

CROSSING BORDERS – STEPPING INTO UNKNOWN LAND

Breaking the cycle of destructive patterns from the past
to gain a life of more empathy, compassion and cooperation

An international therapeutic & artistic encounter

During several workshops over the past years people coming from different countries and backgrounds gathered and shared their various experiences and talents. The workshops opened a space to go beyond the usual limitations and restrictions. By bridging the gap between the past and the future, a space opened allowing to find new possibilities and avenues of relating and being; not only for ourselves but for our communities.



**God turns you from one feeling to another and teaches you by means of
opposites, so that you will have two wings to fly – not one.**

Dschallaludin Rumi

The loss of Soul - being caught up in traumatic experiences

From healing rituals of indigenous people through the development of drama with chorus, dialog and movement in ancient Greece, to the expressive sculptural power of modern Art (Picasso, Frida Kahlo), people gifted with creativity and social awareness found ways to give form and shape to the experience of dreadful, devastating and often unspeakable suffering.

We are seeing more and more places in the world change into drab and lifeless areas: wastelands in which the vital spark of life has darkened or never been revealed. Individually and collectively the soul of man gets lost.

Lost souls can be recognized in human beings as an increasing isolation, internal hardening and a certain dullness of the human spirit. Having lost contact to soul or spirit causes indifference and agony that we can neither understand nor do anything about.

Soul and the relational field

More and more the connection to the Self is lost. The „Other“ is used for all imaginable repressed feelings and thoughts. There is no end to even the most absurd projections. People set themselves against each other. Politicians, people in power, and people like you and me pretend to have no alternative to our present lifestyle, which is based on ruthless competition and destructive faith in worldwide economic growth – and do not dare to risk another way of living.

As Jakob Levy Moreno – the founder of Psychodrama - would state, the Tele is lost. This missing of true relatedness creates a lot of space for demonization and idealization. A real meeting cannot take place.

The sacred core of aliveness

According to C.G.Jung, the human personality contains a vital spark or sacred core of aliveness that should personalize and embody in the course of a person's development for psychological health and ensouled living. But when trauma strikes the psyche, a dissociation or split occurs in which the vital core of the Self retreats into the unconscious. There it continues to live in suppressed ways under a spell cast by the powers of the psyche's survival system. Psychodrama therapy and art can offer an opportunity to regain contact with the lost soul and hence with aliveness, creativity and relatedness.

When, in early childhood, the vital spark of a person experiences repeated rejection, the soul cannot indwell. It cannot actualize itself in the space between self and other which is what is needed to develop an inner source of sustainment and nourishment. Instead the spark of life in the person must go into hiding and armoring. In this case surviving is accomplished through dissociation. By identification with the distorted mirrors, a false self slowly takes over the person's relation to itself and the outer world.

Trauma as the inconceivable

Traumas return repeatedly – more often than we imagine over generations. As a society, we ignore the soul with its fractures and injuries and the answer often is exclusion of "otherness" and madness.

The relations between Greece and Germany have shown recently, how forceful denied guilt and the desire for redress can rip open old wounds. Other examples point at the irreconcilable character in which people and many European countries are treating victims of wars and hunger, or just with a desire for a freer life. Even two generations after the devastating experiences of World War II, it seems difficult to take responsibility for the aftermath. Irreconcilability of people and nations serves to deny one's own responsibility and fear. In this way possible positive changes are blocked.

Why do people and nations confront each other in such destructive manner? Why do people disregard what they share? Old patterns of perpetrator and victim repeat and repeat the suppressed guilt and experienced inferiority due to the atrocities of assassinations and violation. It seems that we are forced to repeat our own conflicts, until we recognize the real causes lurking at the bottom and have mourned them.

Through trauma, concealment and extinction are passed over several generations. Guilt is repressed and the thwarted blame is passed to the next generation. Nothing spreads more easily than the waves of silence, resulting from denial of trauma.

The trauma victim challenges the view of society onto itself. He is embodying the unpleasant darkness. And he asks the following question to each of us:

"And where do you stand? - In this dark times, in this war, that happens every day, in our world, in yours as well as in mine "

Two wings to fly with

According to Greek mythology, Zeus wanted to locate the exact center of the world, "Grandmother Earth". To do this, he released two eagles from opposite ends of the earth, one from the Far East, one far from the West. The eagles met at Delphi: The place where the two worlds meet – a well-known place for oracle and self-awareness.

At this place two ways of looking at the world converge. This seems to be represented in the growing conflicts between the south and the north. All possible projections are clashing: passion against coolness, rationality against imagination, logos against mythos.

In our body these polarities (amongst others) are represented in the relation between the right and the left hemisphere of the brain. Through traumatic experiences the cooperation between both hemispheres is constricted. Here we find

a correlation to the psychic split. The left hemisphere takes control and represses the spontaneous free poetic mind.

Beauty in broken places – from fragmentation to individuation

The one-sidedness of rational thinking is unable to express and deal with the multidimensional wholeness of human life. In our work we try to re-establish the mystery of the archetypal world, to open the doors into the healing qualities of the „potential“ space.

“I’m searching ... for the `Stranger within thee` - and within me
– a more vitalistic, animistic, and phenomenological way to
address the rich complexity of the mind, one that respects the
mind`s numinousness, mystery, and infinite possibilities.”

(James Grotstein – The ineffable subject of the Unconscious)

Healing starts with the recognition of the trauma. Trauma alone does not cause the split, but the mishandling of the trauma does. Through denial, concealment and taboo the person is labeled as blamed. He or she feels wrong. Accepting and allowing the previously sealed feelings to release makes it possible to heal the traumatic experience.

“We cannot overcome the past nor can we make it undone. But we
can come to terms with it. The way in which this is done is the
lament, which springs from all memories.” (Hannah Arendt: Men in
dark times, S.30 / 31)

Cassandra, for instance, is an archetypal figure from Greek history. She went mad when she was not heard speaking out the threatening truth. She experienced extreme suffering when she knew and carried truth that nobody wanted to admit.

Trauma is forced to express itself in one way or another. It is urging to come to the surface, through symptoms of body and psyche, through art or speech. By enacting and re-living, you confide your story to the world. The first step to recovery is to support the men and women who are traumatized by allowing them to tell their own truth.

Reclaiming your power through expression!

Healing can occur when feelings from repressed tormenting experiences are enacted and re-lived through artistic expression, roleplaying and acting. Suppressed powers can be awakened, and thereby new possibilities and paths in life can unfold.

In trauma there is wisdom. Psychodrama and art are ways to express and heal it.

Not only can trauma be handed on to the next generation, but so can healing. This occurs when the suppressed energetic potential of trauma is transformed into the energy of healing. Many indigenous people are intimately aware of this, using art and ceremonial ritual for healing.

The Western World has completely lost the understanding of art as a medium for the welfare of people. Today there are many movements that revive this ancient knowledge. In this workshop, we will look together for images and archetypes to lead us in this direction.

What will happen when I break the silence and express my pain?

**“...man needs a little madness,
or else he never dares (to) cut the rope and be free!”**

(Alexis Zorbas in „Zorbas the Greek“ von Nikos Kazantzakis)