy Author Bio

David Murphy, PhD., CPsychol., AFBPsS., is Professor of Psychology and Education at the University of Nottingham. He is currently the Course Director for the MA in Person-Centred Experiential Counselling and Psychotherapy and a member of the Centre for Research in Human Flourishing. David is author of Person-Centred Experiential Counselling for Depression 2nd edition (2019), Sage and, his Edited books include the official BPS-Wiley Counselling Psychology: A textbook for study and practice (2017). David is Co-editor of Relational Depth: New Perspective and Developments (2012, with Rosanne Knox, Sue Wiggins and Mick Cooper), Palgrave MacMillan and, Trauma and the therapeutic Relationship (2013, with Stephen Joseph) Palgrave MacMillan. He is former editor of the international journal Person-Centered & Experiential Psychotherapies.



## Abstract

The open case setting is a collaborative problem-solving/-transforming approach based on a person-centered mindset, a person offering to share a particular case or situation, interested peers, and a guideline proposing process steps. The author and her team at

the University of Vienna, Austria developed the open case setting during the European Project iCom (Constructive International Communication, 2011 – 2014). Over the past decade, the creators of open case have been keen to initiate several opportunities for 'open case' to mature, leading to an improved understanding and practice emphasizing active listening, empowerment, and sensitive, structured guidance through the process. We have conducted open case sessions mainly face-to-face and also gained interesting insight via videoconferencing and hybrid sessions with (Inter)national students, managers, psychologists, counselors, employees in soft skills trainings, and teachers. Their constructive feedback helped to consolidate the open case process guidelines and to sensitize facilitators to helpful and hindering factors. With more practice, participants tended to feel more distinctly empowered in (not only) managing their case. While some felt overwhelmed by too many questions from peers, a remarkable number of participants referred to the open case session as the most significant event of a person-centered workshop.

The current workshop is structured as follows:

- \* We start with a brief introduction to open case, clarifying its objectives, characteristics, and process steps.
- \* The central part is going to have participants engage in an open case session (or observe it).
- \* The experiential part is followed by reflection and sharing, addressing features such as personal experience; the role of structure; open case's potentials and limitations; theoretical underpinnings; relationship to encounter groups and active listening exercises.
- \* Time permitting, parallels to motivational interviewing and the concept of co-actualization will be explored and ideas for (maybe unorthodox) areas of applications of open case will be sought.

Participants will gain firsthand experience in the open case intervention, receive materials to guide practice, and have the opportunity to contribute to ongoing research and scientific publications. The ideal participant will bring with them at least basic active listening skills, curiosity about open case and willingness to openly share their ideas and experience.

Join us to explore how the open case setting can enhance your practice in person-centered communication, offering fresh engagement in a co-actualizing, person-centered way of being.

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

open case, collegial problem solving, small groups, co-actualization, structured intervention

# 27

## Working in a person-centered way with incarcerated individuals, refugees, and those suffering from mental illnesses.

Mr. **Evangelos Kanavitsas** M.Sc., ECP, Mr. **Antonis Korfiatis** M.Sc., ECP, Mr. **Mohammad Vahedi** M.Sc., ECP, Prof **Maria Kefalopoulou** PhD, ECP  
*ICPS COLLEGE, ATHENS, Greece*

### Mr. Evangelos Kanavitsas Author Bio

Evangelos Kanavitsas has been a correctional psychologist at Korydallos prison since 2007, where he provides private and group psychological support to inmates, assists with the implementation of educational and therapeutic programs, and supervises psychology students. He has been a person-centered counseling and psychotherapy trainer at ICPS since 2008, and he was granted the ICPS Professor of the Year Award in 2019. In addition, he received the European Association of Psychotherapy Certificate in 2015. He has previously worked as a freelancer and for organizations that support socially vulnerable groups. From 2001 to 2005, he received person-centered counseling training at ICPS (PG Dipl), having previously studied psychology at the University of Crete and continuing his studies at the University of Ulster (MSc).



### Mr. Antonis Korfiatis Author Bio

Mr. Antonis Korfiatis is a graduate of the Department of Sociology of Panteion University with postgraduate studies in person-centered counseling and psychotherapy and holds the European Certificate of Psychotherapy (ECP). He collaborates with ICPS College as a trainer in the postgraduate and professional educational programs of person-centered therapy, as well as a certified supervisor. For twenty years has worked as Scientific Manager of mental health units aiming at the psychosocial rehabilitation and improvement of the quality of life of people with mental illness. At the present time he is working in a Day Centre for the psychosocial support of workers. His research interests include the study of therapy conditions and more specifically of the Unconditional Positive Regard (UPR) and the way Person Centered therapy contributes in the treatment of psychological distress. At the same time he has a special interest in the field of person-centered career counseling for people with mental illness.



### Mr. Mohammad Vahedi Author Bio

Mohammad Vahedi is a person-centered psychotherapist who works with adults and minors in individual sessions and facilitates therapy groups. He holds a BSc in Psychology (University of Essex), MSc in Person-Centered Counselling and Psychotherapy (University of Strathclyde), and European Certificate of Psychotherapy (EAP). Mohammad gained initial experience in supervision and coordination in child protection facilities such as SOS Children's Villages Greece. He then worked as a child protection and vulnerable groups specialist in coordination team of various programs for International Organization for Migration (IOM). He has also gained experience at Therapy Center for Dependent Individuals (KETHEA- MOSAIC) and has collaborated with various organizations specializing in protection and integration of asylum seekers, refugees, and unaccompanied minors, such as Caritas Hellas, Caritas Athens, PRAKSIS, and others. Also collaborates with ICPS – College for Humanistic Sciences, in person-centered psychotherapy programs.



### Prof Maria Kefalopoulou Author Bio

Dr. Maria Kefalopoulou, (PhD, ECP), Head of the Organizing Committee, has studied Social Psychology in France (Paris-X-Nanterre, Paris-VII-Denis Diderot) and she is Academic Lead in Counselling and Psychotherapy at ICPS- College for Humanistic Sciences, Athens, Greece. She is member of the European Association of Psychotherapy (EAP), member of the WAPCEPC, Co-Editor of the PCEP Journal



## Abstract

With over fifteen years of experience, three person-centered therapists attempt to describe and evaluate the use of person-centered therapy with specialized populations: Two presenters attempt to transfer their experiences from their fields of corrections and working with people with mental illness, respectively, while the third presenter submits his own experience, framed by two research studies, with person-centered therapy to supporting refugees. Qualities such as non-directivity, trust in actualizing tendency, empathic understanding, and working with configurations are suggested to facilitate personal growth among those populations. Also, professional and moral concerns arising from practicing in such settings are highlighted and discussed.

## Working with inmates in a person-centered way

This talk aims to share seventeen years of experience in the field of corrections, a field where person-centered mental health professionals are scarce. Traditionally, directive kinds of therapy are used to promote moral and behavioral change in offenders. Based on my practical experience working with prisoners at Korydallos Prison in a person-centered way, I propose that non-directiveness, trust in actualizing tendency, and working with configurations, could establish a therapeutic setting where prisoners' multiple organismic needs can be acknowledged and released. Also, professional and moral issues arising from practicing in prisons are discussed.

# Person- Centered Career Counselling for people with mental illness

The onset of mental illness disrupts education and work, particularly early in one's career. However, people with mental illness wish to work for various reasons. This talk presents 15 years of experience in person-centered career counseling for people with mental illness. It also showcases research findings on their career adaptability and resilience. Non-directivity acts as a corrective process against the loss of control that accompanies chronic contact with mental health services. Person-centered career counseling integrates postmodern career counseling theories that highlight the connection between professional career and personal meaning

## Exploring the Role of Person-Centered Qualities in Supporting Refugees

This research explores therapeutic relationships involving interpreters, crucial for enhancing mental health support for refugees. Drawing upon personal experiences as a refugee and diverse professional roles, the studies investigate person-centered approach qualities within the triadic relationship of counselor, interpreter, and asylum seeker. Using Two-way ANOVA and thematic analysis of interviews, findings reveal interpreters' significant influence on therapy, highlighting the need for specialized training. While interpreters enhance empathy and communication, they also introduce complexities. The work emphasizes effective interpreter collaboration and seeks feedback on improving training programs in multicultural settings.

### Submission type

Panel/Symposium (60 min)

### Moderator/Discussant

Moderator of the panel: Dr Maria Kefalopoulou. PhD, ECP

### Brief Individual Papers (Title - First Author)

1. Working with inmates in a person centered way- Evagellos Kanavitsas
2. Person Centered Career Counselling for people with mental illness. Antonis Korfiatis
3. Exploring the role of Person-Centered qualities in supporting refugees. Mohammad Vahedi

### Keywords

specialized populations, person-centered therapy , incarcerated persons, career counselling - mental illness, supporting refugees

# 29

## Existential empathy: Concept, challenges, and how to develop it.

Prof **Siebrecht Vanhooren** PhD. [ORCID iD](#)  
KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium

### Prof Siebrecht Vanhooren

[0000-0003-3775-4829](#)

#### Author Bio

Siebrecht Vanhooren (PhD) is a professor of clinical psychology at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at the University of Leuven (KU Leuven) in Belgium. He teaches counseling, psychological interventions, and person-centered, experiential, focusing and existential psychotherapy in (post-)graduate psychology and psychotherapy training programs. His research includes subjects such as existential concerns, meaning in life, posttraumatic growth, experiential-existential interventions, focusing, dreams, and existential empathy. He is the co-director KU Leuven's Meaning & Existence and a committee member of The Eugene T. Gendlin Center for Research in Experiential Philosophy and Psychology (The Focusing Institute, New York).



## Abstract

**Motivation:** Existential empathy, which was first explicitly addressed by Garry Prouty (2002), and recently studied at the university of Leuven (Vanhooren, 2019, 2022a, 2022b; Vanhooren et al., 2022), can be understood as empathy for the existential layer of the client's issues, which is ultimately shared by the therapist and humankind as such (Vanhooren, 2019). It is a deep resonance with the human condition, beyond the ability to solve or fix the concrete problem through which it is expressed (Prouty, 2002; Vanhooren, 2022a). In times that seems to be marked by large changes and uncertainty, with problems that reach beyond the individual, the capacity to show and experience existential empathy might become crucial.

**Problem:** However, although empathy has been identified as a robust predictor of therapy outcome, and humanistic person-centered therapists experience themselves more at ease with existential issues than others (Hill, 2017; Vanhooren et al., 2022), it does not mean that relating to existential issues is easy.

More concretely, not only do therapists and counselors shy away from existential resonance (e.g. Erdberg et al., 2023; Frediani et al., 2023), also person-centered therapists often feel a 'closing down' when experiencing the meaninglessness of the client (Pellens et al., 2023). How can we help trainees and therapists as such help to develop or extend their existential empathy

Methodology: The research methods used are mixed. Quantitative cross-sectional studies (e.g. the construction of the Existential Empathy Questionnaire) on the one hand. Qualitative methods, e.g. depth interviews analyzed by Consensual Qualitative Research (Hill, 2012) and Process Recall Studies analyzed with General Descriptive-Interpretive Qualitative Research (Elliott & Timulak, 2021) on the other hand.

Results: Existential empathy can be distinguished as a distinct form of empathy, and lower levels of existential empathy correlate with experiential and existential avoidance. Person-centered therapists who also have been existentially trained show different ways in order to resonate and empathize with existential issues compared to person-centered trainees. From these results we can derive helpful micro-skills that can be explicitly trained or deepened.

Implications: The results of these studies show the importance of developing existential empathy and also provide tools to develop this empathy in training and supervision.

Discussion: How do you react bodily to existential concerns of your clients and what do you need?

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

empathy, existential, training, research, -

# 30

## Developing existential empathy: Exploring existential issues and finding helpers from within and beyond

Prof **Siebrecht Vanhooren** PhD [ORCID iD](#)  
KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium

### Prof Siebrecht Vanhooren

[0000-0003-3775-4829](#)

#### Author Bio

Siebrecht Vanhooren (PhD) is a professor of clinical psychology at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at the University of Leuven (KU Leuven) in Belgium. He teaches counseling, psychological interventions, and person-centered, experiential, focusing and existential psychotherapy in (post-)graduate psychology and psychotherapy training programs. His research includes subjects such as existential concerns, meaning in life, posttraumatic growth, experiential-existential interventions, focusing, dreams, and existential empathy. He is the co-director KU Leuven's Meaning & Existence and a committee member of The Eugene T. Gendlin Center for Research in Experiential Philosophy and Psychology (The Focusing Institute, New York).



## Abstract

**Aim, focus and goal of the workshop:** The aim of the workshop is to find ways that can help you attune and resonate with the existential layer of the client's issues. We will explore different avenues and resources that can be helpful in developing and maintaining existential empathy in contact with the client.

**Theoretical and methodical background for the workshop:** The theoretical background is formed by a series of recent KU Leuven studies on existential empathy (see presented paper on existential empathy on this conference). Based on different studies we have been able to derivate possible helpful micro- skills and resources that can help trainees and therapists develop, maintain, or deepen their existential empathy.

**Experiential exercises, therapeutic methods or other types of audience participation:** Exercises in this workshop will include focusing, active imagination, exploration and working in pairs.

**Describe how you will use audio, video, artwork, demonstrations etc. in the workshop:** A video will be shown to explain existential empathy in therapy. The experiential exercises will be done in vivo.



# Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

# Keywords

existential empathy, openness, experiential helpers, existential exploration, -

# 31

## Support for Families Formed through Special Adoption - What PCA Counselors Can Do

**Makiko Mikuni** PhD

*kyuushu sangyou University, Fukuoka, Japan*

### **Makiko Mikuni Author Bio**

Makiko received training as a Person-Centred counsellor at University of East Anglia in the UK and is currently working as a faculty member in the Department of Clinical Psychology in Japan.

### Abstract

There are several forms of adoption in Japan, such as entering a family as an adopted child or being temporarily placed in foster care without changing the family register. One of these forms is a special adoption where a child is registered as the legal child of the adoptive parents rather than the biological parents. The significant difference between the former and the latter lies in whether the child becomes the legal child on the family register, with adoptive families or the children themselves receiving support from the government or local authorities if they do not become the legal child. However, in the case of special adoption, as the child becomes the legal child, support ceases. Becoming the legal child on the family register means that there is no legal documentation regarding the biological parents. Originally, there was no environment in Japan conducive to seeking support to become a legal child, and truthful disclosure was not actively practiced. However, nowadays, there is an increasing trend towards early telling the truth of birth, and parents feel the need to engage with the community. We interviewed 14 adopted families. Interview results indicate that there are several hurdles for new families to enter the community. Efforts are currently being made to explore how PCA counselors can approach the difficulties felt by these families.

### Submission type

Online Brief Individual Paper (15 min)

### Keywords

special adoption, Japan, PCA counsellor

# 32

## ON BECOMING A PERSON CENTERED PSYCHO-SEXOLOGIST

Mr. **Panagiotis Apotsos** MSc

ICPS, Athens, Greece. EGINITIO HOSPITAL- Special Clinic of Sexual Health Clinic, ATHENS, Greece. Private Practitioner, Athens, Greece

### Mr. Panagiotis Apotsos Author Bio

Psychologist MSc, Person-centered Psychotherapist ECP, Lecturer Trainer and Supervisor at ICPS, Clinical Psycho-Sexologist EPCS, Scientific Associate of the Special Clinic of Sexual Health, 1st Psychiatric Clinic - Eginition Hospital, Scientific Leader of the MSc Program in Psychosexual Therapy (UCLAN - Delivered in ICPS). Co Author of Manual of Clinical Sexology (Beta Publications Athens 2024).



## Abstract

Scientific Sexology is a broad interdisciplinary field involving scientists trained in methods of Sexual Medicine and Clinical Psycho-Sexology. The main characteristic of the therapeutic methodology is the strict adherence to protocols of diagnosis and treatment, as they have been developed from the time of Masters & Johnson to the present day, and have been reflected in diagnostic systems.

The psychotherapeutic approaches that to date claim the right to be considered effective, and thus dominate the field are limited, yet several contemporary approaches claim the right to articulate their own discourse in terms of therapeutic philosophy. The absence of the Person-Centred Approach from the field of Psycho-Sexology is characteristic as the methodologies that have been developed seem incompatible with our approach.

The presentation attempts to approach;

- The challenges for the Person-Centred Approach in the field of Sexology.
- To explore a first theoretical-conceptual framework for the aetiopathogenesis of the problems that clients may be experiencing in their sex lives.
- To address the issue of creating a training program in problem assessment and treatment skills for clients experiencing psycho-sexual difficulties based on Person-Centred therapeutic philosophy, and the challenges of creating such a program.
- To explore the impact, at the level of personal development, of such a program in shaping the therapist's identity as a Person-Centred Psycho-Sexologist.

The presentation is based on personal experiences from the beginning of my involvement with Psycho-Sexology to the present day, and the difficulties I have faced as a practitioner having

trained in Person-Centred Counselling and Psychotherapy.

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

Psycho-Sexology, Psycho-Sexual Therapy, Person Centered Psycho-Sexology, -----,  
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# 33

## Empowering Learners: Innovative Applications of Person-Centered Approaches in Diverse Learning Contexts

Prof **Yotam Hod** Ph.D. [ORCID iD](#)<sup>1</sup>, Prof **Maria Kefalopoulou** PhD<sup>2</sup>, Prof Renate Motschnig PhD<sup>3</sup>, Prof **Brendon Murley** PhD<sup>4</sup>, Prof **David Murphy** PhD<sup>5</sup>, Prof **Keith Tudor** PhD<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Haifa, Haifa, Israel. <sup>2</sup>College for Humanistic Studies-ICPS, Athens, Greece. <sup>3</sup>University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria. <sup>4</sup>La Trobe University, Melbourne, Australia. <sup>5</sup>University of Nottingham, Nottingham, United Kingdom. <sup>6</sup>Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand

### Prof Yotam Hod

[0000-0001-7353-4052](mailto:0000-0001-7353-4052)

#### Author Bio

Doubly-authentic learning environments. Over the past decade, I have been iterating on an educational model that combines the person-centered approach with a focus on inquiry and knowledge building. Working in research-practice partnership across diverse settings, this model has been implemented across a number of K-18 classrooms and disciplinary areas and has generated a range of research lines. As I am a first time participant at PCE and with an aim to see what is most interesting for this community, I will focus my presentation as an overview of the approach and will explain the various research studies that have emerged from them. These include how students align their interests and identities, how students develop growth orientations and mindsets, and more.



### Prof Maria Kefalopoulou Author Bio

The training of the person-centered approach as a learning experience of humanistic values. My primary interest as a person-centered trainer and facilitator has focused on an educational climate promoting humanistic values. Carl Rogers' Freedom to Learn has constituted the center of my learning and teaching for over 25 years. The specifics of working with Greek students, who have been trained and are being trained in person-centered counseling and psychotherapy at the College for Humanistic Studies-ICPS in education programmes combining theory, research and practice, are a key aspect of my reflection as is the influence of ancient Greek concepts of education with reference to Socrates.



### **Prof Renate Motschnig Author Bio**

International students' first encounter with the Person Centered Approach: An experiential and research perspective. Over several years I have had the opportunity to teach an academic course on Person- Centered Communication (PCC) to international students, the majority of whom are absolute newcomers to the PCA. The primary course goals are to facilitate and encounter a person-centered way of being and let students acquire the ability to reflect how essential attitudes and skills of the PCA can make a difference for each person as well as the course climate. In the symposium I'm going to share the semi-structured course design that is guided by Rogers' notion of significant learning, students' reactions, and approaches to research the course. I'm particularly interested in colleagues' feedback and ways to strengthen the research value of the profound experience typically resulting from the course both for students and the facilitators. Furthermore, ideas on ways to keep connected with interested students all over the world are highly appreciated.



### **Prof Brendon Murley Author Bio**

Safety in the counseling training workshop. My experience is that almost all of us have had multiple experiences of formal education as being emotionally unsafe, and therefore an environment in which being authentic is risky. We know that in person-centered counseling skills the concept of congruence is crucial. We can encourage students to be their authentic selves as trainee counselors in these circumstances only insofar as we create emotional safety in their learning experiences. I'm wanting to share some of my practices in doing this, and am very interested in colleague's thoughts and practices on this issue.



### **Prof David Murphy Author Bio**

This learning we call therapy. Over the last two decades of being a group facilitator within a counselor education programme, a practitioner psychologist and person-centered psychotherapist, I have come to the conclusion that when I practice therapy I am engaged in a pedagogical process rather than a healthcare practice and when I am facilitating learning in students, I am part of a growthful process in their development. Tracing the origins of the development of Rogers's theory to the founder of the progressive educational philosophy, John Dewey, I will present my argument that reconstructing therapy using Rogers's theory and Dewey's philosophy, is a natural alternative to medical model realism and implies new directions for research and practice. Examples from the counselor education programme at the University of Nottingham will be provided in support.



### Prof Keith Tudor Author Bio

Space, challenge, and community in the stimulation of a person-centred approach to learning. Based on my experience as the director of the diploma/Bachelor's and postgraduate/master's programmes at Temenos in the UK (1993-2009) and of being a lecturer on undergraduate, graduate diploma, and master's programmes at Auckland University of Technology (2009-present), I will reflect on the importance of the creation of space and the co-creation of the environment conducive to learning; the importance of challenge in learning, especially in facilitating students to take their place as active learners and participants in all aspects of learning including assessment; and the significance of community, especially in education/training in cultural contexts that are more centered on groups and communities. Drawing on both Carl Rogers and Natalie Rogers in their work on education and creativity, I will make the point that person-centred theory can guide the practice of education and facilitate the freedom of practitioners.



## Abstract

In an era in which educational paradigms are rapidly evolving, this symposium on "Empowering Learners: Innovative Applications of Person-Centered Approaches in Diverse Classroom Contexts" aims to explore the transformative potential of person-centeredness and the facilitation of learning across varied educational settings. This symposium brings together person-centered researchers dedicated to reimagining learning and teaching processes focused on humanistic values, psychological contact, congruence, safety, interests and identities, significant learning, progressive education, and more.

Central to the symposium's goal is the exploration of person-centered approaches to foster classroom environments where every student feels valued, understood, and motivated to explore their full academic and personal potential. The symposium will showcase innovative research and practical insights from around the world on how such pedagogies and andragogies can be adapted to accommodate the diverse spectrum of student identities, including differences in culture, ability, and so on. By highlighting success stories and lessons learned from diverse educational settings, the symposium seeks to shed light on how person-centered ideas are vital in the pedagogical/andragogical approaches needed in today's world.

This symposium will feature a range of scholars who will present their experiences and research findings. The subsequent discussion will explore the themes and tensions among these varied approaches, aiming to transcend individual cases to uncover broader insights. Additionally, there will be a focus on leveraging the momentum of the symposium to foster future collaborations and academic endeavors. The following six international scholars (listed alphabetically) will present their work at the symposium as entry points for a generative discussion with all participants. Each of the six presenters will be given 10 minutes, following by a 30-minute moderator discussion, for a total of 90 minutes.

## Submission type

Panel/Symposium (90 min)

# Moderator/Discussant

Yotam Hod

## Brief Individual Papers (Title - First Author)

1. Doubly-authentic learning environments - Yotam Hod
2. The training of the person-centered approach as a learning experience of humanistic values - Maria Kefalopoulou
3. International students' first encounter with the Person Centered Approach: An experiential and research perspective - Renate Motschnig
4. Safety in the counseling training workshop - Brendon Murley
5. This learning we call therapy - David Murphy
6. Space, challenge, and community in the stimulation of a person-centred approach to learning - Keith Tudor

## Keywords

Person-centered education, Significant learning, Congruence, Pedagogies, Andragogies



# 34

## Meet you in the moment - Presence as a way of being in therapy. Experimental workshop

Mrs. **Olívía Dr Fekete** PhD  
*Private practice, Budapest, Hungary*

### **Mrs. Olívía Dr Fekete Author Bio**

About the author Dr Fekete Olívía, PhD in Psychology Sciences, clinical psychologist specialist with over 20 years of experience in clinical field, both public and private healthcare systems, inpatient and outpatient settings. Person-centered therapist, hypnotherapist, EMDR practitioner, trained and experienced in cognitive-behavior method. In applied field she works in private practice in ambulatory health care, activity focus is on psychodiagnostics and psychotherapy for patients with clinical and non- clinical issues. In education she works as lecturer at Semmelweis University of Medicine and Health Sciences (Budapest, Hungary), in the postgraduate Clinical psychologist specialization, teaching general psychodiagnostics and cognitive-behavioral diagnostics and therapy, and lecturer at ELTE (Budapest, Hungary) clinical psychologist MA specialisation, teaching person-centered method and skills in seminars. In regards of scientific activity, she is currently engaged in clinical, method specific diagnostical and evaluative interview techniques development, and resource-based approaches and in therapeutical presence.



## Abstract

The workshop introduces a training program for therapeutic presence and creates the opportunity for the participants to get insights and experiences of the programs' development key points.

Presence is considered as the preliminary necessity of the core conditions (Geller, 2002, Weinrauch, 2018). In the therapeutical relationship, presence provides the basis for the embodiment of empathy, unconditional positive regard and congruence. The importance of presence was pointed by Rogers in his late works (Rogers, 1980). Subsequently, prominent person-centered theorists and practitioners recognised presence as the fourth condition of therapeutical growth (Geller, 2013, 2017, 2022, Siegel, 2018, 2019, Weinrauch, 2018). In the broader sense, presence can be reckoned as a precondition, a hub of psychotherapies' common factors.

The workshop aims to highlight the topic of therapeutical presence from an applied point of view. By introducing a concise training program, the workshop is providing the first time in this condensed setup, an overview of this training's developmental possibilities on presence for professional and future professionals in training. It creates the opportunity for the workshop participants to glimpse in and to make more conscious their current therapeutical presence experiences and pinpoint on their development potential.

Essential premises of the training concept constitute: 1. presence is a way of being, not a

therapeutical technique 2. it is a process that realizes in connection with others 3. it's experience is unique, deep and enriching for both parties 4. the therapist's presence can consciously be experienced, deepened and 5. its awareness and its accessibility can be heightened.

The workshop is providing an insight of the 6 elements of the training program: 1. defining and finding my therapeutic presence landmarks 2. connecting to my therapeutic presence 3. being in the process of therapeutic presence 4. my ways of experiencing therapeutic presence 5. developing and practicing my therapeutic presence 6. presence as my way of being.

The workshop will be conducted by multiple training methods: as introduction, short presentation with slides, in the core parts experiential exercises in solo and in small groups accompanied by short group discussions and as closing, summing up group discussion.

By participating in experimental exercises, touching the core markers of each 6 program blocks, the workshop participants can get a closer understanding of their relation and experience of presence as a way of being.

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

therapeutical presence, training program, personal development

# 35

## Development of an Integrated Version of Various Scales Measuring Focusing Attitudes

Prof **Tsuyoshi Aoki** Ph.D<sup>1</sup>, Prof **Hiroyuki Uenishi** Ph. D<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Nanzan University, Nagoya, Japan. <sup>2</sup>Osaka Ohtani University, Osaka, Japan

### Prof Tsuyoshi Aoki Author Bio

Tsuyoshi Aoki, Ph.D. is an assistant professor of clinical psychology and psychotherapy at Nanzan University of Department of Psychology and Human Relations, Faculty of Humanities in Japan. He conducts some studies about mental health, PCT especially Focusing-oriented Psychotherapy and experiential learning about PCA and Focusing. He is a Focusing-oriented psychotherapist as certified by the Focusing Institute and practices at university counselling centers as a part-time counsellor. He has been also conducting Focusing workshops in Japan.



### Prof Hiroyuki Uenishi Author Bio

Hiroyuki Uenishi, Ph.D. is an Associate Professor in the Department of Psychology and Social Welfare in the Faculty of Human Sociology at Osaka Ohtani University. He conducts research on the effects and processes of PCT in Japan, quantitative research on Focusing attitudes in daily life, and research on psychological resources and stabilization. He also practices as a part-time clinical psychologist in psychiatric practice.



## Abstract

**Motivation:** Based on several descriptions of Focusing Attitudes from past practice, Fukumori and Morikawa (2004) created items and developed the FMS (Focusing Manner Scale) as a scale to measure Focusing attitudes. Several of the FMS items were revised and their English version was published in the PCEP journals (Aoki & Ikemi, 2014). Since the FMS was published, seven scales measuring Focusing Attitudes were developed in Japan, depending on their intended use. The presentation will present seven scales developed in Japan and translated in English using “deep”.

**Problem:** Each of the scales measuring Focusing Attitudes had a different factor structure, and there was no collective interpretation of Focusing Attitudes. The purpose of this research was to aggregate these scales and examine what factors constitute a Focusing attitude. This clarification would help us understand which Focusing attitudes toward the felt sense of the client are being maintained or undermined. These understandings could be utilized in therapist training.

