

**Person-centred and  
Experiential Therapies: a remarkable  
variety**

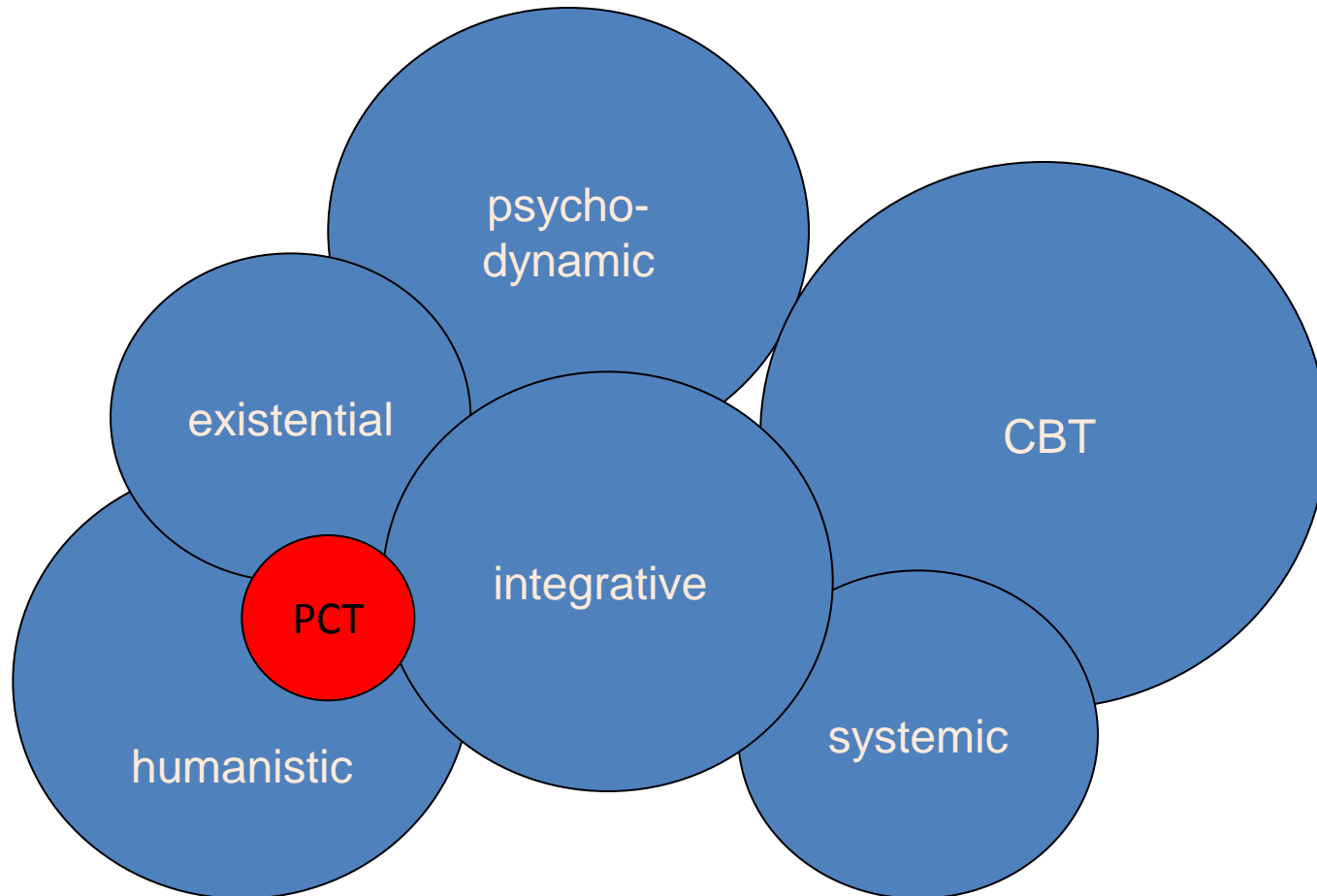
**Symposium PCE Europe**

**Prague**

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**Gerhard Stumm, Vienna**

# Paradigms in psychotherapy



# Pluralistic tradition in history of PCT

- psychoanalytic roots: Otto Rank, Jessie Taft (“relationship therapy”), Frederick Allen, Virginia Robinson, (Elizabeth Davies), (Karen Horney)
- cathartic and expressive aspect: play therapy, (Psychodrama)
- pragmatism: James, Dewey
- phenomenology: Snygg, Combs
- Gestalt psychology: Wertheimer, Köhler, Koffka
- Humanistic psychology: Maslow
- organismic theories: Goldstein, Angyal
- encounter philosophy: Buber
- existential philosophy: Kierkegaard, Sartre, Tillich

<b>orthodox/traditional client-centred/person- centred orientation</b>		<b>various sub- orientations</b>	<b>experiential orientation</b>	
<b>Classical Client- Centred Therapy (CCT) (‘non-directive’)</b>	<b>relational / dialogic orientation (incl. Relational Depth)</b>	<b>interactional (interpersonal)</b>  <b>existential</b>  <b>disorder specific (incl. Pre-Therapy)</b>  <b>creative (Expressive Arts)</b>  <b>integrative  (Motivational Interviewing)</b>	<b>Focusing- oriented Therapy</b>	<b>Emotion-Focused Therapy (EFT)</b>