**Methodology:** Factorial validity was examined through factor analysis, and then construct validity

of the aggregated scale was examined through correlation analysis with related scales (the Structure Bound Scale, the Authenticity Scale and the GHQ12).

**Results:** The seven scales had a total of 150 items, and the items were adjusted because of the need to take participant burden into account. The wording of all 150 items was reviewed and 39 items with the same wording were deleted. A correlation analysis was performed on the remaining 111 items to further adjust the items. Among items with particularly high correlation coefficients between items ( $r=.75$  or greater), 11 items were deleted. A tentative factor analysis based on data from 300 people resulted in the identification of nine factors. Correlation analysis with each scale revealed some construct validity. More survey collaborators are being sought, and results with more data will be presented on the day of the presentation.

**Implications:** By reexamining the results of the research that has been conducted with each scale using the integrated version, it is possible to compare the affecting of each factor.

**Discussion:** This presentation is expected to discuss of the following three and other points: 1) Whether the naming of factors is appropriate, 2) Implications of this scale, including the lack of construct validity 3) The characteristics of each factor revealed by the results of the correlation analysis and the actual clinical situations in which these Focusing Attitudes can be assumed to function.

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

Focusing Attitude, Focusing Manner Scale, -, -, -

# 36

## The Power of Papers: How the PCE-Literature Database Can Support Education and Research

**Niels Bagge** Cand.psych (MA) [ORCID iD<sup>1,2</sup>](#), **Christian Metz** Mag. Dr.<sup>3</sup>, **Takahiro Namiki** Dr. [ORCID iD<sup>4</sup>](#), **David Oberreiter** Dr.<sup>5</sup>, **Sophia Balamoutsou** Dr. [ORCID iD<sup>6</sup>](#), **Brian Rodgers** Dr. [ORCID iD<sup>7</sup>](#)

<sup>1</sup>Institut for Emotionsfokuseret Terapi, Roskilde, Denmark. <sup>2</sup>Dansk Selskab for Personcentreret og Oplevelsesorienteret Psykoterapi, Roskilde, Denmark. <sup>3</sup>FORUM Personcentrierte Psychotherapie, Ausbildung und Praxis, Vienna, Austria. <sup>4</sup>Aichi Shukutoku University, Aichi, Japan. <sup>5</sup>Kepler University Hospital, Johannes Kepler University, Linz, Austria. <sup>6</sup>ICPS - College for Humanistic Sciences, Athens, Greece. <sup>7</sup>University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand

### Niels Bagge

[0000-0002-4560-6212](#)

#### Author Bio

Authorized psychologist, specialist and supervisor of psychotherapy. Emotion Focused Therapy supervisor and trainer (ISEFT) & Focusing Trainer (TIFI) and more. Head of Institute for Emotion Focused Therapy Denmark & private practice. Chair of Danish Society for Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy. Chair of organizing committee for PCE2022. Member of WAPCEPC since 2002 with presentation at PCE World Conferences. Delegate of PCE-Europe to the pce-literature project.



### Christian Metz Author Bio

Person-centered psychotherapist and supervisor; training therapist of FORUM; delegate of FORUM to the pce-literature project (since 2020).



### Takahiro Namiki

[0000-0002-7584-6161](#)

#### Author Bio

An assistant professor working as a college counselor in Japan. His current research interests are in the person-centered therapy, person-centered integration, training and encounter philosophy.



### David Oberreiter Author Bio

Psychiatrist, Director of the Institute of Psychotherapy and Head of the Clinic for Neuropsychiatric Gerontology of the Kepler University Hospital. Author of the book "Psychopathologie" (in German), where psychiatric diagnostics are interpreted from a person-centered perspective.



### Sophia Balamoutsou

[0000-0002-7053-4783](tel:0000-0002-7053-4783)

#### Author Bio

Pluralistic counsellor, coach and psychologist MBACP (Accred), EMCC (practitioner) AFBPsS, CPsychol. Working in private practice and lecturer at ICPS-College for Humanistic Sciences, Athens, Greece).

Working group for the development of PCE-literature project. Research interests: history and philosophy in helping professions, training and curricula development, work-life balance, social injustice and impact to mental health.



### Brian Rodgers

[0000-0002-8203-2211](tel:0000-0002-8203-2211)

#### Author Bio

Programme director for the counsellor education programmes at the University of Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand. Chair of the Board of the WAPCEPC. Research interests include client directed and outcome informed practice, clients' experiences of therapy, technology and counselling/psychotherapy, bi-cultural approaches to counselling/psychotherapy, collaborative learning and counsellor education.



## Abstract

The aim of this presentation is to share how the Person Centered and Experiential Literature and Research Database (<https://pce-literature.org/en>) can be an invaluable resource to assist the PCE world community in education, training, supervision and research. The idea of the literature database originated from the bibliographies of the World Association for Person-Centered & Experiential Psychotherapy & Counseling (WAPCEPC) compiled by Germain Lietaer, Peter F. Schmid, Sheila Haugh, Frans Depestele, Jean-Marc Priels, and others. Currently there are over 13.500 articles, books, chapters and theses relating to Person Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy and Counseling in over 19 different languages. Since 2018 WAPCEPC has supported the development of a dedicated research section of the PCE-Literature database available to researchers, practitioners, students. Since 2022 PCE Europe has been an active partner in the project to support the research engagement of its members.

We will present the current status of the scientific section of database which include entries

on researchers, studies, measures and organisations. Our aspiration is for the database to be a collaborative resource, where people can contribute to an "open-source" repository of knowledge. We see it as an invaluable tool for students who are looking for materials for their projects and studies; for trainers and academics in interconnecting, publishing, finding new developments; for practitioners who are looking for information relevant to their clinical work, and for researchers sharing studies, protocols, measures etc.. During this presentation, you will have the opportunity to explore the website through live demonstrations, as well as open discussion about the future of the project and how you can be involved.

## Submission type

Structured Discussion (90 min)

## Moderator/Discussant

Sophia Balamoutsou

## Keywords

PCE Literature Database, PCE Scientific Database, PCE Measures, Education, Research

# 37

## The development of the person of the PCE therapist and its discontents

Mr. **Pavlos Zarogiannis** Dipl. Psy  
*Hellenic Focusing Center, Athens, Greece*

### Mr. Pavlos Zarogiannis Author Bio

Pavlos Zarogiannis has studied Clinical Psychology, German Literature, and Linguistics in Germany. He is Co-founder and Co-director of the Hellenic Focusing Center. He works as a person-centred therapist, supervisor, and trainer in Person-Centered and Focusing-Oriented Counselling and Psychotherapy. He is also a certified coordinator for Greece for the International Focusing Institute (TIFI).



### Abstract

The development of the person of the PCE therapist involves a demanding and long-term process of subjectification leading to the acquisition of a new identity, that of the PCE therapist. However, as Judith Butler argues, following mainly Nietzsche, Althusser, and Foucault, any process of subjectification is always also a process of subjection/subjugation to a certain power, which is exercised by various social institutions and discourses. These in turn precisely describe the roles, skills and behaviors required in order for someone to be counted as part of them.

Unfortunately, even therapeutic approaches, sooner or later, establish themselves as discourses in the Foucauldian sense, and exercise power over those who follow them.

From this perspective, becoming a therapist means to undertake a process of personal and professional growth, that is to undergo a process of subjectification through appropriate studies, training, personal therapy, supervision, continuous learning and so on, but always within the context and limits of a specific approach, i.e., of a particular therapeutic discourse.

This means more specifically that since the person-centred and experiential approach acts as discourse, the development of the person of the PCE therapist presupposes that this person will inevitably submit to the grammar and syntax of the PCE language, that is to the power, principles, and norms of the PCE discourse.

Therefore, in order to be recognized and accepted as a PCE therapist, one must acknowledge, accept, embrace, and embody the truths, values, virtues, and usefulness of the PCE discourse, along with its exclusions, prohibitions, limitations, weaknesses, and shortcomings. Furthermore, one must constantly prove, demonstrate, and perform one's person-centredness and experientiality. A difficult, frustrating, and often disturbing task indeed.

In this context, the development of the person of the PCE therapist is not only a matter of constantly cultivating professional skills, attitudes, and competences; it is not only a matter of a necessary



encounter of the psychological (person), the sociological (paideia) and the political (politeia), but inevitably also a matter of an unpleasant, sad, and uncomfortable limitation/oppression.

However, if the above contradictory situation is true, what would be the way out?

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

subjectification, subjection, discourse, discursivity, power

# 38

## Assisting Therapists in Utilizing Enactments in EFT-C: Promoting Vulnerability Sharing and Partner Responsiveness

Mrs. **Ofra Kula** MA [ORCID iD](#)<sup>1</sup>, Mrs. **Reut Machluf Ruttner** MA [ORCID iD](#)<sup>1</sup>, Prof **Ben Shahar** PhD [ORCID iD](#)<sup>2</sup>, Prof **Eran Bar Kalifa** PhD [ORCID iD](#)<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Ben Gurion University of the Negev, Beer Sheva, Israel. <sup>2</sup>The Hebrew University of, Jerusalem, Israel

### Mrs. Ofra Kula

[0000-0002-5584-8768](tel:0000-0002-5584-8768)

#### Author Bio

Ofra Kula is a PhD candidate in the psychology department at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. Her research focuses on therapists' interventions in EFT-C, specifically enactments. She is also a couple therapist, supervisor, lecturer, and co-founder of the Israeli EFCT community.



### Mrs. Reut Machluf Ruttner

[0000-0002-7018-7910](tel:0000-0002-7018-7910)

#### Author Bio

Reut Machluf-Ruttner is a PhD candidate at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. Her research focuses on dyadic patterns of nonverbal communication, in particular facial expressions in romantic partners' interactions and their role in relationship functioning.



### Prof Ben Shahar

[0000-0003-3913-2863](tel:0000-0003-3913-2863)

#### Author Bio

Ben Shahar is a licensed clinical psychologist and an associate professor at the Paul Baerwald School of Social Work and Social Welfare, Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is a certified supervisor and a trainer in emotion-focused therapy (EFT). He directs the Emotion and Psychotherapy Research Lab where he conducts research on the effectiveness and change process in EFT. His current research focuses on investigating emotion-based change processes in treatment for people who struggle with social anxiety and self-criticism. He co-founded and co-directs the Israeli Institute of Emotion-focused Therapy, which oversees training and supervision of EFT in Israel.



**Prof Eran Bar Kalifa**

[0000-0003-3579-3015](tel:0000-0003-3579-3015)

**Author Bio**

bio



## Abstract

**Motivation:** The primary purported change process in emotion-focused couples therapy (EFT-C) involves partners accessing and revealing their underlying vulnerable emotions and responding empathically when their partners disclose their own vulnerable emotions. One primary intervention EFT-C therapists utilize to facilitate vulnerability-responsiveness restructuring events is enactment—i.e. when therapists ask partners to interact directly with each other to modify maladaptive transactions.

**Problem:** Despite the significance of vulnerability responsiveness enactment, therapists find it challenging to use enactments. Thus, despite its central role in EFT-C, many therapists avoid using the enactment intervention. Our study aims to clarify interventions therapists can use to help partners share vulnerability and respond responsively during enactments. Specifically, the primary hypothesis of our study is that three main interventions – setting meaningful systemic context, promoting experiencing, and guiding interaction – would predict greater levels of vulnerability expression by the sharing partner during enactments and greater responsiveness by the listening partner.

**Methodology:** 150 vulnerability enactment events were identified and coded from therapy sessions of 21 couples who received 12 sessions of EFT-C.

**Results:** Preliminary results showed that these three interventions were positively associated with vulnerability sharing and responsiveness.

**Implications:** These results have potential implications for training. Helping EFT-C therapists recognize the critical role of these specific interventions may encourage them to practice them, which may equip them with the needed skills to facilitate successful enactment.

**Discussion:** The discussion will focus on the importance of promoting therapists' competence and skills in managing enactments and addressing concerns related to training therapists to apply enactments effectively. This is intended to reduce therapists' apprehension when applying enactments and improve therapy outcomes.

## Submission type

Online Brief Individual Paper (15 min)

## Keywords

emotion focused therapy for couples, enactment, vulnerability, responsiveness, therapists' interventions

# 39

## Effects of Continued Implementation of Interactive Focusing Oriented Counseling on Focusing Attitudes and Stress Reactions

Prof **Kumiyo Sakai** PhD in clinical psychology<sup>1</sup>, Prof **Yoko Ichikawa** Master of Psychology<sup>2</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Wayo Women's University, Chiba, Japan. <sup>2</sup>Chiba Institute of Technology, Chiba, Japan

### Prof Kumiyo Sakai Author Bio

Kumiyo Sakai received her PhD in Clinical Psychology from Rikkyo University in 2013. She has been a professor at the Department of Psychology, Wayo Women's University. She is a Certified Trainer and Focusing-Oriented Therapist with the International Institute of Focusing since 2012 and certified Teacher of Interactive Focusing in 2021.



### Prof Yoko Ichikawa Author Bio

Yoko Ichikawa is an assistant professor in the Faculty of Creative Engineering at Chiba Institute of Technology. Her research specifically focuses on the patterns of focusing attitudes and their impact on the professional development of prospective teachers. She is passionate about devising methods to teach focusing skills to STEM students.



## Abstract

1. Motivation: In the face of increasing stress due to various crises, finding effective management methods becomes imperative. Therefore, we aim to experimentally assess the efficacy of listening and empathic understanding in alleviating stress.
2. Problem: Interactive Focusing (IF), a variant of Focusing introduced by Klein (2001), incorporates elements of listening and empathy. Despite its potential, there is a lack of empirical evidence regarding its effectiveness in stress reduction. IF involves listening from the speaker's perspective, and after a brief silence, known as a "double empathic moment", expressing what the speaker might be feeling, either in the listener's words or in images using his or her felt sense, and communicating them to the speaker. We conducted a counseling session incorporating elements of Interactive Focusing (IFC) to investigate its impact on stress reactions and Focusing attitudes linked to mental well-being.
3. Methodology: Our study involved 17 participants, with 9 in the experimental group and 8 in the

control group. We administered two questionnaire scales: the Focusing Attitude Measurement Scale (FMS.SE) and the Stress Response Scale (SRS-18). FMS.SE was developed by Sakai (2018) consists of four factors such as "attention", "expression", "distance" and "acceptance". SRS-18 was created by Suzuki et al. (1997), which has three factors, such as "Depression-Anxiety", "Irritability-Anger," and "Helplessness". The experimental group received IFC sessions weekly for 8 weeks, while the control group did not undergo IFC. Questionnaire scales were administered before, immediately after, and two weeks post-experiment for both groups.

4. Results: (1) Among the four factors of FMS.SE, only "Expression" demonstrated a significant interaction effect, showing a notable increase in the experimental group post-experiment. (2) Regarding SRS-18, significant interaction effects were observed for "Depression-Anxiety" and "Irritability-Anger," with a marked decrease in the experimental group immediately post-experiment and at the two-week follow-up compared to pre-experiment levels. Similar effects were observed in the total score of the scale.
5. Implications: Our findings suggest that IFC is an effective method for alleviating stress reactions, providing empirical support for the efficacy of Focusing. However, the impact on Focusing attitudes, which are linked to various mental health conditions, was limited, highlighting a direction for future research.
6. Discussion: We invite further discussion on the efficacy of IFC, particularly its distinctions from the short form of Focusing developed by Gendlin.

This research was funded by The Eugene T. Gendlin Center for Research of The International Focusing Institute.

## Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

## Keywords

Interactive Focusing, stress reaction, Focusing attitude, The Focusing Manner Scale with Symbolic Expression, empathic understanding

# 40

## A qualitative study of patients with a chronic wish to die related to unbearable psychological suffering.

Mrs. **Sofie Verdegem** Master, PhD student [ORCID iD](#)  
KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium

### Mrs. Sofie Verdegem

[0000-0001-8410-7179](#)

### Author Bio

Sofie Verdegem is a clinical psychologist, client-centered experiential-existential psychotherapist at Reakiro in Leuven, care center for clients with a death wish related to unbearable psychological suffering and at Spore in Rotselaar, private practice. She is working at UPC KU Leuven on doctoral research on existential suffering in people facing death. She is also affiliated with the postgraduate program in client-centered psychotherapy at KU Leuven.



## Abstract

### Motivation

It is not uncommon for therapists to encounter clients who have a chronic death wish, which may manifest as recurrent or long-term suicidal ideation or requests for euthanasia due to unbearable mental suffering. An increasing number of countries have enacted legislation to regulate such deliberation processes. A chronic death wish is to be distinguished from acute suicidal tendency, which is described as a sudden state of immediacy for suicide, impulsive suicidal thoughts and actions, triggered by stressful events, whereas chronic death wish is characterized by a persistent death ideation for several months or years and is associated with compulsive cognitive processes. It may be viewed as a long-term adaptation to chronic mood disorders and/or personality disorders: the need to feel in control over one's suffering.

It is not always possible for these clients to connect with their inner experience, as suffering often leads to stuck processes and even to a sense of alienation. The objective of this lecture is to equip therapists with the requisite tools to re-establish a connection in the therapeutic relationship, to facilitate experiential connecting in clients themselves and to help clients to reconnect with life.

### Problem

In earlier research, several factors responsible for long-term suicidal ideation or a request for psychiatric euthanasia were identified, but very little is written about the experiences of a wish to

die, described by the patients themselves. In this study, we discovered a wide variety in experiencing a wish to die.

Moreover, clients with a chronic death wish described how they relate to life, what are difficulties in connection and what is helping to re-connect. These experiences can help us to attune psychotherapeutic encounter to this population with complex care needs.

## **Methodology**

A total of ten semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with clients who had a chronic death wish related to unbearable psychological suffering. The interview data were analyzed using the method of generic descriptive-interpretive qualitative research, as developed by Elliott & Timulak. An open-ended data-gathering strategy was employed to elicit detailed descriptive information about the phenomenon of life- and death experiences.

## **Results**

A chronic death wish seems to have different faces. Often, the death wish is experienced as long lasting and persistent over time. Death is seen as a salvation from suffering, and the wish to die can be very determined or pressing. At other moments, clients can experience ambivalence toward the death wish or even abandon the wish to die. Fear of death can differ between clients.

In their relating to life, clients with a chronic death wish experience difficulties in connecting to others, to oneself, to the world and to life in general. They also describe possibilities of re-connecting to others, to oneself and to life.

## **Implications**

This study reveals the various manifestations of a death wish. The research demonstrates how prolonged suffering gives rise to challenges in establishing connections. This indicates that clients who have a long-standing death wish require a supportive relational context in which the duality between life and death, extreme suffering and related existential concerns are given space and addressed. The capacity to develop existential empathy, defined as the ability to resonate with the existential dimension of the client's story and to convey this understanding to the client, is paramount to connect with the existential layer of their suffering, to facilitate connection, to explore new avenues to meaning and to help clients relate to life and death. The development of relational depth within the therapeutic relationship can act as a catalyst for the emergence of new possibilities in terms of self-connection and engagement with life itself.

## **Discussion**

The objective of this presentation is to facilitate an open dialogue about the experiences of clients who are struggling with a chronic death wish. The objective is to examine the difficulties encountered when attempting to establish a therapeutic connection with clients and to investigate how other therapists overcome these challenges. Furthermore, the discussion will examine the relationship between the therapist's capacity to establish a therapeutic connection with their clients and the client's ability to engage with inner experiences and the broader context of life.

# Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

# Keywords

Death wish, existential concerns, experiential-existential psychotherapy, euthanasia, suicidality



# 41

## Experiential-existential care for clients with a chronic death wish related to unbearable psychological suffering

Mrs. **Sofie Verdegem** Master, PhD Student [ORCID iD](#)  
KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium

### Mrs. Sofie Verdegem

[0000-0001-8410-7179](tel:0000-0001-8410-7179)

### Author Bio

Sofie Verdegem is a clinical psychologist, client-centered experiential-existential psychotherapist at Reakiro in Leuven, care center for clients with a death wish related to unbearable psychological suffering, and at Spore in Rotselaar, private practice. She is working at UPC KU Leuven on doctoral research on existential suffering in people facing death. She is also affiliated with the postgraduate program in client-centered psychotherapy at KU Leuven.



## Abstract

### Motivation

The objective of this workshop is to provide therapeutic skills in the work with clients who are experiencing a chronic death wish related to unbearable psychological suffering. A chronic death wish may manifest as recurrent or long-term suicidal ideation or as a request for euthanasia or medically assisted dying. An increasing number of countries have enacted legislation to regulate such deliberation processes. A chronic death wish is to be distinguished from acute suicidal tendency, which is described as a sudden state of immediacy for suicide, impulsive suicidal thoughts, and actions, triggered by stressful events. A chronic death wish is characterized by a persistent death ideation for several months or years and is associated with compulsive cognitive processes. It may be viewed as a long-term adaptation to chronic mood disorders and/or personality disorders: the need to feel in control over one's suffering.

Their severe psychological suffering makes it particularly difficult for clients with a chronic death wish to connect with one's inner experience. Moreover, these clients experience a lot of existential suffering, yet may find it challenging to connect with the existential layer. In order to provide effective therapeutic counselling to these clients, it is essential for the therapist to develop existential empathy, defined as the ability to resonate with the existential dimension of the client's narrative and to communicate this understanding to the client. This necessitates that a therapist is prepared to confront their own existential issues and can assist the client in developing a relationship with their existential suffering.

## **Problem**

Clients with a death wish related to unbearable psychological suffering are hard to reach. These clients have often endured a number of challenging or even traumatic experiences within the care system. In relation to their suffering, therapists may experience feelings of powerlessness and limitations.

## **Methodology**

In this workshop, we will use focusing exercises to establish a connection with our felt sense on the process of clients with a chronic death wish. We will explore where the process gets stuck and how to re-connect with the living forward energy.

## **Results**

The aim of this workshop is to facilitate reflection on the concept of a chronic death wish as it relates to the therapist's own felt sensing. We work experientially with what the client's experiences and thoughts evoke. We practice active listening to identify and understand the ambivalence present in ourselves (existential empathy – fear and resistance) and in the client (death wish – life wish). We explore ways to bridge the gap between life and death. We address the existential challenges of our clients (social alienation, self-determination, extreme suffering, life fear, hopelessness,...) and examine how they relate to our own (isolation & loneliness, death fear, responsibility, helplessness,...).

## **Discussion**

We share our experiences and engage in a constructive exchange of ideas throughout the workshop.

# Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

# Keywords

existential empathy, existential concerns, death wish, unbearable suffering, -

# 42

## The anxious body and the re-connecting power of Person-Centered Therapy

Mrs. **Heidi Pellens** MSc, PhD- student  
KU Leuven, Leuven, Belgium

### Mrs. Heidi Pellens Author Bio

Heidi Pellens, MSc, is a clinical psychologist, person-centered psychotherapist and a doctoral researcher at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences, University of Leuven (Belgium). Her research focusses on existential topics in psychopathology and psychotherapy, with a special interest in anxiety and depressive disorder.



### Abstract

The prevalence of depression varies greatly across nations (De Vaus et al., 2018; Simon et al., 2002). These differences in depression prevalence across nations potentially also reflect variations resulting from the specific way people pursue meaning in their life within a certain cultural context (Juhasz et al., 2012).

Earlier empirical research has consistently linked depression to a limited possibility to find and experience meaning in life (Abu-Raiya et al., 2021; Dekker et al., 2020; Huo et al., 2020; Mascaro & Rosen, 2008). Merleau-Ponty argued that meaning is provided by the culture where people live in (Felder & Robbins, 2011). Through culture, people share pathways to interact and be with each other in the world (Heidegger, 1927). Culture shapes the specific way the world is encountered, and potentially also the way the ultimate concerns, such as the inevitable limitedness and uncertainty of life, are lived.

In the current study, organized by the KU Leuven, we want to explore whether cultural-existential aspects, specifically the degree of interconnectedness of people, and the way the given uncertainty of human existence is approached, explain the variations in depression rates across nations. Participants (N= 1232) with 108 different nationalities participated in this study by completing an online questionnaire about the extent to which they experience meaning in their lives, the way they cope with existential questions, the degree of contact they can make with their embodied experience and the severity of depression symptoms.

The results of the study confirm the importance of the role of existential anxiety and connection to the embodied layer of life experiences in the understanding of depression, cross-over the world. Hence the exploration of existential themes in clients stories and restoration of the contact they have with their body are meaningful areas to be attended to in the psychotherapeutic treatment of depression.

# Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

# Keywords

depression, existential anxiety, culture, existential concerns, meaning in life

# 43

## Using Person Centred Expressive Arts to facilitate communities of practice: touching upon the edge of awareness.

**Sophia Balamoutsou** PhD [ORCID iD](#)<sup>1,2</sup>, **Anna Marina Iossifides** PhD<sup>1</sup>, **Anastasia Hara Karagianni** MSc<sup>1</sup>, **Panos Rokidis** Msc/ECP<sup>1</sup>, **Susanna Markowitsch** Registered Psychotherapist<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>ICPS-College for Humanistic Sciences, Athens, Greece. <sup>2</sup>Institute of Agri-Food and Life Sciences (Agro-Health) Hellenic Mediterranean University Research Centre, Heraklion, Crete, Greece. <sup>3</sup>APG.IPS, Vienna, Austria

### **Sophia Balamoutsou**

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#### **Author Bio**

Pluralistic counsellor, coach and psychologist, MBACP (Accred), EMCC (practitioner) AFBPsS, CPsychol. Working in private practice and lecturer at ICPS (College for Humanistic Sciences, Athens, Greece).

Member, working group for the development of PCE-literature project. Research interests: history and philosophy in helping professions, training and curricula development, work-life balance, social injustice and impact to mental health.



### **Anna Marina Iossifides Author Bio**

Is a Person-Centred counsellor living in Athens, Greece. Born in the United States, she received a PhD in Social Anthropology (1990) from the LSE and worked as a lecturer in Panteion University, Athens. In 2003 she received a PgDip. in Counselling from the University of Strathclyde. In 2017 she completed Natalie Rogers' program in the Person-Centred Expressive Arts.



### **Anastasia Hara Karagianni Author Bio**

I am a Person-Centred psychotherapist. I have a Bachelor's degree in Psychology, and a Masters degree in Person-Centred Counselling and Psychotherapy. A key source of interest for me is helping people find their meaning and purpose in life, trusting in their personal strengths. I like to be inspired and to live and explore life.



### **Panos Rokidis Author Bio**

Panos was born in Germany and lives in Greece. His first degree is in Education. He trained as an actor. He holds an MSc degree from Birkbeck College, University of London. Panos was awarded the European Certificate of Psychotherapy in the Person-Centred Approach in June 2023. The Person-Centred philosophy has changed his worldview.



### **Susanna Markowitsch Author Bio**

Since 2023 I am working in private practice in Vienna, Austria. Since 2019 I am also working as trainer and head of training for PC psychotherapy at APG.IPS and lecturer at the Postgraduate Center of the University of Vienna. Member of Organizing Team for PCE 2018. Head of WAPCEPC board 2018-2022.



## **Abstract**

In this symposium we present aspects of working with creativity. Carl Rogers (C. Rogers 1961:351) believed that healing and growth is enabled through creativity. Yet historically there is limited research and writings on Person Centred Expressive Art therapy. This symposium opens up a much needed space to explore the use of creativity in supporting the continuing development of PC therapists (paideia) and how creative practices engages and helps bring into awareness important issues which therapists face. Furthermore, participants of these workshops develop a sense of belonging in a community of practice and an awareness of their political position in the community (politeia).

Three papers are presented. In the first paper the work of Natalie Rogers (expressive arts) and Liesel Silverstone (creative arts) are summarised. The historical and social context of Natalie Rogers (1928- 2015) and Liesel Silverstone (1927-2013) is introduced and how these contexts seem to be this is mirrored in their methods and practices. Similarities and differences are identified.

The second paper elaborates a merging of the two traditions and how we used them in developing a series of workshops (residential, one day, online). The participants of these workshops were therapists, and the aim was to create a sense of community of practice. Examples of workshop outlines are offered as well as a discussion of how feedback from the participants and their developmental needs informed the continuing evolution of those workshops. Key qualities for the development of these groups involved, trust, boundaries, respect, collaborative practices, mutual development and sharing and holding the group.

The third paper is presented by participants of the workshops where they share their experiences and the impact this has had on their personal and professional development. Furthermore, the sense of belonging in a broader therapeutic community is discussed. The first presenter explores therapist's loneliness and how important is the sense of belonging in a community of therapists. The second explains how the non-judgemental filter of doing art (writing, drawing) gave time and space, helping to lower the therapist's defences and allowing engagement with as yet unprocessed everyday material. Sharing the work with colleagues offered a sense of being understood and accepted.

In this presentation we offer our attempts to create 'pockets of community' to assist in the support and development of therapists. Participants in this symposium will be invited into an open discussion.

Rogers, Carl R. (1961) *On Becoming a Person*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin

## Submission type

Panel/Symposium (60 min)

## Moderator/Discussant

Susanna Markowitsch

## Brief Individual Papers (Title - First Author)

1. Perspectives on Person Centred Expressive Arts - Dr Anna Marina Iossifides and Dr Sophia Balamoutsou
2. Applying Expressive Arts for the development of communities of practice among person centred therapists - Dr Sophia Balamoutsou and Dr Anna Marina Iossifides
3. Participants' experiences in participating in a series of Expressive Art workshops - Anastasia Hara Karagianni and Panos Rokidis

## Keywords

expressive arts, communities of practice, collaborative practices, empowering therapists, -

# 44

## Understanding 'the person' or controlling the narrative. What are the implications of our research?

**Judith A Moore** PhD

*University of East Anglia, Norwich, United Kingdom*

### **Judith A Moore Author Bio**

Judy Moore was trained in the person-centred approach in the late 1980s before becoming a trainer on the Diploma in person-centred counselling and psychotherapy at the University of East Anglia (UEA), Norwich, UK. She later became Director of the UEA Counselling Service and Director of the University's Centre for Counselling Studies. More recently, she has been engaged in an evolving project to investigate anomalies within the person-centred approach by studying the original client-centred theory, particularly in the light of the work of Eugene Gendlin.

She has contributed to and co-edited (with Nikolaos Kypriotakis) two volumes of *Senses of Focusing* (Eurasia Publications, 2021). Her most recent contribution to the literature is a chapter on 'Spirituality and Transcendence' in the 3rd edition of the *Handbook of Person-Centred Therapy* (ed. Susan Stephen et al., Palgrave Macmillan, in press). She lives and works in private practice in Norwich, UK.



## Abstract

Why do we do research? To demonstrate that our Approach is as effective (or more effective) than any other? To enquire more deeply into how a specific intervention works? To form a deeper understanding of what it means to be human?

I am not primarily a researcher, but, through a variety of roles over the past few decades-- therapist, trainer, manager of a counselling service, postgraduate supervisor and examiner-- I've participated in and observed research from many different angles. More recently I've studied the collaboration of Rogers and his early colleagues that led to the tentative formulations of Client-Centred Therapy in the 1950s and 1960s. I contrast their open-ness to whatever might unfold as they listened to hundreds of recorded client interviews with my experience of very different kinds of research: research that is designed to argue a point, to demonstrate the 'effectiveness' of a particular approach or even to shape the direction of a therapy.

The aim of this short presentation is to consider whether the Person-Centred Approach has reached a point in its evolution where it may be wise to pause and reflect on the nature of the 'person' that lies at the heart of our Approach, including how that 'person' is viewed (and even shaped) by research. In our eagerness to demonstrate that we are 'evidence-based' and 'research-led' are we, in seeking to control the narrative, dangerously narrowing understanding of the 'person' for ourselves, our clients and our future?



# Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

# Keywords

nature of the person, open inquiry, client recordings, controlled narrative, effectiveness

# 45

## Person-Centered psychotherapy and spirituality

Mrs. **Violetta Pavlea** Master, PhDc  
ICPS, Athens, Greece

### Mrs. Violetta Pavlea Author Bio

Η Βιολέττα Παυλέα είναι ψυχοθεραπεύτρια-σύμβουλος προσωποκεντρικής προσέγγισης. Απέκτησε πτυχίο ψυχολογίας (B.Sc) και ολοκλήρωσε μεταπτυχιακές σπουδές (M.Sc) με διάκριση στην Προσωποκεντρική-Συμβουλευτική Ψυχοθεραπεία από το University of Strathclyde, UK. Είναι επίσης κάτοχος του European Certificate of Psychotherapy (ECP, Vienna) και υποψήφια διδάκτωρ (PhDc) στο University of Bolton. Έχει πολυετή συγγραφική δραστηριότητα φιλοσοφικού και ψυχολογικού περιεχομένου και έχει υπάρξει εισηγήτρια διαλέξεων αντίστοιχων θεμάτων. Είναι συγγραφέας σειράς βιβλίων και ποιητικών συλλογών, ενώ κεντρικό αντικείμενο της εργασίας της αποτελεί πάντα η μελέτη της ψυχής. Έχοντας ασχοληθεί επί σειρά ετών με τη σκέψη του Γιουνγκ, εργάστηκε ως σύμβουλος ομάδων προσωπικής ανάπτυξης, ενώ σήμερα εργάζεται ως ψυχοθεραπεύτρια της προσωποκεντρικής προσέγγισης με ενήλικες, τόσο ατομικά όσο και ομαδικά.



## Abstract

The aim of this presentation is to highlight the spiritual dimension of the person-centred approach and the effect of spirituality on the therapeutic relationship. The relational depth, according to Carl Rogers, or the in-depth encounter, which constitutes the actualization of the essential therapist-client relationship, signals the shift of consciousness and the opening towards spirituality. Such an opening towards internal life can be traced back to the Greek mysteries, the primordial therapeutics, where the desired self-knowledge constituted the springboard for understanding the existential and spiritual structures of the human soul, a task which is now undertaken by contemporary psychotherapy, a science that constitutes their reminder.

In my presentation questions will be raised for further consideration such as: Are person-centred psychotherapists prepared to integrate into psychotherapy aspects of consciousness related to philosophical and spiritual knowledge? Does relational depth constitute the kindling for immersing into the essence of self and an experience of consciousness expansion? Is the therapist's spiritual awareness essential for the better understanding and awareness of human existence? Correlations and references from scientific researches will be included regarding the attainment and fulfilment of this request, with the intention of exploring more extensively the deeper awareness of human existence, thus enriching the contribution of the person-centred approach to mental health and facilitating the actualization of the Self/client which is the ultimate aim.

Also, issues relating to the correlation between philosophical thought and the psychotherapeutic perception of therapy will be discussed.

For this purpose I will present the findings of my research "Experiences of relational depth and their association to spirituality on the part of PCA therapist, 2019", which was analyzed using Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis.

Plato refers to the threefold nature of human existence as: spirited, rational and appetitive that correspond to the spiritual, mental and emotional, and physical body of humans. Achieving harmony between these bodies during therapy brings about, as we know according to Plato, mental and physical health. How can such an interrelation be perceived and what essential interactions occur between them as outcome of the therapeutic process? Can psychotherapy integrate the spiritual existence of humans in its practices of mental healing?

Can the psychotherapist listen more meaningfully and perceive the depth of mental nature by acknowledging that the incongruence of the Self is related to the incongruence between the conscious self and the spiritual part of existence?

I submit this abstract for an individual paper in the Greek language.

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

Spirituality, Relational depth, Person Center, Expand of consciousness, Personal development

# 46

## The experiential effects of the relationship of spirituality to psychotherapy

Mrs. **Thomais Spanou** M. Sc.  
ICPS, Athens, Greece

### Mrs. Thomais Spanou Author Bio

Η Σπανού Θωμαΐς είναι Ψυχοθεραπεύτρια – Σύμβουλος Προσωποκεντρικής προσέγγισης και διατηρεί ιδιωτικό γραφείο στον Άγιο Ιωάννη Ρέντη. Απέκτησε πτυχίο στη διαπολιτισμική εκπαίδευση από το Δημοκρίτειο Πανεπιστήμιο Θράκης και ολοκλήρωσε αυτόν τον κύκλο σπουδών με την παρακολούθηση καλοκαιρινού σεμιναρίου στο Κρατικό Πανεπιστήμιο της Μόσχας, Lomonosov. Στη συνέχεια ολοκλήρωσε μεταπτυχιακές σπουδές και απέκτησε τον τίτλο M.Sc. στην Προσωποκεντρική Συμβουλευτική και Ψυχοθεραπεία από το πανεπιστήμιο Strathclyde, της Σκωτίας, με θέμα έρευνας, τα γονεϊκά τραύματα ενός πελάτη μέσα στην ψυχοθεραπεία. Μετά από τετραετή εκπαίδευση στην Προσωποκεντρική προσέγγιση απέκτησε το European Certificate of Psychotherapy (ECP) από την European Association of Psychotherapy (EAP), της οποίας είναι μέλος, καθώς επίσης αποτελεί ιδρυτικό μέλος της Πανελληνίας Ένωσης Επαγγελματιών Προσωποκεντρικής & Βιωματικής Προσέγγισης. Έχει εργαστεί εθελοντικά στη Γέφυρα Ζωής με παιδιά και ενήλικες με αναπηρία, καθώς επίσης στα πλαίσια εθελοντισμού, έχει υποστηρίξει τον μητρικό θηλασμό και τη μητρότητα (Ολοκλήρωση σεμιναρίου Αποτελεσματικού γονέα από την Gordon Hellas). Έχει παρακολουθήσει σεμινάρια κλινικής υπνοθεραπείας και παραμένει ενεργή και δραστηριοποιημένη στο κομμάτι της εκπαίδευσης, της έρευνας και της δικής της προσωπικής ανάπτυξης.



### Abstract

As a person-centered psychotherapist, that had the chance to investigate experientially the correlation between psychotherapy and spirituality and having seen the effects and the outcome practically in the Self, I am submitting for a brief individual paper in Greek language than will add on the work of Mrs. Pavlea Violetta. With reference to Mrs. Pavlea's speech, experientially approaching the relationship of spirituality to the person-centred approach and relational depth and acknowledging the importance of significant positive changes that contribute to the end of incongruence and the attainment of self- actualization, I consider necessary to express and add to the field of research and reflection on personal therapy, the experiential effects of the relationship of spirituality to psychotherapy. It is important for the scientific world to understand and acknowledge the subtle correlations between spirituality and psychotherapy. The question that my presentation will raise is whether the moral-existential position facilitates and contributes to mental health. The purpose of this short presentation, is to demonstrate essential processes of mine, after my experience of acknowledging spirituality as psychotherapy, something that is directly related to the positions and work of Mrs. Pavlea.

# Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

# Keywords

Spirituality, Relational depth, Moral, Person Center, Personal development

# 47

## Addressing Social Injustice and Marginality in Emotion-Focused and PCE Therapies: A Growing Edge?

**Lou Cooper** DPsyCh(Counselling)<sup>1</sup>, **Dimitris Mougios** MSc<sup>2</sup>, **Agathi Lakioti** PhD (Clinical Psychology) [ORCID iD](#)<sup>2</sup>, **Robert Elliott** PhD [ORCID iD](#)<sup>3,4</sup>, **Emma Tickle** MSc (Humanistic Counselling Practice)<sup>5</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Australian Institute of Emotion Focused Therapy, Melbourne, Australia. <sup>2</sup>Hellenic Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy, Athens, Greece. <sup>3</sup>University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, United Kingdom. <sup>4</sup>Scottish Institute for Emotion-Focused Therapy, Glasgow, United Kingdom. <sup>5</sup>University of Nottingham, Nottingham, United Kingdom

### Lou Cooper Author Bio

Dr Lou Cooper (she/they) is a Counselling Psychologist based in Naarm/Melbourne, Australia. Lou is a founding member of the Australian Institute of Emotion Focused Therapy and currently their lead trainer, and host of the Emotion Focused Podcast. Lou works predominantly with LGBTQA+ clients.



### Dimitris Mougios Author Bio

Dimitris Mougios is a psychologist holding an MSc on the Psychology of Identity and Interpersonal Relationships from Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences. His specialization is in the role that sexual identity and parental acceptance play in the adjustment of LGB individuals within their romantic relationships. Dimitris provides counselling to adults and coordinates educational and experiential workshops for the general public and various groups of professionals.



### Agathi Lakioti

[0000-0002-7621-510X](tel:0000-0002-7621-510X)

### Author Bio

Agathi Lakioti, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and an adjunct lecturer at Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences. She is the founder and director of the Hellenic Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy in Athens, Greece. She works in private practice as a psychotherapist, supervisor, and trainer. Her research interests focus on counseling and psychotherapy research.



## Robert Elliott

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### Author Bio

Robert Elliott PhD (they/them) is Emeritus Professor of Counselling at the University of Strathclyde (Scotland). Their main interests are training and research on Emotion-Focused Therapy. Recent books include *Emotion-Focused Counselling in Action* and *Essentials of Descriptive-Interpretive Qualitative Research*; they have published more than 190 journal articles or book chapters. They are a past recipient of the Distinguished Research Career Award of the Society for Psychotherapy Research, and the Carl Rogers Award from the Division of Humanistic Psychology of the American Psychological Association.



### Emma Tickle Author Bio

Emma Tickle is Assistant Professor at the University of Nottingham and the Course Leader for the Person-Centred Experiential Counselling for Depression (PCE-CfD) programmes. Emma trained as a PCE therapist at Diploma and Masters level at the University of Nottingham. As well as counselling education Emma has taught Psychology, co-produced and delivered courses for the NHS Recovery College and provided Continuing and Professional Development and Clinical Supervision. Emma has clinical experience working as a PCE counsellor in multi-disciplinary teams in education, health, and corporate contexts, and runs a small private practice. Emma is currently undertaking her PhD exploring PCE as a resource towards Social Justice while applying a Social Justice lens to the PCE approach. Emma contributes to the Centre for Research in Human Flourishing at the University of Nottingham.



## Abstract

To date, the Emotion-focused therapy (EFT) community has devoted relatively little attention to issues of justice, equality, diversity and inclusion (JEDI). Furthermore, EFT's focus on internal emotion processes can be criticised on multiple grounds: First, its individualistic focus can lead to decontextualizing clients from their sometimes oppressive social situations, thus ignoring instances of real injustice and harm. Second, the dichotomy between internal (self-self) and external (self-other) work is overly simplistic and fails to account for the large overlap between external and internal sources of emotional pain. Third, EFT has an elitist, technocratic bias, leading it to ignore the needs of marginalized groups such as people of color.

In this panel, we offer three dispatches and a commentary from the JEDI frontier of EFT and PCE therapies: First, Cooper describes the effects of cissexism on trans clients, and proposes strategies for developing trans-inclusive practice, including alliance building and addressing shame and internalized transphobia stemming from societal marginalization. Next, Mougios and Lakioti address the difficulties of sexual minority men facing a hostile social and interpersonal environment. They then describe how EFT can be helpful with this client population, pointing in particular to the therapist's empathic attunement, providing a corrective emotional experience, and the application of Two Chair work, Empty Chair work and Meaning Re-Creation work. After this, based on a synthesis of EFT theory and the small available literature, Elliott provides a

systematic presentation of a proposed set of principles and EFT practices for people experiencing emotional injuries from marginalization experiences (MEs). Finally, Tickle will discuss the three presentations from a PCE focusing-oriented, social justice perspective.

Together, the presenters and discussant hope to stimulate discussion and further developments in this relatively new area of EFT practice.

## Submission type

Panel/Symposium (90 min)

## Moderator/Discussant

Robert Elliott (Moderator)/Emma Tickle (Discussant)

## Brief Individual Papers (Title - First Author)

1. Alleviating the impact of cissexism on trans clients using Emotion Focused Therapy - Lou Cooper
2. Working with sexual minority men in Emotion Focused Therapy - Dimitris Mougios & Agathi Lakioti
3. Emotion-Focused Therapy for Emotional Injuries Stemming from Marginalization Experiences: A Proposed Body of Practice - Robert Elliott
4. Discussant - Emma Tickle

## Keywords

marginalisation, social justice, minority stress, emotion-focused therapy, sexual minorities



# 48

## Alleviating the impact of cissexism on trans clients using Emotion Focused Therapy

**Lou Cooper** DPsych(Counselling)

*Australian Institute of Emotion Focused Therapy, Melbourne, Australia*

### Lou Cooper Author Bio

Dr Lou Cooper (she/they) is a Counselling Psychologist based in Naarm/Melbourne, Australia. Lou is a founding member of the Australian Institute of Emotion Focused Therapy and currently their lead trainer, and host of the Emotion Focused Podcast. Lou works predominantly with LGBTQA+ clients.



## Abstract

**Motivation:** Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT) has emerged as an effective modality for meeting the therapeutic needs of trans clients, as documented by Westmacott & Edmonstone (2020). Their groundbreaking work laid the foundation for utilizing EFT with trans clients, providing validation and guidance for therapists working in this domain.

**Problem:** Transgender and gender diverse (trans) individuals face disproportionate rates of mental health challenges compared to cisgender individuals, highlighting the critical need for trans-affirmative therapy approaches.

**Methodology:** Building upon Westmacott & Edmonstone (2020) and drawing from over a decade of clinical experience with trans clients in Melbourne, Australia, this presentation introduces a model for addressing the impact of cissexism, or internalised transphobia, within the therapeutic context. A brief case study will be presented to illustrate the practical application of the model, complemented by audio recordings of a trans woman sharing her experience as an EFT client.

**Results:** The model begins by outlining strategies for creating a trans-inclusive practice and emphasizes the significance of therapist education in the trans culture and establishing a strong therapeutic alliance with trans clients. Central to the proposed model is the recognition and validation of the profound shame underlying trans distress, stemming from societal marginalization and discrimination.

**Implications:** By facilitating the transformation of maladaptive shame into adaptive emotions such as anger, sadness and self-compassion, therapists can help alleviate secondary distress and interruptive behaviours among trans clients.

**Discussion:** This presentation aims to equip therapists with practical tools and insights for effectively addressing cissexism and supporting the well-being of trans clients within the therapeutic setting.

# Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

# Keywords

transgender, cissexism, minority stress, marginalisation, discrimination

# 49

## Working with sexual minority men in Emotion Focused Therapy

**Dimitris Mougios** MSc, **Agathi Lakioti** PhD (Clinical Psychology) [ORCID iD](#)  
*Hellenic Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy, Athens, Greece*

### Dimitris Mougios Author Bio

Dimitris Mougios is a psychologist holding an MSc on the Psychology of Identity and Interpersonal Relationships from Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences. His specialization is in the role that sexual identity and parental acceptance play in the adjustment of LGB individuals within their romantic relationships. Dimitris provides counselling to adults and coordinates educational and experiential workshops for the general public and various groups of professionals.



### Agathi Lakioti

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### Author Bio

Agathi Lakioti, PhD, is a clinical psychologist and an adjunct lecturer at Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences. She is the founder and director of the Hellenic Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy in Athens, Greece. She works in private practice as a psychotherapist, supervisor, and trainer. Her research interests focus on counseling and psychotherapy research.



## Abstract

**Motivation:** The term sexual minority generally includes people with a non-heterosexual sexual orientation. In this presentation we will focus on how emotion-focused therapy can be an empowering model for sexual minority men to manage the emotional difficulties they face as a result of interacting with a rejecting environment.

**Problem:** Accepting the sexual identity of a sexual minority person is a process that is often complicated by social stigma and marginalization. When this occurs, the individual experiences internal splits between feelings of attraction for same-sex individuals and feelings of shame, fear, sadness as a result of deviating from socially accepted sexual orientation. Environmental rejection, stereotypes, and prejudices with which one comes into direct or indirect contact from childhood and throughout one's life are internalized, resulting in chronic anxiety about not disclosing and/or experiencing rejection from significant others and the wider social environment.

**Methodology:** Emotion-focused therapy provides a framework for processing these feelings.

**Results:** The therapist's empathic attunement helps to create a place of trust and safety thereby providing a corrective relational experience of acceptance. Furthermore, a number of EFT tasks can be especially helpful for processing specific emotional difficulties.

**Implications:** For example, the two-chair dialogue can help soften the internal conflicts and connect the clients with their deeper needs. Also, empty chair task can help clients process unfinished business with important others, such as their parents. Moreover, the meaning re-creation task helps sexual minority men to re-own their broken cherished beliefs about their sexual identity and their place in the world.

**Discussion:** Emotion-Focused Therapy shows promise with sexual minority men.

## Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

## Keywords

Sexual identity, acceptance, minority stress, men, emotions

# 50

## Emotion-Focused Therapy for Emotional Injuries Stemming from Marginalization Experiences: A Proposed Body of Practice

**Robert Elliott** PhD (Clinical Psychology) [ORCID iD](#)

*Scottish Institute for Emotion-Focused Therapy, Glasgow, United Kingdom*

### Robert Elliott

[0000-0002-3527-3397](#)

### Author Bio

Robert Elliott PhD (they/them) is Emeritus Professor of Counselling at the University of Strathclyde (Scotland). Their main interests are training and research on Emotion-Focused Therapy. Recent books include *Emotion-Focused Counselling in Action* and *Essentials of Descriptive-Interpretive Qualitative Research*; they have published more than 190 journal articles or book chapters. They are a past recipient of the Distinguished Research Career Award of the Society for Psychotherapy Research, and the Carl Rogers Award from the Division of Humanistic Psychology of the American Psychological Association.



## Abstract

**Motivation:** In this presentation I consider how Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT) can be adapted to work with diverse or marginalized clients.

**Problem:** This approach was originally developed in Canada and the US with clinically depressed, English-speaking, mostly white, female clients.

**Methodology:** Over the past twenty years, however, EFT therapists have begun working with more diverse clients, driven by the development of EFT training in Europe, Australia, East Asia, South America and elsewhere, by cultural changes regarding gender, sexual orientation, and by the emergence of feminist-multicultural theoretical perspectives. These perspectives offer a pointed critique of EFT as being individualistic and decontextualizing, simplistic, technocratic and elitist, thus risking real injustice and harm for a range of marginalized groups.

**Results:** In this presentation, I present a set of principles for work with issues of social injustice and related emotional injuries in diverse and marginalized clients. These principles include taking clients' social situations seriously by offering situated empathy, investing in work outside of sessions to educate ourselves, working to avoid stereotyping clients, cultivating a twofold vision encompassing both external (self-other) and internal (self-self) processes, and practicing the delicate art of broaching unspoken issues of marginalization, emotional injury and shame.

**Implications:** Next, I present a proposed framework of EFT tasks for this work: Broaching for delicate injustice-related topics, situated empathic exploration, repairing micro-aggression offenses, allowing and exploring marginalization rage, chair work for internalized oppression, and affirming and soothing marginalization-based anguish.

**Discussion:** I conclude by encouraging the audience to reflect on this initial formulation, and to take them as a starting point, to be critiqued, elaborated, developed, added to and so on.

## Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

## Keywords

marginalisation, social justice, emotion-focused therapy, diversity, emotional injuries

# 51

## Situating the Person-Centred Experiential Psychotherapy Scale (S-PCEPS) through Gendlin's 'A Process Model' for Explicating the Intricacy, Intersectionality, and Inclusivity of 'all that'

**Emma E Tickle** MA Humanistic Counselling Practice  
*University of Nottingham, Nottingham, United Kingdom*

### Emma E Tickle Author Bio

Emma Tickle is Assistant Professor at the University of Nottingham and the Course Leader for the Person-Centred Experiential Counselling for Depression (PCE-CfD) programmes. Emma trained as a PCE therapist at Diploma and Masters level at the University of Nottingham. As well as counselling education Emma has taught Psychology, co-produced and delivered courses for the NHS Recovery College and provided Continuing and Professional Development and Clinical Supervision. Emma has clinical experience working as a PCE counsellor in multi-disciplinary teams in education, health, and corporate contexts, and runs a small private practice. Emma is currently undertaking her PhD exploring PCE as a resource towards Social Justice while applying a Social Justice lens to the PCE approach. Emma contributes to the Centre for Research in Human Flourishing at the University of Nottingham.



### Abstract

**Motivation:** Situating the PCEPS (S-PCEPS) as 'response-able' empathic encounter of contemporary intersecting social and climate crisis.

**The Problem:** The PCE is a universally emancipatory approach to human flourishing. Contemporary intersecting social and climate crises troubles the universal person at the centre of experience as a discrete unit and non-directivity as empowerment in the context of intersecting entanglements. As such, PCE's potential for Justice Equity Diversity and Inclusion (JEDI) is often implied rather than 'real-ised'.

**Methodology:** The PCEPS-10 is an heuristic of the PCE relationship, a tool for reflexive praxis, assessment and research. I 'explicate' this heuristic inclusive of the 'situation' for carrying forward JEDI as experiential, relational and situational processes available for PCE therapeutic encounter. I think with Gendlin's A Process Model (APM), Embodied Critical Thinking (ECT) to Think At the Edge (TAE) of concepts and paradoxes. 'Crossing' these with my felt sense of the situation falling away rating counselling sessions with the PCEPS.

**Results:** Explication of a S-PCEPS-10 as a 'concretisation' of a wider process of re-situating the

PCA and carrying forward its social justice intentions in to the contemporary context. APM offers conceptual moves for (re)situating the PCE from a 'unit model' e.g. body **'and'** environment, into a **'situated body'** intra-affecting 'with' its environment, implying and occurring from an already 'concretised' environment (e.g. climate crisis, structural racism). Each process (e.g. body-environment, oppression-privilege) implies the other, forming unique situated intricacies 'relevanting' JEDI for encounter.

**Implications:** The S-PCEPS is a reflexive heuristic available for assessment and research situating experiential and relational process inclusive of JEDI. A non-prescriptive process addressing concerns around additive versus constitutive intersectionality (e.g. so-called Oppression Olympics), virtue signalling, and directivity. The PCEPS, as an 'actor', implies an 'ontic-shift' as a 'matter of concern' applicable to other concepts and measures. Engendering 'situated knowledge' (Haraway, D. 2016), explicating a 'situated freedom' (De Beauvoir, S. 1947) for the 'situated body' (Gendlin, 1993) for multi-species flourishing. 'Situating' engenders profound implications, collapsing dualities, troubling temporal and spatial assumptions, reassembling PCE values such as freedom as inherent response-ability, inclusive of the non-human for multi-species flourishing.

**Discussion:** This 'situational turn' follows experiential and relational turns, locating the approach at the intersections of JEDI. A situated sensibility troubles PCE claims of universality that appeals to 'natural laws', unique experiencing 'cut off' from the environment, a discontinuous 'present moment', and the inanimacy of place. This is an invitation for participants to 'stay with the trouble' and embrace uncertainty around who and what has agency for carrying forward multi-species flourishing.

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

Experiential, Focusing, Social Justice, Situational, Intersectional



# 52

## Exploratory Acoustic Analysis of Speech Fluency Dependent on Experiencing Level in a Trial Focusing Session

Prof **Hideaki Fukumori** Ph.D<sup>1</sup>, Prof **Tsuyoshi Aoki** Ph.D<sup>2</sup>, Prof **Yuko Morikawa** Ph.D<sup>3</sup>, Mrs. **Etsuko Takeda** R.N.<sup>4</sup>, Prof **Koji Nagano** M.A.<sup>5</sup>, Mrs. **Tomoko Hirano** Ph.D<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Kyushu University, Fukuoka, Japan. <sup>2</sup>Nanzan University, Nagoya, Japan. <sup>3</sup>Kyushu Sangyo University, Fukuoka, Japan. <sup>4</sup>Mental Health Office, Occupational Health Consultant Office Oaks, Tokyo, Japan.

<sup>5</sup>Otemon Gakuin University, Osaka, Japan. <sup>6</sup>Kansai Medical University, Osaka, Japan

### Prof Hideaki Fukumori Author Bio

Hideaki Fukumori is a Professor and counselor of Center for Health Sciences and Counseling, Kyushu University. He received PhD in psychology from Kyushu University. He is certified coordinator in training from the International Focusing Institute. His current research interests include Focusing attitude, quality of college student life and mental health.



### Prof Tsuyoshi Aoki Author Bio

Tsuyoshi Aoki, Ph.D. is an assistant professor of clinical psychology and psychotherapy at Nanzan University of Department of Psychology and Human Relations, Faculty of Humanities in Japan. He conducts some studies about mental health, PCT especially Focusing-oriented Psychotherapy and experiential learning about PCA and Focusing. He is a Focusing-oriented psychotherapist as certified by the Focusing Institute and practices at university counselling centers as a part-time counsellor. He has been also conducting Focusing workshops in Japan.



### Prof Yuko Morikawa Author Bio

Yuko Morikawa, Ph.D. is a professor at Kyushu Sangyo University. She is also a certified focusing coordinator. Her main research themes are daily Focusing attitude and "handling pain with Focusing." She wrote a book with cartoons named "Health management method with Focusing." (2015: ISBN- 9784414400946).



### **Mrs. Etsuko Takeda Author Bio**

Director, Mental Health Office, Occupational Health Consultant Office Oaks. Certified Public Psychologist. She is also a certified focusing coordinator. Her main research interests are mental health education for corporations and Focusing to foster creativity.



### **Prof Koji Nagano Author Bio**

Koji Nagano is a professor and a manager of Office for Psychological Services at Otemon Gakuin University. He has been active as a Person-centered counselor, a facilitator of encounter groups, and a trainer of focusing seminars since 1991.



### **Mrs. Tomoko Hirano Author Bio**

Tomoko Hirano, Ph.D. is an adjunct lecturer at Kansai Medical University, Japan. She is also a clinical psychologist and a certified Focusing trainer. Her current interests are in the area of supporting human service professionals with Focusing and of applying Focusing to neurocognitive rehabilitation.