## **Overview of Person-centred and Experiential Therapies**

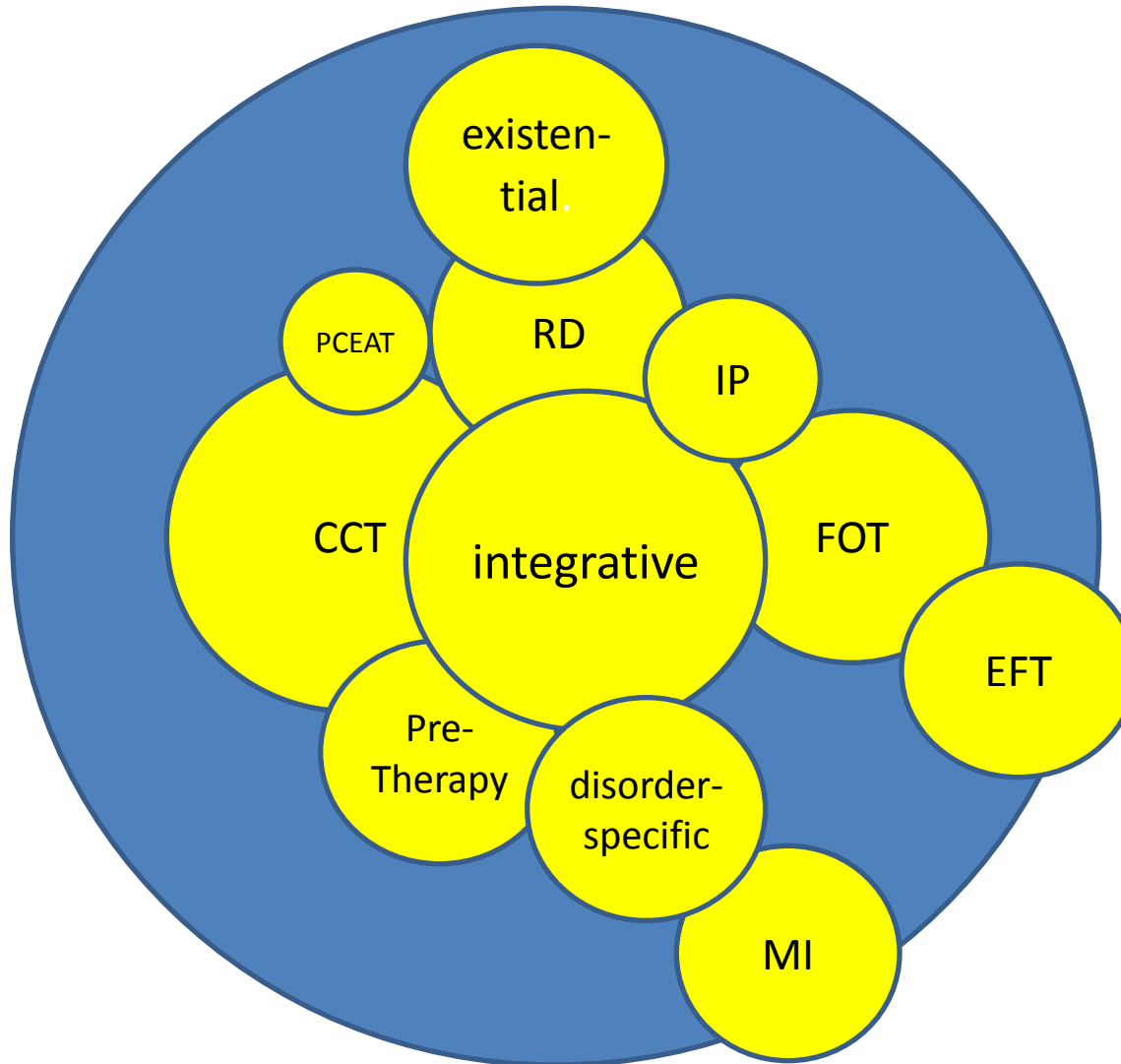
# Tribes of the Family

**CCT=Classical  
Client-centred  
Therapy**

**PCEAT=Person-  
centred Expressive  
Arts Therapy**

**RD=Relational  
Depth**

**IP=Interpersonal**



**FOT=**  
**Focusing-**  
**oriented**  
**Therapy**

**EFT=**  
**Emotion**  
**Focused**  
**Therapy**

**MI=**  
**Motivational**  
**Interviewing**

# Classical Client-centered Therapy (CCT)

- trust in the client's self-governing and growth capacity (actualising tendency)
- ethically based → non-authoritarian, no coercion and power over the client
- (principled) non-directivity (non-experiential)
- “non-diagnostic mindset” (Brodley)

method: core conditions and their implementation & perception by the client are sufficient for constructive change of the client → relational climate counts

# PCT as dialogical approach

- a tradition that has started with the late Rogers
- from a “de-personalized” therapist (Rogers, 1951) to one who involves and expresses him-/herself transparently (e.g. Rogers, 1980)
- from therapist as “alter-ego” to being the “other” → being with and being counter to the client → “two-person-centred therapy” (co-presence)



**Dave Mearns**  
(\*1947)



**Mick Cooper**  
(\*1966)



**Wolfgang Pfeiffer**  
(1919-2011)



**Peter Schmid**  
(\*1950)

# Relational Depth

- term coined by Dave Mearns (1996)