## Abstract

**Motivation:** The EXP Scale is a rating scale derived from the “experiential mode of processing” within C.R.Rogers’ process scale, operationally defining the concept of experiential process as proposed by E.T. Gendlin. The EXP Scale was developed by Klein et al. (1969) to measure the depth of clients’ experiences and the process of creating meaning in counseling sessions. Focused on clients’ manner of speaking, the scale utilizes trained raters who evaluate recorded data and verbatim transcripts, discerning whether speakers are engaged in internal reflection and experience, based on specific criteria.

**Problem:** This study contributes to foundational research aiming to elucidate the linguistic and acoustic features associated with the seven stages of utterances in the EXP Scale. A group interview enlisted the cooperation of three experienced raters trained in using the EXP Scale was conducted to articulate their rating experiences, leading to the extraction of experiential features distinguishing EXP levels(Fukumori et al. ,2023) . In this study, we focus particularly on speech velocity as a measure of fluency.

**Methodology:** This study analyzed vocal characteristics at the outset, midpoint, and conclusion of a trial Focusing session featuring exploration of felt senses. The theme was about her career paths. A segment of 30 seconds to 1 minute from the first half, midpoint, and second half of session were picked up from one trial focusing session for speech analysis. This research method was based on the method used by Shinohara (2022) of fluency in speech, based on a research for second foreign language education. First, the recorded voice parts were annotated using the software Praat with

Syllable Nuclei script after removing noise using Audacity software. The speech rate was then calculated using CAF Calculator(Fukada et al.,2009).

**Results:** The CAF Calculator, evaluating speech complexity, accuracy, and fluency across 50 measures, was employed, with a focus on fluency. Parameters such as speech rate, articulation rate, and mean run length were examined. Speech rates for the first, midpoint, and second half of sessions were 200.27, 155.60, and 139.97, respectively; articulation rates were 315.78, 283.41, and 247.90; mean run length was 7.63, 8.27, and 10.25. Notably, speech rate decreased progressively throughout the session.

**Discussion:** The findings indicate a correlation between higher levels of speech experience and slower speech rates. Despite limited phonetic research in Focusing and Experiential Process Therapy, analyzing voice offers a promising avenue for scientifically comprehending experiential processes, likely yielding diverse insights in future investigations.

## Submission type

Poster (120 min)

## Poster keywords

EXP Scale, E.T.Gendlin, Acoustic Analysis, Fluence, Felt sense

# 53

## Exploring LGBTQIA+ Trainees' Experiences in Person-Centred Counsellor Education in the UK

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University of Aberdeen, Aberdeen, United Kingdom

### Mel Whitter

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#### Author Bio

Mel is an early career academic at the University of Aberdeen where she is tutor in the Department of Counselling, Wellbeing and Educational Psychology. Mel is a Person-Centred Counsellor and Registered member of The British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy (MBACP).



### Shun Chen

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#### Author Bio

Dr Shun Chen is a Lecturer in Person-Centred Counselling at the University of Aberdeen. He is a Chartered Psychologist affiliated with the British Psychological Society and an accredited trainer in Gender, Sex, and Relationship Diversities (GSRD). Additionally, he serves as an editorial board member for the journal Psychology & Sexuality. His research primarily focuses on counselling, LGBTQ+ wellbeing, and psychological assessment.



## Abstract

**Background:** Counsellor education aims to equip future counsellors with the skills necessary to support both personal and professional development in diverse client populations. Despite this inclusive goal, there are indications that gender, sexual orientation, and racial minorities frequently encounter distinct challenges within their training programs. As the counselling field strives to foster affirmative attitudes towards clients, the extent to which training programs reciprocate this affirmation towards their own students, particularly those from LGBTQIA+ backgrounds, remains underexplored.

**Objective:** This study investigates the training experiences of five LGBTQIA+ trainees who completed Person-Centred Counsellor Training in higher education institutions across the UK. By focusing on their lived experiences, this research aims to illuminate the nuances of navigating counsellor education as a minority.

**Methods:** Utilizing Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA), this study conducted semi-structured interviews with five participants. This qualitative approach was chosen to delve deeply into the personal perceptions and emotional experiences of the trainees, allowing for a rich exploration of their educational journeys.

**Findings:** The study reveals intricate dynamics of Experiential Learning and Identity, highlighting how personal and professional identities interact and evolve during training. Participants reported various Challenges, Resistance, and Adaptation strategies, underscoring the resilience required to navigate often inhospitable educational environments. Moreover, insights into Cultural Competence and Inclusivity shed light on the highs and lows encountered by LGBTQIA+ trainees, reflecting on the effectiveness of current practices in promoting inclusivity.

**Implications:** The findings prompt a critical evaluation of counsellor education, particularly in fostering an environment that not only teaches but also embodies principles of inclusivity and affirmation. The study identifies key areas for further research and offers specific recommendations for educators and training providers to enhance LGBTQIA+ inclusion in Person-Centered counsellor education.

**Conclusion:** By bringing to the forefront the experiences of LGBTQIA+ trainees, this research contributes valuable insights into the intersection of identity and professional training in counselling. It calls for a concerted effort to refine educational practices, ensuring that counsellor training programs are truly affirmative and inclusive for all students.

## Submission type

Poster (120 min)

## Poster keywords

Counsellor Education, LGBTQIA+, Experiential Learning, Qualitative Research, Training Experiences

# 54

## Encountering Trans\*Persons - "What is most personal is most universal."

**No title Katharina Schwarz** MSc  
*IPS, Vienna, Austria*

### **No title Katharina Schwarz Author Bio**

Katharina Schwarz, born in Vienna in 1980, gained a wide range of experience in her first profession as a theatre director and decided to train as a psychotherapist alongside her work. She completed it at the Postgraduate Center of the University of Vienna and at the IPS Vienna, has been working with clients since 2020 and specialises in working with trans\* people, among others. She is also a partner, mother, colleague, friend and much more. Her relationships define her.



## Abstract

Individual paper (45-60min) by Katharina Schwarz, Vienna

The main theme of the Conference in my opinion calls out for a contribution that addresses the development of gender diversity. Our aspiration to reflect and engage in political developments as part of the person-centered community has motivated me to submit this paper and share aspects of my experiences and reflections from working with trans\*people.

### **"What is most personal is most universal."**

In my presentation, I argue that this quote is particularly relevant in the context of trans\* identities: By questioning the highly personal - the individual gender identity, a kind of "general order" is also questioned - the binary hetero- and cis-normative order of our society.

Trans\*people are a challenge or even a provocation for many people simply because of the way they ARE. Reactions range from irritation and hostility to open aggression and violence.

With its radically phenomenological approach, I see the PCA as a great opportunity to openly encounter developments on this topic, but above all trans\* individuals as persons, without claiming to know anything about them, without rejection and devaluation, without aggression - but simply to understand and appreciate what they show of themselves.

I will explain how well the PCA and working with trans\*people fit together.

Person-centered theory does not need to be supplemented or expanded in order to do justice to the phenomenon. But it seems important to me to differentiate the approach with regard to this topic. I discuss the emergence of more and more gender identities as an expression of the

actualizing tendency, the development and differentiation of the potential of individuals on the one hand and of our society on the other.

I also think it is important for us as therapists to look at our own gender identity and the way we see and think as shaped by binary society. What does it trigger in us when our counterpart breaks with this order? How can we remain congruent in a therapeutic relationship with a person who cannot be clearly categorized? What about our own identity?

I have found dealing with such questions and my own identity extremely enriching and liberating and would like to share aspects of this. My talk is intended to help reduce any fears of contact that may exist and to arouse interest, because the growing trans\* community needs more competent, unprejudiced healthcare, especially from competent, unprejudiced psychotherapists.

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

Person-centered, Trans\*, Gender, Identity, Phenomenology

# 55

## How Conflicts Between Adult Siblings Can be Avoided and Resolved (If They Want to)

Dr **Robert Waldl** MBA

Private Practice, Vienna, Austria. [www.waldl.com](http://www.waldl.com), Vienna, Austria

### Dr Robert Waldl Author Bio

Business Consultant, Systemic Consultant, Supervisor and Executive Coach, Person-centered psychotherapist, Trainer for Person-centered Psychotherapy for 10 years



### Abstract

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 characterised 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-centred 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 reorganise 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-centred systems theory. The aim of my presentation is to promote a greater awareness of sibling work in the various settings of person-centred psychotherapy and counselling.

## Submission type

Online Individual Paper (40 min)

## Keywords

person-centred systems theory, family therapy, sibling relationship, sibling work, family business

# 56

## Executive Coaching Based on Person-Centred Systems Theory

Dr **Robert Waldl** MBA

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### Dr Robert Waldl Author Bio

Business Consultant, Systemic Consultant, Supervisor and Executive Coach, Person-centered psychotherapist, Trainer for person-centered psychotherapy for 10 years.



### Abstract

Individual coaching for private individuals can take place in the protected framework of a dyadic setting. What separates executive coaching from all other forms of individual coaching is the fact that an organisation with its sub-units and its organisational environment is involved in the coaching process.

The essential factor in person-centred executive coaching is a sustainable, empathic relationship. Psychotherapeutic expertise can be helpful in executive coaching, but it is never enough. In order to be able to carry out executive coaching, the coach needs specialist knowledge of leadership and organisation, methodological competence for an initial analysis and ongoing process analysis, as well as a theoretical model that can map the complexity of leadership and organisational issues.

The presentation will show that person-centred systems theory, with its elaboration of process levels, provides a theoretical model for executive coaching. The distinction between four process levels proves

its worth in such coaching: The personal, the interpersonal, the organisational and the socio-cultural process level.

Executive coaches need experience in dealing with different organisations. They need to be just as open and appreciative of organisational issues as they are of people. They should have no fear of contact with people in positions of power. They must not avoid tensions and conflicts, as these are important material for understanding the organisation and the people who work in it. A central point in executive coaching is the willingness to leave the comfort zone of the dyadic setting, to engage in complex interactions with an organisation and to be touched by them. The analysis of one's own counter-transference helps to understand the organisation's concerns and the coachee's counselling needs more precisely.

In a practical example, an initial analysis is shown, as it is at the beginning of every coaching process: It is about the case of a manager who comes to an initial coaching session with signs

of being overwhelmed and exhausted. It is shown how the influencing factors from the various process levels can be differentiated in an interactive dialogue.

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

person-centered coaching, executive-coaching, person-centred systems theory, organisation, leadership

# 57

## Transitions in person-centered counselling training - Co-creating professional practices

**Lena Mazurkiewicz** M.A.

*Goethe University, Frankfurt am Main, Germany*

### **Lena Mazurkiewicz Author Bio**

Lena Mazurkiewicz is an educational scientist and is currently doing her doctorate in the Doing Transitions research training group at Goethe University Frankfurt am Main in Germany. Her research interests focus on professionalization processes in counselling training. In addition to her research activities, she teaches at the University of Siegen in the Department of Social Work and Social Pedagogy and works as a counsellor and supervisor. She is a member of the scientific advisory board of the Society for Person-Centered Psychotherapy and Counselling in Germany (GwG).



### **Abstract**

The development of the person-centered counsellor is closely linked to the social and societal reality in which the participants of the training courses move on a daily basis, the field of further training and the field of counselling practice. The professionalization process is therefore not only dependent on the didactic structure and range of courses offered by the training instructors. Those provide a valuable framework for individual and collective learning experiences. In terms of appropriation, continuing education participants can be understood as active subjects who engage with the spatial and social environment that they make their own and at the same time find themselves shaping it. The question therefore arises as to how the learners themselves (co-) produce the educational process and generate what is called competence and professional attitude.

This presentation introduces a research project that examines counselling education as a transition that is experienced collaboratively in a group setting. The focus is primarily on the perspective of the participants. In the survey, group discussions are used to access collective orientation patterns.

Furthermore individual experiences and development as well as coping processes are mapped with reflection questionnaires. The evaluation is carried out using the documentary method. Initial findings indicate that specific ways of perceiving, thinking and acting are (co-)created in the joint learning process and that the groups develop their own orientations on what they understand by professionalism. The transition from learning to incorporating and identifying with the role of the person-centered counsellor is mastered and shaped together. First results of the study will be presented and discussed.

This lecture addresses everyone who is interested in a participant-centered perspective on the professionalization processes in person-centered counselling training and who would like to discuss

the possible implications for the didactic design of training courses, including course leaders, trainers, prospective counsellors, researchers and members of counselling associations.

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

counselling education, professionalization, transition, participant-centered, person-centered approach

# 58

## The contribution of Focusing to Emotion-Focused Therapy theory, training, practice, and the development of the person of the EFT therapist

Dr **Agathi Lakioti** PhD in Clinical Psychology [ORCID iD<sup>12</sup>](#), Dr **Emma Smith** Dr. phil. in Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy<sup>3</sup>, Prof **Ellen Gunst** Clinical psychologist (PhD) [ORCID iD<sup>4,5</sup>](#), **Niels Bagge** Cand.Psych (MA) [ORCID iD<sup>6,7</sup>](#), Dr **Marielle Sutter** PhD in Clinical Psychology<sup>3</sup>, **Robert Elliott** PhD (Clinical Psychology) [ORCID iD<sup>8</sup>](#)

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### Dr Agathi Lakioti

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#### Author Bio

Agathi Lakioti, PhD, is a clinical psychologist working in private practice as an EFT psychotherapist, supervisor, and trainer. She is also an adjunct lecturer at Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences. She is the founder and director of the Hellenic Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy in Athens, Greece. Agathi has studied Inner Relationship Focusing with Ann Weiser Cornell and she is certified as a Focusing Trainer and Focusing-oriented Therapist (TIFI). Her research interests focus on counseling and psychotherapy research.



### Dr Emma Smith Author Bio

Emma Smith is a licensed psychotherapist FSP, presently working in a private practice in Bern, Switzerland. She received her Master in clinical psychology and psychotherapy in 1998 and her PhD in 2001, both at the University of Bern. After a post-doc year at King's College, London (2002) she completed her integrative psychotherapy training at the University of Bern in 2005, followed by specialized training in EFT and Focusing. She is an instructor and clinical supervisor in the postgraduate master's program for psychotherapy at the University of Bern, a trainer at the Swiss institute for EFT in Bern, and a participant in the certification program to become a Focusing Professional with Ann Weiser- Cornell.



### **Prof Ellen Gunst**

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#### **Author Bio**

Ellen is a clinical psychologist and client-centered-experiential psychotherapist and supervisor (VVCEPC). She is certified as a Focusing-oriented Therapist and Trainer (TIFI) and as an Emotion-Focused Therapist, supervisor and trainer (isEFT). She is a professor of psychotherapy at the University of Antwerp and coordinator of the postgraduate integrative psychotherapy program at UA. She also works at a forensic treatment unit. Ellen is particularly interested in (studying) experiential deepening and emotional change processes in psychotherapy.



### **Niels Bagge**

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#### **Author Bio**

Authorized psychologist, specialist and supervisor of psychotherapy. Emotion Focused Therapy supervisor and trainer (ISEFT) & Focusing Trainer (TIFI) and more. Head of Institute for Emotion Focused Therapy Denmark & private practice. Chair of Danish Society for Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy. Chair of organizing committee for PCE2022. Member of WAPCEPC since 2002 with presentation at PCE World Conferences. Delegate of PCE-Europe to the PCE-Literature Project



### **Dr Marielle Sutter Author Bio**

Dr. Marielle Sutter is the director of the Swiss Institute for Emotion-Focused Therapy in Bern, Switzerland. She is an EFT trainer and supervisor and enjoys teaching at various institutes and universities in German- and French-speaking countries. Together with Prof. Leslie Greenberg, she has written a transdiagnostic book on EFT in German and translated it into French. She is currently training in Focusing and is interested in integrating this method more and more into EFT training courses at the Swiss EFT institute.



### **Robert Elliott**

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#### **Author Bio**

Robert Elliott PhD (they/them) is Emeritus Professor of Counselling at the University of Strathclyde (Scotland). Their main interests are training and research on Emotion-Focused Therapy. Recent books include Emotion-Focused Counselling in Action and Essentials of Descriptive-Interpretive Qualitative Research; they have published more than 190 journal articles or book chapters. They are a past recipient of the Distinguished Research Career Award of the Society for Psychotherapy Research, and the Carl Rogers Award from the Division of Humanistic Psychology of the American Psychological Association.



# Abstract

Emotion-Focused Therapy emphasizes the importance of experiential processes in therapeutic change. This symposium seeks to investigate how incorporating concepts and methods from both Gendlin's Focusing process and Ann Weiser Cornell's and Barbara McGavin's Inner Relationship Focusing can enrich EFT practice, deepen therapist-client relationship and foster the personal growth of EFT therapists.

In the first presentation, Ellen Gunst explores the crossing of emotion theory and EFT's understanding of the "changing emotion with emotion" concept with Gendlin's theory of personality change. The author attempts to clarify the different change processes and discuss their relationship and interactions, connecting them to the different layers of the experiencing process.

In the second presentation, Agathi Lakioti and Emma Smith discuss the integration of Inner Relationship Focusing (IRF) into EFT practice, highlighting the unique benefits it offers for therapists, clients, and the therapeutic process. Drawing on both theoretical frameworks, they provide practical examples and discuss the implications of incorporating IRF methods into EFT.

In the third presentation, Niels Bagge explores the role of Inner Relationship Focusing (IRF) partnerships in EFT therapists' professional development and personal well-being. The presentation focuses on how IRF partnerships can serve as a multifaceted tool for experiential learning, personal therapy, self-care, and growth work, contributing to the ongoing development of the EFT therapist.

In the final presentation, Emma Smith, Agathi Lakioti and Marielle Sutter, outline a pilot project at the Swiss Institute for EFT, which integrates IRF training into basic EFT training. By offering therapists opportunities to learn and apply the focusing process first to themselves the project aims at developing therapists EFT skills in the areas of empathic attunement and emotion deepening as well as cultivating their therapeutic presence.

Together, these presentations offer a comprehensive exploration of the contributions of focusing to Emotion-Focused Therapy theory, practice, and training to help EFT therapists develop as persons and as EFT practitioners.

## Submission type

Panel/Symposium (90 min)

## Moderator/Discussant

Agathi Lakioti (Moderator)/ Robert Elliott (Discussant)

## Brief Individual Papers (Title - First Author)

1. Putting an EFT-spotlight on the felt sense, based on research and theory - Ellen Gunst
2. Integrating Inner Relationship Focusing into Emotion-Focused Therapy practice - Agathi Lakioti
3. EFT Therapists Own Focusing – How Inner Relationship Focusing Partnerships supports therapists experiential learning, personal therapy, self-care & growth work - Niels Bagge



4. The contribution of IRF to EFT training: A pilot project at the Swiss Institute for EFT - Emma Smith

## Keywords

Emotion Focused Therapy, Focusing, Inner Relationship Focusing, -, -

# 59

## Integrating Inner Relationship Focusing into Emotion-Focused Therapy practice

Dr **Agathi Lakioti** PhD in Clinical Psychology [ORCID iD](#)<sup>1,2</sup>, Dr **Emma Smith** Dr. phil. in Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy<sup>3</sup>

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### Dr Agathi Lakioti

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Agathi Lakioti, PhD, is a clinical psychologist working in private practice as an EFT psychotherapist, supervisor, and trainer. She is also an adjunct lecturer at Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences. She is the founder and director of the Hellenic Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy in Athens, Greece. Agathi has studied Inner Relationship Focusing with Ann Weiser Cornell and she is certified as a Focusing Trainer and Focusing-oriented Therapist (TIFI). Her research interests focus on counseling and psychotherapy research.



### Dr Emma Smith Author Bio

Emma Smith is a licensed psychotherapist FSP, presently working in a private practice in Bern, Switzerland. She received her Master in clinical psychology and psychotherapy in 1998 and her PhD in 2001, both at the University of Bern. After a post-doc year at King's College, London (2002) she completed her integrative psychotherapy training at the University of Bern in 2005, followed by specialized training in EFT and Focusing. She is an instructor and clinical supervisor in the postgraduate master's program for psychotherapy at the University of Bern, a trainer at the Swiss institute for EFT in Bern, and a participant in the certification program to become a Focusing Professional with Ann Weiser- Cornell.



## Abstract

**Motivation:** Focusing is an important part of Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT) and it is being used in many ways in the EFT practice. Inner Relationship Focusing (IRF) was developed by Ann Weiser Cornell and Barbara McGavin as a refinement and expansion of the Focusing process discovered and developed by Eugene Gendlin. In this presentation we argue that IRF can have unique

contributions to the practice of EFT in terms of the person of the EFT therapist, the therapeutic process and the client's inner experience.

**Problem:** EFT is a demanding therapeutic approach for therapists. EFT therapists need to be highly attuned to their client's process and to be able to remain present with their client's difficult emotions and processes. They also need to regulate their own emotions so that they can be effective.

**Methodology:** We will draw on both EFT and IRF theoretical frameworks to elucidate the integration process. We will also use our own experience as EFT therapists who are trained in IRF, providing practical examples of incorporating these methods into our practice.

**Results:** Our experience indicates that integrating IRF concepts and methods into EFT practice can offer some unique benefits for the therapist, the client, and the therapeutic process. It can enrich the therapist's ability to being fully present and grounded in their own experiencing, allowing them to attune more effectively to their clients' experiences. This can enhance the therapeutic relationship which is the basis of effective EFT therapy. It can also provide therapists with powerful methods that can supplement or substitute EFT tasks when clients are not willing or able to engage in them.

**Implications:** By integrating IRF concepts into EFT practice, therapists can deepen their experiential presence and expand their repertoire of therapeutic interventions thus enhancing their capacity to address the diverse needs of clients.

**Discussion:** In the discussion we will explore the practical implications and theoretical underpinnings of integrating IRF concepts into EFT practice. We aim to offer insights into how the specific concepts and methods of IRF can help EFT therapists become more present and enhance their therapeutic practice.

## Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

## Keywords

Emotion Focused Therapy, Inner Relationship Focusing, Experiential presence, Empathic attunement, Therapeutic process

# 60

## The contribution of IRF to EFT training: A pilot project at the Swiss Institute for EFT

Dr **Emma Smith** Dr. phil. in Clinical Psychology and Psychotherapy<sup>1</sup>, Dr **Agathi Lakioti** PhD in Clinical Psychology [ORCID iD<sup>2,3</sup>](#), Dr **Marielle Sutter** PhD in Clinical Psychology<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Swiss Institute for Emotion Focused Therapy, Bern, Switzerland. <sup>2</sup>Hellenic Institute of Emotion Focused Therapy, Athens, Greece. <sup>3</sup>Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences, Athens, Greece

### Dr Emma Smith Author Bio

Emma Smith is a licensed psychotherapist FSP, presently working in a private practice in Bern, Switzerland. She received her Master in clinical psychology and psychotherapy in 1998 and her PhD in 2001, both at the University of Bern. After a post-doc year at King's College, London (2002) she completed her integrative psychotherapy training at the University of Bern in 2005, followed by specialized training in EFT and Focusing. She is an instructor and clinical supervisor in the postgraduate master's program for psychotherapy at the University of Bern, a trainer at the Swiss institute for EFT in Bern, and a participant in the certification program to become a Focusing Professional with Ann Weiser- Cornell.



### Dr Agathi Lakioti

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### Author Bio

Agathi Lakioti, PhD, is a clinical psychologist working in private practice as an EFT psychotherapist, supervisor, and trainer. She is also an adjunct lecturer at Panteion University of Social and Political Sciences. She is the founder and director of the Hellenic Institute of Emotion-Focused Therapy in Athens, Greece. Agathi has studied Inner Relationship Focusing with Ann Weiser Cornell and she is certified as a Focusing Trainer and Focusing-oriented Therapist (TIFI). Her research interests focus on counseling and psychotherapy research.



### Dr Marielle Sutter Author Bio

Dr. Marielle Sutter is the director of the Swiss Institute for Emotion-Focused Therapy in Bern, Switzerland. She is an EFT trainer and supervisor and enjoys teaching at various institutes and universities in German- and French-speaking countries. Together with Prof. Leslie Greenberg, she has

written a transdiagnostic book on EFT in German and translated it into French. She is currently training in Focusing and is interested in integrating this method more and more into EFT training courses at the Swiss EFT institute.



## Abstract

**Motivation:** Teaching therapists Inner Relationship Focusing (Ann Weiser Cornell and Barbara McGavin, 2002) parallel to their basic Emotion-Focused Therapy training could be a great way of ensuring sufficient practice and a continuous focus on the “being” side of EFT throughout the whole training.

**Problem:** Therapists learning EFT struggle most with staying empathically attuned to the client, encouraging the client to access and deepen their own experiencing and generally trusting the process. Unlike individual therapeutic tasks, these skills are not as easy to acquire by workshops and supervision, as they are highly dependent on the therapist’s capacity to be present to their own personal process.

**Methodology:** Level B training for individual EFT at the Swiss EFT institute consists of 5 workshop modules, with supervision in-between, spread over the course of 2 years. In the basic training of IRF, participants are taught the basics of engaging in a compassionate and accepting relationship with their own experience and of being an empathically attuned companion to a person engaged in focusing on their own experience.

Therapists who started their level B EFT training at the beginning of 2024 were offered a 2-day workshop on the basics of IRF between the second and third module of their EFT training, followed by weekly practice in dyads with 4 3-hour workshops (spread over the course of 4 months), for deepening and broadening their focusing skills. The effects of this additional training will be assessed by a mixture of pre-post self-report measures, supervisor assessments, ratings of session transcripts and a qualitative interview.

**Results:** The data collection will be completed by the end of 2024, and we hope to show that the add-on of training in IRF is not only subjectively beneficial for the therapists themselves, but also results in a greater improvement of EFT skills over the course of the training, as assessed by the PCEPS-EFT (Robert Elliott, 2018), especially in the areas of empathic attunement and emotion deepening.

**Implications:** If successful, this project could provide a basis for more EFT institutes to systematically combine basic EFT training with training in IRF, as a means of cultivating therapeutic presence and the presence-dependent skills.

**Discussion:** How a greater emphasis on self-work and developing the person of the therapist in the form of IRF training can help trainees become more effective EFT therapists.

# Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

# Keywords

Emotion Focused Therapy, Inner Relationship Focusing, EFT training, Experiential presence, Empathic attunement

# 61

## EFT Therapists Own Focusing – How Inner Relationship Focusing Partnerships supports therapists experiential learning, personal therapy, self-care & growth work

**Niels Bagge** Cand.Psych. (MA) [ORCID iD](#)

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### Niels Bagge

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### Author Bio

Authorized psychologist, specialist and supervisor of psychotherapy. Emotion Focused Therapy supervisor and trainer (ISEFT) & Focusing Trainer (TIFI) and more. Head of Institute for Emotion Focused Therapy Denmark & private practice. Chair of Danish Society for Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy. Chair of organizing committee for PCE2022. Member of WAPCEPC since 2002 with presentation at PCE World Conferences. Delegate of PCE-Europe to the PCE-Literature Project



## Abstract

**Motivation:** Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT) therapists own focusing is a simple effective way to fill a gap in EFT training and practice.

**Problem:** Experiential learning, personal therapy and growth work has been suggested by EFT scholars as important in the professional development of the EFT therapist, but it has not been applied systematically; and therapist self-care is almost not addressed. Inner Relationship Focusing (IRF) partnerships between therapists/students can function as experiential learning, personal therapy, self-care and/or growth work in an EFT context.

**Methodology:** Observations from practice and literature studies leading to formulation of innovative practice.

**Results:** Focusing is integrated into EFT both as focusing attitude embedded in empathic exploration and as a therapeutic task with an unclear feeling as a marker. When IRF is used on its own it is usually practised in pairs with focusing partners that takes turn being "focuser" and "companion". The focuser is self instructing and the companion mainly following empathically. This format is a very practical and effective way for two EFT therapist to support each other with focusing and empathic following experiences. IRF partnerships could be a central part of EFT training for students experiential learning of focusing skills and even working on personal issues as

a personal therapy. Research on personal therapy suggest benefits in professional development like the therapeutic relationship (empathy, warmth, genuineness etc.). IRF partnerships can develop a focusing attitude that would find its way into therapy, and facilitate clients to reach greater experiential depth (Experiencing Scale), which is positively correlated to outcome. Focusing is also inherently growth promoting symbolizing what is at the edge of awareness which is freshly experienced and implying forward in an ever growth oriented manner, which makes IRF an obvious method for growth work for students and therapist alike. Finally can IRF partnership serve as an ongoing therapist self-care practice where stress, compassion fatigue and burnout can be addressed and countered through regular IRF sessions.

**Implications:** IRF partnership between therapists could be implemented as a “Swiss Army Knife” of professional development and personal benefits (experiential learning, personal therapy, self-care and/or growth work) through the phases of professional life from training to practice, which is very practically applicable in daily professional life and highly beneficial both professionally and personally.

**Discussion:** The role of personal therapy, growth work and self-care in EFT. The role of focusing partnerships as an ingrained part of EFT training and practice.

## Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

## Keywords

EFT, Inner Relationship Focusing, Therapist Self-Care, Therapist Growth, Personal Therapy



# 62

## Putting an EFT-spotlight on the felt sense, based on research and theory.

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### Prof Ellen Gunst

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#### Author Bio

Ellen is a clinical psychologist and client-centered-experiential psychotherapist and supervisor (VVCEPC). She is certified as a Focusing-oriented Therapist and Trainer (TIFI) and as an Emotion-Focused Therapist, supervisor and trainer (isEFT). She is a professor of psychotherapy at the University of Antwerp and coordinator of the postgraduate integrative psychotherapy program at UA. She also works at a forensic treatment unit. Ellen is particularly interested in (studying) experiential deepening and emotional change processes in psychotherapy.



## Abstract

**Motivation:** Emotional change plays a crucial role in EFT. What can we discover if we cross emotion- theory and our understanding of 'changing emotion with emotion' with Gendlin's theory of personality change.

**Problem:** Research has shown that client's depth of experiencing is predictive of good outcome. Should we wait till we spot an unclear feeling as a marker to use focusing or should we make space to let a felt sense form to put more spot on it?

**Methodology:** In this presentation we will use a more theoretical lens to look at the parallels between the concepts of an emotion scheme and a felt sense, and the similarities and differences between the descriptions of the emotional change process by Greenberg and Gendlin.

**Results:** This theoretical reflection helps to clarify the different change processes, how they relate and interact, and how we might connect to the different layers of the experiencing process (pre-implicit, implicit and symbolic).

**Implications:** We can learn how we (can) make (more) use of the implicit knowing and what to do when the process got stuck, when the experience does not function implicit but reacts 'structured bound'.

**Discussion:** How is the (pre)implicit knowing (as described by Gendlin) implied in the process of changing emotion with emotion (as described by Greenberg), and how is the activation of an adaptive emotion implied in the process of carrying forward.

# Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

# Keywords

focusing, EFT, felt sense, experiencing, implicit

# 63

## Person, Paideia, and Politeia: Developing the Person in Their Cultural Context

Dr **Brian Rodgers** PhD<sup>1</sup>, Prof **Keith Tudor** PhD [ORCID iD](#)<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Auckland, Auckland, New Zealand. <sup>2</sup>Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand

### Dr Brian Rodgers Author Bio

Brian Rodgers is the Programme Director for the counsellor education programmes at the University of Auckland, Aotearoa New Zealand, and currently Chair of the Board of the WAPCEPC. His research interests include client-directed and outcome-informed practice, clients' experiences of therapy, technology and counselling/psychotherapy, bi-cultural approaches to counselling/psychotherapy, collaborative learning and counsellor education.



### Prof Keith Tudor

[0000-0001-7443-140X](#)

### Author Bio

Keith Tudor is Professor of Psychotherapy at Auckland University of Technology, Aotearoa New Zealand, where he is also currently the co-Lead of Moana Nui - Research in the Psychological Therapies. He has a long association with the person-centred approach (PCA), including having been co-director of Temenos, Sheffield, UK, for 17 years. He is the author and/or editor of over 100 publications on various aspects of person-centred psychology, including seven books, the latest of which is (with the late Berne Neville) *Eco-centred Therapy: Revisioning Person-centred Psychology for a Living World* (Routledge, 2023).



## Abstract

In this structured discussion, the facilitators will both present ideas and encourage discussion of the person, paideia (education), and politeia (politics) of person-centred and experiential psychotherapy and counselling as a cultural construct. While PCE theory and practice have contributed significantly to these three themes, they are not new. Moreover, in terms of environmental, pandemic, economic, and politics crises, indigenous peoples and communities have generations of stories of both trauma and survival.

PCE is deeply rooted in the Western intellectual tradition and in the Global North, and, in some ways, perpetuates certain colonising attitudes based on the assumption that theory is universal. The facilitators will present ideas that challenge these attitudes and this assumption, with particular reference to culture and the plurality of culture and theory. Drawing on Rogers' acknowledgement of the soil of theory, Cornell's work on 'Southern Theory', Salmond's conceptualisation of the collision of cosmologies, this structured discussion will invite participants to reflect on the impact of culture and context on the person and education of the practitioner, and politics of theory and practice.

## Submission type

Structured Discussion (90 min)

## Moderator/Discussant

Not applicable

## Keywords

person, education, politics, culture

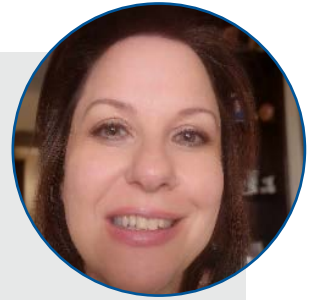
# 64

## Pragmatics and Cognitive Empathy: Relevance theory in person-centered counselling

**Dina Markopoulou** M.Sc, PhD(c)  
*ICPS, Athens, Greece*

### **Dina Markopoulou Author Bio**

Dina Markopoulou is an educator and person-centered counselor specializing in Psychology of Child Development(UCLan) She also holds a post graduate Diploma in Learning difficulties (Edexcel,UK) and a Certificate in Counselling from the same institution. Her academic background dates back to a Bachelor's Degree in English Language and Literature (University of Athens), which was consummated with the award of a M.Ed in TESOL from the Hellenic Open University. Her primary scientific interests revolve around empathy among children and (young) adults, the main focus being on dealing with stress factors and self-consciousness. Currently, she is a PhD candidate in Psychology and Pragmatics.



### **Abstract**

It is a sheer fact that all languages boast a political and cultural reality, hence making it practically impossible to communicate without their proper usage. Drawing on Sperber and Wilson's Relevance Theory, (1996), verbal comprehension starts with the recovery of a linguistically encoded sentence meaning, which must be appropriately enriched on multiple levels to yield a fully-fledged speaker's meaning. In a narrower sense, pragmatically-wise, when it comes to counselling, counselors should make the input highly relatable. Thus, the intended interpretation of an utterance is the intended combination of explicit content, contextual assumptions and implications, and the speaker's intended attitude to these all (Sperber & Wilson, 1996).

In the same sense, cognitive empathy allows us to see through the others' way of thinking, hence assisting in choosing a "fitting" language for the recipient's way of understanding (Goleman, 2013). However, one of the most interesting contributions of Relevance theory is precisely the claim that there is a wide gap between the coded sentence meaning and the inferred speaker's meaning (Sperber & Wilson, 1996). Hence, prospective counselors should be trained to reverse this mismatch and bridge the gap, so that effective treatment take place. At first glance, this may seem as a tall order since pragmatics is involved; a predominantly context-dependent field, unlike semantics which is context- independent. (Birner, 2013). In therapy, accounting for conventional meaning only (semantics) may result in failing to consider the (client's) intentional meaning (pragmatics) which invariably leads to misinterpretations. It is purposeful that the coded message be made meaningful to the hearer (client) striking a chord of "personable" relevance, and provided that the speaker (counselor) engages in a processing effort himself rather than leaving this burdening task to the hearer-client.

In a nutshell, we cannot but agree with the assumption imbued in Relevance Theory that communication, whether verbal or nonverbal, requires the ability to attribute mental states to others (Nordquist, 2020). As counsellors, we should cast our attention to any cues and come up with a “message” that will require the least processing effort and render optimal cognitive effects on the part of our clients (Yus, 2016). Concerning person-centered therapy, (further) education and training are needed to render therapists suitable enough to infer implicit meaning and hidden intentions. By constructing meaningful output we may truly relate with our clients and measure up to the challenge of being qualitatively relevant, congruent and empathetic in all aspects.

## Submission type

Online Brief Individual Paper (15 min)

## Keywords

pragmatics, linguistics, cognitive empathy, inference, education

# 66

## From being present ...to presence: A relevant topic in person - centred work and education?

Dr **Harald E. Tichy** Dr.scient.pth.  
*Sigmund Freud Private University (SFU), Vienna, Austria*

### Dr Harald E. Tichy Author Bio

Person-centered psychotherapist and supervisor, Buddhist meditation teacher, Yoga teacher, psychotherapy scientist (area of expertise: dialogue between psychotherapy and early Buddhism), lecturer for person-centered psychotherapy and mindfulness meditation, and head of the two-year course "Mindfulness in Medical, Psychosocial, and Pedagogic professions" at the Sigmund Freud Private University (SFU), Vienna.



## Abstract

To be able to offer our clients authenticity, unconditional positive regard, and empathy we need to be present. Carl Rogers was quite aware of that. In his last interview he even raised the question, if by highlighting the three therapist attitudes, he maybe oversaw the most important element of therapy: "being clearly and obviously present".

It seems, that presence as an altered state of mind mattered deeply for Rogers. A lot was said about presence since then. Yet before my doctoral dissertation in psychotherapy science at the SFU Vienna it got overlooked, that – depending on the context – Rogers consistently distinguished between two close, yet different narratives: "being present" and "presence".

With the hermeneutic method "Experimental Hermeneutics" of Kurt Greiner I led a virtual dialogue between Rogers' statements about being present and presence and early Buddhist meditation theory in the Pāli Suttas. Historically these are the oldest available sources of the wisdom teachings of the Buddha. I could argue that from the perspective of early Buddhist psychology Rogers' core conditions reveal significant parallels to the quality of attention developed in mindfulness meditation.

One of the aims of mindfulness meditation is continuous awareness of our present experience, whether we are alone or with others. At the same time, it enables us to see, what aids our capacity to be present with our clients and what obstructs it. When our ability for being present (being "mindful") matures, it offers access to a quality of attentiveness which Rogers described as "presence" – the Buddhist correspondence being "samādhi" (collectedness). From this viewpoint presence can be seen as the fruit of being present seamlessly.

This has clear implications for our therapeutic work: If we want to work at our best like Carl Rogers, we now know a way for cultivating being deeply present, attentive, mindful, which may mature to a shared therapeutic presence. Thus, it would be highly helpful if this art of being present would be offered both in theory as in practice to therapists in training and further education.

I am sure that many of us know this shared wholesome state of mind from our own experience which Rogers called presence and the Buddha samādhi – maybe just for short precious moments. Therefore, after my presentation, I would like to talk with you about our own experiences of presence and what we already found out how to invite it in the work with our clients.

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

Presence, Buddhism, Meditation , Mindful , Rogers



# 67

## Parent effectiveness training and PCE therapist development

Mr. **Alecos Papagos** MSc in Person-Centered Counselling, Mrs. **Leda Veikou** MSc in Person-Centered Counselling  
*Gordon Hellas, Athens, Greece*

### Mr. Alecos Papagos Author Bio

Alecos Papagos initially studied economics at Sussex University and devoted a large part of his life to the business sector. Driven by his love for psychology, he studied Person Centered Counselling and was awarded his MSc from the University of Strathclyde. He is the President of "Gordon Hellas", the official representative of Gordon International (GTI) in Greece, an organization that conducts the GTI workshops in their original form. Gordon Hellas' vision is to contribute towards building healthy and harmonious relationships governed by respect and sincerity and to promote emotional health by spreading a philosophy and a series of practices that improve people's lives at home, school and work.



### Mrs. Leda Veikou Author Bio

Leda Veikou is a Mental Health Counsellor. She was awarded her MSc in Person-Centered Counselling from the University of Strathclyde in 2013 and has been working with clients ever since. She has developed a special interest in parenting. She is a certified trainer in a number of parenting programmes (Parent Effectiveness Training, Terrific Toddlers, Positive Parents-Happy Kids) and has a wide experience in counselling parents, both individually and in groups. She has been working with Gordon Hellas as a certified trainer on all the Gordon Communication Skills programmes (PET, LET, TET, BYB). She is the editor of the Greek publication of the books "Irresistible - The Rise of Addictive Technology", "Don't You Know Who I Am?" and "Should I Stay or Should I Go" (Narcissism), "Ages and Stages" (Developmental Stages), "The Price of Privilege", "Attachment Parenting", "Consent (for Children)", "Good Pictures, Bad Pictures - Protecting today's children from pornography". She is also a graduate of the School of Law (National and Kapodistrian University of Athens) and a mother of two children.



## Abstract

Parent Effectiveness Training is the best known person-centered parental enhancement programme, created by clinical psychologist Dr. Thomas Gordon. Based on the Carl Rogers' core facilitating conditions that provide the necessary climate for the child's actualizing tendency to take place - empathy, positive regard and genuineness - the programme conveys the Person Centered theory to practical skills that help parents deal with everyday problems, support the

child when facing a personal problem, resolve conflicts and, finally, influence the child with the family's core values. The skills taught in PET are oriented towards establishing an effective total relationship with the child. Instead of exercising power by using punishment and rewards, parents learn to apply practical communication and conflict resolution skills.

During our long experience of training therapists to become facilitators of PET groups, the feedback we receive is that learning to use the Gordon communication skills helps them with their overall practice and their presence towards their clients, as it gives them tangible tools to deal with challenges in the relationship and helps them relate better to their clients' parental issues. Needless to say that therapists from other theoretical backgrounds get better acquainted with the philosophy and theory of the Person-Centered approach.

PET is divided into five areas of concern depending on who "owns the problem". Each area requires a different set of skills. The first area (where the child owns the problem and is experiencing emotional tension) concerns empathic reflective responses, in the form of Active Listening. The second area is the no problem area (where neither party faces discomfort), utilized to promote relationship bonding by spending quality time and using "I-messages" to express positive feelings and values or to prevent future conflicts. The third area (where the problem belongs to the parent because of an unacceptable child's behaviour) concerns skills in the form of confronting "I-messages". The fourth area (when the needs or values of both parent and child are in conflict) calls for conflict resolution skills, namely the "No-Lose" Method, acting as a consulting agent, using I-messages and Active Listening.

This 90 minutes workshop will give participants an idea of the more important of the aforementioned communication skills, using theory teaching, role plays and exercises. It is addressed to counsellors and psychotherapists who wish to get acquainted to the Gordon skills and learn how to apply them in everyday situations both with their clients and their everyday relationships.

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

Parent Training, Communication skills, Active Listening, I-Messages, Win-Win Method

# 68

## Exploring dead ends in therapeutic relationship using focusing

Mrs. **Jessie Nater** Master of Psychology<sup>1</sup>, Mrs. **Beata Dana** Master of Psychology<sup>1,2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>PcaSuisse, Lausanne, Switzerland. <sup>2</sup>TIFI, New York, USA

### Mrs. Jessie Nater Author Bio

Jessie Nater: After completing her Master's degree in Clinical Psychology and Psychopathology at the University of Lausanne, Jessie Nater undertook a one-year internship at a Police Department, where she conducted psychological interviews for the recruitment of police recruits. Immersed in an emergency environment, she decided to train in emergency psychology in 2015. In 2020, she began training psychologists in immediate and post-immediate intervention techniques. Alongside her various training and recruitment roles, she pursued training in person-centered approach and conducted psychotherapy with adults. With a sensitivity to art, she has always been interested in how art can enrich our experiences and how it can serve as a means of expressing inner experiences



### Mrs. Beata Dana Author Bio

Beata Dana holds a Master's degree in Psychology from the University of Cracow in Poland. Currently based in Lausanne (Switzerland). She is a licensed psychotherapist FSP (Swiss Federation of Psychologists) and pcalnstitut. Additionally, she serves as a trainer and supervisor for the person-centered approach. She is a focusing-oriented therapist and a trainer in focusing certified by TIFI (The International Focusing Institute). Beata Dana has also received training in Gestalt therapy and holds a diploma as a practitioner in Somatic Experiencing. For several years, she has worked in private practice in Lausanne. She has been working in her private practice for years.



## Abstract

Gene Gendlin talks about dead ends in therapy. What is not mentioned, but which corresponds to an experience of "blockage", is linked to the therapist's or facilitator's loss of availability. Focusing is not only an excellent tool for clarification, it also often helps to regain this state of availability, which facilitates all forms of accompaniment. This workshop is therefore an original proposal for exploring feelings in the therapeutic relationship. To this end, we will use drawing and "artistic" expression. A creative group supervision proposition that will appeal to anyone interested in focusing and its application in supervision.

**Workshop:** Exploring "Dead Ends" in Therapeutic Relationship using focusing Materials Needed:

Drawing materials (markers, colored pencils, crayons, etc.) Block notes (like traveling diaries) for each participant Setup:

All participants and facilitators sit around a table.

Place all drawing materials on the table within easy reach.

Distribute a block note to each participant. Activity Steps:

### **1. Introduction and Choosing an Experience:**

Participants choose a "dead ends experience" they've had with a client.

Facilitators explain that this workshop will involve connecting to different aspects of these experiences and expressing them through drawing.

### **2. Connecting to the Present Experience:**

Facilitator Prompt: "Take a moment to connect to your current experience and the felt sense of the moment."

Activity: Participants draw the felt sense of their current experience in their block notes.

### **3. Recalling a Positive Relational Experience:**

Facilitator Prompt: "Think about a good relational experience you've had."

Activity: Participants draw the felt sense that this positive relational experience evokes.

### **4. Reflecting on the Difficult Therapeutic Relationship:**

Facilitator Prompt: "Now, let the felt sense of the difficult therapeutic relationship with your client form."

Activity: Participants draw this felt sense in their block notes.

### **5. Connecting to Our Perception of a Client's Need:**

Facilitator Prompt: "Now, let the felt sense of the client's need form." Activity: Participants draw this felt sense in their block notes.

### **6. Naming the Personal Resonance:**

Facilitator Prompt: "Reflect on the personal resonance of these experiences."

Activity: Participants name and perhaps write down the personal resonance they feel related to these experiences.

## **7. Sharing and Discussion (Optional):**

If comfortable, participants can share their drawings and discuss their reflections with the group.

## **8. Conclusion:**

Facilitators thank participants for their engagement and encourage them to reflect on how these visualizations and insights might influence their future therapeutic work.

# Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

# Keywords

Focusing, Creative expression, Supervision, Dead Ends, Therapeutic relationship

# 69

## 'The Door to Intrinsic Resourcefulness and Life-forward Movement': An Experiential Way for Clearing the Space and Attending to Essential Wholeness

Prof **Soti Grafanaki** Ph.D.<sup>1</sup>, Mr. **William Hernandez** MBA<sup>2</sup>  
<sup>1</sup>Saint Paul University, Ottawa, Canada. <sup>2</sup>FECD, Quito, Ecuador

### Prof Soti Grafanaki Author Bio

Soti Grafanaki is a Professor of Psychotherapy and the Director of the School of Counselling, Psychotherapy and Spirituality (Saint Paul University, Canada). She is a certifying Focusing coordinator (Focusing Institute, New York) trained in Person-centred therapy and Focusing-oriented approach. Soti is the co-author of the book: 'The Natural Pause- A path to Peace' and the author of several peer-reviewed papers on the concept of congruence and its impact on the therapeutic interaction. Soti has co-facilitated with William numerous workshops across Latin America, North America and Europe on "Learning to Listen through the Pause" to promote Felt-sense Literacy in vulnerable communities, and support the efforts for peace building and social development. [www.pausemovement.org](http://www.pausemovement.org)



### Mr. William Hernandez Author Bio

William Hernandez is the Executive Director of FECD, a social development NGO that works with the most vulnerable groups and communities in Ecuador. He is a certifying Focusing Coordinator of the Focusing Institute (New York). He worked very closely with Gene Gendlin and Mary Hendricks for the development of the Felt Sense Literacy initiative of the Focusing Institute and is the founder of the Pause Movement ([www.pausemovement.org](http://www.pausemovement.org)). William has developed and implemented a focusing-oriented, social development model to promote sustainable development and peacebuilding in vulnerable communities. As part of this effort, he has offered extensive training and numerous experiential workshops to leaders of community organizations and NGOs in Ecuador and other countries. He has co-authored with Soti Grafanaki the book: "The Natural Pause- A Path to Peace" and is actively engaged in the development and implementation of simple exercises and practices which support personal development and enable people to connect with their essential goodness and Light.



## Abstract

Training, supervision and personal therapy represent evidence-based ways through which therapists learn to engage in a safe and effective use of self with clients. Although much of our attention is on creating and developing the PCE therapist, it is important to highlight that the personal

and professional aspects of therapists' growth and development cannot be really separated. In the therapy room, therapists bring their own humanity along with the tools and concepts they have learned through their training and practice. Very often therapist's development is focused on accumulating more knowledge and clinical skills, identifying and attending to blind spots and personal and professional shortcomings, and working towards 'becoming' better, or more. (e.g., more warm, more empathic, more accepting, more competent etc.,). The tendency to look for what is missing at times clouds the ability to recognize what is already there

This experiential workshop aims to offer participants the opportunity to reconnect with their essential completeness and what is already there. The space where deep connection, tranquility and one's fundamental values are naturally present. We consider that encountering the felt sense of such space could support therapists in their journey for integration and groundness.

Through a simple experiential exercise and imagery, participants will be invited to reconnect with the innate space of inner tranquility and peace and consider its potential to carry them through during moments of uncertainty or turmoil. This experiential exercise will be carried out with the whole group or a volunteer depending on the available time.

After the exercise, there will be time to debrief about the experience and reflect on the following questions: What is the base of connecting deeper with clients and living the fundamental PCE values at a relational level in a world that is constantly changing? What is the essential ingredient that permits to listen naturally and recover the 'magic' of human connection beyond steps, 'conditions', and prescribed roles? What is the 'door' that provides the fastest access to our intrinsic resourcefulness and sense of wholeness?

During the workshop, we will share practice-based evidence from our work with groups and communities facing adversity and challenging life circumstances (i.e., poverty, domestic violence, incarceration, civil war) and offer examples of simple practices that can support human resilience, conflict transformation and sustainable social development.

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

personal development, natural pause, clearing the space, Felt Sense Literacy (FSL), experiential Focusing

# 70

## Cinema And Person-Centred Therapists

Mr. **Vasilis Spiliotis** MSc Person-Centred Counselling & Psychotherapy (Strathclyde Uni.)  
ICPS, Athens, Greece

### Mr. Vasilis Spiliotis Author Bio

A qualified person-centred counsellor and psychotherapist. At the same time with a long business background in various positions and companies. Interests include the use of cinema in counselling and psychotherapy, working with clients who have relationship difficulties, and the therapeutic use of photography. Beyond my two daughters, books, meditation, and music are the riches of my life.



## Abstract

The paper is based on a study which collected information directly from PCA therapists on their feelings and thoughts about how cinema affects them professionally and personally.

The scope of the project was to examine if there's value when PCA practitioners are watching movies as a professional developmental tool but also as a training tool for the education of new PC therapists.

More specifically to shed some light on the way the person-centred's therapy core conditions are influenced by movie watching and if the quality of education of new person-centred therapists could be enriched from this activity. How is their perceptual field affected while various narratives on relationships are presented on the big screen?

The methodology used is qualitative phenomenological (IPA) with a sample size of 6 participants, which are person-centred therapists with at least 3 year experience.

All the participants saw three movies (Joker, Persona, Lost In Translation) specifically for the study and interviews followed regarding the scope of the study.

findings:

- "interaction" with a movie as part of the experiences of a therapist often works as transforming her self-awareness and making the bond between theory and her professional role even stronger.
- existential themes appear in the participants' answers, as person-centred approach is closely related to existential therapeutic approach. Both psychotherapeutic practices are part of the humanistic psychology, and they have very similar philosophical views for human life, something which becomes quite apparent during the interviews.
- From the above it appears that cinema for therapists can potentially be a foundation to construct



or justify a more solid person-centred and humanistic philosophy.

- As cinema's narratives are dominated by stories of people the way Joseph Campbell's work illustrated and with similar stages in their personal journeys (which often can be described as missions as well), movies are perhaps the appropriate framework to shed light in the greatness of the individual human being. This way we can acknowledge that movie watching could potentially develop and a therapist as a "person" too and not only as a professional, but a person also who tends to see fellow human beings with dignity and respect, a philosophy closely related to the core of person-centred philosophy.

As implication to the above the use of cinema as a training or a professional tool is an issue closely related to the Conference's theme and perhaps it's worthwhile discussing it with the broader "audience" of the participants.

## Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

## Keywords

Cinema, Development, Person, Narrative, Art

# 71

## Relational Depth in Interpersonal Training

Dr **Krzysztof Jedliński** MD-PhD<sup>1</sup>, Mrs. **Jolanta Sokół-Jedlińska** MA<sup>1</sup>, Dr **Joanna Komorowska-Mach** PhD [ORCID iD](#)<sup>2,1</sup>, Mrs. **Aneta Kosińska** MA<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Intra Center, Warsaw, Poland. <sup>2</sup>University of Warsaw, Warsaw, Poland

### Dr Krzysztof Jedliński Author Bio

Psychotherapist and supervisor in the humanistic-experiential approach. Trainer and supervisor of psychological workshops and trainings. PhD in Medical Sciences, psychiatrist. Teacher of psychotherapy and psychological workshop. Member of the Intra Association Scientific Seminar. Interested in relations between psychotherapy and philosophy. Author of books: "Interpersonal Training," "Dignity - How to Protect It Without Humiliating Others," and "How to Help Those Who Have Lost Hope."



### Mrs. Jolanta Sokół-Jedlińska Author Bio

Psychological trainer and supervisor of psychological workshops and trainings. Holds a Master's degree in Polish Philology. Conducts open interpersonal training groups and teaches trainers of interpersonal training. Member of the Intra Association Scientific Seminar. Interested in intersections of psychology and spirituality. Author of the book "Spirituality in Everyday Life" and articles on interpersonal training.



### Dr Joanna Komorowska-Mach

[0000-0002-8287-6668](tel:0000-0002-8287-6668)

#### Author Bio

Psychotherapist in the humanistic-experiential approach. PhD in Philosophy. Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Philosophy at the University of Warsaw. Member of the Intra Association Scientific Seminar. Interested in philosophy of mind, methodology, and philosophy of psychotherapy. Author of scientific articles on self-knowledge, communication, and emotions.



### Mrs. Aneta Kosińska Author Bio

Psychologist, psychotherapist, coach, and mediator. Master's degree in Psychology with a specialization in social and business psychology. Conducts psychotherapy in the humanistic-experiential and existential approach. Member of the Intra Association Scientific Seminar.



# Abstract

**Motivation:** Relational depth is defined by Mearns and Cooper (2005) as a profound level of contact and engagement where individuals are fully authentic and deeply understand and value each other's experiences. Originally introduced for therapist-client dyad, recent studies (Di Malta et al., 2022, 2024) support the presence of relational depth beyond individual psychotherapy. However, there is a lack of research on relational depth in groups larger than dyads. We decided to investigate relational depth in the context of group experiences in interpersonal training, where participants report experiencing closeness, sincerity, and bonding.

**Problem:** Interpersonal training is an intensive, several days long group experience focusing on emotional expression, body sensation, and feedback exchange. Both the participants and facilitators report a profound impact of the training on fostering deep interpersonal connections. They also describe moments of closeness and encounters that seem to fulfill the definition of relational depth. We hypothesized that members of interpersonal training groups would experience moments of group relational depth and that these moments would become more frequent as the training progresses.

**Methodology:** The study involved 15 training groups participating in a 40-hour, five-day group experience. Each group consisted of approximately 12 participants. The level of relational depth was measured at the end of each day's session by The Relational Depth Frequency Scale (Di Malta et al., 2019) adapted for measuring relational depth moments in groups.

**Results:** The findings revealed a consistent and statistically significant growth in relational depth in groups throughout the training. This pattern indicates that interpersonal training sessions enhance the development of profound, genuine connections among participants. Moreover, on the final day of the training, the median response to each of the six questions reached its highest value, indicating the experience of relational depth in its various aspects for most of the time.

**Implications:** Our study demonstrated that relational depth can be experienced in the context of group interpersonal training, and that it consistently increases over time, reaching high levels. These results underscore the efficacy of structured interpersonal training in fostering deep interpersonal connections. Further research could explore the specific elements of training that most effectively contribute to this outcome, potentially guiding the design of future interpersonal development programs.

**Discussion:** We anticipate that our presentation will provide an opportunity for discussion both on the concept of relational depth as a characteristic of groups beyond just the therapist-client dyad, and on the significance and effectiveness of interpersonal training.

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

relational depth, interpersonal training, group experience, -, -

# 72

## Ethical infrastructure in helping practices

Mr. **Paul Diaconescu** MS, PhD student  
*PCE Europe, Bucharest, Romania*

### Mr. Paul Diaconescu Author Bio

I work as a PCA physiotherapist with adult individuals and groups, in Bucharest, Romania. I am currently interested in ethics and ethical infrastructure, doing a PhD on the subject. Also a member of PCE Europe Board, responsible with ethics and membership.



### Abstract

Psychotherapy is a relational activity that tries to provide help. Navigating relationships can become difficult even in regular situations, but the therapeutic relationship has more variables imposed by the client's vulnerability, the transactional nature of the relationship, and the contractual duty of the therapist. One can easily get confused or lost at the intersection of these variables and lose their footing in providing an adequate, fair, and helpful service.