- “A state of profound contact and engagement between two people, in which each person is fully real with the Other, and able to understand and value the Other’s experiences at a high level” (Mearns & Cooper, 2005, p. xii).
- based on the fundamental need for relating deeply (more than need for UPR)
- method: spontaneous and active participation of the therapist to foster an intense meeting and connection with the client → more than actualising core conditions → self of the therapist as “developmental agenda”

Mearns, C. & Cooper, M. (2005). *Working at relational depth in counselling and psychotherapy*. London: Sage.



# Critique of RD

- *Sue Wilders*: missing unintentionality → directive
- *Keith Tudor*: depreciation for “superficial” experiencing → offending the principle of horizontalisation (all phenomena are equally to be regarded positively and unconditionally)  
what is depth and what is surface? → diagnostic expertise

# Existential

## Existential

- struggle between polarities: limitations and tragic side of existence (e.g. death, transitoriness) *and* potential
- freedom to ...
- permanent choices
- immanent tensions and contingency (“there is no cure for life“)
- future bound
- meaning
- challenging/confronting

## Humanistic/person-centred

- growth and optimism
- freedom from ...
- trust in the actualizing tendency
- conditions of worth
- here and now
- self-actualisation
- facilitating

# Interpersonal orientation

- van der Linden, van Kessel, Lietaer
- reason for incongruence: interpersonal level
- exploration of the client's relational patterns is primary (vs. self-exploration)

## method:

- non-complementary (“a-social”) responses of therapist
- meta-communication about the client-therapist interaction

goal: corrective relational experiences

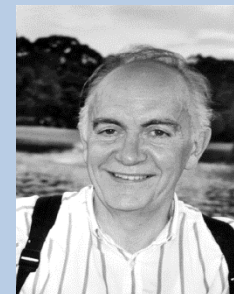
# disorder-specific

- mainly in the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Austria, Switzerland
- differentiated clinical knowledge & “disorder specific understanding“ is thought to be necessary, especially when working with severely disturbed clients → as cornerstone for empathy and UPR

Teusch, Speierer, Binder, Greenberg, also Prouty’s Pre-Therapy



Hans Swildens  
(\*1924)



Jobst Finke  
(\*1937)

# Pre-Therapy

- work with **contact impaired people** (psychotic, autistic, dissociated, dementia, mentally retarded, brain injury, ...) = pre-experiencing, pre-expressive

- method: **contact reflections** of concrete client behaviour and his environment:

**Word for Word, Facial, Body, Situational, Reiterative Reflections**

to develop or restore awareness of phenomenal field (world, self and others) → **contact functions**: reality, affective & communicative contact



Garry Prouty      Jill Prouty  
(1936-2009)

# Creative Therapy

- **Expressive Arts Therapy by Natalie Rogers**  
drawing from theory of creativity“ by her father  
specific method: “Creative Connection“: dancing,  
(Authentic) movement, music, sound, drawing,  
painting, journal writing, meditation, ... as  
channels of the healing process → intermodal approach
- Liesl Silverstone (England)
- Norbert Groddeck (Germany)  
five steps: Felt Sense, “invitation to action“,  
reflecting the product, felt shift, transfer



Natalie Rogers  
(\*1928)



N. Groddeck  
(\*1946)

# Focusing-Oriented Therapy

- Experiential therapy
- relationship quality *and* experiencing
- **Felt Sense** as compass: “whatever is said and done must be checked against the concretely felt experiencing“ (= direct reference, implicit, pre-conceptual, intricate) → felt shift
- self as process ≠ structure bound
- Listening, Guiding, Response (more than 6 steps-modell)
- process-directivity (Focusing “instructions“ = invitations)



Gene Gendlin  
(\*1926)

# Emotion Focused Therapy

- elaborated by Leslie Greenberg (drawing from Laura Rice), Robert Elliott, Jeanne Watson (former: process-experiential)
- combination of PC, Gestalt, Focusing, existential
- emotion theories & dialectic constructivism
- emotions are primary (not experiences, as Rogers and Gendlin have assumed): „You can't leave a place before you haven't arrived there“
- primary adaptive vs. maladaptive emotions
- modification (transformation) of emotional schemata
- markers and tasks (process-directive)



Les Greenberg  
\*1945



# Emotion Focused Therapy

Greenberg, L. S. (2011). *Emotion-focused therapy*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

# Motivational Interviewing (MI)

- focus is on the motivation for change (“80% Rogers”), clients are always motivated for something (natural process)
- humanistic philosophy
- dealing with ambivalence (change vs. resistance)
- empathic listening → change talk (urgency, ability & commitment for change)
- motivation-centred, change-centred, problem-centred, directive in terms of facilitating change

Miller, W.R. & Rollnick, S. (2002). *Motivational Interviewing. Preparing people for change*. 2nd ed. New York: Guilford.

# integrative

- The questions are: what is integrated? How systematically is this done? On what level? Consistent?
- first vs. second order integration: integration of elements of different suborientations, above all person-centred *and* experiential vs. integration of elements of other schools



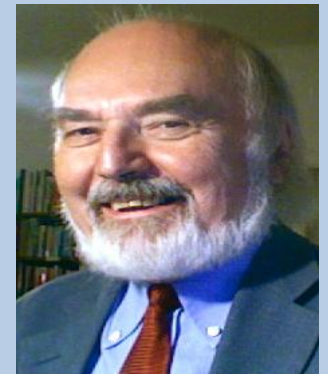
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(\*1939)



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