Having a clear grasp of what psychotherapy is, what you are doing in the relationship with the person/client in front of you, what the boundaries and duties of this relationship are, are essential tools in offering a consistent and helpful service.

The reality is that ethics transcends psychotherapy methods on one side and is actually intertwined with the method itself. Psychotherapy is unequivocally linked with ethics.

But in order to have this clear grasp of what psychotherapy is, what ethics are, and where they intersect, we need education and support on this matter. And here we get to the ethical infrastructure and having an integrity-based professional cultural model based on understanding ethics and its usefulness for the psychotherapist, the professional community, and providing a helpful service.

A coherent and unified ethical infrastructure can be the backbone of creating a professional culture based on ethics, community focus, autonomy-driven, and good service providing.

### Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

### Keywords

ethics, infrastructure, services, practitioners, psychotherapy

# 73

## A Journey to the MSc PCE training program at ICPS: Harmonizing Experience and Inquiry

Mr. **Konstantinos Pappas** MSc<sup>1</sup>, Dr **Maria Kefalopoulou** PhD<sup>1</sup>, Mr. **Alexandros Vallidis** MSc<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>ICPS College for Humanistic Sciences, Athens, Greece

### Mr. Konstantinos Pappas Author Bio

Mr. Pappas, for over 18 years is involved in the business and academic administration and development of ICPS, from the position of the President and Director General. Since 2010 and for two years, he served as Secretary General of the World Association of Person-Centred and Experiential Psychotherapy and Counseling. His research interests are in personality, emotional intelligence, organizational change, leadership, motivation, teamwork, work-life balance and business coaching. He is also the President of the Panhellenic Association of Recognized Colleges in Greece.



### Dr Maria Kefalopoulou Author Bio

Dr. Maria Kefalopoulou, (PhD, ECP), Head of the Organizing Committee, has studied Social Psychology in France (Paris-X-Nanterre, Paris-VII-Denis Diderot) and she is Academic Lead in Counselling and Psychotherapy at ICPS- College for Humanistic Sciences, Athens, Greece. She is member of the European Association of Psychotherapy (EAP), member of the WAPCEPC, Co-Editor of the PCEP Journal.



### Mr. Alexandros Vallidis Author Bio

MSc. Psychologist ECP Psychotherapist/ Supervisor. Academic Coordinator at College for Humanistic Sciences – ICPS. Board member of WAPCEPC, PCE EUROPE, National Organization of Psychotherapy in Greece and EAP



## Abstract

This structured discussion focuses on the short presentation of the PCE training program at ICPS- College for Humanistic sciences. The ICPS- College former KEP (Center for Person Centred studies in Greece) was founded back in 1989. The current training program is now included in the four years MSc on Person- Centred and Experiential Counselling and Psychotherapy provided by ICPS in collaboration with UCLan- University of Central Lancashire, which also leads at the European Certificate of Psychotherapy . While cultivating essential skills in students through an experiential learning framework, the program combines interactive elements such as encounter groups, study groups, empathy labs, congruence labs, supervision sessions, encounter facilitation labs, and

original research on person-centred theory and practice. These components have the purpose to enhance both the personal and professional development of future PCE psychotherapists. The experiential nature of the program successfully bridges the gap between theoretical learning and practical application, preparing students for professional practice. The discussion with the participants in this Structured Discussion aims to explore the possibilities of implementing PCE training programs harmonizing experience, research and practice.

**Dr Maria Kefalopoulou**

## The power of the experiential learning

In our program, students are involved in various learning experiences that help them develop critical therapeutic skills. Encounter groups provide a useful space for them to engage in deep interpersonal exploration and self-reflection. Study groups encourage cooperative learning and detailed discussions of psychotherapeutic concepts, fostering critical thinking and comprehensive understanding. Empathy labs concentrate on improving students' ability to empathize with clients, thus contributing to a really effective therapy. Congruence labs focus on cultivating authenticity and personal integrity, a key issue for establishing trust in therapeutic relationships. Supervision sessions are founded on the collaborative principles of PCE supervision. All along the program, students keep reflective journals and participate in peer evaluations, documenting their personal and academic development and the impact of various training elements. These reflective practices assist them to integrate their learning experiences and apply them in real-world therapeutic contexts

**Alexandros Vallidis**

## Emphasis on producing research projects

A central element of the program is the learning and application of qualitative and quantitative research on person-centred and experiential theory and practice. Research on PCE deepens students' understanding and practical application of its principles, enhancing their overall competency as psychotherapists. This valuable research component solidifies theoretical knowledge and promotes practical applications and ongoing refinement of their therapeutic skills.

## Submission type

Structured Discussion (60 min)

## Moderator/Discussant

Mr. Konstantinos Pappas

## Keywords

PCE training , Experiential , Personal development , Research, Competencies

# 74

## The Impact of Encounter-Based Learning on the Personal and Professional Development of Psychology Students in ICPS: An Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

Mr. **Alexandros Vallidis** MSc, Dr **Maria Kefalopoulou** PhD  
*ICPS College for humanistic Sciences, Athens, Greece*

### Mr. Alexandros Vallidis Author Bio

MSc. Psychologist ECP Psychotherapist/ Supervisor. Academic Coordinator at College for Humanistic Sciences – ICPS. Board member of WAPCEPC, PCE EUROPE, National Organization of Psychotherapy in Greece and EAP



### Dr Maria Kefalopoulou Author Bio

Dr. Maria Kefalopoulou, (PhD, ECP), Head of the Organizing Committee, has studied Social Psychology in France (Paris-X-Nanterre, Paris-VII-Denis Diderot) and she is Academic Lead in Counselling and Psychotherapy at ICPS- College for Humanistic Sciences, Athens, Greece. She is member of the European Association of Psychotherapy (EAP), member of the WAPCEPC, Co-Editor of the PCEP Journal.



## Abstract

The current research study explores the experiences of third-year BSc Psychology students participating in a year-long personal development course designed to explore various psychotherapeutic theories through an encounter-based learning method. Research shows that students who participated in encounter group training showed significant gains in self-actualization and emotional intelligence and reduced non-client-centered responses, such as giving advice and making judgments, compared to the control group (Brison et al., 2015).

The main hypothesis is that the encounter group will foster the experiential learning of key theories of personality and will facilitate personal growth, preparing psychology students to be trained and work as psychotherapists in the future.

The participants were five third-year BSc Psychology students at ICPS College who participated in a year-long module of personal development in an encounter format. The interviews were transcribed and then analyzed by the second author using interpretative phenomenological analysis (Alase, 2017).

The findings show that the students were able to understand the theory presented at a deeper level when it was connected with their experiences and in an environment of trust within the encounter space.

The findings can be used in the formation of future educational programs regarding the use of encounter groups in establishing theoretical knowledge and preparing psychologists for their training in psychotherapy.

It would be important to discuss and reflect with the delegates on their experiences in training and how these findings could be embodied in their training programs.

### **Reference List**

Alase, A. (2017). The interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA): A guide to a good qualitative research approach. *International journal of education and literacy studies*, 5(2), 9-19.

Brisson, C., Zech, E., Jaeken, M., Priels, J. M., Verhofstadt, L., Van Broeck, N., & Mikolajczak, M. (2015). Encounter groups: do they foster psychology students' psychological development and therapeutic attitudes?. *Person-Centered & Experiential Psychotherapies*, 14(1), 83-99.

## **Submission type**

Individual Paper (60 min)

## **Keywords**

Encounter, Training , Psychology , Psychotherapy, IPA



# 75

## Person Centered and Experiential Counseling for Relational Trauma

Mr. **Alexandros Vallidis** MSc

ICPS, Athens, Greece. PRAKSIS, Athens, Greece. UNHCR, Athens, Greece

### Mr. Alexandros Vallidis Author Bio

Mr. Alexandros Vallidis works as a person-centered trainer, therapist, supervisor, and academic lead on Psychotherapy programs at the ICPS College for Humanistic Sciences. He holds a psychology degree from Panteion University of Athens and an MSc in psychotherapy from ICPS College for Humanistic Sciences/University of Strathclyde. Additionally, Alexandros is a trainer in Child Protection and Grief Counseling and has received training in Addictions Counseling and the Neuroaffective and Relational model for trauma treatment. He is a researcher in PRAKSIS and UNHCR for relational trauma.



## Abstract

This pilot study aims to form a model of Person-Centered and Experiential Counseling for clients experiencing trauma, offering insights for practitioners. The intervention aligns with the conference's theme on clinical practices addressing trauma amid global crises, such as political instability, war, and population displacement.

The study explores Person-Centered Counseling for children and adolescents who have endured war and Sexual Gender-Based Violence. Four participants engaged in 10 sessions of a tailored intervention for relational trauma, incorporating elements such as working with emotions to connect with and understand needs, creating a map through empathic responses using symbolization, exploring configurations of the self, and adjusting and questioning experiential specificity. Proximity-based work emphasized building a safe, trusting environment to explore vulnerabilities and traumas, while acceptance-based work promoted self-observation and self-compassion. Continuous feedback loops between therapist and client ensured the therapy met evolving client needs.

The intervention, conducted from March 2023 to June 2024 at the NGO Praksis community center, is funded by the UNHCR and supervised by the ICPS College of Humanitarian Studies. It is analyzed using the Sequential Explanatory Design by Ivankova et al. (2006).

Three types of data were collected: quantitative data during the 5th and 10th sessions using the International Trauma Questionnaire by Cloitre et al. (2018) and the Post-Traumatic Growth for Children scale by Tedeschi & Calhoun (1996); qualitative data from interviews with children post-intervention, analyzed using Thematic Analysis; and comments from trauma specialists, person-

centered psychotherapists, and cultural mediators regarding the intervention.

Data synthesis and triangulation allow for the presentation of four case studies, integrating quantitative data with qualitative insights. The intervention showed that in three cases, the relationship with the self- concept alleviated symptoms, and post-traumatic growth improved, with CPTSD scores dropping below the diagnosis cut-off. The therapist's supportive stance facilitated the child's engagement in the therapeutic relationship. Qualitative insights from interviews and expert feedback explain the quantitative changes observed in each case. This comprehensive analysis aims to establish an effective Person-Centered and Experiential Counseling intervention for relational trauma.

The study concludes with a discussion on the intervention within the PCE paradigm, addressing research limitations and proposing future directions.

Ivankova, N. V., Creswell, J. W., & Stick, S. L. (2006). Using mixed-methods sequential explanatory design: From theory to practice. *Field methods*, 18(1), 3-20.

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

PCE Counselling , CPTSD, Relational Trauma , Intervention , SGBV survivors

# 76

## Am I the therapist I wanted to be? An experiential dialogue.

**Christiane Geiser** lic.phil.

*Ausbildungsinstitut GFK, Zurich, Switzerland*

### Christiane Geiser Author Bio

Christiane Geiser is a therapist and still works as a supervisor, teacher and trainer at the GFK Training Institute in Zurich, which she and her husband founded in the late 80s. She also translates books and articles into German.



## Abstract

In this short workshop I would like to give you the opportunity to pause and reflect on your own lifelong education: Do you remember why you wanted to be a therapist? Have you become the professional practitioner you wanted to be? What about your training has been most helpful, supportive and inspiring? Were there important influences outside the professional context?

And if you work as a trainer or educator: How do you relate to young people who want to learn our profession? What is important for them to learn and understand, and how do you support them?

As I pondered these questions myself, I was reminded of the groundbreaking research by the group around M.H. Ronnestad and T.M. Skovholt on the professional development and stagnation of therapists over the career lifespan, from the "Novice Student Phase" to the "Senior Professional Phase". They interviewed thousands of practitioners from all over the world and from different therapy orientations, asking: What has been helpful and supportive? Where did you struggle? And does it make a difference in which phase of your training and professional life it happened? It is a deeply human book, full of insights that can inspire us all, wherever we are in the process of lifelong learning and teaching.

In a short unpublished paper written by Gene Gendlin in 1962 during his research with Rogers and his group, he tentatively opened the discussion about the need for therapy training and how it might be organized, and what he considered to be the requirements for good training. His proposals included things like: that there must be a real climate for "candid self-expression" of what we personally experience in practice - that all concepts must be taught experientially - that training must include literature, philosophy, art... "so that the psychotherapist is not foreign to these modes in which the human soul has expressed itself".

This is an experiential workshop. There will be no lecture and no need to "prepare". We will simply practice "listening" and "responding to our responding", as Campbell Purton calls it - in my opinion the most undervalued activities our approach has brought to our profession. We will listen to

ourselves, to our neighbor, to the whole group. Then we will know a bit more about what “created” us and what keeps us going even in difficult times.

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

lifelong education, phases of development, good training, experiential, dialogue

# Applying Person-Centered Core Conditions to Foster Pluralism Mindsets among Elementary School Students

Mrs. **Liat Rahmian** PhD student [ORCID iD](#), Dr **Yotam Hod** PhD, Dr **Nurit Novis-Deutsch** PhD  
University of Haifa, Haifa, Israel

## Mrs. Liat Rahmian

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### Author Bio

Liat Rahmian is a Ph.D. student at The Department of Learning and Instructional Science at the University of Haifa. She specializes in designing and implementing innovative pedagogies, and passionate about incorporating elements of identity, curiosity, and growth into the learning experience for lifelong engagement.



## Dr Yotam Hod Author Bio

Dr. Yotam Hod is an Associate Professor (Sr. Lecturer) at the University of Haifa Faculty of Education. He is the Chair of the Department of the Learning and Instructional Sciences, and is currently the President- elect of the International Society of the Learning Sciences (ISLS). Dr. Hod currently serves on the editorial boards of the International Journal of Computer-Supported Collaborative Learning, and the Journal of the Learning Sciences.



## Dr Nurit Novis-Deutsch Author Bio

Nurit Novis-Deutsch is social psychology lecturer at the University of Haifa. She researches moral development and values education, with a special interest in the intersection of pluralism, identity and religiosity in educational contexts.



## Abstract

**Motivation and Problem:** The intermingling of diverse cultures and identities in today's era requires that we address issues of personal and social differences. The collision of values, opinions, and identities frequently generates tensions and hostility, often inflamed by social media, which can narrow perspectives and reinforce people's existing beliefs. The importance of fostering a

pluralism mindset, particularly within educational contexts, is crucial for promoting dialogue and celebrating diversity, thus making this research highly relevant.

**Methodology:** This study aims to explore how an educational program that incorporates the Rogerian core conditions of unconditional positive regard, empathic listening, and congruence can foster a pluralism mindset to facilitate the negotiation of differing perspectives without dismissing them, promoting a more inclusive and understanding environment. In this program, the person-centered conditions are integrated with a foundational cognitive concept called Both/And reasoning, which appreciates multiple perspectives and their contradictions without seeking to resolve them.

The program is designed around four tools:

1. Speaking and Listening from the Heart focuses on congruence and empathic listening.
2. Seeing with Kind Eyes helps students practice unconditional positive regard.
3. Walking in the Other's Shoes involves empathy and perspective-taking.
4. Both/And Reasoning fosters cognitive competency to justify different perspectives.

The 14-week program involved 19 elementary school classes and assessed outcomes and processes both quantitatively and qualitatively through measures of pluralism mindset, well-being, classroom climate, interviews, class observations, focus groups, and students' artifacts.

**Results:** Preliminary results from interviews and observations indicate a notable shift in student discourse towards increased attentiveness and reduced judgment. The interactions exhibit a more dialogical nature, and there is an enhancement in students' ability to take different perspectives. Consequently, social conflicts are being resolved with greater ease. Further quantitative and qualitative results are forthcoming.

**Implications and Discussion:** The research highlights the program's potential to enhance classroom climate and deepen understanding of diverse perspectives. It demonstrates that integrating Rogerian principles with Both/And reasoning can foster cognitive flexibility and cultural sensitivity, contributing to a more inclusive educational environment. Further results are forthcoming, but the initial findings already suggest significant benefits in fostering a more inclusive and dialogical classroom climate. This research offers practical strategies for educators seeking to cultivate a pluralism mindset and manage the complexities of diversity in educational contexts.

## Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

## Keywords

Pluralism Mindset, congruence, unconditional positive regard, empathic listening, Education

# 78

## Beyond the Individual in the Person-Centred Approach

Dr **Richard Doyle** PhD

*University of Nottingham, Nottingham, United Kingdom*

### **Dr Richard Doyle Author Bio**

I first became aware of the person-centred approach in 2016, before which I had worked in scientific research environments for over fifteen years. After retraining as a person-centred counsellor, I became involved in research and tutoring at the Norwich Centre, and since 2021 I am an Assistant Professor at the University of Nottingham, UK. Currently I tutor on an MA in Person-Centred Experiential Counselling and Psychotherapy as well as on the Person-Centred Experiential Counselling for Depression course. I have experience counselling in the voluntary sector, a student counselling service and private practice, with particular interest in relationships.



## Abstract

### **Motivation and Problem:**

Contemporary debates within a number of fields, including cultural evolution and social network theory, align with existing person-centred theories of community. However, evidence supporting the conceptualisation of human social groups as self-organised 'superorganisms', which can function and act as units, has implications for what it means to be a person in community. This relates to an inconsistency in Rogers' presentation of the organismic actualising tendency and the mechanism of the development of incongruence in individuals.

### **Methodology and Results:**

In this paper I will show how person-centred personality theory can be adapted in response to these ideas. By considering tensions between the actualising tendency of individuals and the tendency of their communities towards maintenance and growth, a framework is developed with some explanatory power in relation to incongruence and human distress, going beyond 'social mediation'. An inconsistency in Rogers' presentation of the organismic actualising tendency is explained within this model.

### **Implications and Discussion:**

I will outline the implications of this, including how we might reconsider the nature of incongruence.

I welcome debate and discussion, including on the significance of social bonds, community and cultural identity in understanding relationships, and implications for therapeutic practice.

## Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

## Keywords

Community, Actualising Tendency, Groups, Personality Theory, (In)congruence



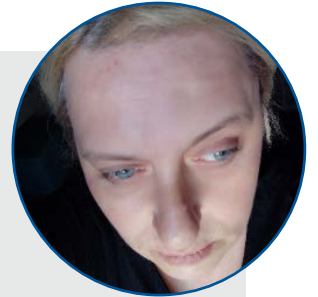
# 79

## Imperfection. The route to evolution. An attempt to visualize.

No title **charis paraskevopoulou** EcP  
*Psychochroma, Athens, Greece*

### No title charis paraskevopoulou Author Bio

A graduate of the Department of Pedagogical Philosophy and Psychology with a specialization in Psychology of the Hellenic Capodistrian University of Athens, I was trained in Person-centered and Focusing Experiential Psychotherapy and I hold the European Psychotherapy Certificate (EcP). I am trained in Genogram and have received training in Landscape Genogram and Neuroscience as well as Addictions within the ITAKA program. I have been a teacher on Communication and Human Relations as well as a supervisor of caregivers of people with disabilities in the workplace within the framework of the IEK Metamorfofis. An important part of my path as a psychotherapist is my experience as a member of the voluntary support group for people at the Counseling Center of the Municipality of Dionysos, both in groups and in individual sessions, as well as in speeches in schools and the structures of the Municipality. I work with individual sessions, as well as couple sessions, with personal development and empowerment groups, parenting schools and consulting companies with the aim of organizing the structure but also a more human approach in the business sector and with trainings and formations in the area of Focusing Experiential Approach. Writing articles and participating in conferences and radio shows with empowering content are part of my hobbies. Since 2023 I am a proud member of the network of women writers against gender violence and femicide "Her Voice". Finally, I strongly claim that I do all of the above somewhat better than writing a resume!



## Abstract

### Imperfection.

### Ellipse.

The route to evolution. The actual shape of the therapeutic relationship. The conditions proposed by Rogers inside this relationship, taking into consideration the Person Therapist and the Person Client, the Paedeia of the above and their human surroundings, within the frame of Politeia, both in its constitutional and its Platonical aspect. An attempt to visualize.

The whys and hows of the construction of the therapeutic relationship, as viewed under the individuals' participating light. The problems that occur, the burn outs, the gifts, the human aspect of the person called "therapist". A discussion, open for ages, on that being "a job", or a lot more. The ethics behind that discussion, addressing the society's rules and stereotypes, the educational role of a therapist's and a client's Paedeia and finally, what's the role of Pleasure, as an Epicurean term, within the frames of this interaction.

# Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

# Keywords

"relationship", "evolution", "visualize", "person", "imperfection"

# 80

## The Sudden Suicide of the Supervisor Eugene X.

**Zafeiria Detoraki**, B.Sc., Pg.Dip., ECP  
ICPS, ATHENS, Greece. OKANA, ATHENS, Greece

### Zafeiria Detoraki Author Bio

Ζαφειρία Δετοράκη, B.Sc., Pg. Dip., ECP Η Ζαφειρία γεννήθηκε και μεγάλωσε στα Χανιά. Στα 18 έτη, ήρθε στην Αθήνα και σπούδασε Κοινωνική Λειτουργός. Άρχισε να δουλεύει σε πλαίσια για παιδιά με αναπηρίες και άσκησε για αρκετά χρόνια την Κοινωνική Εργασία σε Διευθύνσεις Πρόνοιας του Υπουργείου Υγείας. Παράλληλα ασχολήθηκε με τη μουσική, το τραγούδι και τη ραδιοφωνική παραγωγή. Όταν βρέθηκε να εργάζεται στο Κέντρο Διαπολιτισμικής Ψυχιατρικής και Περίθαλψης με τους Ρομά του Δήμου Αχαρνών - Ζεφυρίου, άρχισε την εκπαίδευση στην Προσωποκεντρική Προσέγγιση στο ICPS (τότε Κέντρο Εκπαίδευσης στην Προσωποκεντρική Προσέγγιση), με δάσκαλο τον Ομότιμο Καθηγητή του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών Ιούλιο Ιωσιφίδη. Προσελήφθη στον OKANA σε Μονάδες Υποκατάστασης και Απεξάρτησης και συνέχισε την εκπαίδευση στο Focusing και την ειδική εκπαίδευση στις Εξαρτήσεις. Στον OKANA εργάζεται τα τελευταία 26 χρόνια, ενώ παράλληλα συνεργάζεται με το Μεταπτυχιακό Πρόγραμμα στις Εξαρτήσεις του Τμήματος Ψυχολογίας του Πανεπιστημίου Κρήτης στο Ρέθυμνο, όπου εκπαιδεύει και εποπτεύει Μεταπτυχιακούς φοιτητές. Τα τελευταία 6 χρόνια εκπαιδεύει στη Focusing διαδικασία, εκπαιδευόμενους ψυχοθεραπευτές Μη-Κατευθυντικής Παρέμβασης στα Χανιά. Από το 2009 κατέχει τον τίτλο European Certificate for Psychotherapy της Ευρωπαϊκής Εταιρείας Ψυχοθεραπείας (EAP) ως πιστοποιημένη Προσωποκεντρική Βιωματική Ψυχοθεραπεύτρια. Τα ενδιαφέροντά της και τα δυνατά της σημεία είναι η διδασκαλία και η εποπτεία υποψηφίων κοινωνικών λειτουργών και ψυχοθεραπευτών, η ατομική και ομαδική θεραπεία, η διαχείριση συγκρούσεων, η ενδυνάμωση νέων στο επάγγελμα του ψυχοθεραπευτή, ο ιδιαίτερος τρόπος προσέγγισης των ανθρώπων με αυθεντικότητα, χιούμορ και ενσυναίσθηση, η βαθειά της πίστη στην καλή φύση του ανθρώπου και... το τραγούδι ως τρόπος έκφρασης και αυτοθεραπείας.



## Abstract

Ο έμπειρος επόπτης Ευγένιος Χ. αναλογίζεται τους θεραπευτές εποπτευόμενούς του και τις δυσκολίες που του έφεραν προς συζήτηση τον προηγούμενο μήνα.

Διανύοντας τον πιο δύσκολο προσωπικά μήνα της ζωής του, ο Ευγένιος Χ σε μια σπάνια κρίση αυτοκριτικής, θυμάται τον κάθε εποπτευόμενό του, τις παραλείψεις, τις αδυναμίες του, τις ώρες που δεν άκουγε στην πραγματικότητα τίποτα από όσα έλεγαν οι θεραπευτές και εντέλει την ανημπόρια του να στηρίξει και να βοηθήσει.

Καθισμένος στον θρόνο της αναγνώρισής του ως ένας από τους πιο πετυχημένους επόπτες της Αθήνας, ο Ευγένιος Χ. αρνήθηκε κάθε βοήθεια και τώρα σκέφτεται να δώσει τέλος στη ζωή του...

Άραγε είναι η μόνη του επιλογή?

Με τρόπο γλαφυρό, μέσα σε μια ιστορία, περιγράφονται οι αγωνίες, οι δυσκολίες, οι αξίες, οι τρόποι βοήθειας, οι ειδικές ικανότητες, οι γνώσεις, η αναγκαιότητα αυτοεπίγνωσης και ο μαγικός τρόπος που οι θεραπευτικές συνθήκες – ενσυναίσθηση, αποδοχή άνευ όρων και αυθεντικότητα – συμβάλλουν στην δημιουργία μιας ουσιαστικής θεραπευτικής και εποπτικής σχέσης.

## Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

## Keywords

ΕΠΟΠΤΕΙΑ

# 81

## PCE Specialist Applications: Working with psychotic clients in a PCE way

**Eleftheria Petrakaki** B.Sc., M.Sc., ECP  
*College for Humanistic Sciences - ICPS, Athens, Greece*

### Eleftheria Petrakaki Author Bio

MSc, ECP, Psychologist – Child Psychologist, Person Centred Psychotherapist, with specialization in depression President of Panhellenic Association of Person-Centred & Experiential Professionals. Registrations and professional development consultant at College for Humanistic Sciences - ICPS.



## Abstract

It will be presented one of my personal researches "Therapeutic relationship: effectiveness on Well-being and symptoms of depression, Anxiety, stress on psychotic patients".

Psychotherapy in any kind is based on the key element of "therapeutic relationship" The term therapeutic relationship refers to the bond that is developed between the therapist and the client and is an essential element of psychotherapy. The same applies to mental health recipients, in the present study, psychotic patients. As is it reported mental well-being also has clear philosophical resonances with mental illness rehabilitation, including hope, meaning and fulfillment. The present study investigated which factors of subjective happiness, life satisfaction, depression, anxiety and stress predict the therapeutic relationship in psychotic patients. It also examined in depth which of the factors of therapeutic relationship questionnaire is related with wellbeing. Finally, it examined which of the factors of STAR- P can predict subjective happiness. Results indicated that higher levels of life satisfaction are positively related to subjective happiness, (b) higher levels of subjective happiness and subjective happiness are positive related to therapeutic relationship (c) depression levels are negatively correlated to life satisfaction and (d) stress levels positively related to anxiety. Results also indicated that that subjective happiness and life satisfaction significantly predict therapeutic relationship. Furthermore, 67% percent of positive collaboration between the therapist and the client can be significantly predicted by life satisfaction and 83 % of positive collaboration between the therapist and the client can be significantly predicted by subjective happiness. Moreover, positive clinician input, with 71% can be significantly predicted by stress. Furthermore, non-supportive therapist is not related with any of the factors. Concluding, results showed that positive collaboration between the therapist and the client can predict 71% of subjective happiness. As a conclusion, results reveal the importance of therapeutic relationship in psychotic patients on their wellbeing.

The aforementioned research illustrates the need to enclose a more in depth PCE training in special populations. It pinpoints the needed skills for a collaborative relationship and therefore the importance of therapeutic relationship and being a person in the relationship.

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

Person - Centered Psychotherapy, Therapeutic Relationship, Pre-therapy, Well being, Psychotic Patients

# 82

## “Guarding Thermopylae”: How do we strengthen commitment to our person-centred values amidst a changing world, ensuring high quality therapy?

Dr **Fani Papayianni** Doctorate<sup>1</sup>, Dr **Christina Michael** Doctorate<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Cyprus Psychologists' Association, Nicosia, Cyprus. <sup>2</sup>Cyprus Institute for EFT, Nicosia, Cyprus

### Dr Fani Papayianni Author Bio

Dr Fani Papayianni is a registered Counselling Psychologist in both the UK and Cyprus and a Registered Applied Psychology Practice Supervisor with the British Psychological Society. Following four years of undertaking her psychology degree at the University of Cyprus, she continued into doctoral studies at Glasgow Caledonian University (Scotland) where she graduated in 2013. She afterwards remained in Scotland for five years where she worked as a lecturer at the Doctorate in Counselling Psychology at Glasgow Caledonian University, a practitioner and a qualitative researcher and supervisor. She then relocated to Cyprus in 2018; since, she has been offering private psychological services to the public as well as clinical supervision services to qualified psychologists. Dr Papayianni has also acted as a board member in the Cypriot Registration Board for Psychologists; a founding member of the Division of Counselling Psychology in the Cyprus Psychologists' Association; a postdoctoral qualitative researcher at the University of Cyprus and, an associate lecturer at local universities. At present, alongside maintaining an established private practice, Dr Papayianni is a board member at the Cyprus Psychologists' Association and, a clinical supervisor for counselling, clinical and forensic psychology trainees. Her research interests include meta-therapeutic communication, ethics and law in applied psychology, resilience, meaning-making and social justice.



### Dr Christina Michael Author Bio

Dr Christina Michael is the Founder and Clinical Director of the Cyprus Institute of EFT. She received her Doctorate in Counselling Psychology at Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU). Before she moved to Cyprus in 2018, she worked for 7 years in Scotland with a wide range of mental health difficulties and she was also an Associate Lecturer for the Doctorate in Counselling Psychology for 4 years. Christina is now based in Cyprus and works as a Senior Counselling Psychologist at the Cyprus Institute for Emotion Focused Therapy. She works for Universities in Cyprus and the UK as a Visiting Lecturer and she is internationally accredited EFT supervisor and trainer. She has facilitated EFT trainings in the UK, the USA, Canada, Iran and Europe with Prof Robert Elliott, Prof les Greenberg, Prof. Jean Watson and others. Her research interests include grief, post-traumatic growth, therapy goals and micro-processes.



# Abstract

## **Aim, focus and goal of the workshop**

In an ever-changing world and in the absence of single dogmatic truths, therapists' person-centered values can serve as both a solid foundation for creating valuable working alliances aiming at empowering individuals to grow and, as guiding principles for one's ethical and professional practice.

The scope of this workshop is to stimulate an active and energetic dialogue amongst therapists of various therapeutic approaches and attitudes, in order to foster a deep, experiential understanding with regards to the: (a) key person-centered values which therapists, despite their differences, hold and the reasons these remain important; (b) challenges in today's world that may interfere with or hinder the maintenance of person-centred values; (c) key strategies that can be employed for the safeguarding and strengthening of person-centred values in clinical practice.

## **Theoretical and methodical background for the workshop**

In recent years, massive developments have taken place, including socioeconomic, political, environmental and globalization changes, topped by a global pandemic and several wars. All these contribute to a plethora of changes on a macro, mezzo and micro level. As a result, a variety of responses is brought to life in the counselling room, from both our clients and ourselves; from activism and advocacy to detachment and hopelessness, to everything in between. Can cultures change yet therapeutic values remain the same? How do we as therapists remain present and respond to clients who, just like us, may belong to, and mirror, our changing world? What are recent difficulties encountered by therapists, how do these impact on the maintenance of person-centred values, and what are steps that can be taken to both address such challenges and ensure effective practice?

## **Experiential exercises, therapeutic methods or other types of audience participation.**

Through dialogue, small and large group discussions, interactive activities and reflective exercises, participants are invited to explore, connect, critically reflect on their experiences, exchange viewpoints and reach conclusions with regards to the aforementioned issues.

## **Describe how you will use audio, video, artwork, demonstrations etc. in the workshop**

The use of case studies will also take place as a means to translate theory into practice and invite participants to consider practical ways of helpfully co-existing with clients and with what both bring to therapy, whilst managing any potential internal or external tensions and reactions and, facilitating growth.



# Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

# Keywords

Person-centered values, global changes and challenges, therapist presence, effective practice , ethical practice

# 84

## Launch of the Handbook of Person-Centred Psychotherapy and Counselling (Bloomsbury)

Dr **Susan C Stephen** PhD for research in counselling; MSc in Counselling [ORCID iD](#)<sup>1</sup>, **Yana O Gololob** Master's degree in psychology<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Strathclyde, Glasgow, United Kingdom. <sup>2</sup>Ukrainian Psychotherapy University, Dnipro, Ukraine

### Dr Susan C Stephen

[0000-0003-3567-2045](#)

#### Author Bio

Susan Stephen is a person-centred counsellor and supervisor based in Glasgow. She is a lecturer in counselling at the University of Strathclyde, Director of the Strathclyde Counselling and Psychotherapy Research Clinic, and a co-editor of the international journal, Person-Centered & Experiential Psychotherapies.



### Yana O Gololob Author Bio

Yana Gololob is a person-centred psychotherapist in private practice, a trainer and supervisor of the Ukrainian Umbrella Association of Psychotherapists, a lecturer of the Ukrainian Psychotherapy University, and a guest lecturer at the Dortmund University of Applied Sciences and Arts. She is a co-author and co-director of the person-centered children and youth therapy training project. She is a current Board member of the World Association for Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy and Counseling. Her main concern is with the development of the person-centered approach both in Ukraine and worldwide.



## Abstract

The co-editors of the 3rd edition of the Handbook of Person-Centred Psychotherapy and Counselling (Bloomsbury) are delighted to invite PCE2024 conference participants to join with us and many of our chapter authors to celebrate its publication.

We (Gina Di Malta, Mick Cooper, Maureen O'Hara, Yana Gololob and Susan Stephen) developed this new edition during a significant time of upheaval, loss and change throughout the world and also within our person-centred family. We continue to work through what these generational, social, cultural, political and technological shifts mean for us as persons, as well as therapists, and

for the potential transformation that person-centred theory and practice offers those who we meet in the therapy room and beyond.

At this launch, the editors and authors who are present will share their experiences of navigating these challenges both personally and for the Handbook: in particular, how we worked through the process of preserving and/or re-imagining established chapters and introducing new chapters that together we hope will ensure that the Handbook continues to hold its place as a core text for person-centred psychotherapy and counselling in the 21st century.

We hope that this will stimulate discussion between us all about our experiences of being a person-centred psychotherapist or counsellor in these times.

A small number of advance copies of the Handbook will be available for inspection and purchase. A discount code will be shared with conference participants for online purchase.

## Submission type

Structured Discussion (90 min)

## Moderator/Discussant

Susan Stephen, Yana Gololob

## Keywords

Person-centred approach, Handbook, Generational shift, Authors' experience, Contemporary challenges

# 85

## Confronting the Jargon Barrier in Emotion Focused Therapy: Challenges and Opportunities

Dr **Christina Michael** Doctorate<sup>1</sup>, Prof **Robert Elliott** PhD<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Cyprus Institute for Emotion Focused Therapy - Director, Nicosia, Cyprus. <sup>2</sup>Emeritus Professor of Counselling University of Strathclyde (Scotland), Glasgow, United Kingdom

### Dr Christina Michael Author Bio

Dr Christina Michael is the Founder and Clinical Director of the Cyprus Institute of EFT. She received her Doctorate in Counselling Psychology at Glasgow Caledonian University (GCU). Before she moved to Cyprus in 2018, she worked for 7 years in Scotland with a wide range of mental health difficulties and she was also an Associate Lecturer for the Doctorate in Counselling Psychology for 4 years. Christina is now based in Cyprus and works as a Senior Counselling Psychologist at the Cyprus Institute for Emotion Focused Therapy. She works for Universities in Cyprus and the UK as a Visiting Lecturer and she is internationally accredited EFT supervisor and trainer. She has facilitated EFT trainings in the UK, the USA, Canada, Iran and Europe with Prof Robert Elliott, Prof Ies Greenberg, Prof. Jean Watson and others. She is a founding member of the Division of Counselling Psychology in the Cyprus Psychologists' Association. Her research interests include grief, post-traumatic growth, therapy goals and micro-processes.



### Prof Robert Elliott Author Bio

Prof Elliott received his PhD from the University of California, Los Angeles. He is an internationally recognized psychologist, researcher, and trainer. He has led EFT training in the States, many parts of Europe, and Asia. He is co-author of important books in the field of Psychology, including: Emotion Focused Counselling in Action; Facilitating emotional change, Learning emotion-focused psychotherapy, Research methods in clinical psychology; as well as author of more than 200 journal articles, and book chapters. He has received the Distinguished Research Career Award of the Society for Psychotherapy Research, and the Carl Rogers Award from APA for his distinguished work in the field.



# Abstract

**Motivation:** Emotion-focused therapy (EFT) is an integrative, humanistic, empirically supported approach which emerged from the person-centred tradition and in particular its experiential branch (Rice and Greenberg, 1984; Elliott et al., 2013). EFT gives emotion a central role in therapy as a source of meaning, direction, and growth, and within the frame of a person-centred relationship and values it uses active process-guiding therapeutic methods to facilitate client change (Greenberg et al., 1993; Elliott et al., 2004). Since its inception decades ago as an experiential approach EFT has grown a detailed vocabulary that identifies a range of micro-processes and interventions in different episodes in psychotherapy (Elliott et al., 2004; Rice & Greenberg, 1984; Greenberg, 2015). The extensive research of psychotherapy processes, has resulted in a long list of EFT words (often referred to as “EFT jargon”) related to moments in psychotherapy that involve emotion transformation. In this paper we highlight the invaluable contribution of EFT to the vocabulary of psychotherapy in general, while raising issues that challenge us and our students in the process of communicating and learning EFT. Research in the field of learning, consistently indicates that reading comprehension plays a vital role in two main learning perspectives—knowledge acquisition and cognition aptitude cultivation (Perfetti & Stafura, 2014; Silva & Cain, 2015). In the education field a fundamental aspect of reading comprehension is vocabulary acquisition (Hoover & Gough, 1990; Cromley & Azevedo, 2007). In this presentation we argue that vocabulary acquisition is a vital component of teaching, learning and applying EFT.

**Problem:** Through our developing EFT Lexicon, we aim to explain EFT theoretical concepts, ideas and terms as described by the EFT pioneers, and to raise issues which involve the EFT vocabulary, learning, application and research of EFT.

**Methodology:** The selection of the EFT words included in the lexicon focused on four comprehensive, methodological and transparent steps that will be discussed in this presentation.

**Results:** In this presentation we will share some of our results so far.

**Implications:** We aim to create a reader-friendly book for the curious learner and for the specialised EFT practitioner to easily access and navigate the EFT concepts in order to enhance the learning, research and practice of EFT.

**Discussion:** Can this lexicon facilitate the teaching, learning and application of EFT? Can it be a good companion for the next generation of EFT trainers and learners?

## Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

## Keywords

Vocabulary, EFT, Process-guidance, Jargon, EFT lexicon

# 86

## Understanding Your Therapist Development Process: An Experiential Workshop Learning from Master Therapist Research

Prof **Tatsuya Hirai** Ph.D.<sup>1</sup>, Prof **Koji Nagano** Ph.D.<sup>2</sup>, Prof **Yuko Morikawa** Ph.D.<sup>3</sup>, Prof **Hideaki Fukumori** Ph.D.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Meiji University, Tokyo, Japan. <sup>2</sup>Otemon University, Osaka, Japan. <sup>3</sup>Kyushu Sangyo University, Fukuoka, Japan. <sup>4</sup>Kyushu University, Fukuoka, Japan

### Prof Tatsuya Hirai Author Bio

Tatsuya Hirai is a teaching/research faculty in the Department of Global Studies at Meiji University, Japan. He is a certified clinical psychologist and holds a Ph.D. in Counseling Psychology from the University of Minnesota. His major interests include encounter groups, use of PCE in career education, therapist development, multicultural counseling, positive psychology, and global leadership.



### Prof Koji Nagano Author Bio

Koji Nagano is a professor and a manager of Office for Psychological Services at Otemon Gakuin University. He has been active as a Person-centered counselor, a facilitator of encounter groups, and a trainer of focusing seminars since 1991.



### Prof Yuko Morikawa Author Bio

Yuko Morikawa, Ph.D. is a professor at Kyushu Sangyo University. She is also a certified focusing coordinator. Her main research themes are daily Focusing attitude and "handling pain with Focusing." She wrote a book with cartoons named "Health management method with Focusing." (2015: ISBN- 9784414400946).



### Prof Hideaki Fukumori Author Bio

Hideaki Fukumori is a Professor and counselor of Center for Health Sciences and Counseling, Kyushu University. He received Ph.D. in psychology from Kyushu University. He is certified coordinator in training from the International Focusing Institute. His current research interests include Focusing attitude, quality of college student life and mental health.



# Abstract

The goals of this experiential workshop are to 1) Understand therapist development processes from master therapist studies, 2) Examine each participant's development process as a PCE therapist/practitioner, and 3) Envision participants' optimal therapist development processes.

Theoretically speaking, this workshop is based on Skovholt (2003)'s research findings of master therapists, as well as Hirai (2010)'s Japanese master therapist research.

In this experiential workshop, presenters will first briefly introduce the significance of therapist development and master therapist research. Then, we will ask participants to review and share their impactful past experiences for their therapist development in a small group setting. Next, presenters will introduce research findings from Hirai's and Skovholt's master therapist studies as a framework and ask participants to reexamine their important values and experiences for their future therapist development.

Following this, participants will share how they want to actualize their important values and visions with small group members, and exchange feedback and support for optimal therapist development.

It is our hope that participants will realize important factors and experiences for their therapist development and leave the workshop with a sense of hope, encouragement, and direction.

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

therapist development, master therapist, expertise, developmental process, experiential workshop

# 87

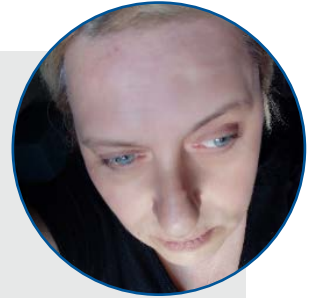
## Who do you think I am? Ποια νομίζεις πως είμαι;

No title **charis paraskevopoulou** EcP<sup>1</sup>, No title **Zafiria Detoraki** EcP<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Psychochroma, Athens, Greece. <sup>2</sup>ICPS, Athens, Greece

### No title charis paraskevopoulou Author Bio

A graduate of the Department of Pedagogical Philosophy and Psychology with a specialization in Psychology of the Hellenic Capodistrian University of Athens, I was trained in Person-centered and Focusing Experiential Psychotherapy and I hold the European Psychotherapy Certificate (EcP). I am trained in Genogram and have received training in Landscape Genogram and Neuroscience as well as Addictions within the ITAKA program. I have been a teacher on Communication and Human Relations as well as a supervisor of caregivers of people with disabilities in the workplace within the framework of the IEK Metamorfosis. An important part of my path as a psychotherapist is my experience as a member of the voluntary support group for people at the Counseling Center of the Municipality of Dionysos, both in groups and in individual sessions, as well as in speeches in schools and the structures of the Municipality. I work with individual sessions, as well as couple sessions, with personal development and empowerment groups, parenting schools and consulting companies with the aim of organizing the structure but also a more human approach in the business sector and with trainings and formations in the area of Focusing Experiential Approach. Writing articles and participating in conferences and radio shows with empowering content are part of my hobbies. Since 2023 I am a proud member of the network of women writers against gender violence and femicide "Her Voice". Finally, I strongly claim that I do all of the above somewhat better than writing a resume!



### No title Zafiria Detoraki Author Bio

Η Ζαφειρία γεννήθηκε και μεγάλωσε στα Χανιά. Στα 18 έτη, ήρθε στην Αθήνα και σπούδασε Κοινωνική Λειτουργός. Άρχισε να δουλεύει σε πλαίσια για παιδιά με αναπηρίες και άσκησε για αρκετά χρόνια την Κοινωνική Εργασία σε Διευθύνσεις Πρόνοιας του Υπουργείου Υγείας. Παράλληλα ασχολήθηκε με τη μουσική, το τραγούδι και τη ραδιοφωνική παραγωγή. Όταν βρέθηκε να εργάζεται στο Κέντρο Διαπολιτισμικής Ψυχιατρικής και Περίθαλψης με τους Ρομά του Δήμου Αχαρνών - Ζεφυρίου, άρχισε την εκπαίδευση στην Προσωποκεντρική Προσέγγιση στο ICPS (τότε Κέντρο Εκπαίδευσης στην Προσωποκεντρική Προσέγγιση), με δάσκαλο τον Ομότιμο Καθηγητή του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών Ιούλιο Ιωσιφίδη. Προσελήφθη στον ΟΚΑΝΑ σε Μονάδες Υποκατάστασης και Απεξάρτησης και συνέχισε την εκπαίδευση στο Focusing και την ειδική εκπαίδευση στις Εξαρτήσεις.

Στον ΟΚΑΝΑ εργάζεται τα τελευταία 26 χρόνια, ενώ παράλληλα συνεργάζεται με το Μεταπτυχιακό Πρόγραμμα στις Εξαρτήσεις του Τμήματος Ψυχολογίας του Πανεπιστημίου Κρήτης στο Ρέθυμνο, όπου εκπαιδεύει και εποπτεύει Μεταπτυχιακούς φοιτητές. Τα τελευταία 6 χρόνια εκπαιδεύει στη Focusing διαδικασία, εκπαιδευόμενους ψυχοθεραπευτές Μη-Κατευθυντικής Παρέμβασης στα Χανιά. Από το 2009 κατέχει τον τίτλο European Certificate for Psychotherapy της Ευρωπαϊκής Εταιρείας Ψυχοθεραπείας (EAP) ως πιστοποιημένη Προσωποκεντρική Βιωματική Ψυχοθεραπεύτρια. Τα ενδιαφέροντά της





και τα δυνατά της σημεία είναι η διδασκαλία και η εποπτεία υποψηφίων κοινωνικών λειτουργών και ψυχοθεραπευτών, η ατομική και ομαδική θεραπεία, η διαχείριση συγκρούσεων, η ενδυνάμωση νέων στο επάγγελμα του ψυχοθεραπευτή, ο ιδιαίτερος τρόπος προσέγγισης των ανθρώπων με αυθεντικότητα, χιούμορ και ενσυναίσθηση, η βαθιά της πίστη στην καλή φύση του ανθρώπου και... το τραγούδι ως τρόπος έκφρασης και αυτοθεραπείας.

## Abstract

Το αρχέτυπο του θηλυκού στη σύγχρονη σκέψη και νοοτροπία. Ατομικότητα, θηλυκότητα, κοινωνική ταξινόμηση. Στερεότυπα. Η δράση ως κίνηση και πολιτική πράξη. Οι λέξεις, οι τάσεις και οι φράσεις που κατατρύχουν τις θηλυκότητες εδώ και αιώνες. Υπομένω ή κάνω; Ξεχνάω ή θυμάμαι; Σιωπώ ή μιλώ; Είμαι ή απλά παραβρίσκομαι; Ποια είμαι; Και, τέλος, ποια νομίζεις εσύ ότι είμαι;

Η θηλυκότητα ως Πρόσωπο, τα πλαίσια της Παιδείας μέσα στα οποία κινείται και δρα, η αντιμετώπισή της από την Πολιτεία.

Οι συμμετέχουσες – οντες – οντα θα κληθούν να πάρουν θέση, να συμμετάσχουν ενεργά στην τοποθέτηση απέναντι στα φαινόμενα βίας και επιθετικότητας που έχουν υποστεί και υφίστανται οι θηλυκότητες και, τέλος, να αποτελέσουν μέλη μιας ενσυνείδητης υπεράσπισης του δικαιώματος στην Ελεύθερη Ύπαρξη, ζητούμενο τόσο θεραπευτικό, όσο και βαθιά ανθρώπινο.

The archetype of the feminine in modern thinking and attitude. Individuality, femininity, social classification. Stereotypes. Action as a movement and a political action. The words, trends and phrases that have been terrorizing femininities for centuries. Do I endure or do I act? Do I forget or remember? Do I keep quiet or do I speak? Am I being or am I just attending? Who am I; And finally, who do you think I am?

Femininity as a Person, the frameworks of Paideia in which it moves and acts, its treatment by the Politeia.

The participants will be invited to take a stand, to actively participate in the standing up against the phenomena of violence and aggression that femininities have suffered and are still experiencing and, finally, to be members of a conscious defense of the right to Free Existence, a demand therapeutic, as well as profoundly human.

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

feminine, stereotypes, action, being, speak

# 88

## Focusing on the safe space. Εστίαση στον Ασφαλή Χώρο.

**Zafiria Detoraki** EcP<sup>1</sup>, **charis paraskevopoulou** EcP<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>ICPS, Athens, Greece. <sup>2</sup>Psychochroma, Athens, Greece

### Zafiria Detoraki Author Bio

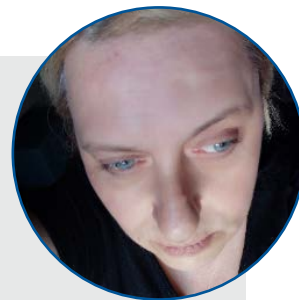
Η Ζαφειρία γεννήθηκε και μεγάλωσε στα Χανιά. Στα 18 έτη, ήρθε στην Αθήνα και σπούδασε Κοινωνική Λειτουργός. Άρχισε να δουλεύει σε πλαίσια για παιδιά με αναπηρίες και άσκησε για αρκετά χρόνια την Κοινωνική Εργασία σε Διευθύνσεις Πρόνοιας του Υπουργείου Υγείας. Παράλληλα ασχολήθηκε με τη μουσική, το τραγούδι και τη ραδιοφωνική παραγωγή. Όταν βρέθηκε να εργάζεται στο Κέντρο Διαπολιτισμικής Ψυχιατρικής και Περίθαλψης με τους Ρομά του Δήμου Αχαρνών - Ζεφυρίου, άρχισε την εκπαίδευση στην Προσωποκεντρική Προσέγγιση στο ICPS (τότε Κέντρο Εκπαίδευσης στην Προσωποκεντρική Προσέγγιση), με δάσκαλο τον Ομότιμο Καθηγητή του Πανεπιστημίου Αθηνών Ιούλιο Ιωσιφίδη. Προσελήφθη στον ΟΚΑΝΑ σε Μονάδες Υποκατάστασης και Απεξάρτησης και συνέχισε την εκπαίδευση στο Focusing και την ειδική εκπαίδευση στις Εξαρτήσεις.

Στον ΟΚΑΝΑ εργάζεται τα τελευταία 26 χρόνια, ενώ παράλληλα συνεργάζεται με το Μεταπτυχιακό Πρόγραμμα στις Εξαρτήσεις του Τμήματος Ψυχολογίας του Πανεπιστημίου Κρήτης στο Ρέθυμνο, όπου εκπαιδεύει και εποπτεύει Μεταπτυχιακούς φοιτητές. Τα τελευταία 6 χρόνια εκπαιδεύει στη Focusing διαδικασία, εκπαιδευόμενους ψυχοθεραπευτές Μη-Κατευθυντικής Παρέμβασης στα Χανιά. Από το 2009 κατέχει τον τίτλο European Certificate for Psychotherapy της Ευρωπαϊκής Εταιρείας Ψυχοθεραπείας (EAP) ως πιστοποιημένη Προσωποκεντρική Βιωματική Ψυχοθεραπεύτρια. Τα ενδιαφέροντά της και τα δυνατά της σημεία είναι η διδασκαλία και η εποπτεία υποψηφίων κοινωνικών λειτουργών και ψυχοθεραπευτών, η ατομική και ομαδική θεραπεία, η διαχείριση συγκρούσεων, η ενδυνάμωση νέων στο επάγγελμα του ψυχοθεραπευτή, ο ιδιαίτερος τρόπος προσέγγισης των ανθρώπων με αυθεντικότητα, χιούμορ και ενσυναίσθηση, η βαθειά της πίστη στην καλή φύση του ανθρώπου και... το τραγούδι ως τρόπος έκφρασης και αυτοθεραπείας.



### charis paraskevopoulou Author Bio

Απόφοιτος του τμήματος Φιλοσοφίας Παιδαγωγικής και Ψυχολογίας με ειδίκευση Ψυχολογίας του ΕΚΠΑ, εκπαιδευτήκα στην Προσωποκεντρική και Focusing Βιωματική Ψυχοθεραπεία και είμαι κάτοχος του Ευρωπαϊκού Πιστοποιητικού Ψυχοθεραπείας (EcP). Έχω εκπαιδευτεί στο Γενεόγραμμα και έχω λάβει επιμόρφωση σχετικά με το Γενεόγραμμα Τοπίου και τις Νευροεπιστήμες, καθώς επίσης και με τις εξαρτήσεις στα πλαίσια του προγράμματος ΙΤΑΚΑ. Έχω ασχοληθεί με την εκπαίδευση ατόμων πάνω στην Επικοινωνία και τις Ανθρώπινες Σχέσεις καθώς και με την Εποπτεία φροντιστών ατόμων με αναπηρία στον εργασιακό χώρο στα πλαίσια του ΙΕΚ Μεταμόρφωσης. Σημαντικό μέρος της πορείας μου ως ψυχοθεραπεύτρια καταμετρώ την εμπειρία μου ως μέλος της εθελοντικής ομάδας υποστήριξης ατόμων στο Συμβουλευτικό Κέντρο του Δήμου Διονύσου, τόσο σε ομάδες όσο και σε ατομικές συνεδρίες, όπως επίσης και σε ομιλίες στα σχολεία και τις δομές του Δήμου. Ασχολούμαι με ατομικές συνεδρίες, καθώς και με συνεδρίες ζεύγους, με ομάδες προσωπικής ανάπτυξης και ενδυνάμωσης, σχολές γονέων και συμβουλευτική εταιρειών με στόχο την οργάνωση της δομής αλλά και μια πιο ανθρώπινη προσέγγιση στον επιχειρηματικό τομέα και με εκπαιδεύσεις και επιμορφώσεις στον χώρο της Focusing Βιωματικής Προσέγγισης. Η συγγραφή άρθρων και η συμμετοχή σε συνέδρια και σε ραδιοφωνικές εκπομπές με ενδυναμωτικό περιεχόμενο είναι μέρος των ασχολιών μου. Από το 2023 αποτελώ υπερήφανα μέλος του δικτύου γυναικών συγγραφέων κατά της έμφυλης βίας και των γυναικοκτονιών «Η Φωνή Της». Θέλω δε να πιστεύω ότι όλα τα παραπάνω τα κάνω κάπως καλύτερα από το να συντάσσω ένα βιογραφικό σημείωμα!



## Abstract

Σκοπός αυτού του εργαστηρίου είναι μια πρώτη επαφή και γνωριμία με αυτό που αποτελεί φυσική συνθήκη των έμβιων όντων και από το οποίο φαίνεται να έχουμε απομακρυνθεί μέσα στα στενά όρια του «πολιτισμένου» κόσμου. Η Διαδικασία της Εστίασης κατά Gendlin συντελεί στο να έρθει το άτομο σε πραγματική επαφή και σχέση με το σώμα και τις πληροφορίες που αυτό αποθηκεύει κατά τη διάρκεια της ζωής του. Ο Ασφαλής Χώρος είναι το ψυχικό μέρος όπου αυτές οι πληροφορίες γίνονται αντικείμενο διαχείρισης και λήψης αποφάσεων.

## Submission type

Demonstration Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

Focusing, Ασφαλής χώρος, Gendlin, σώμα, εστίαση

# 89

## Developing the organisations of the PCE approaches in an evolving world - What more could we be doing?

**WAPCEPC Board none, PCE Europe Board none**

*none, none, Austria*

### WAPCEPC Board Author Bio

The World Association for Person-Centered & Experiential Psychotherapy & Counseling had its genesis in the mid 1990s after person-centred theoreticians and practitioners felt there was not an adequate representation of the PCA at the First World Conference on Psychotherapy (WCP) in July 1996. You can read more about the process of WAPCEPC's evolution here. Nearly 25 years since it was officially formed, our desire remains to be an identifiable, international organization serving as a world-wide forum which: Provides a world wide forum for practitioners and scholars working within the person-centered and the experiential paradigms. Fosters the exchange of research, theory and practice across language groups and cultures. Supports and encourages scientific study as well as improvement of practice in the field of psychotherapy and counseling. Promotes person centered and experiential perspectives. Stimulates cooperation and dialogue with other psychotherapeutic orientations.



### PCE Europe Board Author Bio

PCE Europe started as the Network of European Associations for Person Centred and Experiential Psychotherapy and Counselling (NEAPCEPC) and was founded in 1998 in the city of Luxembourg on the occasion of the Annual Meeting of the European Person-/Client-Centred Organisations in Luxembourg. The terms "Person-Centred" and "Experiential" and the concepts and processes they encompass have an extensive, rich and evolving history. The choice of the phrase "Person-Centred and Experiential" is intended to promote continued dialogue and development. The name of the network has been changed to PCE Europe in 2009 at the Szeged meeting for reasons of practicality.



## Abstract

In a joint activity, the Boards of both the WAPCEPC and PCE Europe wish to facilitate a round table and discussion that is open to all. Our aim is to highlight the work of the two associations and their respective commitment to supporting and promoting the person centred and experiential

approaches in a rapidly changing world. Perhaps we must ask ourselves: are we doing enough?

Participants are invited to join our conversation on the person-centred values and how we as a community can develop and maintain them. Another crucial reflection will be on how PCA professionals could be better supported by the associations in times of adverse reality.

During the round table our hope is that we can all contribute in an honest, open and person-centred way, exploring new types of dialogue, and facilitating inner personal change that leads to a deeper relational level of engagement within and between the organisations.

The activity will be an opportunity to engage with board members of both associations, to find out more about what the organisations do, how they operate, the work they are currently undertaking, the benefits of being a member, and how you can become involved.

## Submission type

Structured Discussion (90 min)

## Moderator/Discussant

WAPCEPC Board, PCE Europe Board

## Keywords

World Association for Person-Centered & Experiential Psychotherapy & Counseling, PCE Europe, PCA values, Professional support, Open discussion

# 91

## Future Directions and Growth Edges Next Steps: Taking 2022 eDelphi Survey Results Further

Prof **David Murphy** PhD [ORCID iD](#)<sup>1</sup>, **Niels Bagge** Cand.Psych [ORCID iD](#)<sup>2,3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>University of Nottingham, Nottingham, United Kingdom. <sup>2</sup>Institut for Emotionsfokuseret Terapi, Roskilde, Denmark. <sup>3</sup>Dansk Selskab for Personcentreret og Oplevelsesorienteret Psykoterapi (DSPOP), Roskilde, Denmark

### Prof David Murphy

[0000-0003-0019-3124](#)

#### Author Bio

Professor of Psychology and Education, University of Nottingham, UK. PCEP Co-Editor 2012-2022. Chair of PCE2022 & PCE2024 Scientific Committees.



### Niels Bagge

[0000-0002-4560-6212](#)

#### Author Bio

Authorized psychologist, specialist and supervisor of psychotherapy. Emotion Focused Therapy supervisor and trainer (ISEFT) & Focusing Trainer (TIFI). Head of Institute for Emotion Focused Therapy Denmark & private practice. Chair of Danish Society for Person-Centered and Experiential Psychotherapy. Chair of organizing committee for PCE2022. In scientific committee for PCE2024. Delegate of PCE-Europe to the PCE-Literature Project



## Abstract

The aim of the workshop is to continue the exploration of the future directions and growth edges of Person-Centred Experiential Therapy approach. This process was started with the eDelphi Survey conducted as part of the planning of the PCE2022 World Conference where 43 members of the scientific committee were asked: "What are, or will be, the most important themes/topics that represent the emerging growth edges of the PCE approach in the next 10 years?" This question produced more than 100 replies with detailed commentaries, which were synthesized into 11 overarching themes by conducting thematic analysis. Themes were rated for their desirability and probability. The top ranking themes for desirability that represent the emerging growth edges

of the PCE approach was “therapist training and development”, which inspired the theme for PCE2024. The results of the eDelphi survey were presented at PCE2022. This workshop will continue to expand this discussion by considering more themes, their underlying reply's with commentaries. This workshop aims to capture the richness of the survey, and reflect on potentially overlooked important topics or reply's that “drowned” in synthesizing the overarching themes. In the original eDelphi survey, the panelists were anonymous throughout the process. In this workshop, we invite the participants to an open discussion of themes and topics that we will argue could be important for the emerging growth edges of the PCE approach. With slides we will present briefly the initial results and then dive deeper into the qualitative data in some of the overarching themes. By sharing some of the survey's replies, we invite the participants to engage in further discussion of the substance of what PCE is and how it can best be further developed.

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

PCE Approach, Future directions for PCE, Growth Edges of PCE, Delphi Survey, Wisdom of the Elders

# 93

## Why we need a metaphysics of the person-centred approach

Dr **Seb Heid** BA in Person-Centred Counselling and Psychotherapy  
*Private Practice, London, United Kingdom*

### Dr Seb Heid Author Bio

Seb Heid works as a person-centred therapist in London. He came into counselling after previous lives first in academia (PhD in Phonetics) and then in industry (software engineer). He has a strong interest in the theory of counselling and the person-centred approach. Driven by a life-long passion for philosophy, he is also interested in the phenomenology of power, theory of affect, the understanding of understanding, and the intersections of all of these themes in the task of making sense of our postmodern existence. He has extensively explored the role of power in the lives of his clients and in our culture in general. Originally from Germany, Seb has lived in the UK for over 25 years now. From 2017 to 2022 he served as a trustee for the tPCA.



## Abstract

The recent release of the 3rd edition of "The tribes of the Person-Centred Nation" (Mick Cooper ed.) shows the world of person-centred therapies as a beautiful kaleidoscope of different but fundamentally related forms of practising. What unites them is the legacy of Carl Rogers. The 6 necessary and sufficient conditions and the 19 propositions could be called a person-centred metaphysics, spelling out a framework of basic convictions that underpin theory and practice.

So, do we still need to develop a person-centred metaphysics or do we only remember that we actually have one? I want to argue: both. We need to remember that we have a valuable set of core assumptions, but also that Rogers never suggested they could not be improved on and explicitly expressed that it was work in progress.

Moreover, while all person-centred therapists hold onto the basic ideas they leave room for interpretation which in turn leaves us with viciously discussed differences in how to apply them. Acknowledging that the world of the person-centred tribes is not a peaceful kaleidoscope. I want to propose that we need an open discussion about the basic metaphysical assumptions of the approach and their interpretation.

Acknowledging the philosophical background of the approach with roots in phenomenology, existentialism, pragmatism and using also inspiration from dynamic systems theory (Capra) to critical theory (Adorno, Jaeggi) I want to have a close look at the key concepts and the often only implicit convictions people carry in their hearts.



The goal is not to suggest a definitive version of a person-centred metaphysics but to establish it as a field for ongoing discussion. Lack of clarity and with it a lack of confidence around deeply held convictions might explain why people sometimes react with such enmity to diverse ideas around how to interpret the person-centred framework.

I will present a comparison of arguments from person-centred literature around key concepts like non-directivity, the actualising tendency, the core conditions, and how they could fit together in a consistent system, and make the case that we need person-centred metaphysics for better education of therapists but even more importantly as a field of engagement with and discussion of central convictions to help us all to better understand who we are as a community.

I hope to discuss with participants their views on a person-centred metaphysics, its indispensable concepts and how they think these could best be defined.

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

Philosophy, Person-Centred Approach, Tribes, Metaphysics, -

# 94

## How to prepare a person to become a therapist?

Mrs. **Maria Fijewska** MA<sup>1</sup>, Mrs. **Sheila Haugh** MA<sup>2</sup>, Mr. **Siebrecht Vanhooren** PhD<sup>3</sup>, Mrs. **Lídia Isabel Fidalgo Joaquim Ferreira** MA<sup>4</sup>, Mr. **Alexandros Vallidis** MSc<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>INTRA CENTER, WARSAW, Poland. <sup>2</sup>Metanoia Institute, London, United Kingdom. <sup>3</sup>University of Leuven (KU Leuven), Leuven, Belgium. <sup>4</sup>Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa, Lisboa, Portugal. <sup>5</sup>ICPS College for Humanistic Sciences, Athens, Greece

### Mrs. Maria Fijewska Author Bio

Maria Fijewska—therapist and supervisor. Co-founder of the Intra Center. Program Director of the INTRA School of Psychotherapy. Author of books and articles. The book *Experiencing and Psychotherapy* was written under her editorship. She is interested in the mystery of psychological change.



### Mrs. Sheila Haugh Author Bio

Sheila has been involved in the training of person-centred therapists since 1992. This started with the setting up of the Institute of Person-Centred Learning (IPCL) GB with, amongst others, Irene Fairhurst and Tony Merry. She has been involved in the professional accreditation/registration of person-centred training programmes at both undergraduate and Masters level. She is currently the Director of Studies for the Diploma/MSc Contemporary Person-Centred Psychotherapy, Metanoia Institute, London UK. The programme is professionally recognised by the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (UKCP). She also has a small practice in Prague working English speaking people.



### Mr. Siebrecht Vanhooren Author Bio

Siebrecht Vanhooren (PhD) is professor of clinical psychology at the Faculty of Psychology and Educational Sciences at the University of Leuven (KU Leuven) in Belgium. He teaches counseling, psychological interventions, and person-centered, experiential, focusing and existential psychotherapy at undergraduate, graduate and postgraduate level. He is the director of the person-centered therapy training programs and the existential well-being counseling program at KU Leuven. He also works as an experiential-existential psychotherapist, researcher and supervisor at the academic therapy center PraxisP at KU Leuven. He is the co-director KU Leuven's Meaning & Existence research center and a committee member of The Eugene T. Gendlin Center for Research in Experiential Philosophy and Psychology at The Focusing Institute (New York). His research includes existential concerns, meaning in life, posttraumatic growth, experiential-existential interventions, experiential dreamwork, focusing, and existential empathy.



### **Mrs. Lídia Isabel Fidalgo Joaquim Ferreira Author Bio**

Completed the master's degree in Help Relationships and Therapeutic Intervention on 2012/05/02 from the Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa. Is a Guest Assistant Professor at the Universidade Autónoma de Lisboa. Works in the area(s) of Social Sciences with an emphasis on Psychology and Humanities with an emphasis on Philosophy, Ethics and Religion with an emphasis on Theology. Is a Person Centered Counsellor and Psychotherapist, and Trainer for the APPCPC Associação Portuguesa de Psicoterapia Centrada na Pessoa e Counselling, certified by the Person Centered and Experiential, Europe.



### **Mr. Alexandros Vallidis Author Bio**

Mr. Alexandros Vallidis works as a person-centered trainer, therapist, supervisor, and academic lead on Psychotherapy programs at the ICPS College for Humanistic Sciences. He holds a psychology degree from Panteion University of Athens and an MSc in psychotherapy from ICPS College for Humanistic Sciences/University of Strathclyde. Additionally, Alexandros is a trainer in Child Protection and Grief Counseling and has received training in Addiction Counseling and the Neuroaffective and Relational model for trauma treatment. He is a researcher in PRAKSIS and UNHCR for relational trauma.



## Abstract

### **Round table discussion 90 minutes.**

I propose a meeting of people involved in preparing students to become therapists and exchange experiences in several important areas. I hope that such a meeting will be inspiring and help to improve our Schools of Psychotherapy. I would like representatives of 5 Schools of Psychotherapy in the humanistic-experiential approach from different countries to actively participate in the meeting.

Topics of discussion are :

1. How to select candidates for the school? What is a convincing criterion that creates a chance that the candidate will be a good therapist?
2. Forms of work that are specific to a particular school and of which the school is particularly satisfied, proud.
3. What is the most difficult problem in the process of preparing future therapists? How has this problem been solved so far?
4. If we agree that supervision + education + self-therapy is not enough to raise a good therapist, then what else and how do we convey this "something"?

Each topic is discussed for 20 minutes /5 presentations of 3 minutes each and 5 minutes for comments/. The last 10 minutes are used to summarize.

# Submission type

Structured Discussion (90 min)

# Moderator/Discussant

Maria Fijewska

# Keywords

Schools for Psychotherapy, Education of therapists, Profile of PCE therapist, The process of education of therapist, Method of learning psychotherapy

# 95

## Short-term experiential psychotherapy/ step as a method increasing the therapist's involvement and enthusiasm

Mrs. **Maria Fijewska** MA, Mr. **Piotr Dariusz Fijewski** MA  
INTRA CENTER, WARSAW, Poland

### **Mrs. Maria Fijewska Author Bio**

Maria Fijewska-therapist and supervisor. Co-founder of the Intra Center. Program Director of the INTRA School of Psychotherapy. Author of books and articles. The book *Experiencing and Psychotherapy* was written under her editorship. She is interested in the mystery of psychological change.



### **Mr. Piotr Dariusz Fijewski Author Bio**

Piotr Dariusz Fijewski-therapist and supervisor, director and co-founder of the Intra Center. Author of the method of working with trauma *Symbolic Assertiveness*. He has written a number of psychological books. He is interested in the therapeutic relationship and the development of agency.



## Abstract

Short-Term Experiential Psychotherapy/STEP/ is a method that strongly involves the client in the therapy and healing process, as well as strongly involves the therapist in the whole process. STEP can be a tempting proposition for therapists who are in a situation of impending professional burnout to change the way they work - to increase motivation, contact with fresh experience and dynamic, enthusiastic work with clients.

The STEP method is based on the experiences of person-centered therapy, focusing, relational depth, and Gestalt and EFT therapy procedures. However, it is largely an author's method. A novelty is the written contract entered into by the therapist with the so-called helpful part of the client's person. Each session includes work on a therapeutic screen, on which the client's painful experiences are projected. While working on the screen, the therapist sits next to and processes the experience together with the client.

The method also has the advantage of a short process time of 15-30 sessions and a high level of

effectiveness. At the end of the presentation, we will share the first pilot results of STEP effectiveness research currently being conducted by the Intra Center in Warsaw

The discussion can cover the following topics:

- What clients are worth or not worth offering STEP to ?
- What might be the limitations of the method ?
- Whether novel STEP procedures can be used in long-term therapy?

## Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

## Keywords

Short-Term Experiential Psychotherapy, agency of client, methods of psychotherapy, role of therapist, effectiveness

# 97

## Εργαστήριο - Θέλω να με δεις

Mrs. **Nektaria Pateraki - Kastrinaki** MSc

Τεχνη του Θεραπέυειν, ATHENS, Greece

### **Mrs. Nektaria Pateraki - Kastrinaki Author Bio**

Η Πατεράκη-Καστρινάκη Νεκταρία είναι ψυχολόγος με μεταπτυχιακές σπουδές (Msc) στη συμβουλευτική, πιστοποιημένη ψυχοθεραπεύτρια προσωπικοκεντρικής από την Ε.Ε.Ψ.Ε. εκπαιδύτρια και επόπτρια στην Προσωποκεντρική και στην παρεμβαίνουσα μη κατευθυντική (N.D.I.) Η ψυχοθεραπευτική της εκπαίδευση είναι στη συστημική, στη προσωποκεντρική και στην παρεμβαίνουσα μη κατευθυντική N.D.I καθώς και στη θεραπεία ζεύγους στη συγκινησιακά εστιασμένη θεραπεία (e.ft) της Sue Johnson. Είναι συνιδρύτρια του εκπαιδευτικού κέντρου «η τέχνη του θεραπεύειν», στο οποίο είναι εκπαιδύτρια και επόπτρια σε εκπαιδευτικά προγράμματα ενηλίκων στη συμβουλευτική και Ψυχοθεραπεία προσωπικοκεντρικής και μη κατευθυντικής παρέμβασης όπου είναι αναγνωρισμένα από την ελληνική και Ευρωπαϊκή Εταιρία Συμβουλευτικής καθώς και από τον παγκόσμιο οργανισμό της NDI.



## Abstract

Η προσωποκεντρική θεραπεία βασίζεται στην έννοια της ανάπτυξης, σύμφωνα με την οποία κάθε άτομο διαθέτει μια έμφυτη τάση που το ενθαρρύνει να αναπτύξει όλες του τις ψυχολογικές και σωματικές λειτουργίες με κάθε τρόπο, ώστε να οδηγηθεί στην αυτονομία, στην ενότητα, στην αυτοπραγμάτωση και την αυτορρύθμιση.

Η αρμονία ανάμεσα στον τρόπο που βιώνει το άτομο, την εμπειρία του και τον τρόπο που την αντιλαμβάνεται μέσα από τις επιδράσεις του περιβάλλοντος του είναι καθοριστικός παράγοντας για την ανάπτυξη του ...που όμως συχνά σε αυτή την πορεία καταλυτικό ρόλο παίζει το ποιος μας έχει δει ..πρόσωπο(προς+όψη=σε βλέπω)

Για να γίνεις πρόσωπο κάποιος πρέπει να σε δει ..να δει τις σκέψεις σου, τα συναισθήματα σου, τις ανάγκες σου, τις επιθυμίες σου..

Ποιος μας έχει δει, λοιπόν, για να μπορούμε να δούμε και εμείς τον εαυτό μας και να γίνουμε πρόσωπα.

Στο βιωματικό εργαστήριο μας θα ταξιδέψουμε μαζί στον τρόπο που οι άλλοι μας είδαν ή μας έμαθαν να βλέπουμε τον εαυτό μας ...

# Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

# Keywords

Person , View of self , Perceptions



# 98

## Shame in the room

Mrs. **Barbora Hrdlickova** MSc  
*Fokus Praha, Prague, Czech Republic*

### **Mrs. Barbora Hrdlickova Author Bio**

Born in Czechoslovakia and living in The Czech Republic. Clinical psychologist, psychotherapist and supervisor in training. Barbora has been working in the mental health system mostly with adults and adolescents for more than 20 years. She works with individuals, groups, couples and families in the national health service and also in her private practice. She is a lecturer for Centrum for Mental Health Care Development in Prague and works as a training facilitator.



## Abstract

Shame, guilt, and embarrassment belong to self-conscious emotions. Early in life, a child begins formulating a sense of self and developing the cognitive ability to reflect on her/himself. Self-awareness allows for the idea of “me” and the child is able to consider her/himself in interaction with others. The exposure to positive and negative regard affects the child’s behaviour and how the child experiences self-conscious emotions.

Shame and guilt can be useful in regulating and promoting social and moral development. When harnessed constructively, these emotions can enhance therapists’ or supervisors’ empathy, ethical awareness, and relational depth, promoting a profound understanding of client experiences and fostering a safe environment rooted in authenticity and compassion. However, in their maladaptive forms, shame and guilt can pose substantial challenges.

How do they impact the process of therapy/supervision - what can and cannot happen in the room? How can we notice these emotions - in you, in the other person? What can you do as a therapist or a supervisor to manage these feelings?

## Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

## Keywords

shame, guilt, embarassement, psychotherapy, supervision

# 99

## Meaning 'Self-Care' through PCAGIP (Person-Centered Approach Group Incident Process) Experiences

Ms **Michiko Miyazawa** Master of Psychology, Mr. **Tomonari Yamane** Master of Psychology, Prof **Yukishige Nakata** Ph.D.

*Kansai University, Suita, Japan*

### Ms Michiko Miyazawa Author Bio

Michiko Miyazawa is a doctoral student in Psychology, an industrial and organizational psychotherapist. Her work focuses specifically on Self-Care process in Person-Centred Approach. Also interested in well-being. Her favorite is the Moomins.



### Mr. Tomonari Yamane Author Bio

Tomonari Yamane is a doctoral student in Psychology, a clinical therapist. His interest is the growth of Person-Centered therapists.



### Prof Yukishige Nakata Author Bio

Yukishige Nakata is a Professional Person-Centred psychologist in Japan. His current work is about 'Relational Depth'.



## Abstract

**Motivation:** This study explored the meaning of psychological self-care based on the philosophy of the Person-Centered Approach(PCA). This can lead to new perspectives on approaches other than providing information and guidance on self-care education for all.

**Problem:** 'Self-care' emphasises autonomy in terms of self-use and self-determination rather than professional support. However, what is done in general psychological self-care education in Japan is based only on the provision of specialised knowledge, which is insufficient regarding autonomy.

Therefore, to further develop self-care education in Japan, it is necessary to incorporate an approach that focuses on deepening self-acceptance and drawing out a person's own natural strengths and resources. In this study, PCAGIP (Person-Centered Approach Group Incident Process), a group work based on the PCA theory, was implemented as self-care education.

**Methodology:** The model workshop (PCAGIP for Self-Care) was tested and participants (n=9) completed a fillable questionnaire administered before and after the workshop. The questionnaire consisted of the items about impressions of participation in the PCAGIP, Psychological Well-being Scale, Japanese version of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale, K6, and Psychological Safety Scale. Qualitative data were analysed using the Steps for Coding and Theorization method (SCAT). Quantitative data were analysed using the Wilcoxon signed-rank test to assess the extent of the intervention effect.

**Results:** With psychological safety and the relief of not having to draw conclusions, participants could accept their unfavorable aspects and lead to greater congruence while going through the process of self- reflection, gratitude for awareness. Differences of opinion with others lead to recognition of distinctions between self and others, awareness of diversity, and tolerance of the values of others. By visualizing and sharing the saying, it is possible to re-experience, personalize and understand through experience. By sharing the process while feeling the similarity, distance, and relationship among members, a sense of unity and atmosphere for problem solving can be achieved through the participation of all members.

And after the workshop, psychological safety scores were significantly higher.

**Implications:** PCAGIP creates an environment of psychological safety within the group. Meanings 'Self- Care' through PCAGIP experience are twofold, self-acceptance and acceptance of others. Limitation of this study is that the number of participants are small.

**Discussion:** The findings suggest that an environment of psychological safety can bring 'Self-Care' regarding self-acceptance. And it is necessary to clarify how self-acceptance can be self-care.

## Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

## Keywords

Self-Care, PCAGIP, self-acceptance, workplace

# 100

## Professionalisation of person-centred psychotherapists in light of academisation

Prof **Aglaja Przyborski** Ph.D. [ORCID iD](#)

*Bertha von Suttner Private University, St. Pölten, Austria*

### Prof Aglaja Przyborski Author Bio

Person-centred psychotherapist, psychotherapy trainer APG-IPS, doctorate in psychology, habilitated cultural scientist, university professor for psychotherapy Main areas of psychotherapy: eating disorders, behaviour that can be criminalised, "adjustment disorders", couples, love and sexuality, identity Main areas of research: Qualitative and reconstructive methods, epistemic foundations of empirical research, praxeological sociology of knowledge, implicit knowledge, professionalisation

### Abstract

A new psychotherapy law has been in force in Austria for a few weeks now. It provides for a full academisation of psychotherapy training while at the same time preserving approach-specific training in corresponding non-university institutions, as has been the case for many decades. This article will present the challenges and concepts of person-centred training in this context. The relation between research and a person-centred view of human nature as well as between theory and practice will play a central role.

### Submission type

Individual Paper (60 min)

### Keywords

academisation of psychotherapy training, professionalisation, Praxeology, tacit knowledge, Person-centred image of the human being

# 101

## Self-Determination Theory and Person-Centered Approach as the “Why” and “How” of the Functioning Person

Ms **Beate Weissinger** MA  
*IPS, Vienna, Austria. SFU, Vienna, Austria*

### Ms Beate Weissinger Author Bio

Beate Weissinger began her education with studies in psychology. After the founding of the Sigmund Freud Private University, she continued her studies in the field of psychotherapy science with special consideration of the philosophy of science. At the same time, she completed her training as person-centered psychotherapist and counselor at IPS under the direction of Peter F. Schmid, Marietta Winkler and Peter Frenzel. Beate Weissinger has been working in her private practice for over 10 years.

Additionally, she has been involved in the therapy of the long-term unemployed for 7 years.



## Abstract

Carl R. Rogers identified “the necessary and sufficient conditions of therapeutic personality change” through extensive empirical data. However, he had no interest in asking the question “why” his therapeutic variables had their undisputed effectiveness. The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) provides extensive data on this exact topic. SDT is a well-founded motivation theory that aims to explain a wide range of human behavior. Just as the person-centered approach is not only a psychotherapeutic method but a cultural philosophy.

SDT is axiomatically based on a not only humanistic foundation but also uses basic assumptions common to PCA. Even though the inherent connection from SDT to PCA will be quite obvious to the person-centered professionals, SDT fails to reference it.

To correct this omission, I propose the hypothesis that SDT provides data to strengthen PCA by answering the question why its principles have their well-known impact on the human being.

SDT’s six “mini theories” allow to differentiate PCA’s terms. Of special interest to me is the SDT mini theory of basic psychological needs that are defined as autonomy, competence and relatedness. These needs connect very well to Rogers’ congruence, positive regard and empathy. Also, findings of SDT about negative effects of controlling mechanisms provides a well-researched argument as to why the PCA rejects the use of techniques.

Applying this hypothesis, I will contribute to one of the main criticisms on PCA. While the “necessary” part of Rogers conditions is broadly accepted in the therapeutic field the “sufficient” part is not.

SDT explains and proves why it is essential for well-being not to use controlling mechanisms such as techniques.

By looking at the whole six mini theories it was possible to detect basic and inherent assumptions that allowed to investigate the relation of SDT and PCA.

Thus, I will demonstrate that SDT and PCA can indeed be viewed as merely two different viewpoints to the same universal assumptions about humans. They are different perspectives on the functional person. SDT explains why different mechanisms enhance or undermine well-being whereas PCA provides a theory on how to improve functioning and well-being. SDT and PCA can become mutual addition and extension to each other's theory.

## Submission type

Brief Individual Paper (20 min)

## Keywords

Person-centered Approach, Self-determination Theory, therapeutic conditions, basic psychological needs, functioning person

# 102

## Group-Supervision for Counsellors: The Power of the Reflecting Team

**Krista Susman** Mag.

*zb centrum für beratung, Krems, Austria*

### **Krista Susman Author Bio**

Mag.a Krista Susman is placed in Vienna, Austria. She works as CEO of the NPO zb centrum für beratung, which is offering counselling in 15 cities in Austria, and has been working for years on pca-core values in leadership and developing programs based on pca principles. She is working as a person-centered supervisor for groups and individuals and as lecturer for Universities. She's particularly interested in everything that helps us understand out interconnectedness in a living world.



### **Abstract**

In my experience as a person-centered supervisor, mainly for counsellors in the psycho-social field, I have come to find it particularly helpful to sometimes work with defined process-structures in group supervision. I then might use an adapted version from a method from the Systemic Approach, the "reflecting team", which I'd like to demonstrate in this Workshop. This method of the "reflecting team" can also be helpful for intervision-groups (peer groups not working with a defined supervisor). The Workshop is aiming both at those interested in group-supervision (or intervision) as such and also at those who would like to consult on an issue they are bringing. From a person-centered view, I understand supervision as work with and about the (present) case-giver, not about their (absent) client. This might sound obvious, in my experience it can be missed easily. The "primary" empathy, the focus point is with what the case-giver brings about their struggle, their question, their issues in relation to their client. It is not about counselling the client through the mediation of the supervisee. In a (maybe less experienced) group though "helping" dynamics sometimes can arise which might become difficult to handle. I offer the method of reflecting team when it's about case-work, when the group has not established a stable culture yet how to remain with the needs of the case-giver, or when the group is prone to jumping to quick fixes, or when it seems hard for participants to come up with a case because they fear being judged, or when the supervision is happening within an institutional frame where there is rivalry etc. I also might offer this method if I think it's necessary to actively foster hearing different voices in the group. This form provides a high amount of protection for the case-giver, as the supervisor is holding the frame and intervening whenever the group starts projecting, or is going off-topic, or giving unwanted advice. It is divided in two major steps, the first one being in dialogue only with the supervisor, the second one bringing the reflections of the group on board. A major part of this work is centered around the process of finding the relevant question, as it might already contain it's answer when it hits the core issue the case-giver is grappling with.

# Submission type

Experiential Mini Workshop (90 min)

# Keywords

Supervision, Reflecting team, Group, Widening Perspective



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## Willing to play? Facilitating group exercises in a person-centered way to foster space and reflection.

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Mag.a Krista Susman is based in Vienna, Austria. She works as CEO of the NPO zb zentrum für beratung, which is offering counselling in 15 cities in Austria, and has been working for years on pca-core values in leadership and developing programs based on pca principles. She is working as a person-centered supervisor for groups and individuals and as lecturer for Universities. She's particularly interested in everything that helps us understand out interconnectedness in a living world.



## Abstract

Sometimes it can be difficult for a group, particularly in functional contexts such as professional environments, to relate to what is relevant to the group in the here and now without getting distracted or pulled into side tracks. This is even harder if there is not already an ongoing group-culture supporting both holding space for speech and for the necessary pauses; so to speak, in an environment where connection and reflection might not be shared core values for achieving the goals of the group or team. Nevertheless, space and silence are as indispensable conditions for encounter, inclusion, collaboration, even excellence in teams, as much as is the quality and depth of what is communicated directly. Like in music, timing, pausing and playing define the piece as a whole, it's not just about the single note, or the solo. When the speaking speed of a group (i.e. of some speakers) is higher than their potential to make sense of the ongoing processes in a personal, relational and intellectual way, it can become crucial for facilitators/leaders to slow the processes down and create a focus for all to be able to join in: The group's potential will only be fulfilled when all have found their meaning within that group, and rushing over that point will not help. What can we offer from a person-centered perspective to facilitate a frame for connection and shared focus, in all given time boundaries? How can we balance the need for openness to emergent processes and yet having to achieve certain goals (like in teaching)? Coming from person-centered values, I find the reflection on the distinction between (non-)directivity, clarity and openness central when working in a strongly structured setting.

I'd like to offer some playful exercises which I have found helpful to center as group and which I've applied throughout years of group work. I have used exercises in different sorts of professional environments - supervision, university-seminars, Leadership-Workshops or adult teaching. I still

find myself surprised at times how some simple activities can shift the focus of and the atmosphere in a whole group, and what meaning the members can find in them. It's rather simple exercises which carry the potential to involve all participants and which do not prioritise talking. Their aim is to provide "material" for experiencing and reflecting as a group from a shared starting point. The exercise itself - could be playing with balls for instance - is neither central nor meaningful by itself. The working focus is on the reflecting and relating process afterwards, on the metaphors, analogies and ideas which arise. In the Workshop we'll try some exercises out, the choice of the exercises will have to depend on the size of the group. Let's find out what emerges!

## Submission type

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Activity, Reflection, experiencing connection, Creating Space



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